

MEG PACTO

MeG with compact tables and armies

Introduction

Mortem et Gloriam (MeG) provides a "full-scale" wargame with all the spectacle of several hundred models, played on a tabletop that is typically 1.8m x 1.2m / 6' x 4' table and gamed to a conclusion in about 3 hours. We now have well over 1200 players loving the game and in excess of 650 armies to choose from (a record for any ancients rule set).

Pacto needs only about a ¼ of the figures of the main game and is played in ¼ of the normal the area - so it will fit on a coffee table or a pub table. Hence Pacto - meaning "compact". It is easily transportable and faster, but not "dumbed down" as a game at all. It maintains all the core mechanisms and tools of the main game - we just drop of some of the fancier parts of the full mechanics. It feels like mini-MeG.

It is a miniaturised of the main game with a little simplification. Ideal for fast games, getting new players into the game, and for a fast moving campaign. And all played with 20-30 bases on a 3'x2' table in about an hour. The game uses all the existing army lists with some simple adaptations to how you create and so you still have the entire 650+ to choose from!

And It's a game that can be played to a conclusion in under 90 minutes - so you can play two in a night with ease, or have a 5 game wargames competition in a day. In addition this package contains four ready printed armies and a mini-campaign - so give it your friends who have yet to collect some ancient figures to get them going, or magnetise it as a travel set.

Objectives

So why create this smallest version? I hope it will open up new possibilities and help to grow the hobby and the game, making it easier for people to switch from fantasy or sci-fi into historical gaming, or to get going from scratch. We can use it in several ways to have even more fun and get even more people playing the game. Here are six great reasons to play Pacto:

1. As an **introductory game** to get people playing for the first time - allowing them to learn the core mechanics in a fun way with very few figures - or even none at all.
2. As a **translation game** for people collecting and painting armies, so they can start playing with their carefully crafted models when they only have ⅓ of the troops painted up. No need to wait until they are all ready.
3. As a **compact 28mm game** to be played out on a 4¹/₂' x 3' table, so we can feature 28mm easily at space constrained events.

4. As a different and enjoyable **1-day competitions** that will still appeal to the main MeG community but bring in players wanting to use fewer bases - you can play at least 4 and maybe even 5 games in a day.
5. Allow people to play **fast campaigns** so that in an afternoon or evening you might progress a campaign by a series of map moves and fight two or three battles. You might even start and finish a small campaign in a single day.
6. Allow competitions with **preset armies and terrain** where players circulate, or pairs play identical battles from the opposite side of the table (like duplicate bridge) giving a new type of challenge.

And all of this without sacrificing the core popular components of MeG that our players love: PBS, interactivity, the colour system, the army feel. I have enjoyed playing it a lot in testing. **Pacto might be compact but the game itself almost as big as the main one.**

The Essence of MeG Pacto

To create our miniaturised game, all we need to do is to change some scales and representations, and then tweak a few rules. Here are the changes:

Changing our ground scale

A BW in **Pacto** is half the BW of the main game for movement and ranges while keeping bases on the normal sizes. So, for 15mm figure scale its 20mm = 1BW with figure son 40mm wide bases, and for 28mm figure scale its 30mm = 1BW with figures on 60mm bases. This has several effects:

- Our table size has its width and depth halved but actually represents the exact same battlefield as Maximus. In 15mm we play on a very portable 90cm x 60cm/3'x 2' mat and in 28mm a 135cm x 90cm/4¹/₂' x 3' mat. These sizes give the same space as the main 15mm game on a 6' x 4' table, or the 28mm game on a 240cmx160cm/8'x5.5' table.
- All terrain also has its dimensions reduced. So in the 15mm game a large piece of terrain will now be 10BW across and therefore 20cm maximum on each side. So again, it is the same proportions as the main game.
- All we need is a new set of measuring sticks with 20mm or 30mm BW on them.

Adapting our Units to Pacto

All **Pacto** UGs are simply a single 40mm or 60mm frontage file. A file being a single base or column of bases up to a maximum of three bases deep. All our mechanics that **shoot and fight by file** do not have to change at all. This file represents a 2xBW frontage UG formation from **Maximus**.

The bases in the **Pacto** stay always in this file formation, bases never expand out to the side, except bases can turn to face enemy to flank or rear using MF2 moves. The file is treated as a single fighting unit. They form fixed elements of the game. And you will have as many TuGs of these as in the **Maximus** game. Hence the scaling system actually creating a miniature version of the main game.

To give you a feel for it right away, here are some examples **Pacto** "units" and what they represent in the main game, plus the figure ratio to the main game that is implicit in the conversion.

Unit type	Pacto	Meg	Figure ratio
Legionaries	1 x Legionary base with an option to make it 2.	2 wide x 2 or 3 deep TuG of 4 or 6 legionaries.	1:4 or 2:6
Pike Phalanx	3 x pike bases	2 wide x 4 deep TuG of 8 pikes	3:8
Hoplites	2x long spear bases	2 wide x 2 or 3 deep TuG of 4 or 6 hoplites.	2:4 or 2:6
Warband	2 x warrior bases	2 wide x 3 or 4 deep	2:6 or 2:8
Cavalry	1 x base with and option for 2.	2 x 2 or 3 cavalry	1:4 or 2:6
Knights	2 x bases	2 x 2 or 3 knights	2:4 or 2:6
Skirmishers	2 x bases	2 or 3 x 3	2:6 or 2:9

You will have noticed that the figure ratio is between 1:3 and 1:4, hence the armies being 20-30 bases.

The general rules for creating **Pacto** units are as follows:

- A unit needing ranks to be fully effective in Pacto get have those ranks. So Dev Chargers get to be 2 rank deep and Pikes 3 ranks deep.
- Other troops have the option to be 1 rank deep or 2 ranks deep for extra resilience.
- Poor infantry can always be 3 deep.

So, our "units" in Pacto are simply a file of figures and rear bases can never move from the rear ranks. A block 3 pikes as a "unit" cannot expand and always stays 3-deep (until it suffers casualties if you choose to take bases off to show this). And so on... simple.

Changes in the rules

You have within this package a **Pacto** QRS which slims down the main game by taking out some of the more nuanced concepts. You can tell the difference as it has pastel colours for its background and the words **Pacto Supplement** on every page.

Here is what has changed:

- The **Prompted Action Table** just has a fewer options on it:
 - no countercharges or intercepts, in the charge phase - just charge or hold.
 - double wheels are removed entirely and turns are adjusted.
 - no MF1 move
 - only the basic break offs in the fighting phase, and no control of pursuits.
- **Shooting**

- there is no slowing effect of fire and prompting.
- TuGs and SuGs both shoot at full effect 2 deep.
- **Combat**
 - Pikes fight 3 deep with as LSp factor +1 if in 3 ranks.
- **Break Points**
 - A 3-base file breaks on its 4th wound.
 - a 2-base file on its 3rd wound.
 - and a 1-base file on its 2nd wound.
 - Anything with *fanatic* gets a +1 on the above.
 - A **Skull** of course counts as 2 x wounds just like the main game.
 - You still remove a rear base once troops suffer 2 wounds so their fighting capability declines if they need ranks.

Everything else is the same as the main game: same sequence, same factors, same dice, same cards, same moves. Same feel and fun. In my play testing I have just used magnetic sabot bases to create the new Pacto files from bases.

Building a Pacto Army

There is a separate Pacto army builder to download on the website. Troops points are same as the main game but generals have been adjusted, break points set for **Pacto** in wounds and there is no camp in a **Pacto** army. **Armies should be 3500pts.**

You use the existing MeG army lists, so you have the full 600+ to go at. All you need to do is to apply the with the following adaptations:

- Reduce all **minima** to $\frac{1}{4}$ of their list numbers, and all **maxima** to $\frac{1}{3}$ of their total.
- Any TuGs with mixed formation where shooters are 2-deep behind a front rank only take on of the shooting base and give the missile weapon to the front rank base.
- Use each line of the army builder to create your **Pacto** UGs using the rules above, and still pay for each individual base just like MeG - so for a phalanx unit take 3 bases of phalangites on a single line.

How it will feel?

You will find that **Pacto** feels a miniature version of maximus, but one that resolves even more quickly and stands on its own merits.

- It won't feel as small as it looks, as you still have the same cards and decision to make.
- The break points are a little quicker - a single base breaks on 2 Wounds when a comparable 2x2 TuG in the main game breaks on 4.5 Wound. Note you are rolling half as many combat dice as you still roll 1 dice per "file".
- It will feel a bit more volatile, as you are rolling 1 dice for what was 2 files, so there is less averaging out in the dice rolling. This all adds to the fun.
- If you learn to play **Pacto**, picking up the big MeG game is easy - just more figures, in bigger units, on a bigger table, with a few neat additions.