



By Russ Gifford

Welcome – here is a quick review of the PRESTAGS rules discussed during the 2025 PRESTAGS Tournament.

The Facing rule – because details matter!

1. You can enter any of the three **FRONTAL** hexes you are currently facing - but you have to change your facing to make that hex the middle frontal hex. There is no cost for this change of facing if it is one of the three frontal hexes **and** you are moving.
2. If instead you wish to move into one of your current **FLANK** hexes, you can pay 1 movement point to change your facing to that new hex.
3. Then move into the hex, paying the terrain costs, as usual.



Not much to it, right? Well, a couple things to think about:

4. When you enter that hex, your unit *maintains* that facing. Heading to another hex? Same as the first point above - a change to a different hex in your current facing is free.
5. And if you enter a hex using your final movement point? You cannot change facing! Your facing is the facing the unit had when it entered the hex. (Your movement ENDED with the expenditure of that last point.)
6. Meaning - If you want to change facing after entering, *without moving to a new hex*? You must have MPs remaining.

And – here is the video version of that discussion, with examples!

<https://www.spigames.net/playingPRESTAGSFacing.htm>

Many thanks to Alan Sawyer for the help with this!

Some Other “Fast Rule Reminders!”

COMBAT ADJUSTMENTS:

[#] means Melee Defense Strength is halved. (Melee Attacker Strength normal)

Flank Attacks Doubled – Flank is the LAST adjustment applied.

Flank Attack means ALL 6 adj hexes are adj to the Attackers – unit is ‘surrounded’

[EXC: if using Facing rule]

Add 1 to an attack where the Defender is Disrupted

Leaders add Combat bonus to Melee (bonus # or 1 if ‘.)

Leaders stacked with Units in *Melee* prevent Disruption, but LEADER is reduced 1 level

Leaders do NOT affect units attacked by Fire, but Leader not affected by Fire Disruption result (Still affected by Elimination results)

The box above is from the quick reference rules chart! Download yours here! [PRESTAGS_QuickRefChart.pdf](#)

The PRESTAGS Rules Review –

What you should have gotten with this outing:

- ***With the Panic rule in play, you now realize the finish usually comes far earlier than the turn count!*** And just how devastating Panic becomes. You can see it coming, so if you are getting close, try to pull your troops together to offset the impact. ALSO – note the Roman Legions have exceptions to the Panic rule!!! (see below.)
- ***With the Contact rules***, if the result is a MISS, you are STUCK! You can't break off or change facing!
In a D or ½ Elim result, you are not in contact! (But all remaining units are disrupted so they can't depart. In the next turn, neither unit is held by contact.)
- ***With the Facing rules***, to move into a hex your center front hexside must FACE the hex you are entering. You can shift 60 degrees (one vertex left or right) to make that happen at no MP cost. ***Anything more than that costs an MP.*** (A single MP pays for up to 180 degree changes.)
- ***Defensive Fire ONLY happens when a unit moves into a hex.***
- ***Leadership*** -- You saw how VITAL leaders are to movement - But you may or may not have realized a Leader's total power in Combat!
Below is an important review – and do NOT overlook the surprises in the Leadership Combat Bonus section.

Leadership

You noticed how Leaders protect the units they are stacked with?

- ***Units stacked with leaders will not Disrupt, either from Fire or Melee!*** (Units do suffer Elim and ½ Elim results.)
- ***A Fire Attack NEVER affects the Leader.***
- ***But a Melee result of Disruption will reduce the leader one level.***
- ***And Melee result of Elim or ½ Elim will reduce the leader AND Elim or ½ Elim the units stacked with the leader.***

Powerful stuff, right?

Now check this one:

Leadership Combat Bonus

[10.0] PROCEDURE: The rule reads you may add the leader's combat bonus to any unit he is stacked with, *attack or defense*.

HOWEVER – often overlooked is the [10.14] clarification: "Leadership Combat Bonus **may be applied to any number of attacks made by Melee Attacking Units in the Combat Leader's hex.**

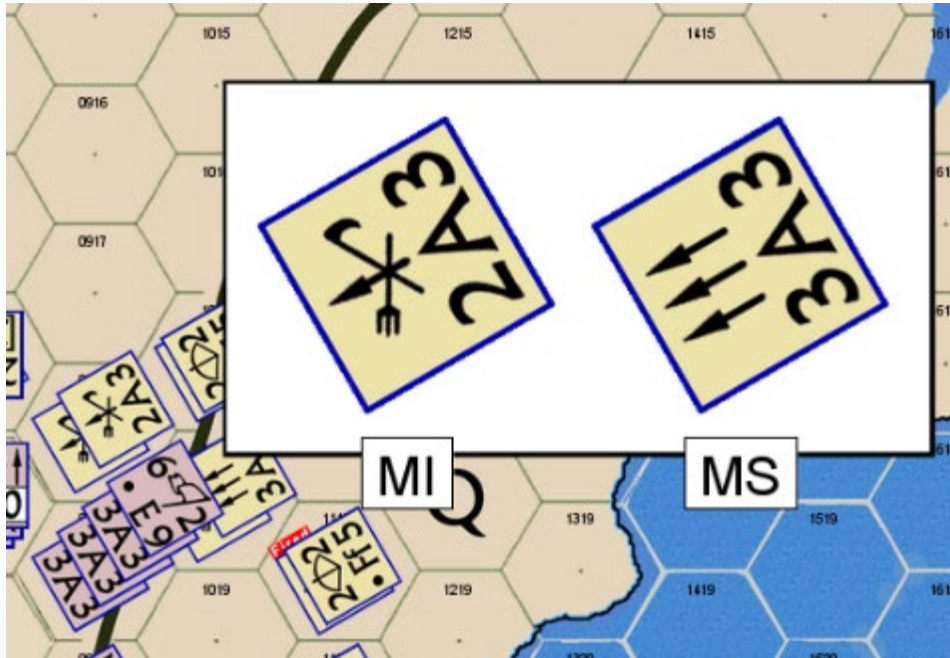
Meaning – more than one attack per game turn!

Example 1: Greeks Attacking

Level 2 leader stacked with 3 Milita Spearmen of 3 Melee attack strength.

Combat 1:

Two of the Greek MS for a **total of 6 attack + the Leader adds his combat bonus of 6 = 12 vs the 4 point stack of the MI.**



The result is 12 vs 4, or 3:1. the magic 3:1 column. But this time, they have this as well:

Combat 2:

The remaining MS(3) attacks the defending MI/MS stack(2+3).

But the Leader can add his Combat Bonus to this attack as well!

[10.14] HOWEVER [10.11] tells us a Leader cannot add more than the

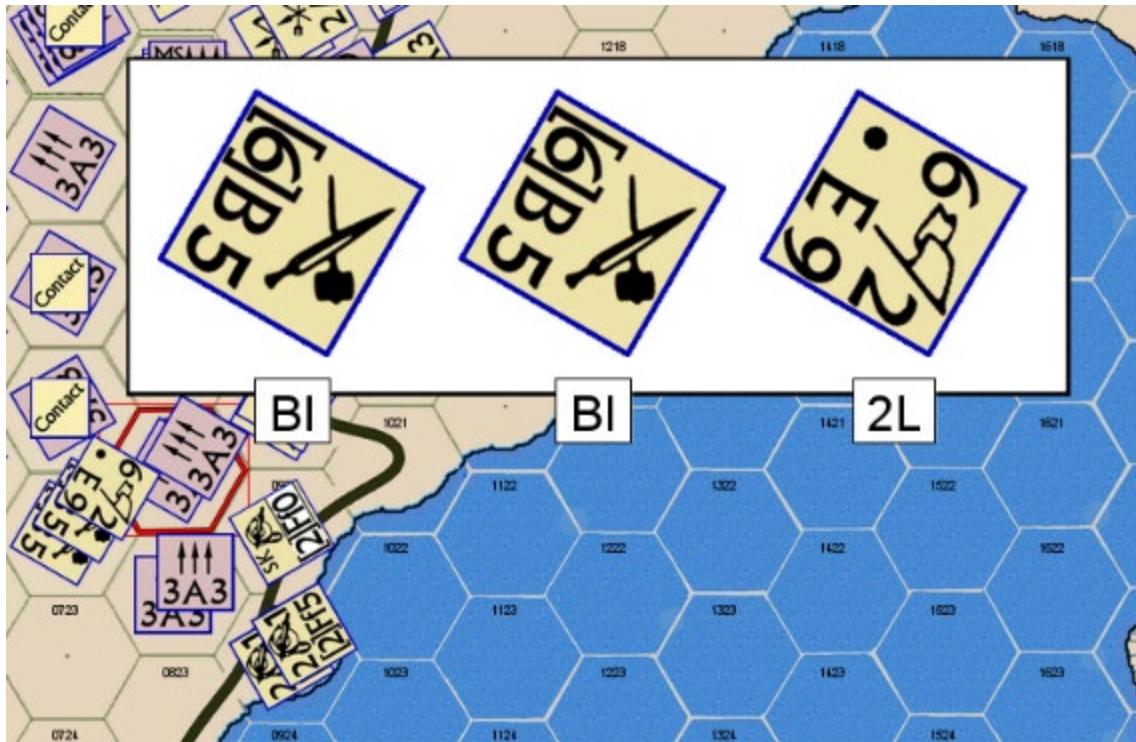
combined adjusted combat of the units he is stacked with that are attacking – so he is limited to a 3 point bonus:

$$MS(3) + Ldr Bonus (3) = 6 \text{ vs } MI(2) + MS(3) = 6:5 = 1:1$$

That's a 50-50 shot at disruption. And if that is a miss – the units would be in Contact – so they cannot move away or move out to allow stronger units to move up to challenge the Leader stack.

Let's look at another example.

Example 2: Persian attacking



OK – here is the standard use of the leader bonus:

Combat 1 (red hex target):

$$2 \text{ BI}(6) + \text{Ldr}(6) = 18 \text{ vs } 2 \text{ MS}(3) = 6 = 18:6 = 3:1$$

Combat 2 (NON red hex target):

$$2 \text{ SK}(2) \text{ vs } 2 \text{ MS}(3) = 6 / 2 \text{ Flank} = 3 = 4:3 = 1:1$$

All fine. BUT we could maximize our Leader bonus instead.

Combat 1: NON Red Hex combat.

1 BI(6) + Ldr(6) + 2 SK(2) = 16 vs 2 MS(3) = 3+3 = 6 / 2 Flank = 3 = 16:3 = 5:1 Can't miss – and could be dead. And still have a second combat with the unused BI!

Combat 2: Red Hex Combat:

Leader can still use his bonus with the second unit, as it is a different attack.

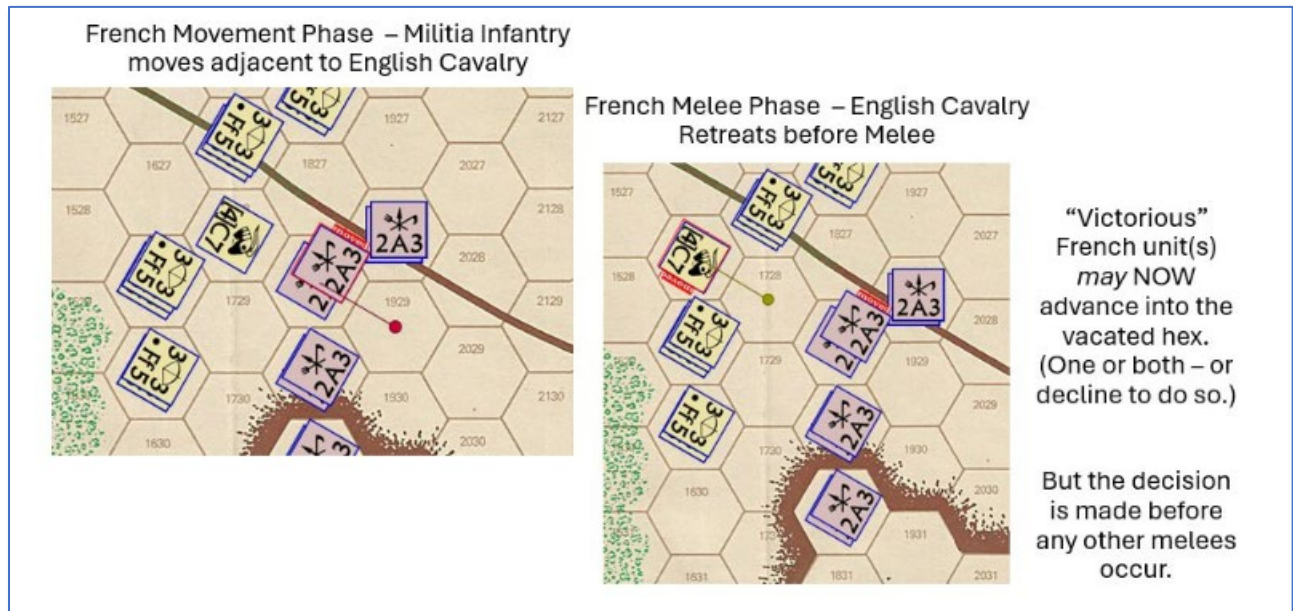
$$1 \text{ BI}(6) + \text{Ldr}(6) = 12 \text{ vs } 2 \text{ MS}(3) = 6 = 12:6 = 2:1 .$$

Bottom line – a leader stacked with multiple units – with multiple separate targets – can add his bonus to EACH of those attacks in the same Melee Phase!

(up to the limit of the points of the units he is leading in that specific combat.)

Literally, this is a force multiplier!

A: Use of RETREAT BEFORE MELEE means the unit “backs up” 1 hex and maintains its current facing.



If that is good for you, you can stop reading here! 😊

However, some may say, 'Where do you get that from the rules??'

These games are all reworks of the earlier games (*Centurion*, *Phalanx*, *Dark Ages*). I used the explanation from *Phalanx*. A unit “is simply moved directly backward one hex. It may not [retreat] if doing so would violate stacking restrictions.” It also states “a unit does not pay any movement points for the [retreat] nor may it alter its facing.”

'Directly backward, meaning, it backs up into the hex directly opposite of its **FRONTAL CENTER** hexside. *BUT* -- it also may not enter a prohibited hex or cross a prohibited hexside.

Further notes that were NOT asked, but are important to clarify:

This means if a unit is attacked in the **FLANK**, *RETREAT BEFORE MELEE may be impossible*.

If they are attacked in the **REAR** hex (the one opposite their center frontal hex) than "retreat through the rear hexside" would move them onto the **ATTACKING** unit – a prohibited hex! They can't do that!

A **FLANK** hex may or may not work. I will mention, in *Phalanx*, you did not get the choice: Retreat was not possible if you were attacked through *any* **FLANK** hexside in that game.

Personally, I would advocate for that, but it is *not* in the **PRESTAGS** rules, and I try not to make rules up.

Remember, in the earlier games, Facing was a part of the main rules. So they considered the possibilities in more detail.

Rules about Advances after a unit Retreats before Melee.

If the attacking unit(s) decides to "advance into the vacated hex" the **PRESTAGS** rules make it clear "the advancing unit(s) may not be allocated to attack any other Enemy unit, *nor may they attack the unit which [retreated.]*" Just a clarification. [17.4] in **PRESTAGS**.

Another point: According to the current **PRESTAGS** rules [17.3] it is clarified that *if the hex* the unit retreated INTO is subsequently attacked in that same melee phase (*by other units, NOT the advancing units*) the retreated unit WILL BE ATTACKED. As this new unit could not adjust his facing, he may be flanked in that attack in the new hex. This is consistent with the rules that all units in a stack must be attacked as a stack, and facing in the hex may be in different directions and thus decides the unit's defending strength.

AND IMPORTANT NOTE: [17.3] also makes it clear that these first retreaters make it impossible for the units in the hex they retreated into to subsequently retreat before melee in that same melee phase!

Another point no one asked about but requires noting: Who can Retreat before Melee?

[17.0] appears to be in conflict with [17.5]

[17.0] says **ALL** the defending units in the HEX must 3 MP points GREATER.

BUT [17.5] says some units may retreat, and others required to remain, "dependent on individual movement allowances."

As [17.5] is higher in the rules, I believe we must use it as the 'final word.'

My fix for this tournament:

Change [17.0] to replace "defending" (in line 4) with "retreating"

That will allow any units with at least 3 MP greater than the fastest Melee unit to retreat (back up one hex) - but not others in the same hex, as per [17.5].

That too has ramifications I need to point out:

As the hex is not vacated, this would mean the attacking units could not advance – but clearly, the Attackers will now have improved odds to destroy the remaining defenders. If they do *eliminate* those remaining defenders in the melee phase, the victorious unit(s) *may* now advance into the hex.

Which is better than the original result of just winning the hex. But might be better for the Defender, who might have lost BOTH units.

The Wrap Up

That is it for this week. If you have not sent me an update for an IN PROGRESS 1st round game, please do so.

And if you have not already done so, shoot me your second round scenario choices!

Despite my loss in Round 1, I am still pleased to be part of this tournament! Hope you feel the same way. I am sure there are many people that wish they had this opportunity! ---RHG