

XEBEC –CHEBEC – POLACRE - FELUCCA RULES

A Xebec is a special type of warship used in the Mediterranean. It was used predominantly by the Moors, Barbary Coast Pirates and other Arab or North African groups as well as the Spanish and French navies. The Royal navy also used them in the Mediterranean, as did other navies on occasion of capturing one.

The design seems derived from the galleys of old, albeit with less oars due to the addition of cannon, and much improved sailing qualities. The Barbary pirates and other Arabic nations used galleys and were a menace to European shipping, but if the merchants were escorted by a warship, the broadsides could eliminate the oar-driven vessels quickly. The merchants could flee under sail and leave the pirates with no prizes.

In order to be able to run away or even stand up to a fight, galleys needed to be upgraded. The result was a sailing ship with the capacity to carry guns. Rowers were removed to fit the cannons, and the hull was widened to achieve greater stability for the added weight.

The foremast of the xebec was traditionally raked (bent) forward while the main was straight. There were no topmasts. The immense lateen yards were actually two spars lashed together with rope at the thicker ends to form one. The hull had considerable overhang at the bow and stern. The bow generally was shaped into a ram, perhaps a throwback to its galley lineage. The bow had a boom instead of a traditional multi-piece bowsprit.

Xebecs were very fast sailors in almost any heading to the wind including close hauled or tacking. The sails could be replaced with different sized sails depending on the circumstance, and the rig was designed for easy conversion. The downside was that the rig was designed for light winds common to the Mediterranean, and thus not very good in high seas. Also changing tacks was a manpower issue as the boom had to be switched to the other side of the mast.

Many of the features of a xebec are also found on its smaller cousin, the Felucca, and the Polacre, basically a xebec with one or two of its masts square rigged.

Rules for these vessels

Vessel types are highlighted in **bold** for ease of determining what class each rule effects.

Xebecs and **Feluccas** have a larger than average sail crew –usually double that of a traditional vessel at least. The sail crew must be divisible by two. The sail crew is located on deck for damage taking purposes. There is no aloft crew. They also may not use extra sail.

No guns outside of rail swivels may be mounted on the quarterdeck or poopdeck on **Xebecs, Feluccas, or Polacres**.

Xebecs, Feluccas, or Polacres may move six inches under sweeps with the sail crew, and twelve inches with double sail crew.

Xebecs may ram without taking any damage except for the loss of the bowsprit.

Xebecs and **Feluccas** must treat a spar loss as a mast loss until a repair crew of ten replaces the spar (10 crew actions, 1 full turn after loss). The ship may not be sailing while replacing the spar (but may be rowed).

Xebecs and **Feluccas** must roll a D20 after sailing a plot in high wind. On a roll of one the Xebec loses a mast. This is a critical, and may be saved with standard rules

Xebecs and **Feluccas** may be rigged right or left to start the game. This adds two inches to every facing on the side rigged. To change the rig direction the ship may not be sailing, (but may be rowed), and requires the sail crew number of crew actions and one full turn to implement.