By Fire and Sword II

Historical Wargame

Second Edition

Armies I

Beta 21.03.2023

Preapering an firmy

Before starting the game of *By Fire and Sword* you must prepare your army. As By Fire and Sword is a historical game, your army cannot be an aleatory conglomerate of random elements, but it should, at least roughly, reflect the nature of the troops of the given faction in the middle of the 17th century. We prepared the Army Lists for each of the factions to help you reach this goal. The Army Lists represent the historical composition of typical forces in the indicated period.

In Armies books you will find everything you need to compose an army for all of the main factions of By Fire and Sword. to play both at the level of the Skirmish and Task Forces. This book refers to Polish-Lithuanian Commanwealth, Kingdom of Sweden, Kingdom of Denkmanrk and Norway, Electorate of Prussia and Brandenburgia, Holy Roman Empire. These include the Army Lists, Army Elements and information about the attachments.

Each chapter describing a faction contains:

- A short description of the faction and its military doctrine
- A list of the available Army Elements
- A description of the special rules used by Army Lists
- Army Lists for the Skirmish Force
- Army Lists for the Task Force

The most comfortable way to prepare your list is the BFaS 2nd Ed. Army Creator available online at:

oim.wargamer.pl

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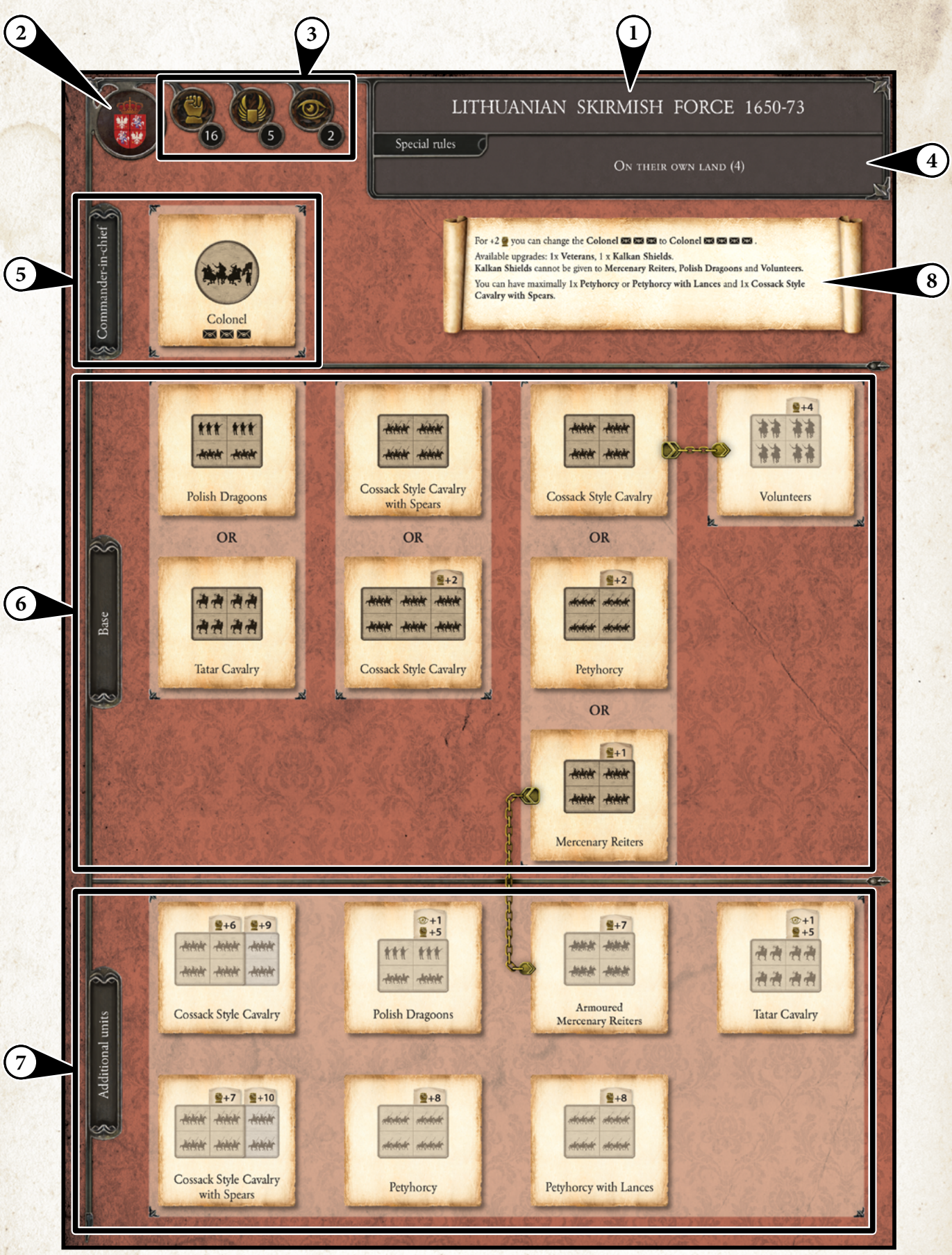
How to use Army Lists

Army List at the level of the Skirmish Force



1. Name of the List. There is also information about the historical period it concerns next to it.
2. Coat of arms of the faction.
3. Statistics of the army. Initial values may undergo modification after the selection of different options.

Reflects initial Force Points of the army. Describes combat value of the army and allows to determine which player has advantage.

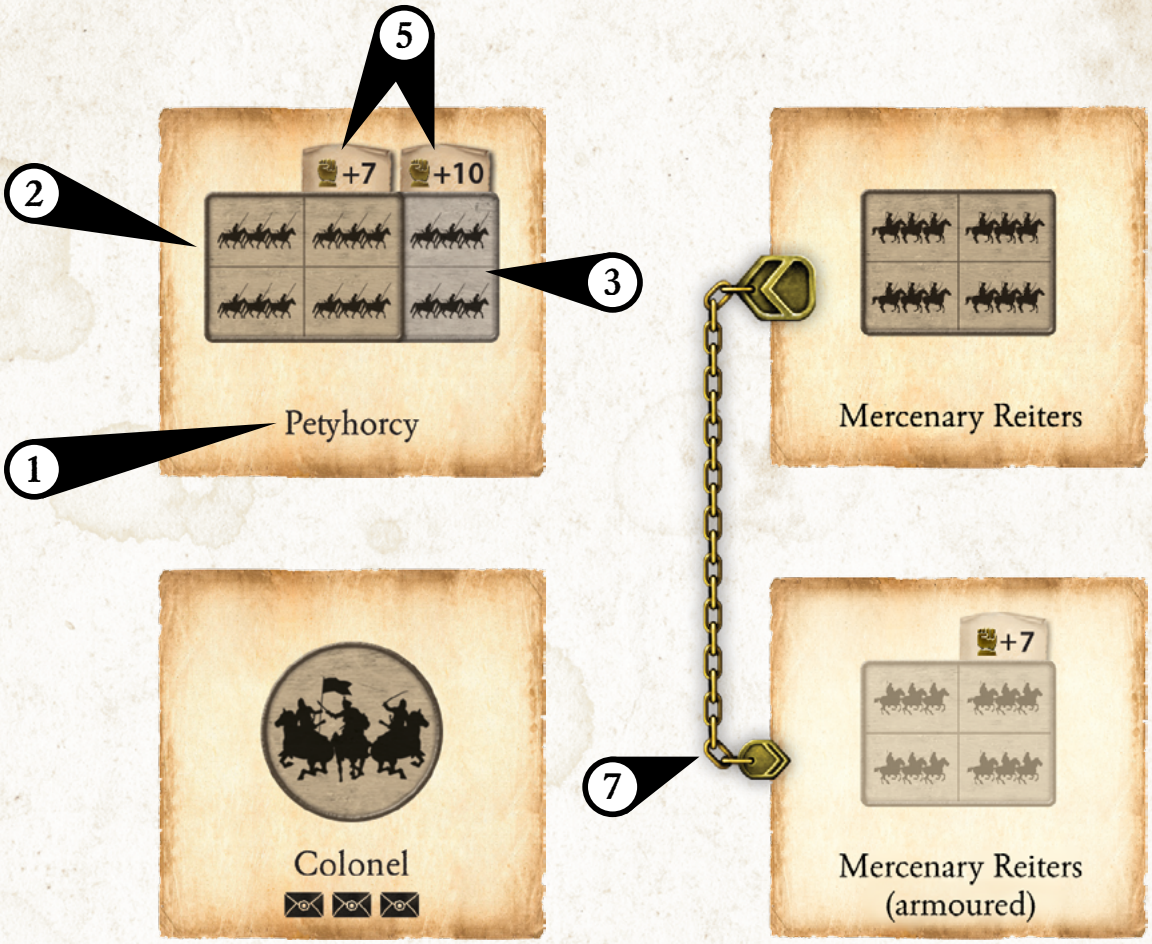
Army Motivation. Describes how long the army is willing to stay at the battle ground while facing setbacks.

Army Intelligence. It is used in the Reconnaissance phase.

4. Special rules of the army. Names of the special rules are listed here. Full descriptions can be found in the previous part of the chapter concerning the particular faction.
5. This is where the Commander-in-Chief is placed.
6. Here you will find the Base of the Army. This part defines the characteristics of the army.
7. Here you will find the Additional Elements. A maximum of one element can be chosen.
8. Other data related to the list. Here you will find the information about additional options, limitations, and available attachments.

Army Lists at the level of the Task Force

1. Name of the List. There is also information about the historical period it concerns next to it.
2. Coat of arms of the faction.
3. Statistics of the army. Initial values may undergo modification after the selection of different options.
   - Reflects initial Force Points of the army. Describes combat value of the army and allows to determine which player has advantage.
   - Army Motivation. Describes how long the army is willing to stay at the battle ground while facing setbacks.
   - Army Intelligence. It is used in the Reconnaissance phase.
   - Intelligence Risk. It is used for Vanguard at the level of Task Force only.
   - Available upgrade points.
4. Special rules of the army. Names of the special rules are listed here. Full descriptions can be found in the previous part of the chapter concerning the particular faction.
5. This is where the Commander-in-Chief is placed.
6. Here you will find the Vanguard of the Army. It is found only at the Task Force level.
7. Here you will find the Base of the Army. This part defines the characteristics of the army.
8. Here you will find the Additional Elements. A maximum of one element can be chosen.
9. Upgrade options.
10. Additional data related to the list. Here you will find the information about additional options, limitations, available attachments and their costs.

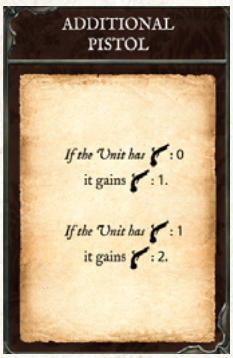


In every List Army Elements are shown on separate pieces of parchment. Grey pieces of parchment indicate that the Element is optional.

1. Name of the Element. There might be additional information about the Element next to it. In the case of Commanders-in-Chief here are placed the ✉ that they have.
2. Size and arrangement of the trays. In the case of units there is a representation of the tray with the arrangement of the stands depicted on the piece of parchment.
3. Optional attachments. Grey bases indicate options for bigger Units.
4. Groups are depicted as round or oval trays.
5. Here you will find information about modification of the army statistics. Only the modifiers assigned to the chosen Unit size can be used. Modifiers from all of the Elements placed in the Army are cumulative.
6. If the Elements are placed in the same field and separated by the word OR only one of the alternatives can be chosen.
7. If the Army Elements are connected by a chain it indicates that in order to choose an Element marked with ◄ you also have to select the Element marked with ►

Attachments

Units can receive attachments which change their functioning. Most often the attachments impact the statistics of the Unit, add Special Rules or Special Fire. Sometimes they can cause negative effects. Attachments come in the form of cards that must be attached to the card of the appropriate Unit. The Army List determines which attachments can be assigned to the individual Units.



Upgrade points

Each Army List has Upgrade Points ( ). This is the pool that can be spent on Attachments in the process of composing an army and the sum of the upgrade values must be within it. Occasionally, Special Rules of the List grant additional Attachments. You do not have to count this additional Upgrade cost unless it is explicitly stated otherwise.

The upgrade cost is determined by the number on the Unit card. A modifier to the cost may be on the icon next to the name of the available Upgrade in the Army List (e.g. +1).

Name	Cost	Max.	
Kalkan Shields		2	Kalkan
Veterans		-	-
Additional pistol	-1	-	-
Independent	+3	1	-

Random attachments

Some Special Rules require to draw attachments for certain Units. Such rules come with a number in brackets which determines how many times each of the indicated attachments can be repeated. To draw attachments, take the appropriate upgrade cards in the number indicated by the rules, shuffle them and pick randomly for each availble Unit..

Varied equipment (2) means that attachments Disciplined and Superior Firepower can occur twice. Create a deck of two Disciplined cards and two Superior Firepower cards. If five units qualify for an upgrade due to this rule one of them will not be able to get it.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

Military of the Commonwealth

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth combined Eastern and Western European traditions to create a distinctive way of fighting. This unique Polish "art of war" can be traced to the reign of Władysław IV, who divided the army into national and foreign contingents. The national contingent (winged hussars, cossack style and pancerni cavalry, light cavalry, and Polish-Hungarian infantry) were conventional Polish formations based on indigenous Eastern and Central European fighting methods. Traditionally, the cavalry played the dominant role while infantry was a supporting arm. Foreign contingents (such as "German" infantry, dragoons, and reiters) were based on the Western European military practices, which emphasized infantry and artillery firepower.

Indigenous and foreign troop types employed different recruitment strategies. The national contingent was based on the companion system and the foreign contingent units were paid professionals. A retinue was the smallest unit in the national contingent and was formed by a companion with one or more retainers. A number of retinues formed a banner that was commanded by a captain (rotmistrz). A lieutenant served as his second-in-command. Banners were the basic units of the national contingent. A group of several banners constituted a regiment (or pułk), which was a tactical unit and not an organizational one. Foreign contingents followed the Western European model in that the basic units were companies or squadrons which in turn were organized into regiments. Units were formed on a basis of an agreement with the lieutenant, who was responsible for their recruitment, equipment, training and pay. As a result, the quality of the troops could vary significantly. In retinues the companion took care to select the very best retainers while in the mercenary units the ranks were filled with various random individuals conscripted to make sure that the ranks were as large as it was stipulated in the agreement. The military forces of the Commonwealth may be classified in a number of ways. Apart from a basic distinction into national and foreign contingents, as well as into Polish and Lithuanian forces, one can also identify the armed forces controlled by the crown and those commanded by the local authorities, urban self-governments, and individual nobles.

Various types of Polish forces showed a high tactical value, but it was the winged hussars who were the army's main strike force. The Polish "art of war" was characterized by the "craving for battle" and commanders strived for a decisive encounter, as simply there were no financial means for long campaigns. Such an inefficiency of the state was the Achilles' heel of the Commonwealth. As the state could not afford to conduct long-term military operations, often the great victories on the battlefield could not be forged into political success and territorial gains.

While in the first half of the 17th century the infantry played a supportive role to the cavalry, the situation changed during the Smoleńsk campaign (1632-1634), when Władysław IV, noticing the lack of the forces capable of laying siege to the opponent's strongholds, decided to recruit numerous foreign contingent units. In the middle of the century strong dragoon units and so-called "German" infantry began to play a bigger role, while the cavalry was dominated by the cossack style and pancerni banners. The pride of the Polish military, the winged hussars, were still important from a tactical point of view, but their numbers dwindled by the second half of the century (during the "Deluge" there were only several banners left) and they were unable to win battles without cooperating with other types of forces. Artillery was relatively weak on the battlefield, which was caused by the lack of funds for transport, rather than by the lack of equipment. Thus, the army was more likely to employ only a few small caliber cannon (2-6 pounders).

The strategy and tactics used depended on the type of the opponent, but in general, it can be said that the Polish military fared better on the battlefield than when conducting siege operations. The Polish army skillfully combined the merits of the Eastern (cavalry) and the Western (firepower) arts of war and was a diverse army, which could be easily balanced when necessary.

In the 17th century, mobility and maneuverability were preferred in the Polish army over firepower, the lack of which was clearly visible during the "Deluge", when the Commonwealth military had to face a large number of firearms and powerful artillery of the Swedish army. However, even then the Polish forces, using komunik tactics (i.e. cavalry units moving swiftly without the supply train, usually supported by dragoons), were able to surprise the enemy thanks to the lightning speed of their movement and maneuvers.

Characteristics of the army

In *By Fire and Sword* armies of the Commonwealth are characterized by a large participation of cavalry and its diversity. In most of the cases these are very mobile and aggressive armies based on the collaboration of strong shock cavalry such as hussars, pancerni and petyhorcy and lighter formations of Cossack style cavalry. Infantry and artillery make up a rather small proportion of these armies and even the siege armies consist largely of dragoons. An important feature of the Army Lists of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is the division into the forces of the Crown (i.e., The Kingdom of Poland) and Lithuania. They mostly differ in the pool of available Units. The Crown uses Pancerni and Wallachian Cavalry whereas Lithuania uses Petyhorcy and Tatar Cavalry and uses mercenary Units more often. Almost all units in both Army Lists have influence on the motivation of the army which causes that almost none of them can be sacrificed without much concern.

The Commonwealth is the perfect choice for players who value cavalry and prefer to aim for victory by means of dynamic maneuvers and charges. The Commonwealth also allows you to combine eastern and western styles of warfare. This mixture of eastern and western formations also provides fantastic variety in terms of modelling.

Advantages

+ mobility
+ very good in attack
+ excellent cavalry of all types
+ wide choice of units
+ good reconnaissance
+ good leadership

Disadvantages

- weak artillery
- few infantry
- weaker in defense
- unit loss has strong influence on Motivation

Commander-in-Chief and Commanders

Armies of the Commonwealth were commanded by hetmans, who were substituted by regimentaries if needed. Below there were colonels who commanded regiments. As there were only four hetmans (two in the Crown and two in Lithuania), the colonels usually took command of smaller groups. In the hierarchy below the colonels were rotamaster who nominally commanded the banners, yet in practice that role was often held by lieutenants.

Hussars

The Hussars were the pride of the Polish army and belonged to the elite of cavalry in Europe. Well-trained, protected by helmets and half-armours, armed with long, but light lances, broadswords, and swords, the hussars were the core of the shock forces of the Commonwealth. Companions with lances were positioned in the front and the retainers behind them. The hussars distinguished themselves by the impetus and mobility as well as the ability to tighten and loosen the formation depending on the tactical situation.

Cossack Style Cavalry

Cossack Style Cavalry (not to be confused with Cossacks) was the core of the national units of the Polish cavalry. It consisted of comapnions and retainers who were lightly armoured, armed with sabres and firearms or bows. With time also polearms gained popularity among the troops. Cossack Style Cavalry was tactically elastic – its use depended on the conditions in which it had to fight and on the enemy it faced.

Pancerni Cavalry

Pancerni Cavalry is a unit developed as a result of popularizing of chainmail in Cossack cavalry. Unified troops often armed with rohatyna spears took on more offensive features. Pancerni Cavalry was not able to fully replace the winged hussars as the main shock force, but provided a very good support, also with fire. Banners fought in a tight striking formation or "in the Tatar style", i.e., in a spread formation.

Petyhorcy

Petyhorcy is a medium armed Lithuanian cavalry armed with polearms – rohatyna spears or lances. They were an equivalent of pancerni units as far as the organization is concerned. They also performed an analogous function in battle as they were more armoured than Cossack Style cavalry, but less than winged hussars.

Wallachian cavalry

Initially, Wallachian units, consisting mainly of volunteers from Moldavia and Wallachia, were light cavalry armed with sabres, bows and long firearms. They did not play a major role in battle, but they performed outstandingly during raiding, gathering intelligence and giving cover.

Tatar cavalry

Tatar cavalry was more common in the Lithuanian army. It was a light cavalry armed with sabres and bows. It performed primarily tasks such as reconnaissance, gathering intelligence and raiding. It did not bear the main burden of battle, but it was perfectly suited for pursuing the defeated enemy.

Dragoons

Dragoons are mounted infantry. Horses were used to move fast, but the dragoons fought on foot. The main equipment was a musket. Dragoons gained great popularity in the Polish and Lithuanian army due to their high mobility which allowed them to provide an effective fire support for the cavalry.

Haiduks

Haiduks or Polish-Hungarian infantry were the oldest infantry formation in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They were armed with matchlock muskets or arquebuses and sabres. They had quite a lot of firepower as they fired in ranks. The first ranks knelt and the next ranks fired over their heads. Willingly charge and were efficient in hand to hand combat, however, they were almost defenseless against the cavalry.

Volunteers

These are the volunteers that are not a part of the regular army. The units were formed on the model of military units, most often Cossack cavalry, but they were characterized by poor discipline. Volunteers were not uniformly equipped and their armament consisted mainly of the weapons currently preferred by the nobility: sabres, pickaxes, bows, bandolet carbines, etc.

Army Lists

Special rules of the army

On their own land (X)

When testing for Reconnaissance, after all rolls and re-rolls, you can change the result on one dice to X. It can be a dice that was re-rolled.

Quarter army

The cost of the Veterans upgrade is lower by 1 for units from the Base of the Army.

POLISH SKIRMISH FORCE 1650-73

18 5 2

Special rules

On their own land (4)

Commander-in-chief

Colonel

For +2 you can change the **Colonel** to **Colonel** .

Available upgrades: 1 x **Veterans**, 1 x **Kalkan Shields**.
Kalkan Shields cannot be given to **Polish Dragoons** and **Volunteers**.

Base

Wallachian Cavalry

OR

Polish Dragoons

Cossack Style Cavalry

Cossack Style Cavalry

OR

Cossack Style Cavalry with Spears

OR

Pancerni Cavalry

Volunteers

Additional units

Cossack Style Cavalry with Spears

Wallachian Cavalry

Cossack Style Cavalry

Pancerni Cavalry with Spears

16 5 2

LITHUANIAN SKIRMISH FORCE 1650-73

Special rules

On their own land (4)

Commander-in-chief

Colonel

For +2 you can change the **Colonel** to **Colonel** .

Available upgrades: 1x **Veterans**, 1 x **Kalkan Shields**.
Kalkan Shields cannot be given to **Mercenary Reiters**, **Polish Dragoons** and **Volunteers**.

You can have maximally 1x **Petyhorcy** or **Petyhorcy with Lances** and 1x **Cossack Style Cavalry with Spears**.

Base

Polish Dragoons

OR

Tatar Cavalry

Cossack Style Cavalry with Spears

OR

Cossack Style Cavalry

Cossack Style Cavalry

OR

Petyhorcy

OR

Mercenary Reiters

Volunteers

Additional units

Cossack Style Cavalry

Polish Dragoons

Armoured Mercenary Reiters

Tatar Cavalry

Cossack Style Cavalry with Spears

Petyhorcy

Petyhorcy with Lances