

HORDELING STAMPEDE

Hordeling Stampede Level 16 Controller Medium Abberant Humanoid (hordeling)

Initiative: +12 **Perception** +17
HP 154; **Bloodied** 77 **Blindsight** 10
AC 30; **Fortitude** 28; **Reflex** 28; **Will** 29
Speed 7, teleport 1

Traits

Unmanifest

Hordelings leave no bodies when they die, and vanish from battle when defeated or repelled.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Omnidirectional Strike** ✦ **At-Will**

Effect: Before the attack, the hordeling teleports to any square adjacent to the target.

Attack: Melee Basic 1 (one creature) +21 vs. AC

Hit: 4d6+6 damage, and the target is pushed 3.

↶ **Xenostampede** ✦ **Recharge**

Attack: Close Blast 5 (all enemies in blast) +20 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d6+6 damage, and the target slides 4.

Miss: The target slides 2.

Effect: After the attack, the hordeling stampede can teleport to any square adjacent to the area of the attack.

Recharge: The hordeling uses omnidirectional strike.

Move Actions

Hordeling Flux ✦ **Encounter**

Effect: The hordeling and one other hordeling within 5 swap places.

Phantom Army ✦ **At-Will**

Effect: The next time the hordeling uses stampede before the end of their turn, the area of effect becomes a zone of difficult terrain. Any enemy entering this zone or beginning a turn there takes 10 damage. The zone lasts until the end of the hordeling stampede's next turn.

Skills Acrobatics +17, Arcane +17, Athletics +17

Str 18(+12); **Dex** 18(+12); **Wis** 18(+12)

Con 18(+12); **Int** 18(+12); **Cha** 18(+12)

Alignment Unaligned

Hordelings are mystifying and unpredictable creatures which seem to appear out of thin air to cause havoc and mayhem with no apparent rhyme or reason. They are short, squat humanoids, around five feet tall, with a thick, rubbery hide and few identifying features apart from their drooping, expressionless faces. They display formidable strength and speed, striking with club-like hands ending in four thick digits, which appear at times to resemble a human hand, but at others take on more alien configurations. Their flesh is tough, and they don't seem to bleed when cut.

Yet, their alien appearance is insignificant compared to the bizarre way in which they move and interact with the world. Hordelings seem to phase in an out of reality, flickering from place to place, teleporting across short distances, and of course, they only ever appear as if from nowhere, and vanish just as easily as they appear. What's more, it's never exactly clear how many hordelings one is facing- a creature can stand alone one moment, only for the air to shimmer, and the battlefield to explode into motion, coming alive with dozens of the creatures to an instant, only for them to disappear as quickly as they arrived.

A Hordeling Stampede represents the most extreme cases of this phenomena. It seems at times to be a singular creature, but without a moment's warning, it can be joined by dozens of it's alien ilk, who strike from all directions, threatening to sweep the hordeling's foes aside with their numbers. These momentary allies can strike at a single target from multiple directions, or wash across the enemy in a wave, knocking foes aside. Even as the heroes strive to battle the creatures, they struggle to even come to blows with them, as they flicker in an out of reality.

The nature of the hordelings is open to much speculation. Some claim that it is a lurking army, invisible until it strikes. Others insist that the creatures can simply summon aid from another dimension with a split-second mental command. Stranger still are the theories that there are not creatures, but a single creature- a single, solitary entity who is able to interact with the world in multiple different places, simultaneously, acting as it's own reinforcements in battle. Even if the truth could be determined, it would only begin to answer the real question- what is the purpose of the hordelings, and their strange attacks on the land?

For use with the 4th Edition

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ROLEPLAYING GAME

Requires the use of the D&D Player's Handbook,® Monster Manual,® and Dungeon Master's Guide® Player's Handbook® 2, Monster Manual® 2, Adventurer's Vault™ core rulebooks, available from Wizards of the Coast, LLC

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YOU AND WHO'S ARMY?

OH.

TACTICS

The hordeling stampede works best with allies which can exploit its erratic movement around the battlefield, and keep its foes corralled. Soldiers, especially those with slow powers can be useful, to pick up some of the slack for this unique controller. Since the hordeling stampede is focused on forced movement, features and allies that capitalize on this are useful- hazardous terrain, cliffs, damaging auras and zones, slow moving but hard hitting allies, and so fourth.

The stampede also moves primarily by teleportation, which means that it can pass through difficult terrain and over chasm with relative ease- at least when using the stampede power. Its lesser teleports still make a mockery of many attempts at crowd control, including its 'super shift' teleport 1 move. Be cautious however, because if the stampede spends too much time dancing around the battlefield, it won't be able to get to grips with its foes, and focus damage. As a result, its melee attack should be used often, not only to recharge the blast, but to keep in contact with its most vulnerable foes.

Another option for using the stampede is in a highly mobile battle, like a chase scene. In this case, teaming the stampede with skirmishers and other allies with unconventional movement is key, as is keeping them all in a position to help one another. Whether chasing or retreating, the stampede can shape its enemy's movements, keeping the 'herd' moving in the right directions.

Finally, it's a good idea for the hordelings to have an unconventional goal or secondary goal in the battle. This is more about roleplaying than tactics, but it should also be a tactical goal. Examples of such goals include take a particular foe to 0 hit points, aiding in the escape of a particular ally, or causing a pc to discharge a specific daily power .

Lore

Arcana DC 20: All the info in the introduction

Arcana or History DC 25: Hints about the possible agenda of the hordeling manifestations in the area.

Encounters

Hordelings are a mystifying and cryptic race who's manifestations occur with no apparent rhyme or reason. They appear from nowhere, cause chaos and havoc, often attacking targets and causing property damage seemingly at random, then promptly vanish. What few people who encounter them tend to describe them as some kind of terrible demon, but they do not seem to be abyssal in origin, or even aberrant in the regular sense. They are instead, simply alien.

Indeed, their behavior is far from malevolent at times. There are rumors of them defending farming villages from raiders, freeing dwarvern miners caught in collapsed tunnels, and rescuing the crew of stricken sailing vessels. Beyond both their aggressive and benevolent actions are cases where they have been observed simply doing something strange. A traveler once reported that he witnessed a swarm of hordelings digging a huge trench in the wilderness, to slightly alter the course of a small river. A wizard of some renown claims he once found his private library being raided by the hordelings, who seemed disinterested in the books, preferring to intently study the heraldic symbols that adorned his favorite book-cases.

This has led a few, rare, mostly self-styled experts on the hordelings to claim that the creatures (or creature) is pursuing some kind of master plan, a sprawling conspiracy to manipulate and influence the history of world in seemingly random, but actually entirely rational ways, forming a web of interconnected events which will, in theory, lead to some grand and dramatic outcome. Of course, It is anyone's guess where such a scheme might lead, and what its consequences may be.

Whatever their goal, adventurers could encounter hordelings in any number of circumstances, from the cypritic to the extreme. These meetings are likely to be rare- but perhaps, coming less so, as the actions of the heroes intersect more and more with the designs of the creatures. Hordelings might join in an attack on the heroes in one battle, then aid them in a battle months later. They could watch them from a distance for years, only to appear bearing grim tidings when they are least expected. .

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