

Heroes Before Iron

Sequence of Play

Set Up Game

Each Turn (alternate bounds for each band in turn)

Issue single combat challenges if the general melee has not started

Movement

Fire Missile Weapons (in own bound only)

Close Combat

Morale Resolution (enemy bound only)

Army Organisation

Each figure represents one warrior, and should roughly represent what it is meant to be. Troop types are Chariots, Horsemen, Close Combat Infantry and Skirmishers. Chariots are the elite arm. Assume that in addition to close combat skills, chariot warriors have firepower (javelins at least). Unarmed charioteers are ignored in combat.

Horsemen are rare and not particularly effective. They have javelins.

Close combat infantry include spearmen, swordsmen and axe men. They may use javelins if the model has them. (A close combat figure with javelins must have some indication that they are a close combat infantryman, such as armour, or a medium or large shield.)

Skirmishers use bows, slings and javelins. They have no armour, but may have a small shield.

Each side consists of one or more bands. A leader of a band of infantry may be a chariot warrior. **Skirmishers in open battle are treated as being a separate allied band with no leader**, but which suffers a morale penalty when the leader of the close combat infantry is killed. When defending fortifications skirmishers are part of the same band as the close combat infantry.

Set Up Game

Place scenery. Set morale to 2 for each band. Apply the following rules:

1. If behind fortifications multiply numbers by 3 for morale calculation. Raise morale by 1.
2. Every 25% of your side that your opponent has more than you reduces your morale by 1.
3. Every 25% of your side that you outnumber your opponents by increases your morale by 1.

Each side throws a dice. The higher scorer deploys and starts first.

Single Combat Challenges

If the battle has not yet started either side may issue a challenge to single combat. There is no penalty for refusing single combat. Each side selects their champion. Fighting is for 5 combat rounds unless a kill happens. Use the normal combat rules except that a difference of 4 or more kills.

The winner's side gets a boost of 1 to their morale. The loser's side gets no boost of morale if the winner fought fairly (with no one else from the winner's side intervening). If the fight was won by treachery and the losing side fought fairly the losing side gets a morale boost of 2. If the losing champion was the war band leader or $\frac{1}{10}$ of the band are lost the usual morale penalties apply.

Movement

Figures move as individuals or formations, but movement for each figure must always conform to the table. Dismounted chariot warriors move as infantry. If climbing walls include the distance upwards.

“Rough Going” includes fords and rough pasture. “Difficult Going” includes marsh, dense undergrowth, steep slopes, rivers away from fords and crossing fortifications. The whole move is at the slowest pace of the move.

Troop Type	Good Going	Charge	Rough Going	Difficult Going
Infantry with no or small shield, no armour, or two handed weapon	6	8	5	4
Infantry with medium shield, bronze cuirass, long spear or large axe	5	6	4	3
Infantry with large (tower or figure of eight) shield	4	5	3	2
Infantry with dendric armour	3	n/a	2	nil
Horsemen	10	13	4	1
Chariots	8	11	3	nil

Charge - Individuals and formations up to 2 ranks deep, in good going ending in combat. (If a formation charges some of it must end up in combat.) Figures already in close combat, or supporting close combat can not charge.

Moving to combat is to the nearest, or nearest unengaged enemy. The move must be the closest clear point of the enemy base, moving in the most direct path possible. Bodies do not move obliquely into combat, but may wheel, or move men from the back rank. Foot may not cross the path of mounted that move in the same bound if either are moving into combat.

Breaking off from close combat can either be done after pushing back the enemy and not following up, or if faster than all opponents in contact.

Climbing Walls - Troops can not climb to a position at the side of an enemy facing towards them.

Missile Fire - maximum range 16 inches bow or sling, 8 inches javelin

Missile troops not in, or breaking off from, combat may shoot or throw once in each of their own bounds. Each shot is taken separately. Throw a single D6 and add the factors below.

Short range (8 inches or closer, always for javelins)	+2
Chariot horses or mounted target (but not animals with no riders)	+1
Target shot from rear	+2
Archer, slinger or thrower moved this bound	-1
Target has small shield and is shot from front	-1
Target has medium (larger than buckler) shield and is shot from front	-2
Target has large (whole body) shield and is shot from front	-3
Target has metal body armour larger than chest protector <u>or</u> is a leader who is unarmoured	-1
Target has dendra panoply <u>or</u> is a leader with metal body armour larger than chest protector	-2
Target in partial cover	-2
Target is Chariot Warrior whose chariot has a runner carrying a large shield	-1

Effect: 5 or more kills, any less has no effect.

Target: Closest enemy who is in clear line of sight, within arc of fire, but not within 2 inches of your friends.

Arc: 45° each side of front edges for infantry, horsemen and dismounted chariot warriors, 360° for chariots.

Past friends: Infantry friends only, if friends are in 1 rank directly in front of shooter.

Chariot: If dice score before adjustment is even then treat as shot at warrior, otherwise treat as shot at horses. A dead horse immobilises the chariot so that the warrior dismounts.

Close Combat

Throw a d6 for both figures. Add factors below. Compare the two scores. Check the effects table.

Combat Factor		
Leader		8
Other Chariot Warrior or Hero		6
Other Close Combat Infantry		4
Skirmishers, Horseman and Civilians		0
Fighting from mobile chariot		2
Using fortifications		2
Uphill (may be in addition to fortifications)		1
Next to and in line with a friend who has already killed or pushed back an enemy this bound		1
Rear support - friend directly behind, facing the same direction (1 rank only)		1
Fighting more than one opponent (each enemy after the first one)		-2
Unengaged enemy to rear within 16 inches, no friends facing them between combat and enemies in rear		-1
Difference	Effect of Combat upon Loser	
5 or more	Kill	
4 or 3	Push back by own base depth (follow up is optional) - if can not be pushed back die	
2	Push back by own base depth (follow up is optional) - if can not be pushed back survive	
1 or 0	No effect – treat as draw	

Brawls: Pair off figures one to one as far as possible, if not two to one etc. Main attacker is the toughest. Secondary attackers just act as factors.

Push Back: Can push back one infantry friend facing same direction.

Mobile Chariots: Count as 1 figure for close combat, so it can only kill one enemy per bound. If infantry is fighting it, a "kill" immobilises the chariot. Mobile chariots or cavalry attack the chariot's warrior.

Morale Factors and Resolution

Each band has its own morale.

Event	Morale Effect
Each 10% of original strength of band killed, fled or captured	-1
Own standard captured for instance by standard bearer killed in close combat	-1
Enemy standard captured for instance by standard bearer killed in close combat	+1
War band leader killed	-3
More than 3 enemies within fortification, breach made or gate forced	-3
Friendly band routs or leaves the field (excluding supporting skirmishers or horsemen)	-1
Enemy band routs or leaves the field (excluding supporting skirmishers or horsemen)	+1
Significant friendly reinforcements arrive (see below)	+1
Significant enemy reinforcements arrive (see below)	-1
Any friendly band won a challenged single combat	+1
Any friendly band lost single combat unfairly	+2

Reinforcements (see above)

If significant reinforcements arrive, the reinforced side's morale rises by one and their opponent's falls by one. A significant reinforcement is an extra 25% or more of the original starting strength. The reinforcements may be troops of any quality.

If the opposing war bands are not of the same size it is possible that reinforcements might be significant to one side but not the other. For instance one side's morale could rise when reinforced, but if they were fighting a larger opponent the opponent's morale may not fall.

Morale Resolution - once at end of each enemy bound if morale is zero or less

Test the morale of the bands with worst morale first. If any rout, take the effects into account when doing all further tests. If two or more bands have equally bad morale, their player chooses which is tested first.

Throw a d6 and halve the result, rounding down. Add the current morale. If the sum is zero or less the band rout. Otherwise they fight on for the next round, their morale unchanged. (This means that they will need morale tests in future bounds.)

Routed troops can not be rallied and are removed immediately. Troops in close combat that rout are treated as surrendered in campaigns. Other routed troops are deemed to have fled.