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All persons who submit feedback will receive a complimentary electronic copy of the rules when the final version is released.

FANTASY ARMIES

A Chess Variant

By Shane Garvey

Fantasy Armies is a chess variant designed to represent mighty armies of men, orcs, dwarfs, undead, elves and demons doing battle in a magical world of myth and monsters. It is played on a traditional chess board but adds in extra tactical elements such as army selection, as well as random elements in the form of dice rolls.

In order to play you will need a standard chess board (8x8 squares). You will need some dice numbered 1 through 6 (what we call a D6 for short). You will also need some miniature figures to represent your playing pieces. While you can use standard chess pieces, you will find it much better and more visually impressive to use miniatures that actually match the description of the piece you have chosen.

How to Play

Before you start the game, you and your opponent must first select your army. Your army is made up of the playing pieces used in the game. Note that, unlike regular chess, you can pick whatever mixture of pieces you wish. However, you may not have less than 8 or more than 16 playing pieces in your army. At the back of this book you will find sections for each of the six armies represented in *Fantasy Armies*: humans, elves, dwarfs, orcs, demons and undead. You must pick one of these armies, and then pick your pieces from that army list. For instance, if you picked orcs, you could only choose pieces listed in the orc army section.

Before we continue, it is worth looking at how different pieces work in a game of *Fantasy Armies*.

Anatomy of a Soldier

The playing pieces in your army represent the soldiers, warriors and troops that fight for you. They may also represent magicians, leaders and other special types of people that can aid you in battle. Each different piece has a set of statistics that help further differentiate them from each other. Let's take a look at them.

Move (M): A piece's M shows how they move on the board. An M score will be listed as P (pawn), R (rook), K (knight), B (bishop), Q (queen) and KG (king), and shows how they move across the board; the particular piece moves in the same way as it's standard chess counterpart.

Hand-to-hand (HTH): This value, which is represented by a number (1, 2 etc) determines how many D6

they roll when contesting a square. The more dice, the better. This score is sometimes listed as 1+1, or 1-1, which means ‘roll 1D6 and add 1 to the roll’ or ‘roll 1D6 and subtract 1 from the roll’.

Ranged Attack (RA): This value is represented by two numbers, such as 1/2 or 2/3. The first number is how many dice you roll when shooting at another piece, while the second number is how many squares that piece can shoot up to. An RA of 2/2, therefore, would mean you roll 2D6 when shooting and you can shoot a piece 2 squares away.

Defence (D): This score shows how hard it is to kill the piece. The **lower** this score is, the better. When this piece is hit it must roll a D6 and equal or beat this score in order to survive, or else they are removed from the board.

Points Value (PV): How many points this piece costs to include in your army. The higher the PV, the more powerful the piece is.

Here is a sample profile of a playing piece, so that you better understand what it looks like:

	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>HTH</i></u>	<u><i>RA</i></u>	<u><i>D</i></u>	<u><i>PV</i></u>
<i>Man-at-Arms</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	-	5+	2

This means that this particular piece, a man-at-arms from the Kingdom of Man army, moves like a pawn, rolls 1D6 when contesting a square and must roll 5 or more on a D6 to survive a hit. The ‘-’ means that it has no shooting attacks, while this piece costs 2 points to include in your army.

Let’s compare this to another playing piece:

	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>HTH</i></u>	<u><i>RA</i></u>	<u><i>D</i></u>	<u><i>PV</i></u>
<i>Archer</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	1/2	6+	2.5

This is another piece from the Kingdom of Man army. It has the same M, HTH and D scores as the man-at-arms, but has an RA of 1/2, meaning that it can make a shooting attack. Because of this, it’s PV is 2.5, making it more expensive to include in your army.

Picking Your Army

Now that you understand what you are looking at in the army lists, it is time to pick an army. You have 60 points to spend on your playing pieces and, as stated earlier, you can only choose them from one army list and must have at least 8 pieces and no more than 16. You should probably choose a mix of low-cost and high-cost pieces so as to have a well-balanced army, but you can choose anything you want within the limits.

Deploying Your Army

Once both players have picked armies, it is time to set them up. Each player takes a D6 and rolls it, with the player scoring the lowest having to set up all their pieces first. The second player then sets up their pieces.

Unlike regular chess, the pieces in your army do not have to be placed in specific squares on the board. Instead, your pieces can be placed in any square within two rows of your side of the board. In other words, they can be placed anywhere within the 16 squares closest to you. This is referred to as your deployment area.

Once both players have set up, the game begins. The player who set up their pieces first may choose who goes first.

Playing the Game

A game plays out much like a normal game of chess – your pieces move in a way to eliminate other pieces with the ultimate goal of eliminating your opponent's 'king' piece. Once you have done that, you win.

Of course, there are some differences with *Fantasy Armies* that needs to be explained.

Pieces move according to their movement type. For instance, a piece with Move P would move in exactly the same way as a pawn in regular chess – one square directly forward at a time (two squares on the first move) and can capture pieces by moving diagonally forward.

Capturing pieces is not automatic like it is in regular chess. In *Fantasy Armies*, when a piece attempts to capture another piece, they must fight! Each piece rolls the number of D6 listed under their HTH score. The piece whose turn it is rolls one extra D6. Whichever piece rolls higher wins; if the scores are a tie, whoever rolled the most dice wins. If this is still a tie, the player whose turn it is wins.

The losing piece takes a 'hit'. That piece must now roll a D6 and equal or beat their Defence score. If they do not do this, the piece is removed from the board. If they do succeed with this roll, they remain on the board and the attacking piece is moved back to the square it came from.

The game continues in this way until one 'king' piece is removed from the board. That person loses the game.

Other Rules

There are a few other special rules you need to know in order to play *Fantasy Armies*.

Shooting Attacks

Some pieces are able to make special shooting attacks instead of moving. This allows them to remove pieces at a distance rather than risk fighting - a powerful ability indeed. Any piece with numbers listed under their RA score are able to make shooting attacks.

Shooting works as follows. In order to shoot, a piece must have 'line of sight' to its target. Line of sight

means that you can trace a line to the target, either straight or diagonally, with no intervening pieces in the way. The target piece must also be within range; this is a number of squares equal to the second number listed under the RA score (so, if a piece had an RA score of 1/2, the target must be within 2 squares).

If these conditions are met, the piece may make its shooting attack. Roll a number of D6 equal to the first number listed under the RA score (so, if the piece had an RA of 1/2, you would roll 1D6). If any of the dice roll 5 or 6, the target is hit. Otherwise the target is missed.

A hit target must make roll a D6 and equal or beat their Defence score; failure to do so results in that piece being removed from the board.

Additional Special Rules

In some circumstances, pieces will have special or unique rules not covered by the main rules. You may use these special rules instead of moving that particular piece. The nature of these rules are listed in the army lists.

Army Lists

What follows are six army lists to be used in the *Fantasy Armies* game. Choose one of the lists to choose your army from. Remember you must choose at least 8 pieces but no more than 16, and have 60 points to play with.

The armies are presented here with full stats and rules, as well as a short description and background.

Kingdoms of Man

Mankind has always had to struggle against adversity. Their lands, dubbed the Great Kingdoms by the inhabitants, are found in a heavily wooded land that is infested with all manner of evils. Monsters, cultists, bandits and dark spirits all stalk the land and the people are forced to huddle behind town walls, trusting to the skill of their armies for protection.

The various kingdoms that inhabit this realm are far apart, and their influence only extends a few miles beyond the city walls. Travellers would be well advised to hire well-trained guardsmen to accompany them, for it is rare indeed for a journey to be undertaken without encountering some sort of menace along the way.

But for all the danger and horror that lies in the wilderness, mankind is a happy and hardy lot who attempt to live normal lives, all the while looking out for the dangers that lie all around them.

Army Selection

You may choose from the following pieces for your army.

	<i><u>M</u></i>	<i><u>HTH</u></i>	<i><u>RA</u></i>	<i><u>D</u></i>	<i><u>PV</u></i>	<i><u>Special</u></i>
<i>King of Men</i>	<i>KG</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Wizard</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>b</i>
<i>Cleric</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>c</i>
<i>Knight</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>6</i>	
<i>Champion</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Man-at-Arms</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>2</i>	
<i>Archer</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1/2</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>2.5</i>	

Special Rules:

A) Your army must include 1 King of Men piece. This piece counts as your King. Any Kingdoms of Man piece in a square adjacent to a King of Men gains +1 HTH.

B) Instead of moving, a Wizard may attempt to cast a spell from the following list. In order to successfully cast the spell, you must roll a D6 and equal or beat the casting value of the spell.

Armour (casting value 4+): Increase the Wizard's Defence score to 4+. This spell lasts until the Wizard piece moves or casts another spell.

Fireblast (casting value 5+): This spell is used as a shooting attack on a model up to 3 squares away. If it is cast successfully, the target takes a hit.

Teleport (casting value 5+): You may move any piece in your army that is adjacent to the Wizard, or the Wizard itself, to any other vacant square on the board.

C) Any Kingdoms of Man piece in an adjacent square gains +1 D.

Orcs & Goblins

The Orc race is an aggressive and warlike race of violent psychopaths. They are strong and tough, standing a head taller than a man and wider than one too. Their green skin is tough and hard, well-muscled without any excess fat at all. They love to fight and fight to live, for barely a day goes by without an Orc killing someone or something.

The smaller cousins of the Orcs are the Goblins, smaller, wiry humanoids who otherwise share the same sort of features as their larger kin. What they lack in the strength of their cousins they more than make up for in wicked cunning, a trait they evolved so as to stay one step ahead of the more brutish and stronger

Orcs.

Together these two races make up hordes that love nothing better than to invade other lands. They do this partly because they simply want to as it is part of their nature to wage war, but they also do it partly out of necessity. Their own home, the land of Kraggar, long ago became overpopulated, and so the armies of the Orcs and Goblins venture into other lands in search of more room for their ever expanding kindred. This is bad news for the other races as they must keep constant vigil against this unwanted incursions.

Army Selection

You may choose from the following pieces for your army.

	<i><u>M</u></i>	<i><u>HTH</u></i>	<i><u>RA</u></i>	<i><u>D</u></i>	<i><u>PV</u></i>	<i><u>Special</u></i>
<i>Chieftain</i>	<i>KG</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3+</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Shaman</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>b</i>
<i>Great Orc</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>6</i>	
<i>Wolf Rider</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Orc</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>4</i>	
<i>Hobgoblin</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1/2</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>2.5</i>	
<i>Goblin</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>1</i>	

Special Rules:

- A)** Your army must include 1 Chieftain. This piece counts as your King. Any Orcs and Goblins piece in a square adjacent to your Chieftain gains +1 HTH.
- B)** Instead of moving, a Shaman may cast a spell from the following list. In order to successfully cast the spell, you must roll a D6 and equal or beat the casting value of the spell.

Charge! (casting value 6+): Upon casting this spell successfully, you may immediately take two more turns.

Crunch! (casting value 5+): This spell is used as a shooting attack on a model up to 3 squares away. If it is cast successfully, the target takes a hit.

Smash! (casting value 4+): Increase the Shaman's HTH score by +2. This spell lasts until the Shaman casts another spell.

Dwarfs

The rocky mountains and hills of the land of Darg are so inhospitable that no one would choose to call them home. Yet that is what the race of Dwarfs have done since the beginning of time. They live behind the walls of their stone fortresses where they stay ever vigilant, for the mountains around them are dangerous places. Monstrous beasts prowl the peaks and valleys, hunting for the food that is so scarce in this land. The worst of these beasts are the drakes, wyverns and dragons that rules the mountains and terrorize the Dwarven people at every opportunity.

For the most part, the Dwarfs stay within their fortresses. Although there are walls and towers built above ground, the majority of the fortress actually resides underground. This affords the Dwarfs an even greater protection against the marauding beasts above. It also leads them into their great mines, where gold, silver, iron and precious gems are extracted and traded with other lands for the food they so desperately need.

When not mining or at war, the Dwarfs are busy honing their fighting skills, for their very survival depends upon their strength of arms. They also seek to master the secrets of their blackpowder weapons, for this gives them a definite edge over their enemies and the beasts of Darg.

Army Selection

You may choose from the following pieces for your army.

	<i><u>M</u></i>	<i><u>HTH</u></i>	<i><u>RA</u></i>	<i><u>D</u></i>	<i><u>PV</u></i>	<i><u>Special</u></i>
<i>High King</i>	<i>KG</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3+</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Dwarf Lord</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>b</i>
<i>Miner</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>c</i>
<i>Hunter</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Cannon</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4/4</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>d</i>
<i>Gunner</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3/2</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>e</i>
<i>Warrior</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>3</i>	

Special Rules:

- A) Your army must include 1 High King. This piece counts as your King. Any Dwarf piece in a square adjacent to your High King gains +1 HTH.

- B) Any Dwarf piece in a square adjacent to a Dwarf Lord gains +1 HTH.
- C) Instead of moving, a Miner may roll 1D6. On a roll of 5+, the piece may be placed anywhere on the board.
- D) When shooting, if a Cannon rolls two or more 1s, it is immediately removed from the board.
- E) When shooting, if a Gunner rolls a 1, it takes an automatic hit.

Undead

Thousands of years ago the land of Jzet was beset by plague and famine, the likes of which had never been seen before in all the lands. They prayed to their god for help, but their pleas were ignored and their prayers fell on deaf ears. In desperation, the king of Jzet set out to find out why the god had forsaken them so. After thirteen years of searching, the king finally found the god and begged him to save them from the disease and starvation that was killing so many of his subjects. But the god was a cruel and wicked deity and he agreed to save them from the burden of death by cursing them all to live as the Undead: undying, mindless minions of the god.

No sane person visits the land of Jzet any more. For those who do, they find a crumbling empire full of empty graves and tombs and an overwhelming stench of death and rotting meat. Before long they will hear the soft, slow shuffling of feet, the creaking of ancient bones and the eerie wailing of the spirits of the dead. If they still have not fled, that person will soon see horrors beyond his imagining, terrors that will haunt his dreams until he dies.

The armies of the Undead often invade other lands, for they are jealous of the warm flesh of the living and would prefer that life be wiped out entirely. The defending armies find themselves in a hell of a fight, for how do you kill creatures that are already dead?

Army Selection

You may choose from the following pieces for your army.

	<i><u>M</u></i>	<i><u>HTH</u></i>	<i><u>RA</u></i>	<i><u>D</u></i>	<i><u>PV</u></i>	<i><u>Special</u></i>
<i>Liche Lord</i>	<i>KG</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Necromancer</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>b</i>
<i>Vampire</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>c</i>
<i>Spectre</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3+</i>	<i>6</i>	
<i>Ghoul</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>c</i>

Zombie	<i>P</i>	<i>2</i>	-	6+	2	
Skeleton	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	-	5+	2	

Special Rules:

- A) Your army must include 1 Liche Lord. This piece counts as your King. Any Undead piece in a square adjacent to your Liche Lord gains +1 HTH.
- B) Instead of moving, a Necromancer may cast a spell from the following list. In order to successfully cast the spell, you must roll a D6 and equal or beat the casting value of the spell.

Drain Life (casting value 5+): This spell is used as a shooting attack on a piece up to 2 squares away. If it is cast successfully, that piece must reduce their HTH by -1, while the Necromancer increases his by +1.

Raise Dead (casting value 5+): You may choose one of your pieces that has been removed from the board and return it to play as either a Zombie or Skeleton (your choice). The piece must be placed in a square adjacent to the Necromancer.

Slay (casting value 6+): This spell is used as a shooting attack on a piece up to 2 squares away. If it is cast successfully, the piece is removed from the board.

- C) Whenever a Vampire or Ghoul removes an enemy piece from play, add +1 to the Vampire or Ghoul's HTH.

Elves

The Elves are a mystery to most people of other lands. Very rarely do they venture from their forest realm Cael, and when they do it is only for good reason. Usually this is to right a wrong done against their race or to gain vengeance against an enemy who has dared to violate their woodland kingdoms. When this occurs the Elven clans muster under the banner of the most wise clan lord and march to war.

When they are not seeking revenge against those who would defile their homes, the Elves shelter within their woods, living within loose family clans. Sometimes these clans war with each other, though most of the time they live in peace, each respectful of the territories of the others. They are very much naturalists, living in harmony with the fauna and flora of their forests and tending to them so that they may grow.

Other races see the Elves as mysterious, isolationist and untrustworthy and therefore worthy of their suspicions. If, for whatever reason, an Elf is spotted alone or in a small company outside of Cael, they are often teased and tormented and in extreme cases, attacked. Of course, this leads to that Elf's clan becoming angered...

Army Selection

You may choose from the following pieces for your army.

	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>HTH</i></u>	<u><i>RA</i></u>	<u><i>D</i></u>	<u><i>PV</i></u>	<u><i>Special</i></u>
<i>Clan Lord</i>	<i>KG</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1/3</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Druid</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1/3</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>b</i>
<i>Battlemaster</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1/3</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>7</i>	
<i>Pegasus Rider</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1/3</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>7</i>	
<i>Bowmaster</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2/3</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>4.5</i>	
<i>Ranger</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1/3</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>c</i>
<i>Archer</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1/3</i>	<i>6+</i>	<i>3</i>	

Special Rules:

- A) Your army must include 1 Clan Lord. This piece counts as your King. Any Elf piece in a square adjacent to your Clan Lord gains +1 HTH.
- B) Instead of moving, a Druid may cast a spell from the following list. In order to successfully cast the spell, you must roll a D6 and equal or beat the casting value of the spell.

Armour of Thorns (casting value 5+): This spell increases the Druid's or another piece in an adjacent square Defence to 4+. This spell lasts until the Druid piece moves or casts another spell.

Arrow Storm (casting value 6+): This spell is used as a shooting attack on a piece up to 3 squares away. If it is successfully cast the target and all enemy pieces in an adjacent square take a hit.

Entangle (casting value 4+): This spell is used on a piece within 2 squares of the Druid. If successfully cast, when that piece next attempts to move, it must first roll a D6. If it rolls 4+ it may move as normal, but if it rolls 3 or less it may not move that turn and the turn is wasted.

- C) Rangers may be deployed anywhere within your half of the game board, not just the first two rows.

Demons

Demons are evil incarnate. They are unthinking, unfeeling monsters whose sole purpose in life is to kill and destroy. Their origins are unknown, though it is suspected that they are not a natural race of beings and that they were created by some soulless, wicked god who wanted nothing more than the destruction of the world.

Demon-kind come from a hellish, nightmare world. The land is rocky and barren and covered in a thick layer of ash that spews forth from the many active volcanoes found there. The sky is tinted a permanent orange, and rivers of lava and sulphur meander their way across the landscape. Everything is acidic and poisoned, even the very air, and a mortal creature would not survive even a few moments in this environment.

Over time, the mortal races have developed powerful magic that binds the Demons to their home world. This was done out of necessity, for the Demons would relentlessly invade the other realms without any sign of mercy. Still, occasionally they manage to break free of these shackles and launch an assault, and the unending war between the Demons and the mortal races continues.

Army Selection

You may choose from the following pieces for your army.

	<i><u>M</u></i>	<i><u>HTH</u></i>	<i><u>RA</u></i>	<i><u>D</u></i>	<i><u>PV</u></i>	<i><u>Special</u></i>
<i>Demon King</i>	<i>KG</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3+</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Hellwitch</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>4+</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>b</i>
<i>Blood Demon</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Winged Demon</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Bone Demon</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>Demospawn</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4+</i>	<i>3</i>	
<i>Black Warrior</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5+</i>	<i>3</i>	

Special Rules:

- A) Your army must include 1 Demon King. This piece counts as your King. Any Demon piece in a square adjacent to your Demon King gains +1 HTH.
- B) Instead of moving, a Hellwitch may cast a spell from the following list. In order to successfully cast the spell, you must roll a D6 and equal or beat the casting value of the spell.

Dark Ritual (casting value 2+): If this spell is successfully cast, you may add +1 to the dice roll the next time you try to cast a spell.

Hellfire (casting value 5+): This spell is used as a shooting attack on a model up to 3 squares away. If it is cast successfully, the target takes a hit.

Rain of Blood (casting value 6+): If cast successfully, roll a D6 for each of your opponent's pieces on the board. On a roll of 6, that piece takes a hit.