

# Front Rank...Fire!

## THE ZULU WAR 1879 - SKIRMISH WARGAME RULES

By Jim Wallman

### INTRODUCTION

These rules are intended for small unit actions, involving a handful of British and a larger force of Zulu. In general, odds of around 3:1 in favour of the Zulu produce a balanced game. The Zulu should be grouped into units of 20-40 figures each.

### SCALES

Ground scale is 1" to 2 yards (ie. the same as the figure scale).

Time scale is one move represents 6-8 seconds of real time.

Figure representation is one figure to one man.

### MOVEMENT

Movement distances are in inches, as follows:

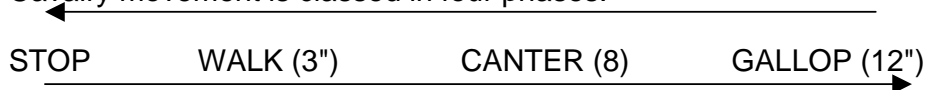
#### a) Movement on foot

	Zulu	Any others
Walking	2.5	2.5
Running	6	5
Charge	8	6
Crawl	1.5	1

Europeans and other natives can only run for 6 moves in any 8. The charge move is permitted only if such a move would bring the figure into hand to hand combat with an enemy figure.

#### b) Mounted movement

Cavalry movement is classed in four phases:



Horses are only permitted a maximum of 45 degrees of turn during the move at the canter or gallop; 90 degrees of turn at a walk or slower and up to 180 degrees of turn when stationary.

The total for a given speed cannot be exceeded, but it can be split during the same move (eg. making two 22.5 degree turns during a gallop move).

In addition, horses must accelerate and decelerate through each of the phases at the rate of one phase per move.

Horses can jump over obstacles such as bushes or low walls, provided that they are moving at a canter or faster.

When a horse is about to jump an obstacle, roll 1d6 to see if it refuses the jump.

If it does, roll again to see if the rider is unhorsed by the sudden stop - score 1 for most riders, or 1, 2, or 3 for poor horsemen (ie. some NNC horsemen). If the rider is thrown then he is dazed for two moves and cannot get up for one move.

## FIRING

All firing requires a roll of two normal dice (d6) per firer.

Throwing spear. When a player gives the order to throw spears there is a 'spear volley' in which all those able to throw do so. The unit as a whole is assumed to have used ALL its spears, and therefore cannot throw again.

Multiple targets. In every group of bunched targets, for every target figure, there is one potential secondary target. If the firer misses with his shot, he may roll again to see if the secondary target was hit (with a nominal minus on the die score).

Fire control. Roll one die per hit on the target group; if any of the scores on these die rolls are the same then the hits were on the same target figure.

Roll 2d6, score in the table or more to hit.

Range:	5"	10"	15"	20"	25"	30"	40"	50"	over 50"
Zulu spear	9	11	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soldier & pistol	5	6	8	10	12	12	-	-	-
Soldier & rifle	5	6	7	7	7	8	9	10	10
Zulu & musket	9	10	11	11	12	12	-	-	-
NNC & rifle	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	10	11
Boer & rifle	5	6	7	7	7	7	8	9	9
Zulu & rifle	8	9	10	10	11	12	12	12	12

Factors (these are cumulative):

Target in soft cover	-1	European firing from horse	-1
Target in hard cover	-2	" " moving horse	-2
Target prone in open	-1	Native firing from horse	-2
Target running/cantering	-1	" " moving horse	-4
Target galloping horse	-2	Dicing for secondary target	-1
Firer under fire	-1	Resting weapon	+1
Aiming (Europeans only)	+1		

**Men on foot may not move and fire.** This includes turning more than 45 degrees, and also throwing spears.

Reloading times:

NNC, British or Boers reloading a service rifle take 1 move.

Zulu reloading a rifle take two moves.

Zulu reloading a musket take six moves.

A British service revolver may fire six times before reloading, whereupon they take one move per chamber to reload.

**ORGANISATION OF THE ZULU** Zulu figures are normally they are placed in `units' of 20-40 figures (referred to as `groups'). These groups may not normally split up. If they are split up then apply morale results to BOTH segments, irrespective of their situation or relative positions - this is specifically to discourage unnecessary or unrealistic breaking down of groups.

**MORALE**

Whenever a Zulu group is fired on it must roll 2d6.  
 Whenever a NNC group is fired on OR charged by Zulu, it must roll 2d6 for morale.  
 For the purposes of this game, Europeans do not roll for morale.

Factors:

Zulus: -1 for each 5% casualties in turn from fire only.  
 NNC: -2 for each 5% casualties in turn from any cause.

Score	Result if Zulu	Result if NNC
12	Must rush at nearest enemy.	Continue.
9-11	Continue.	No advance.
7-8	Continue.	Retire.
5-6	No advance.	Retire.
2-4	No advance.	Run away (one move).
0-1	Retire.	Run away (two turns).
Under 0	Run away.	Leave battlefield rapidly.

Definitions:- Retire means that the group must move away from the enemy at least 2.5" on their next move, and may move no further on the current move.  
 No advance means that the group is halted immediately, and may not move closer to any enemy.  
 Run away means that the group is halted immediately and must move away at the run next move (and the move after if required).

**Force Morale.**

The point at which the whole Zulu force gives up and disperses to its home kraal, is when the total number of British (including NNC) exceeds the total number of Zulu on the table. The Europeans will always fight to the death, since they have little or no practical chance of out-running their enemy.

**MELEE**

Roll 1d6 per man, per exchange of blows.  
 Thus, if one man were fighting one man, roll one die for each, and the highest score is the winner. If three men were fighting one man, he would roll separately against each opponent. Each man can only affect one adversary per move, so a man outnumbered three to one, who wins all three rolls, still can only kill one of his three enemies (the others have been successfully blocked).

If the difference in scores is 3 or more then the loser is killed, otherwise the loser is pushed back 1".

The individual die rolls are affected by the following factors:

Natal Native Contingent	-1
British Senior NCO	+1
Outnumbered 2:1	-1
Outnumbered 3:1	-2
Outnumbered 4:1	-3
Outnumbered 5:1	-4 (and so on...)
On higher level than enemy	+1
Impeded	-1
Dazed	-2
On horseback	+1
Irregular cavalry charging	+2
Regular cavalry charging	+3
Regular cavalry cantering	+2
Lancers	+1

So, to summarise:

A figure may only make one attack in a move. He may defend as often as necessary. You can only push back or kill an opponent if you attack him. Men may not attack whilst prone, dazed, or with their backs to the enemy.

### Horses in the Melee.

When a horseman is fighting a man on foot, the horsemen will ride through the enemy, rather than stop on the edge of the group and engage. Therefore it is important that you attempt to complete the horse's movement to the full, pausing in its track only to adjudicate the results of passing combats. All the above melee rules apply, and so a horseman still only makes ONE attack per move.

Should the horseman wish to ride down an enemy this should be tested initially as if jumping an obstacle - to see if the horse refuses, and whether the rider is thrown in the process (most embarrassing in a melee!). See the movement rules for this.

If there is room on either side of the man being run down and the horse gets a 'refuse' result, it will pass by - otherwise it will stop. Always adjudicate the result of an exchange of blows before running down the man on foot. Once run down, the man on the receiving end is 'dazed'.

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

Optional rules:

1. Horsemanship.

Horse movement can be varied with the quality of the riders (or the unit).

Movement speeds: (Inches)

	Good Horsemen	Average	Poor
WALK	3	3	3
CANTER	9	8	7
GALLOP	13	12	11

Turning circles: (Degrees)

	Good Horseman	Average	Poor
STATIONARY	180	180	120
WALK	100	90	80
CANTER	60	45	30
GALLOP	60	30	0

## 2. Wounds.

Should you wish to reflect wounds, roll 1d6 for any man hit by fire or melee. Score 1 = Light wound

2-4 = Wound

5-6 = Killed

All wounded figures drop to the ground and count as killed for unit morale in that move. Lightly wounded can get up again after 4 complete moves, and will have a permanent -2 from all firing and melee die rolls.

Wounded can get up again after 8 complete moves. They may not attack in melee or run. They have a permanent -4 on melee and firing die rolls.

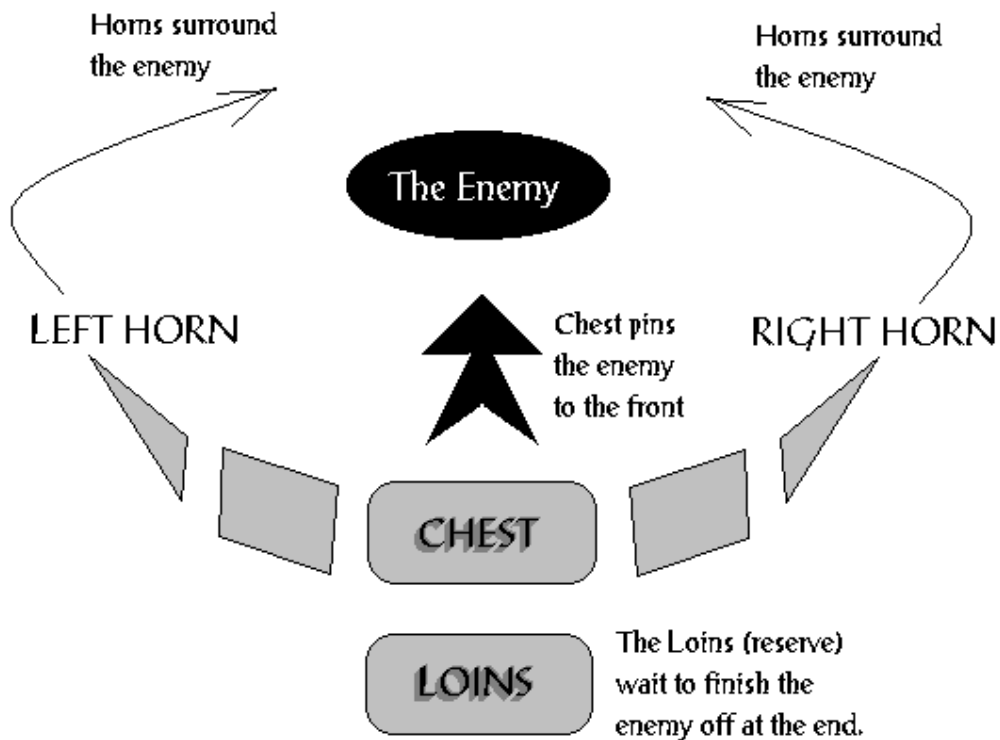
## Selected Bibliography

The following are commonly available:

MORRIS The Washing of the Spears

LABAND & THOMPSON A Field Guide to the War In Zululand 1879

BARTHORP The Zulu War, A Pictorial History



## "The Horns of The Buffalo" Tactics

## FRONT RANK...FIRE! : ZULU SKIRMISH WARGAME - QUICK REFERENCE PLAYSHEET

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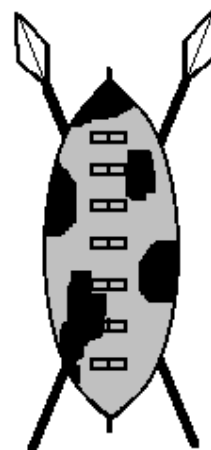
### Mounted movement

STOP ----- WALK (3") ----- CANTER (8") ----- GALLOP (12")

Maximum 45 degrees turn at the canter or gallop

90 degrees of turn at a walk or slower

180 degrees of turn when stationary.



### FIRING

Roll 2d6, score in the table or more to hit.

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Target in soft cover -1

Target in hard cover -2

Target prone in open -1

Target running/cantering -1

Target galloping horse -2

Firer under fire -1

Aiming (Europeans only) +1

European firing from horse -1

" " moving horse -2

Native firing from horse -2

" " moving horse -4

Dicing for secondary target -1

Resting weapon +1

### MORALE

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