Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

Posted by Hannibal Rex - 26 Jun 2020 02:46

I found this with the Wayback Engine on the Dancing Thief, and I don't think it's preserved on any current site, so I'm reposting it here. This guide predates the Stormheim units, and apparently was written around the time of the DLR 1.01 patch, so I'd appreciate any input by veteran Warlords if they agree or disagree with HydroJackson's assessment, and why.

Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

I put together some of the best units base on how fast you can build them... and since slot cost is also base on turn, specially in Allies and Merc after the patch, so the measure of usefulness of a unit of same production time become critical.

Some units might be wonderful if there weren't too many better or must have units of the same building time, specially 3 turns units, make them useless.

In addition, some units of similar function but only differ in one turn make them useless because there are just not enough slots available, this is specially true for 4 turn creatures which are virtually useless when measured against its 5 turn counter part.

Another thing I did is to break them down to different types. Some are support unit (SU), with high bonus; some are attack troop (AU), with high strength, hp or special form of attacks; some are good at both (ASU). And some are good against hero (HERO). And some are so good it can do them all (ALL). I also put (?) to some of the units to signify that these units can have special purpose and are not necessary the regular battle troopers.

One turn unit... winners are:

1. Dwarf Runner (ASU): 4HP, missile immunity, GOOD land terrain bonus, can get nasty with other bonus unit to jack up its attack ST. Note: it is a wonderful support unit since put it in front can cancel missile attack and pillow assassination specially from gnoll and assassin.

2. Peasant (AU): Cheap, best troop to fill initially since u will need money to attract heroes, nasty banding bonus, and also its one of the cheapest slot filler.

3. Giant Bat (?): Good scouting unit for hidden map, fast attacking troop can do some serious damage to unguarded cities and enemy sites. Can be used as an early warning system when position at some strategic position or be a feeler to test opponent's hero stack or city unit status prior to its own hero

attack. It can be a nasty unit when played correctly, kill it asap and u might earn a medal doing it!

4. Gnoll (HERO): Assassination 10%, deadliest 1 turn hero killer, less useful after the patch.

5. Imp (AU): Summonable by summoner, 3 hp, best visual range, flyer, lightning +1. Specially powerful when combine with new DLR patch's "chain lightning" spell for wizard.

6. Scout (?): Good land terrain bonus, moves fast, slot filler, early warning system.

7. Elf Archer (AU): Missile +4, Dwarf Runners make this unit obsolete, but with new DLR patch +3 ST verses flyers, may make a come back... if it is not so expensive...

8. Dwarf Infantry (AU): 3 ST and 3 HP ... pretty good but kinda expensive... when produced in a hit+1 city or somehow make it hp4, then u have an enhanced version of Dwarf Runner.

Two turn unit ... winners are :

1. Wargs (ASU): Warding +4, the MOST important hero supporter after the patch fix the warding bug specially against Blue's possible +8 lightning. But group warding might make this unit less important...we just have to see.

2. Harpy (ASU): Flyers with curse +4

3. Ghost (ASU): Flyers with curse +4 (more powerful than harpy but cost more)

4. Wolfriders (ASU) : Warding +3

5. Gnoll Crossbows (HERO): Assassination 20%, almost useless after the patch

6. Pegasi (ASU): Good fast cheap city attack support unit but expensive to maintain.

7. Dark Pegasi (SU): Flyer with Fear +2, if you don't have Green Dragon or Wraith in your regular set, this is a must have. good fast cheap but expensive to maintain.

8. Ballistae (AU) : High strength 5 with city + 3 and missile +1 is one of the best missile/cost/turn around, only have 1 hp...you know what it needs...

9. Catapult (SU) : Siege +2, not bad, fast attack, but since siege engine take only one more turn to produce and is a MUCH better unit, catapult normally got canned.

10. Plagues Carriers (ASU): This can be a nasty unit when patch fix the curse, 1 gp to maintain, 7 strength, and disease +5, need I said more ?

11. Nightmares (AU) : Banding +4 can make it a strength 7 unit and with move of 25 it can become a fast attack troop but the BIGGEST weakness is it need supporting units with bonus, which it tend to slow down the stack, else its a very good unit. Kinda expensive to build but cheap to maintain.

12. Dryad (AU): watch its wood +5 bonus, dont fight them inside forest, still pretty useless even with

VERY HIGH forest setting.

13. Clay Golem (AU) : Cheap to maintain, trample +1 (do 2 pts damage per successful attack to land units in regular battle). Will be useless when patch come out... create golem no longer requires this unit to be fielded at all.

14. Mummies (AU): 4 hp land unit with poison +3, a better unit in new patch since curse and poison can happen in the SAME battle, but not now ... to expensive and slow.

15. Green slime (AU) : Acid +2 but its a weak unit who moves too slow. Worth even less after the patch.

Three turn unit ... winners are :

1. Siege Engine (SU): Siege +4 makes it a must have unit, no ifs or buts. City +3 is even better. A must have hero stack unit if thief is not around. Very slow land unit.

2. Gnoll Cavalry (ALL): BEST assassination unit around...

3. Assassin (SU): 50% assassination, best field in M. or A., the cost to maintain them, 25, is a bit high.

4. Wraith (ASU): Fear +3, flyer, makes it one of the most used starting units when Green Dragon or Dark Pegasi are not available.

5. Griffon(ASU): Very solid fast initial attacking unit, can be all by itself but MUCH better stack with other cheap initial unit such as wraith or dark pegasi and buff it up with harpy or ghost then you have a mini-nasty-initial attacking non-hero stack.

6. Knight Lord (ASU): A better 3 turn unit, strength 6 and Hit 3, than unicorn since its terrain bonus is field +2. morale +1 is rather useless. Weakness: slow land unit.

7. Unicorn (ASU): ST 6 hit 2, wood +3, morale +3 makes it one of the ST 15 possible creatures ... best fight in forest, but with morale of +3, it can get nasty when fight non-hero stack. Weakness: slow land unit.

8. Moonguard (AU): St 6 missile +4, gets a big boost because patch fixed warding and decrease the usefulness of gnoll cavalry, the +3 ST against flyer can be deadly against anything but the black and blue dragons. But Ballista (2 t.) make it much less attractive in M. and A. slots after the patch.

9. Iceguard (ASU): The ONLY unit with Fortification +1, can make hell for non-hero fight with that extra bonus. But take gnoll cavalry, Knight Lord or Moonguard over this unit ...

10. Medusae (ASU): Paralysis. +6, too bad there were just so many must have 3 turn units even with the new patch this is still a low filler, too slow land unit.

11. Cockatrice (?): Movement 50 land bonus speed!!! But as a 3 turn unit it too expensive to field, but watch it when some one has it in the set... this unit serves only one purpose... surprise attack or dogging your hero. Make it turn 2 unit and watch me use it!

12 .Eagle (?): Flyer with 36 movement points, similar situation as cockatrice.

Four turn unit ... winners are:

Well... with all these dragons need only one more turn... most of the units here are useless since the inbalance to 5 turn critters is just too huge. With maybe the following three exceptions, all flyers...

1. Fire Elemental (SU): With Chaos +2, initial fast troop. till Red dragon arrive.

2. Spectre (ALL): +6 curse ... best spot to put this is in ally #2 but after the patch it may become useless because it just cost too much to have it around.

3. Archon (ALL): Fast attack troop with morale +3.

Five turn unit ... winners are:

Well, they are all good with maybe one exception (the black)

1. Blue Dragon (AU): BEST unit with the new patch wizard chain lightning spell, +8 lightning max.

2. Undead Dragon (ALL): Got highest chance to get medal and only 4 gp to maintain. It's 4 hp make it a very attractive reg. unit but the patch makes it not immune to missile but gain more power in its curse ability ... so still ok in my book.

3. Black Dragon (AU): Acid attack go first but Blue and Undead make it #3 attack dragon in my book which mean...I WONT field it since I need room for other support dragon.

Another school of though is...drop the Undead Dragon but get Black back in because the acid attack is just sooo good...which I do sometimes ...

4. Red Dragon (SU): Chaos +5 ... make LD useless.

5. Green Dragon (SU): Fear +5 ... make morale useless.

6. Gold Dragon (SU): Very nasty with morale +4 if Green Dragon is not around. BEST (SU) around.

7. Silver Dragon (SU): A minor Gold dragon but move very fast.

HydroJackson

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson
Posted by KGB - 26 Jun 2020 22:46

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This analysis is VERY old and out of date.

Some of the units mentioned here are useful and still widely used but not many.

KGB

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson
Posted by 065227N - 05 Feb 2021 01:06

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TC if you're still around maybe I can discuss about what I believe are the units that are considered good

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson
Posted by Hannibal Rex - 05 Feb 2021 02:20

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Hey, yeah I'm still around, and I'd absolutely be interested. I keep getting sidetracked by life, but one thing I'd like to do is a sort of player's guide for all Warlords 3 units, that explains which units are best to use, and why those that aren't worthwhile to include in a custom set don't cut it.

And that, in turn, could be used as a starting point for a balancing mod.

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson
Posted by 065227N - 12 Feb 2021 22:08

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So to my memory, these are all the units I believe seen competitive use and are thus probably cream of the crop. I got to apologize if I get some of them wrong but maybe someone else can jump in and correct me if I'm wrong.

I'll add commentary on the units but I feel like some of them are fairly self-explantory - if a unit is here and it provides a Bonus/Malus then you can probably assume it basically has the best practical stat loadout.

1T

So before I begin, I want to say deciding on your 1T units in your army set is honestly one of the more interesting parts of army building - it certainly feels a bit more richly nuanced compared to certain slots like Ally 3 and 4 for sure.

I think 1T units can roughly be divided into a handful of categories - Scouting (high move / view), Archery, Banding (for cheap stacks) and utility. Sometimes they intersect.

Archery

Archers

Halfing

Elven Archers

These guys are arranged in order to cost and they don't quite scale linearly in terms of how much of an improvement you get over how much gold you have to pay for the better quality ones - Archers are stupidly cost effective at 40 gold while Elven Archers cost a whooping 350 gold. It really does depends a lot on playstyle.

Banding

Peasant

Gnome

Goblins

The dynamic between banding units is that the more banding a particular unit has, the more potential in bigger stacks but consequentially that also means they take more turns to "ramp up" and are also very heavily influenced by unlucky losses.

Peasants are notable because they're hilariously dirt cheap. Gnome and Goblins double as scout due to their Move Bonus and high view range. I prefer the former because they have 3 Hits (as opposed to 2).

Giant Rat*

Special mention to the Giant Rat - it's not a unit you use in Regs, but it makes pretty much the perfect Mercs1 since they're dirt cheap and can just infuse your army periodically with a threatening stack once you drop an Elven Cav on the

Scout

Rover***

Vampire Bat

If I'm not wrong I believe the Rover is considered pretty darn OP and a lot of the meta at one point just consisted of Rovers bushwacking each other. It doesn't have enough Missiles to be considered a dedicated Archery unit for taking out fliers so it can't replicate that role but it's honestly surprising how often that +1 Missile just sucker punch things that are significantly higher value than it.

Vampire Bats, introduced in SH, is kinda a bastard child of Giant Bats and Gnolls and kind of supercedes them both IMO. I don't think they were super common but they did see some use.

Utility

Banshees

Curse a bit of a niche ability but these guys are surprisingly bang for their buck.

Dwarven Runners

Kinda solely because of their 4 Hits on a 1T unit to soak Archery.

Straw Golem*

I actually can't quite remember if this one actually showed up more than I'm remembering.

2T

From here on I won't really categorize them any more because I think building your set is a bit more of a overall thing.

Giant Bees

These guys are like the defacto units for poison strategies I believe, you get a stack of them and send them at your enemies to really annoy the hell out of them.

Elven Cavalry

These guys might be one of the best bonus units in the game due to their cost efficiency. Morale +2 is a good bonus, they're fast so they can reinforce stacks real easy and a whole bunch neutral army sets seem to have these guys in them meaning you get a lot of free ones from capturing neutrals.

Pegacentaur

This is a really solid combat unit if you're going for an air-heavy army composition, though I think mostly in the Ally slot.

Gladiators

Very solid Assassin unit in both regular combat and cheap assassination, kinda supercedes Gnoll crossbows IMO

Basilisk / Cockatrice

Basilisk is basically a balance fix for Cockatrice. They're the defacto Para units

Marksmen

Dark Pegasi

Malus unit, like Pegacentaur, really good for air-heavy army comps

3T

Battering Ram / Siege Engine

These are the De Facto Siege units for the game... outside of Thieves I guess. You never need more than +4 Siege which is why Siege Engines used to be the default pre-SH, but SH adds Battering Rams who are great for armies that need to be a bit faster.

Roc Rider

These is a niche Siege unit for air-heavy army comps.

Moonguard

Big Archery units.

Black Rider

Malus unit that's surprisingly combat competent on Fields - essentially the most common terrain type

Hobgoblin

Used for its 4 Hits, not really a Malus unit, though that Chaos+1 is a nice icing on the cake.

Gnoll Cavalry

Basically the best all-rounder Assassination unit in the game - Fast, competent at regular combat so enemies can't just chaff their way through them and Assassin + 4 is just a minor stepdown from the more specialized Assassin

Cyclops

These guys are pretty competitive with Elephants as a Trample unit I think, with a lot less raw power but coming in at 3T (instead of 4) and 4 Hits to soak Archery.

4T

Lamia****

IIRC, due to statistics, this is a completely OP Ally 3. Unless you want to be a cool rebel, you put a Lamia in Ally 3 slot.

Balrog

Chimera

A smaller Black Dragon and Blue Dragon respectively

Elephants

Used to be the De Facto trample meat unit. Just really nice combat stats all around

Archons*

These guys usually only show up summoned by a Priest rather than an actual army slot, though sometimes being put in Ally4 just so you can adjust its combat order

5T

Red / Green Drags

The Malus Dragons, I believe Green tends to be more common. Usually the Ally 7 slot.

Black Drags

De Facto Ally 4 slot, best Combat dragon (IIRC Acid is better than Lightning mathematically I think, unless your opponent runs around with a lot of 1 Hit units)

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

Posted by KGB - 12 Feb 2021 23:18

There are a few units you are missing that are widely used

5 turn units

Brass/Bronze Dragons - Cheaper army set cost than Red/Green

Gold Dragons - Ally 4 to get +5 Morale in hero stacks

Undead Dragons - Used on the undead dragon neutral map. They are very strong with combined with Shaman's Evil Eye spell for 100% curse and immunity to trample.

4 turn units

Iron Golem - Best trample unit in the game

3 turn units

Unicorn - Used on maps with free Unicorn production

Giants / Minotaurs - For their +2 Chaos. Mostly used in sets that have Mercs

2 turn units

Royal Guard - With many players using Rams, this unit lets you get +4 fortify in cities.

There are quite a few other units neither of us mentioned. But they are situational depending on the game type (teleport vs no-teleport, 1 army start vs 2000 point army start etc) where they can shine.

KGB

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

Posted by 065227N - 12 Feb 2021 23:53

Ooh, thanks for the assistance

KGB wrote:

Giants / Minotaurs - For their +2 Chaos. Mostly used in sets that have Mercs

Are these guys especially good in Mercs for a specific reason

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

Posted by Hannibal Rex - 13 Feb 2021 02:03

Thanks for the feedback! I'm wondering why the shortcomings of the majority of regular DLR units wasn't addressed with some sort of unofficial balancing patch. Presumably, creating new units instead had no compatibility issues when you're playing with people who only used the regular game?

About scouting, one thing that surprised me in the DLR 1.01 patch notes is how Goblins got a huge increase in view range, from 3 to 6, but all other scouting units were left completely untouched in that regard. SH added a bunch of additional units with high view range, like rovers and outriders, and those became the de facto scouting units instead.

I've found one mention somewhere that Cockatrices were banned from multi-player. I assume because of their huge movement speed; how useful is 'paralyze' as an ability, considering it only comes into play if you lose the combat?

Banding units, and Peasants especially, seem really under-costed compared to other 1-turn crossbow fodder units like light & heavy infantry, pikemen, dwarf infantry, etc. I assume you just used those as garrisons in cities, where it will be pretty rare that they don't get their full banding bonus, at least on the first battle.

Gold/Silver Dragons: Are Silver Dragons as useless as they seem to me in comparison to Golds, or is there a good reason why you'd make the tradeoff for slightly higher movement?

It's also interesting to read how the distribution of neutral units on the map sometimes influence which units you want to include in your set.

How much impact do summoning spells have? I've seen the Priest/Archon/ally4 combination mentioned before, are there any other particularly useful summoned units that you don't necessarily have to include in your army list to make good use of?

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

Posted by KGB - 13 Feb 2021 06:02

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Hannibal Rex wrote:

Thanks for the feedback! I'm wondering why the shortcomings of the majority of regular DLR units wasn't addressed with some sort of unofficial balancing patch. Presumably, creating new units instead had no compatibility issues when you're playing with people who only used the regular game?

Correct. A fair number of players who played online (or PBEM) also played solo games especially campaigns so you didn't want to change how those played.

The other thing is that the game did not check that all sides used the same armies. By that I mean if I changed my Elf Calf to be 9/2 and yours was left at 5/1 the game would still let us play against each other and on battles on my machine they'd be done at 9/2 and on yours at 5/1. When I created the KHeroes and made some revisions is when players found this out as not everyone updated at the same time so they had mismatched heroes. So later on when I did the final version I added a '4' to the name so that players would know immediately if they had a mismatch.

Hannibal Rex wrote:

About scouting, one thing that surprised me in the DLR 1.01 patch notes is how Goblins got a huge increase in view range, from 3 to 6, but all other scouting units were left completely untouched in that regard. SH added a bunch of additional units with high view range, like rovers and outriders, and those became the de facto scouting units instead.

Only Steve knows why they got that change. 1.01 came VERY soon after the initial 1.0 release (I suspect most players never had 1.00 unless they bought on day 1). Players soon realized the value of the view range and Goblins were everywhere in games for that scouting and movement bonus. When SH was being put together players wanted a variety of 1 turn units that could be used as scouts that did other things (like Rover with +1 missiles, gnomes with banding etc).

Hannibal Rex wrote:

I've found one mention somewhere that Cockatrices were banned from multi-player. I assume because of their huge movement speed; how useful is 'paralyze' as an ability, considering it only comes into play if you lose the combat?

They were banned due to a bug I discovered. It was possible for them to get infinite movement so that's why they were banned. With their 50 moves, if you moved them into the water when they were low on moves and had a boat type with a higher movement than they had left (the better boat types) and then came back out of the water there was a bug that would give them +50 moves and you could repeat this infinitely often as long as you had a unit to group them with in the water when they ran low on moves. So you could not go infinite on turn 1 but by turn 8-9 if you spread out some scout units to the ports you could effectively move around forever razing things.

Hannibal Rex wrote:

Banding units, and Peasants especially, seem really under-costed compared to other 1-turn crossbow fodder units like light & heavy infantry, pikemen, dwarf infantry, etc. I assume you just used those as garrisons in cities, where it will be pretty rare that they don't get their full banding bonus, at least on the first battle.

The only 1 turn unit skills that have any value are archery, assassination and curse. The rest don't matter (other than for scout vs scout battles). The reason for this is because any halfway decent stack (never mind a strong hero stack) will make the fight -3 against those 1 turn units so they all fight at strength 1 anyway. Even hits don't matter much because Trample just wipes them out.

Hannibal Rex wrote:

Gold/Silver Dragons: Are Silver Dragons as useless as they seem to me in comparison to Golds, or is there a good reason why you'd make the tradeoff for slightly higher movement?

Silver are useless. The only place I've ever seen them used is in 1-4 army starts where you might get 3 or 4 of them to start and can race them to neutrals. It's happens very infrequently and isn't really that much better than Golds.

Hannibal Rex wrote:

It's also interesting to read how the distribution of neutral units on the map sometimes influence which units you want to include in your set.

Some neutral maps have a TON of good production on them (Red Dragons, Undead Dragons, Elf Archers, Unicorns, Siege Engines etc). Knowing that affects the set choice because free production is huge early on before you have a lot of money. Other maps are very poor so it's hard to afford good units and on those you may want to instead rely on allies or mercs for your better units.

Hannibal Rex wrote:

How much impact do summoning spells have? I've seen the Priest/Archon/ally4 combination mentioned before, are there any other particularly useful summoned units that you don't necessarily have to include in your army list to make good use of?

The only unit I see that gets summoned and you want to place in your fight order is Archons. Everything else (including Necromancy units) is pretty much throwaway so it doesn't matter much if it fights up front and is killed because you will be summoning more (usually your game plan revolves around that mass summoning if you are going that route).

KGB

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Re: Turn Unit Analysis by HydroJackson

Posted by 065227N - 13 Feb 2021 10:26

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Hannibal Rex wrote:

I found this with the Wayback Engine on the Dancing Thief

How did you manage to retrieve it from the Wayback Engine? Using the yuku link in that site I can only get like one page worth of topics in General

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