

Mount & Blade Intensity (formerly "*the polearm mod*").

I'd argue that this is the most sophisticated rebalance of Mount & Blade yet produced and solves many issues in the original game. Thrusting polearms are now useable on foot as well as on horseback. Combat is more fluid. There is a room for unpredictable dynamics. Horses and shields now do not grant invincibility. Heavy armour alone can withstand archer fire if the fire intensity isn't too high. More varied player strategies are possible etc.

To be perfectly honest: I'm quite pleased with this. I think it works a tremendous change with a very small text file and fixes many of the problems that have plagued Mount & Blade's gameplay. Despite the diversity of rebalancing in diverse mods, I think a number of the changes made here are probably unique solutions.

This mod consists of detailed reworking of almost all values in the game, fixing a number of gameplay limitations. Overall damage values have been increased, leading to more intense, realistic, and dynamic battles. Over a year and a half of testing has been conducted to ensure that the result is balanced (started on version .808, with the first public release after Warband).

The most important document to look at is the IntensityTactics.PDF - which should give you some idea of what you are up against.

For a list of these changes see the IntensityRebalanceLog.PDF file.

Installation

Installation:

- 1) Find the modules directory
- 2) Copy all of the files from the .\modules\Native directory into a new directory
- 3) Copy the file "item_kinds1.txt" into the new directory and overwrite the original file
- 4) Select the new directory in the launcher in the same way as you'd select any module.

Note: A directory is what we used to call "folders" in the old days. If you are confused by the instructions just replace the word "directory" with "folder"...

If using the non-horse-crossbow version of this mod, it should be possible to use saved games from the default "vanilla" Native module with this mod (and vice-versa). The saved games can be found in directories within the "My Documents" folder (after at least one saved game has been created with each of the modules the directories should appear).

There is also a module.ini file inside the module's directory. It can be used to tweak gameplay. This mod is balanced for the default settings but a few alternatives are included at the end of the file. I'd recommend getting used to the default settings before exploring the alternates.

Have fun!

Plans & contact

Feedback:

- How should blunt weapons be handled? Currently they are a mixture of blunt and piercing weapons (as it is fairly easy to bludgeon someone to death).
- Similarly, some two-handed weapons can only swing to one side while on horseback to simulate their unwieldiness. Should this be applied to all very heavy weapons? Or should the Vaegir cavalry be left unencumbered and allowed to hack in peace (or more accurately: 'hack to pieces' or 'hack in war')?
- How important is it to maintain compatibility with "vanilla" saved games? Is this worthwhile or would it be better to add features, weapons and troop types? Should other mods to be integrated into this one?
- Are there any ways to make historical improvements (despite game engine limitations)? Are there any inconsistencies or illogical mistakes?

Future development:

A Troops.txt patch is in development that should better balance the default factions. A version with extensions to the troop trees is also planned, including dismounted knights, distinctions between lance and short-weapon cavalry and the addition of weak cavalry units for the Nords and Rhodok as well as relatively weak dismounted archers and infantry for the Kanate.

A Warband version is under consideration for development. This version will possibly allow switching modes for mêlée weapons using the "X" key feature. This would allow penalisation for use of two-handed weapons on horseback and switching between high-damage lethal hits and lower damage non-lethal hits for blunt weapons etc. This could easily lead to a transition from text files to the module system and attempts to rebalance the general campaign for more variety.

Finally, if any 3d modeller is interested in making a pack of more accurate and respectful weapons for use by mods featuring Indigenous peoples from North America - I'd be happy to do some help with research and implementation.

Contact:

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A special thanks to David Jordan for the item editor which was instrumental in speeding up the pace of work and Iberon for the Custom Battle Generator which sped up game balance tests immensely (& Kolba for porting it). Last but not least - thanks to the team behind Mount & Blade.

Post-Secondary

Special notes:

- It is indeed possible to take down an enemy Sergeant using only a pitchfork! However, it isn't easy.
- The game is balanced with "horse archery" skill of 3 or less and the "agility" character attribute being 12 or less. However, if you want an easier time, feel free to cheat instead of building your charisma/intelligence (double entendre intended ;)).
- It has always been possible to exploit couched lance damage on horseback; don't. Rather hold down the mouse button to avoid couching and 'discard' your lance if you miss the head of your target more than a couple of times.
- If using the version with Cavalry crossbows: The weapon buttons require special handling for successful employment, namely the trigger (right mouse-button) should be depressed for five seconds after the aiming animation has been completed. This will lead to immediate release of the bolt on release of the trigger. Simply clicking the trigger will lead to a time delay before the release.

Regarding realism:

I am by no means an expert on Medieval warfare. However, some research has been done on shield and armour effectiveness. Archers are modelled to a fourteenth century standard and should be very effective against lower level infantry. Elite infantry will only suffer about 10% attrition while charging an equally sized archer force and armoured cavalry will be largely immune unless previously damaged. However, I've managed a shot into the visor of an enemy knight and done over one hundred points of damage leading to an instant kill. A point-blank hit to the side of a bascinet will do no damage whatsoever.

There are many tradeoffs regarding realism due to the limited player field of view and weapon control. In real life most combat with polearms was much faster and more dynamic. However, the basic necessity of gauging an opponent, using good timing and the importance of accuracy does transfer to the game and polearms are now quite useful.

Experimental module.ini settings:

```
damage_interrupt_attack_threshold = 20.0
```

```
# You can modify the damage system by editing the following values:
```

```
# The first three values determine the amount which will be directly subtracted from damage due to armour.
```

```
# The next three values determine the percentage reduction from the damage.
```

```
armor_soak_factor_against_cut      = 0.65  
armor_soak_factor_against_pierce   = 0.35  
armor_soak_factor_against_blunt    = 0.3  
armor_reduction_factor_against_cut = 1.2  
armor_reduction_factor_against_pierce = 0.45  
armor_reduction_factor_against_blunt = 0.65  
horse_charge_damage_multiplier    = 0.7  
couched_lance_damage_multiplier    = 0.6  
missile_damage_speed_power = 3.0;  
melee_damage_speed_power = 1.0;
```