

KINGDOM OF MERIDIES



Meridian War Booklet

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Meridian General

INTRODUCTION

The main function of this booklet is to provide all Meridian Soldiers a common starting point from which to build upon. I will go over a few basics, but it is up to each of you to read and understand all the pertinent information in the Marshals Handbook on the conduct of SCA warfare.

Those of you with mundane military experience will soon notice a lot of blatant plagiarism

It is my mission to keep your participation in the Meridian Army a safe and fun experience.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Crown

Heirs

General

(3)Tribunes

(3)Sub Commanders-Centurions

Knights

Legion of the Bear

COMMANDS

All commands will be given in as loud and clear a voice as possible. However, few people have the lungs and voice control to be heard over the din of battle, therefore it is vitally important for all sub commanders to look towards the field commander and echo each command.

A good command should be given in three parts

1. WHO you are addressing (i.e. the army, the cohort or any subgroups such as archers or spearmen)
2. The preparatory command. WHAT you want your unit to accomplish or WHERE you want them to move. (i.e. “forward”, “right”, “left”, “to the rear”) This is not always necessary but it gives each unit a good heads up as well as allowing the field commander to know if he has been heard.
3. Command of Execution. WHEN (i.e. “march” or “charge”)

Commands

Form Up: One of the first commands given. See Starting Formation in Placement and Composition.

Army's commanders to change that while keeping the participation enjoyable.

The use of Roman rank structure is not intended to favor any time period or persona. You can keep your own persona and still mesh in with the rest of the Army. Most of my documentation comes from "The Renaissance At War", and the author stated that during that period the leading military minds looked back to the classical Roman and Greek texts to reorganize the armies of Europe and they kept the terminology regardless of their cultural backgrounds.

We know this is a hobby, nobody gets paid for fighting and we want your support.

Show up. Fight well and with honor. Have fun.

Sir Gunther, General of the Armies of Meridies

Reform or Rally: Possibly the most important order given. After any action where the unit has broken ranks or spread out too far, a reform should be called to gather the unit back into its starting formation. Look for your unit's banner or pennon as a rallying point.

Forward March: At a normal pace, walk forward.

Double-Time March: At a dogtrot, move forward.

Wheel Right: The soldier on the right flank will stand fast acting as a pivot while the rest of the unit swings in an arc to the right.

Wheel Left: The soldier on the left flank will stand fast acting as a pivot while the rest of the unit swings in an arc to the left.

Stand Fast: DO NOT MOVE. Do not back up. Do not pass go, do not collect \$200. Keep your position.

Turn/Face (right or left): Each soldier in the unit will turn in place in the direction specified.

Shift (right or left): Each soldier will slide to the direction indicated while maintaining the same orientation.

Charge: Split the gaps between the opposing shields. Keep moving. If you break through alive, turn toward your objective and reform. If you are dead, quit pushing or expect to keep getting hit. Fall forward and to the side if possible. Be safe and cover up.

Open Ranks: From the normal spacing, extend the distance to a full arm length from left to right

Close Ranks: From “open ranks” reduce the side to side distance between soldiers until shield are slightly overlapping.

Take a Knee: There are times when it is advantageous for the first rank to kneel and allow the second rank of spears to work over the heads of the soldiers in the first rank.

ORGANIZATION

The Kingdom is divided into three sections known as Cohorts. The first or Eastern Cohort is comprised of all the territories within the mundane state of Georgia extending upwards in a line to Eastern Tennessee.

The second or Central Cohort shall include all the territories within the state of Alabama extending upwards to include Central Tennessee and downwards to include Northern Florida.

The third or Western Cohort shall include all the territories of the Principality of Gleann Abhann.

Each Cohort is divided into northern and southern companies under the command of a Tribune, who will be responsible for the organization of local war practices and reporting estimated troop strength to the General. Each

archers reloaded while waiting their turn to move forward. Unless Meridies recruits a lot more archers, and we do need more archers, we do not have enough archers for effective suppressive fire. This means that we need to select our targets with care in the following order of priority. 1 enemy archers. 2 enemy leaders. 3 enemy spearmen. Note: I DO NOT list 4 as targets of opportunity. Do not waste your bolts/arrows on shield men. You will serve the army better by keeping at the ready and waiting for a good target.

Legion of the Bear: The Bears as a unit have two primary field duties. The first is to protect the Crown by forming a protective guard unit. The second duty is to stay within their respective cohorts helping relay commands and keeping order in the ranks and files. The best placement is to have a Bear at each flank of each file. The direction/ use of the Bears is at the discretion of the Crown, so its members must stay flexible to the changing roles they must assume.

Closing/Disclaimer:

The Kingdom of Meridies is known for many positive attributes; unfortunately a well-trained and organized army is not one of them. It is the priority of your

they need to be in the general battle plan. HOW they should act to accomplish their mission. Shield men are the foundation upon the rest of the Army depends. Never give ground unless ordered to do so. Over block for the shield mates in your file and for the ranks behind you. Halberds and great swords need to support the 1st file, use the seven and a half foot reach of the pole arms to swing at your opponent's helm while the front file swings for a leg. The best use of these weapons is the prevention of an enemy breakthrough. You can brace the front file during a change, but do not push. Spearmen need to always work in pairs. Thrust at the same target at the same time. Thrust at opponents off to your sides, not at the person directly across from you. Put a shield hook at the end of your spear to better enable you to pull down a shield so your partner can have a clean shot.

Archers typically line up to either flank for a clean shot, yet close enough to fall back on infantry support if they are charged. If there are six or more archers available, an effective formation used for crossbows in the late Renaissance was known as the sleeve. Placed in two files of three or more ranks, the front two archers loosed their bolts at the same time, then peel off to the end of the file allowing the next two archers to step to the front rank. The

company will have a Centurion to assist the Tribune. Both the Tribune and Centurion will be appointed by the crown.

Each Cohort is strongly encouraged to make a banner or pennon incorporating the Kingdom's badge to use as a rallying point.

Note: Allowances will be made for troops to fight along with the rest of their households even if they might live in different Cohorts.

Organization/Formation on the Company Level

The Meridian army will be using a modified version of the late period infantry pike square as the standard formation. The key element is depth. In a true square, the number of RANKS (how many soldiers from front to back) are equal to the number of FILES (the number of soldiers from left to right). Meridies will never have the number of troops necessary to do this, so we will form up in Ranks of three for all open field battles. The number of Files is determined by the number of troops available. Each company MUST set aside troops to be used as a reserve/movement unit. Figure between 15% and 20% of your total strength.

Example: The Southern Company of the Eastern Cohort brought 27 troopers to Border Raids. First, set aside

four or five troops for your reserves, including any florentiners. Divide the number of remaining troopers by three. Round down to the next whole number. That gives you three Ranks (deep) of seven Files (across). Any extra troops should be placed at the flanks for support.

Placement/Composition

No one will tell the individual trooper with what they can or cannot fight. Each weapon style is needed to form a balanced company. In a perfect unit, at least 30 to 40% of your troops should be shield men. 40 to 50% should be spearmen. 10 to 20% of the troops should be a mix of great swords, pole weapons and, if you are lucky, archery support.

First Rank: Shield men

Second Rank: Mixed pole weapons and spears

Third Rank: Spears

Two to three steps back: Reserve. (This is the ideal spot for your two weapon fighters plus a shield or two.)

The normal distance between files (side to side) is the distance from your body to your elbow when out stretched. The distance between ranks (front to rear) is the distance from your body to your out stretched hand.

Everyone needs to have enough room to swing their weapons in order to be effective. This formation is only a starting point designed to either move to contact or charge. As necessary orders will be give to open or close ranks to allow the spearmen to move into the first rank. I can't place enough emphasis on the need to listen. Communication is the difference between fighting on your own and fighting as a part of a winning unit. You must be able to speak to the ranks in front of and behind you, as well as to the comrades to your left and right.

Bridge battles call for having shield men in your first two ranks and a heavier percentage of spearmen. Your reserve is of less importance when you cannot be flanked.

The most important factor to remember in resurrection battles is the need to return or 'Res' in groups of four or more. Take a moment to drink some water, form up with your shields in the front and move back to your unit. Do not wander off to another sector of the field, your Cohort needs you. A Centurion should be placed in charge of the res-point keeping track of the time remaining, and ordering the direction of the final push.

Before stepping onto the battlefield each soldier should know the following; WHAT they expected to accomplish. When they are expected to be ready. WHERE