

# DRAGON WARRIORS

## Quick Combat System

### The Concept

The combat system used in Dragon Warriors, despite its simplicity, is too unwieldy for the GamesMaster to run as part of a PBM game or in NPC vs. NPC combat. This quick combat system was devised to represent a number of Combat Rounds in a single turn, thus greatly shortening the time needed to run a combat.

These rules are principally aimed at GMs rather than players, who would probably have no reason to use them.

### The Mechanics

#### Striking an Opponent

When two opponents face each other, they each make opposed d20 rolls against their ATTACK scores, with the winner inflicting damage on the loser.

If the d20 roll is higher than his ATTACK, that character has *Failed* (F). If the roll is less than his ATTACK, but lower than his opponent's (successful) roll, then that character has achieved a *Partial Success* (PS). If the roll is less than his ATTACK and higher than his opponent's roll (or if his opponent *Failed*), then that character has scored a *Success* (S). Finally, if the character rolls equal to his ATTACK score, that is a *Critical Success* (CS). The results are applied as shown in the table below:

Roll	Result
CS vs. S or PS	CS damages S; damage reduced by <b>shield</b> .
S vs. PS	S damages PS; damage reduced by <b>shield &amp; armour</b>
S vs. F	S damages F; damage reduced by <b>armour</b>
CS vs. F	CS damages F; no reduction to damage!
Equal rolls (tie)	A stand-off. No damage inflicted on either party.

Fumbles are treated as *Fails*, with the possibility of weapon breakage or loss.

The ATTACK score can be modified by the opponent's DEFENCE score. The standard DEFENCE score is assumed to be 7 (that of a Rank 1 knight). For every point that the opponent's DEFENCE is **less than** 7, the character gets a +1 modifier to his ATTACK. Similarly, for every point that the opponent's DEFENCE is **more than** 7, the character gets a -1 modifier to his ATTACK.

#### Inflicting Damage

The damage done to the loser of the combat is **3d6** reduced by Armour Factor and / or shield. Shields

count as 6 points of armour if they are successfully used to parry (i.e. if a *Partial Success* was achieved).

Damage is modified according to what damage the character would normally do in Dragon Warriors combat, based on his weapon and his *Strength* as shown below:

Normal DW damage	Quick damage
1	3d6 -2
2 - 3	3d6 -1
4 - 5	3d6
6 - 7	3d6 +1
8 - 9	3d6 +2
10+	3d6 +3

#### Example

*Theodric the Berserk and Sir Richard of the Raven Launds meet in combat. Theodric has 18 Health Points, is on foot, is wearing magical chain mail (AF5) and is wielding a two-handed battle-axe. Sir Richard has 19 Health Points, is riding a charger, is wearing magical plate armour (AF6) and uses a magical sword and shield.*

*First, the ATTACK scores are compared and modified according to the opponent's DEFENCE. Theodric has an ATTACK score of 19. As he is on foot fighting a horseman, this is reduced by 1. Sir Richard's DEFENCE is 18, which is 11 points over 7, and Theodric's ATTACK is reduced accordingly. Theodric's final modified ATTACK is  $(19 - 1 - 11) = 7$ . Sir Richard has an ATTACK score of 22 with an additional +1 for fighting an opponent on foot. Theodric's DEFENCE is 10, which is 3 points over 7, so Sir Richard's ATTACK is reduced by 3. Sir Richard's final modified ATTACK is  $(22 + 1 - 3) = 20$ . Despite the fight being obviously unequal, both opponents rush at each other and combat is joined...*

*Both opponents roll 1d20. Theodric gets a 6 while Sir Richard gets a 5. Theodric wins (!) and rolls damage. He uses a battle-axe doing 6 points of damage, so he rolls 3d6+1; he gets a 13. As Sir Richard obtained a Partial Success, he reduces the damage he takes by his Armour Factor (AF6) and his shield (6 points of additional armour). Theodric's efforts only succeed in lightly scratching the knight for  $(13 - 12)$  1 point of damage. As neither opponent feels inclined to yield, combat continues.*

*This time, while Theodric again rolls a 6, Sir Richard rolls a 14. Sir Richard wins and rolls damage against Theodric. His magical sword does 5 points of damage, so Sir Richard rolls 3d6; he rolls 14. Despite his Partial Success, Theodric has no shield and so must rely on his armour alone (AF5). Thus Theodric takes  $(14 - 5)$  9 points of damage, but he continues to fight with 9 Health Points remaining.*

*Theodric is not called “the Berserk” for nothing! Frothing at the mouth, he puts 9 points of DEFENCE into ATTACK, raising his ATTACK by 3 points to 22. Theodric now succeeds on a roll of (22–1–11) 10 or less. This is a grave mistake, however! With Theodric’s DEFENCE reduced to 1 (6 points less than 7), Sir Richard’s ATTACK is now (22+1+6) 29! This means he now scores a Critical Success on a roll of 11 or more and cannot Fail!*

*Theodric rolls 18 (fails) while Sir Richard rolls 12 (criticals) and inflicts 3d6 points of damage to Theodric ignoring armour! Theodric takes a mighty blow and falls...*

### Multiple Opponents

Combat proceeds as above, but the lone combatant must divide his ATTACK between his foes (just as he would in normal Dragon Warriors combat). As each round represents several Dragon Warriors Combat Rounds, he can damage each foe against which he has won. Similarly, it is possible for him to injure one opponent while being injured by another.

### Example

*Sir Richard (ATTACK 22, DEFENCE 18) is beset by three footmen (ATTACK 12, DEFENCE 6) wielding great spears. The footmen’s ATTACK scores are modified to (12 – 11) 1, while Sir Richard’s ATTACK of (22+1 for being on horseback) 23 is split three ways to face his opponents. He splits his ATTACK as 8, 8 and 7. The odds are still very much in his favour, but then he is a high-ranking, heavily-armoured knight mounted on a warhorse; I would expect him to win!*

*Note that the footmen’s great spears eliminate the usual –1 penalty for being on foot.*

### Play By Mail

If a character is involved in combat during a PBM game, then he cannot die; instead he is reduced to –2 Health Points (unconscious) and left at his opponent’s mercy.

The character can die in PBM if he is on a “high risk” quest. This is an exception to the above rule.

Returning to the first example above, where Theodric fell to Sir Richard’s blade:

*As this is a PBM combat (and thus “out of game”) Theodric, being a Player Character, is not killed but merely rendered unconscious at Sir Richard’s mercy.*

*What Sir Richard does now is up to him, but he is entitled to hold Theodric for ransom and, regardless of whether this is paid, he is entitled to keep Theodric’s steed (if he had one), armour and weapons. As they say; to the victor the spoils!*

This does not apply to non-player characters; they can die in combat.

### Designer’s Notes

This whole system was thought up in 1998 while I was shopping in a supermarket (everyone has to be inspired by something!) and so is perhaps a little “rough and ready.” I have play-tested this on several occasions and the results have been encouraging.

While I have attempted to create a system that is simple, workable and fair to all, I have identified one flaw: that characters using two-handed weapons, and thus not being able to benefit from the extra “armour” of having a shield, can be at a significant disadvantage. Their lack of protection is not counter-balanced by a significant increase in damage caused by their weapon. Perhaps the damage values need revising?

The damage values could be altered as below:

(Option 1)

Normal DW damage	Quick damage
1	2d6
2 – 3	3d6 –2
4 – 5	3d6
6 – 7	3d6 +2
8 – 9	4d6
10+	4d6 +2

Or perhaps the damage bands should also be altered?

(Option 2)

Normal DW damage	Quick damage
1	2d6
2	3d6 –2
3 – 4	3d6
5 – 6	3d6 +2
7 – 8	4d6
9 – 10	4d6 +2
11+	5d6

Let me know what you think. Remember I’m aiming for something quick, simple, workable and fair...

Brock

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