

Review of Fighting Styles

A review for style separation improvement.

Jeramie Cooper 09/03/2016

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Introduction

- Andy asked if the weapon attack granted by the two weapon fighting, PH 195, could be grouped with the Attack action when a character has the Two-Weapon fighting style.
- He would like the bonus action to be freed up for use, and maintain some higher damage since the character is using two weapons.
- The Two-Weapon fighting style is available in the Fighter and Ranger class as a feature.
- The two-weapon fighting style should do more damage than the Dueling (i.e. single weapon) style but less damage than the Great Weapon fighting style.
- This report will review various character builds of all three styles. The builds will utilize feats and multi-classing to optimize for damage per turn.
- This report will also review the same builds without the use of feats.

Results

- It's seen that the two - weapon fighting style has a fairly small range of damage per turn depending on level. The range can be from six to fifteen points.
- It's seen that great weapon fighting style has a fairly large range of damage per turn depending on level. The range can be from fifteen to twenty points.
- The barbarian class with different fighting styles seems to perform as desired.
- The fighter and paladin classes allow a dueling (sword & board) character to generate as much damage or more per round as a two weapon fighter.
- The fighter class allows a two weapon fighter to generate nearly the same amount of damage as a great weapon fighter.

Results Continued

- When two weapon fighting is increased slightly above level 12, Dueling is reduced in mean damage, and Great Weapon fighting is increased in mean damage the desired separation in damage appears.
- When the feature of Dueling is changed to be similar to the Great Weapon Fighting per the PH then the damage per turn is decreased and a separation is seen with the fighter and paladin, with the exception of no feats used in Fighter above level 12.
- When the two-weapon Fighter is allowed to re-roll weapon damage dice starting at level 12 then the slight increase puts it above Dueling fighting.
- When the feature of Great Weapon Fighting is changed to be similar to the Dueling feature in the PH then the damage per turn is slightly increased and a slight separation is seen between it and two weapon fighting with the fighter.

Conclusions

- The current design in the PH for Dueling and Two-Weapon Fighting can lead to the same damage for fighters and paladins.
- The current design for Great Weapon Fighting and Two-Weapon Fighting can lead to the same damage for fighters.
- A change to both Dueling, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Great Weapon Fighting will create the desired separation in damage for each fighting style.

Recommendations

- It's recommended to change the Dueling feature to read: When you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack you make with a melee weapon you are wielding with one hand, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2.
- It's recommended to change the Great Weapon Fighting feature to read: When you are wielding a melee weapon in two hands, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for you to gain this benefit.
- It's recommended to add this text to Two-Weapon Fighting: Starting at level twelve, when you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack you make with a melee weapon that you are wielding in one hand, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2.

Possible Design Changes

- A few different design ideas were presented to review.
 - Move the bonus action attack to be grouped with the Attack Action. One of the attacks would have two weapons worth of damage.
 - Add an attack when a character gains the Two-Weapon Fighting style.
 - Give a character advantage on attacks when wielding two weapons.
- Granting two weapons worth of damage on one attack can mess with Reaction attacks and does not grant the risk vs. reward for each separate attack.
- Giving a character advantage on attacks steps on the toes of the Barbarian class and makes the Monk class less attractive.
- Adding an attack to the Attack action does not interfere with any game mechanics already in existence. This change was reviewed.

Character Builds to Review

- There are eight two-weapon fighting builds to review.
- There are six great weapon fighting builds to review.
- There are four dueling weapon builds to review.
- The barbarian, fighter, and paladin class are applicable to all three fighting styles.
- Other classes were reviewed but not compared between the different styles.

Assumptions - Race & Feats

- The Variant Human race was used to gain the advantage of the extra feat at start.
- Feats were used to take advantage of the number of attacks.
 - Crossbow Expert - Grants the ability to attack with a hand crossbow as a bonus action.
 - Dual Wielder - Grants the ability to use two non-light melee weapons.
 - Grappler - Grants advantage on attack rolls against a creature grappled by the character.
 - Great Weapon Master - Grants a bonus action attack on kill and on crit. Grants -5 accuracy for +10 damage.
 - Magic Initiate - Grants a character access to Hex
 - Polearm Master - Grants a Reaction attack when an enemy enters range. Grants a bonus action attack of a 1d4.
 - Sentinel - Grants a Reaction attack against a creature that attack a creature other than you and is within 5-ft.

Assumptions - Feats Cont.

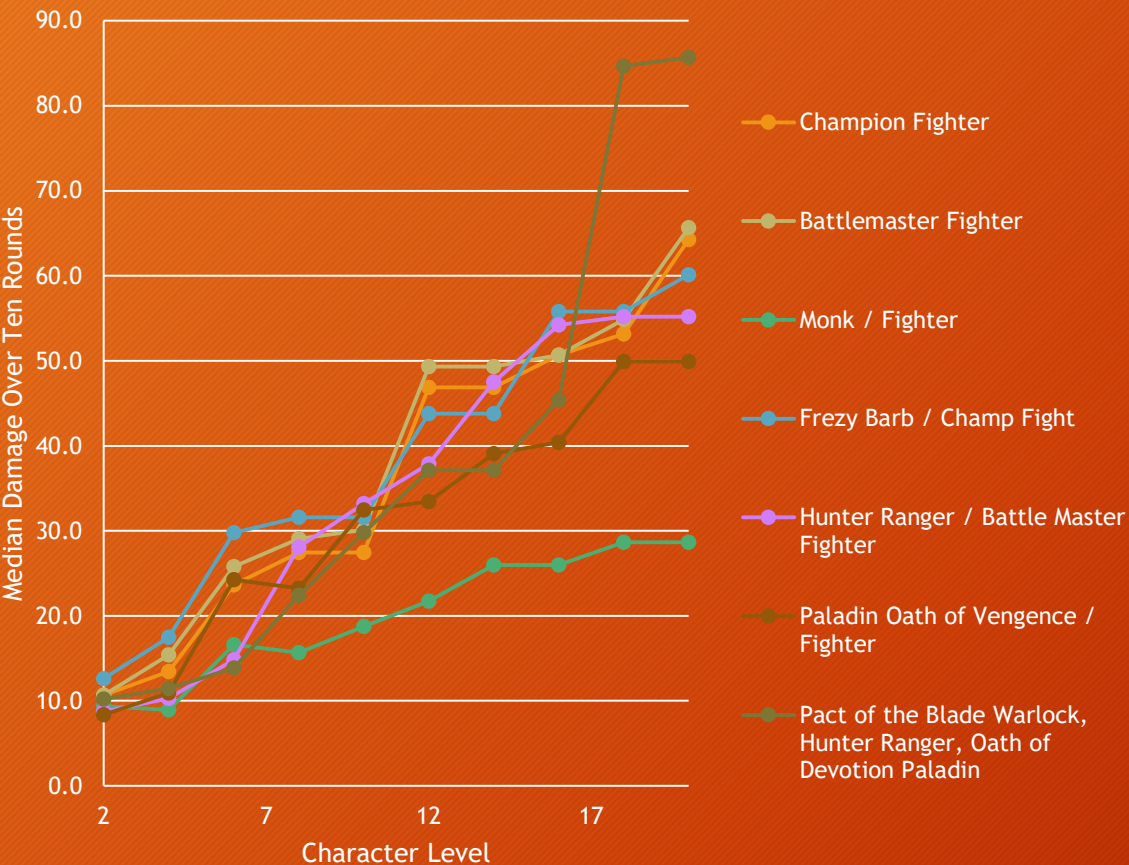
- Grappler - It's assumed the target of the attack is grappled.
- Great Weapon Master - It's assumed a creature dies $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time.
- Magic Initiate - The casting time and move of the Hex spell as a bonus action is assumed to occur after two rounds.
- Polearm Master - It's assumed the character gets a reaction attack $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time due to creatures entering reach.
- Sentinel - It's assumed a character will get the reaction attack every round.

Assumptions - Damage and Rounds

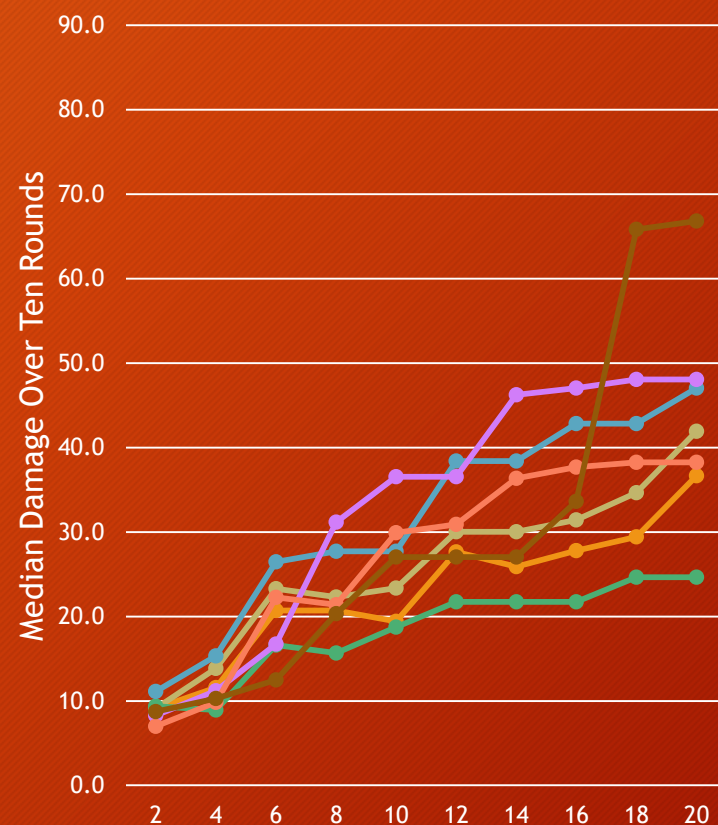
- The median damage is calculated.
- The damage is estimated over ten rounds of combat.
- If a character has a resource, such as spell slots for paladins, then they are used once each round.
- AC is taken from the table *Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating* on page 274 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide (DMG)*

Two Weapon Fighting by the Players Handbook (PH)

Damage per Round vs. Level for Two Weapon Fighting With Feats



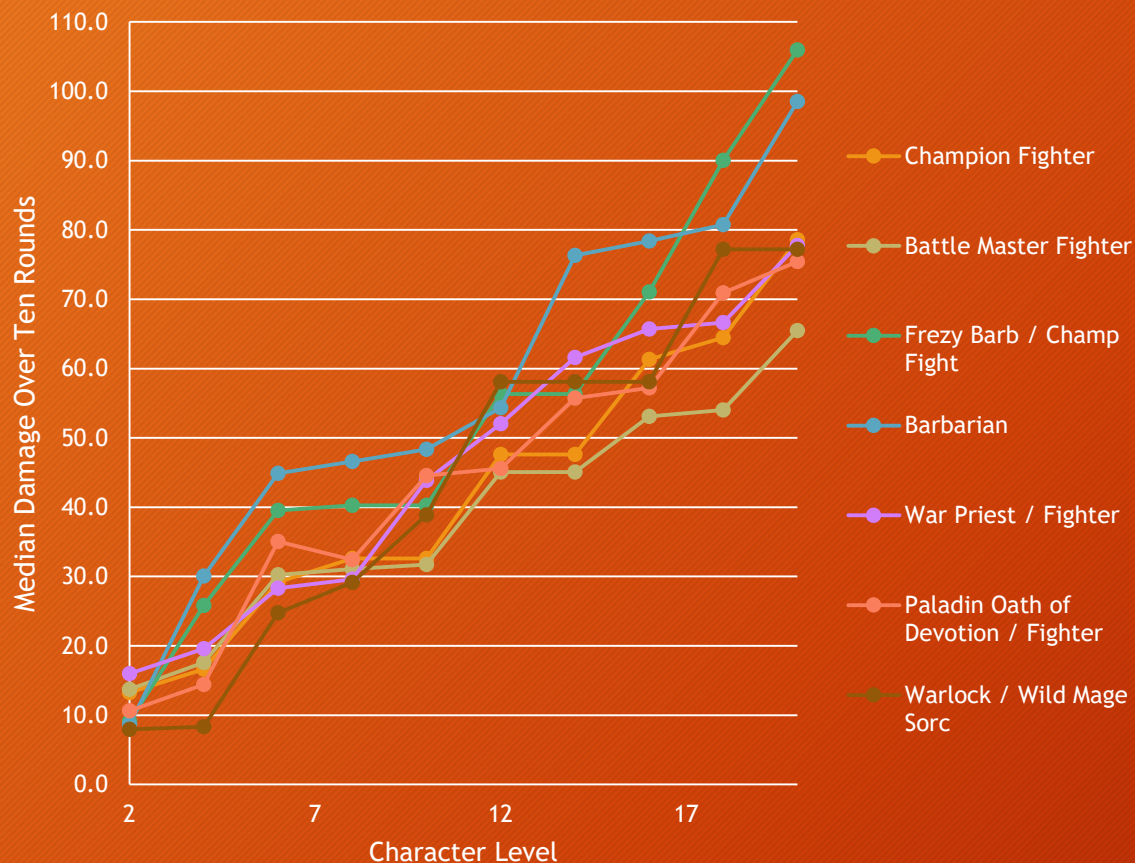
Damage per Round vs. Level for Two Weapon Fighting Without Feats



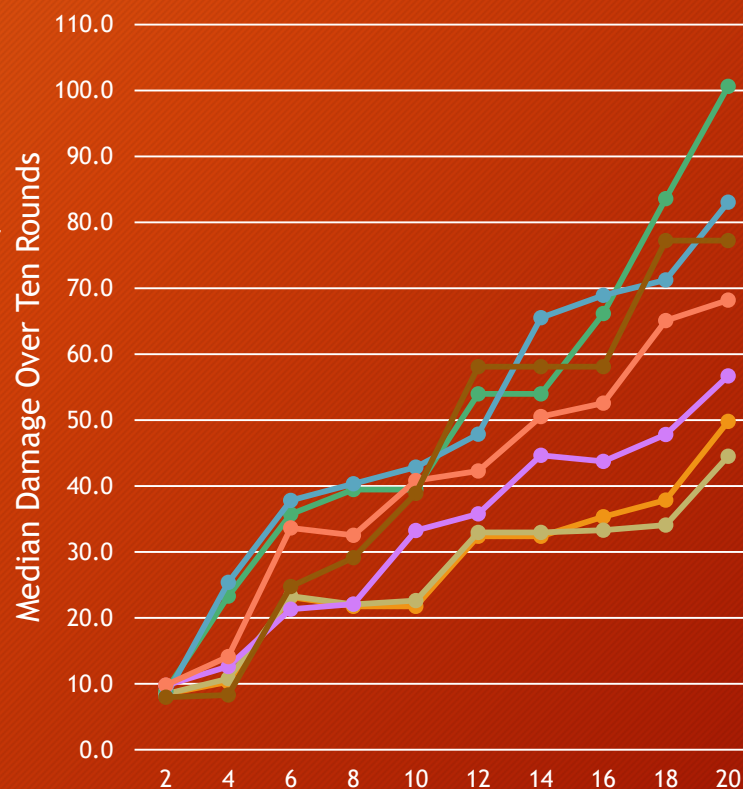
- Two weapon fighting has a fairly tight group of damage per round.
- The Monk class falls short, but it has strengths in stunning creatures and escaping.
- The warlock / ranger / paladin build is unique and steps out of the normal range but there are assumptions with always hitting with a ranger feature.

Great Weapon Fighting

Damage per Round vs. PH Great Weapon Fighting with Feats



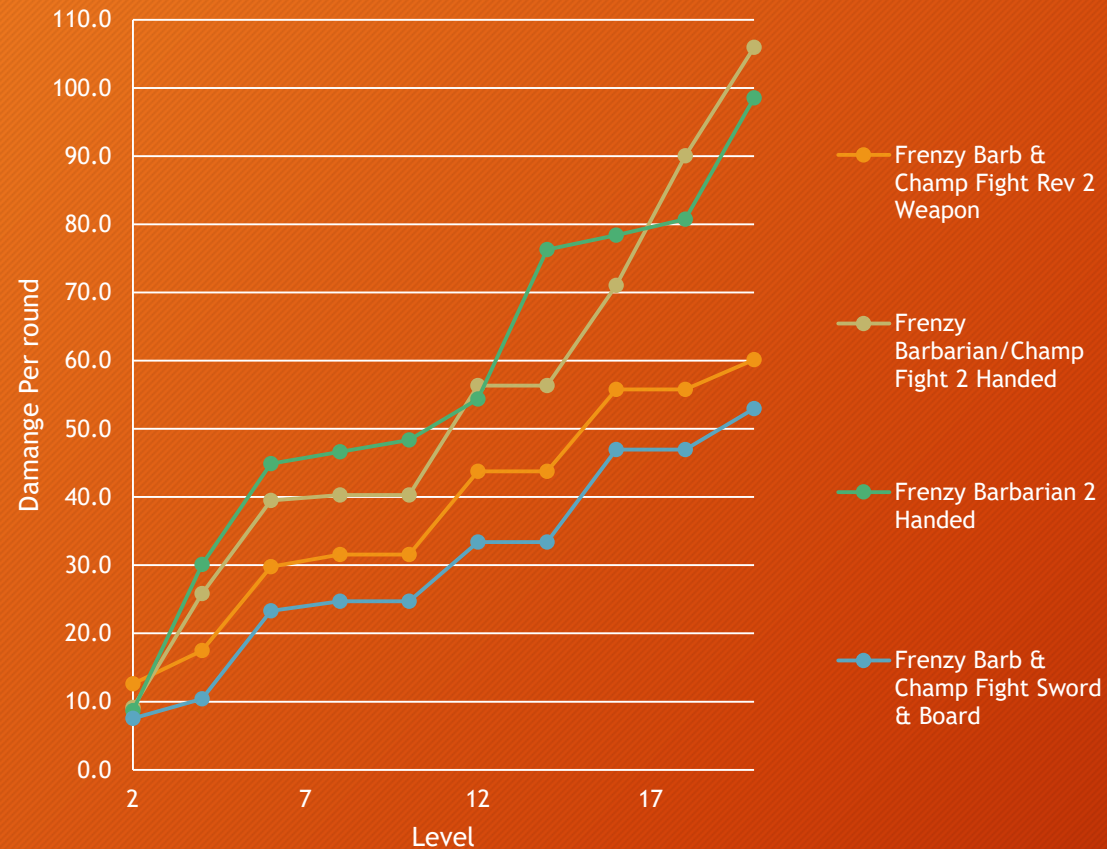
Damage per Round vs. Great Weapon Fighting without Feats



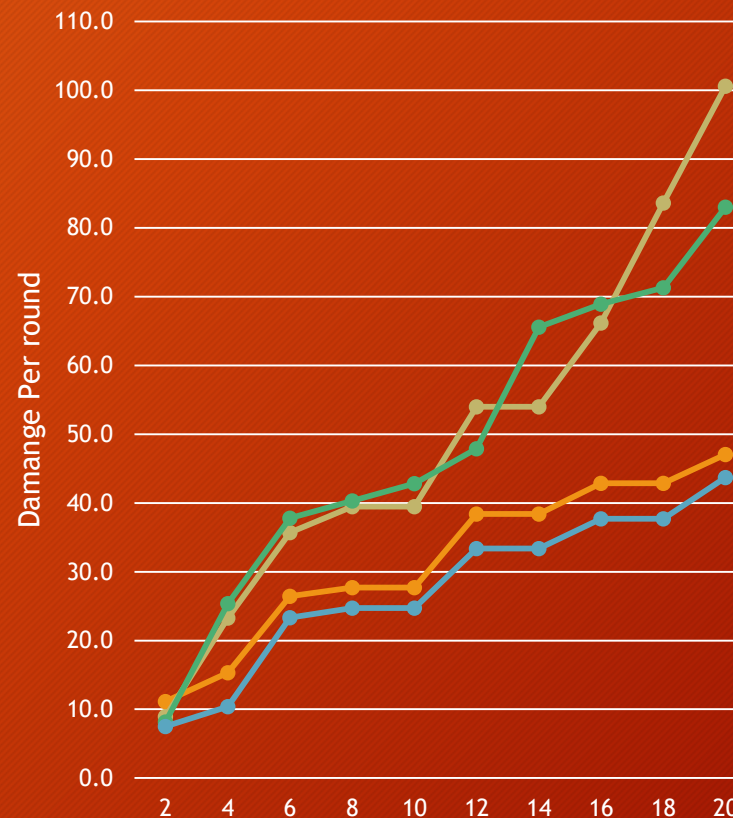
- Great weapon fighting has a wider spread than two weapon fighting.
- The barbarian class surpasses all others in damage output
- The Warlock / Sorc build is added to this chart simply for comparison because it's considered an optimum build.

Barbarian Fighting Style Comparison

Damage Per Round vs Frenzy Barbarian Level with Feats



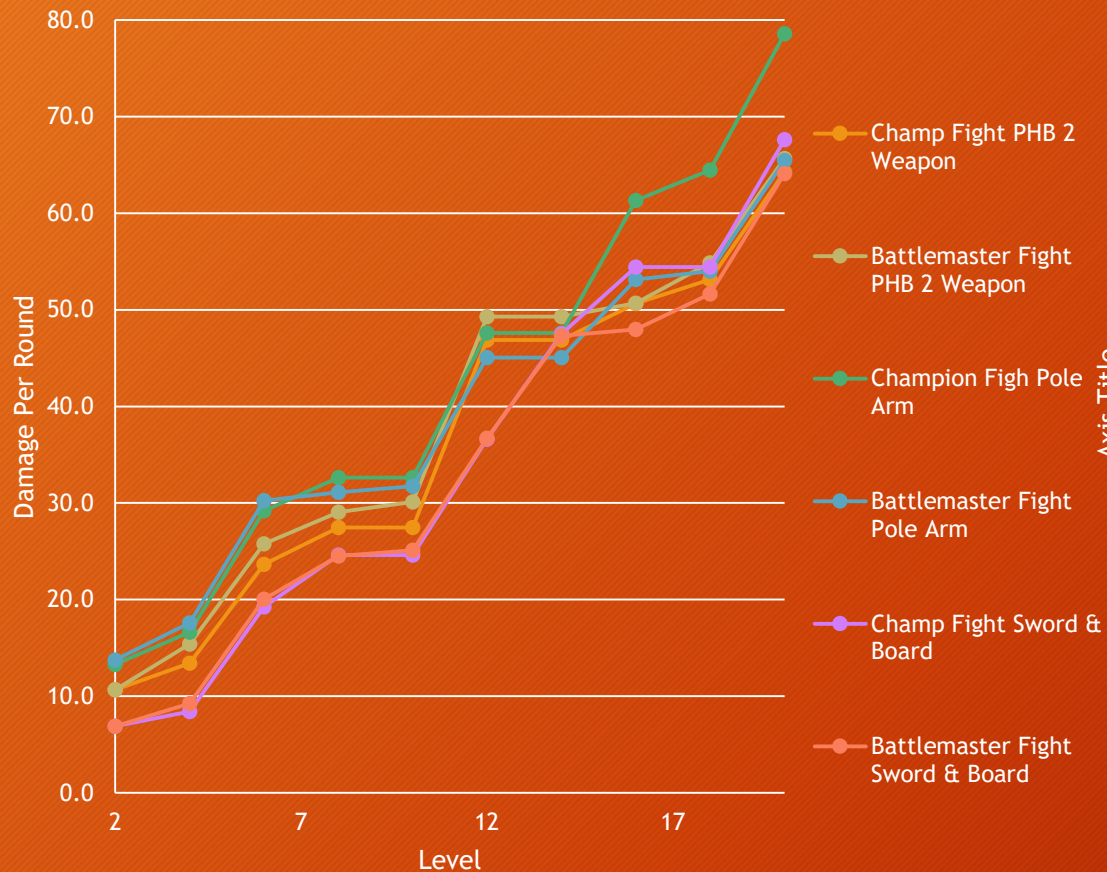
Damage per Round vs. Level for Barbarian Builds, PH No Feats



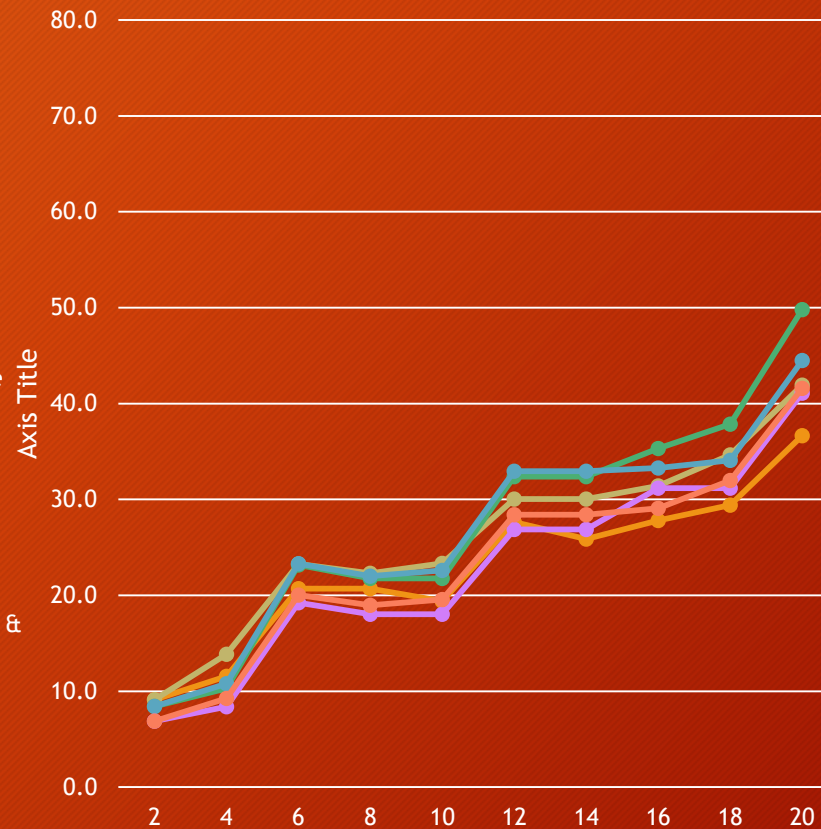
- The fighting styles a barbarian may take seem about right by comparison.

Fighter Fighting Style Class Comparison

Damage per Round vs. Level for Fighter Builds, PH Two Weapon With Feats



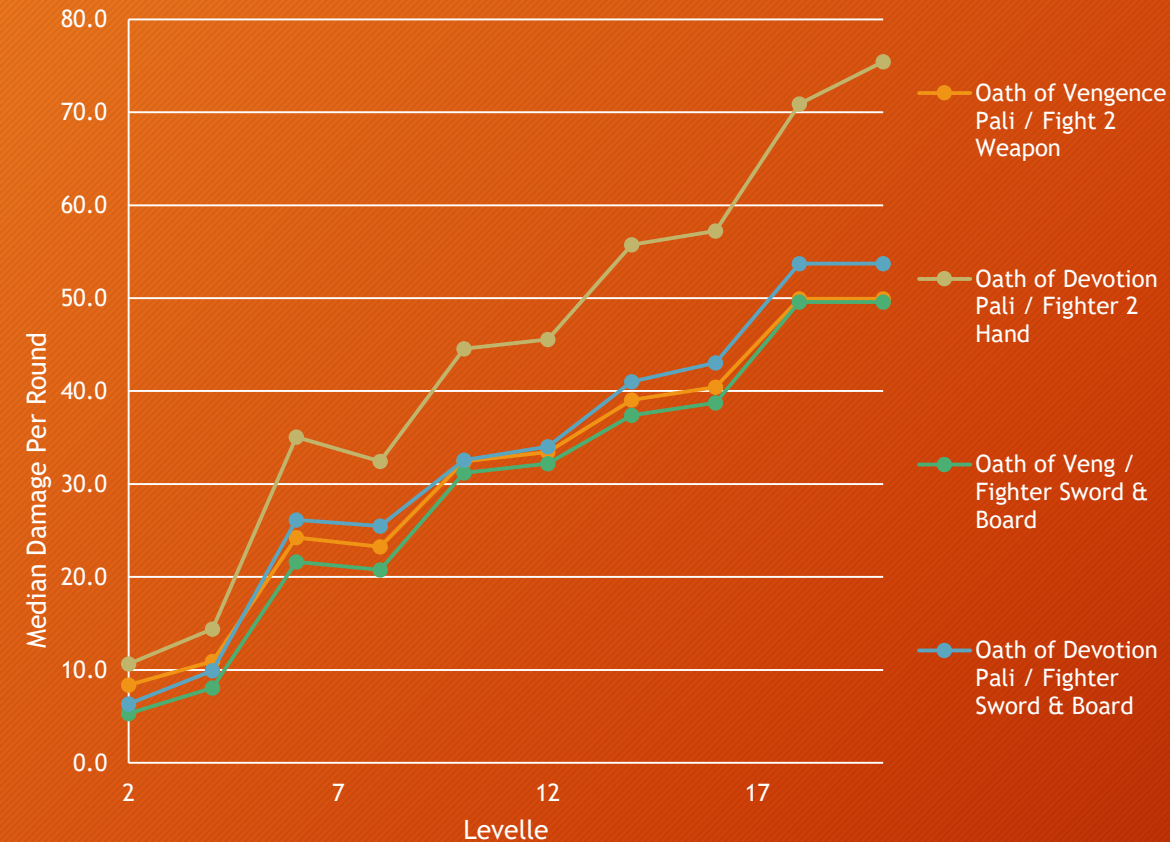
Damage per Round vs. Level for Fighter Builds, PH Two Weapon No Feats



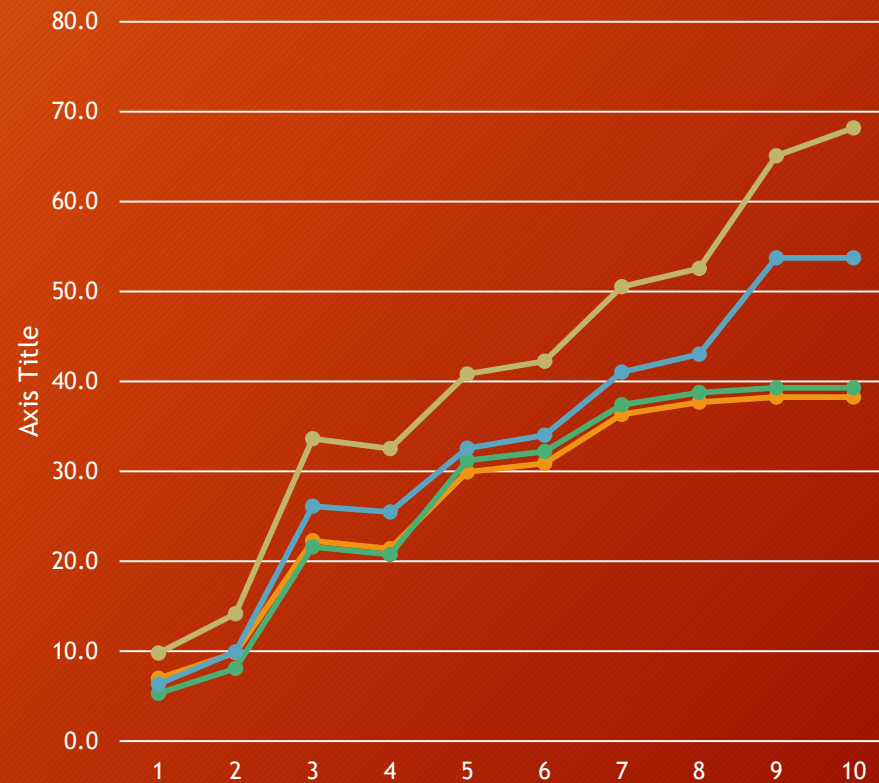
- There is concern that the two weapon fighting style is nearly the same as the great weapon fighting style damage.
- There is concern that the sword and board fighting style is nearly the same as the two weapon fighting style.

Paladin Fighting Styles Comparison

Damage per Round vs. Level for Paladin Builds, PH with Feats



Damage per Round vs. Level for Paladin Builds, PH No Feats



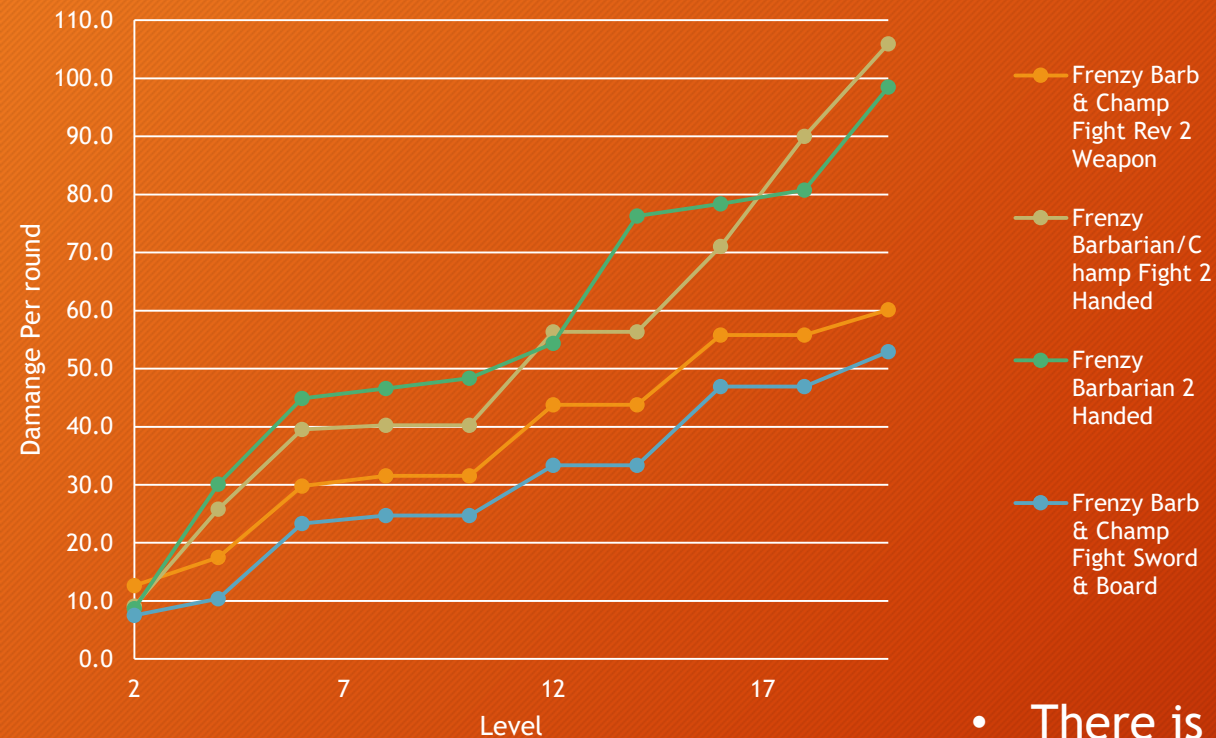
- The paladin great weapon fighting style is above the others.
- The sword and board fighting style is greater than the two weapon style for the Oath of Devotion Paladin.

Proposed Changes

- To address the concerns with the sword and board fighting style doing nearly the same damage as the two weapon fighting style it's proposed to revise the Dueling fighting style to read: When you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack you make with a melee weapon you are wielding with one hand, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2.
- To address the concern with the two weapon fighting doing as much damage as the great weapon fighting it's proposed to revise Great Weapon Fighting style to be: When you are wielding a melee weapon in two hands, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for you to gain this benefit.
- It was also found that the two-weapon fighter would need a little extra after damage after level 12 to keep the damage above the Dueling fighter.
- To address this concern the two-weapon fighting style will be allowed to re-roll weapon damage dice if the first roll is a 1 or a 2. The new result will be kept.

Revised Barbarian Class Comparison with Feats

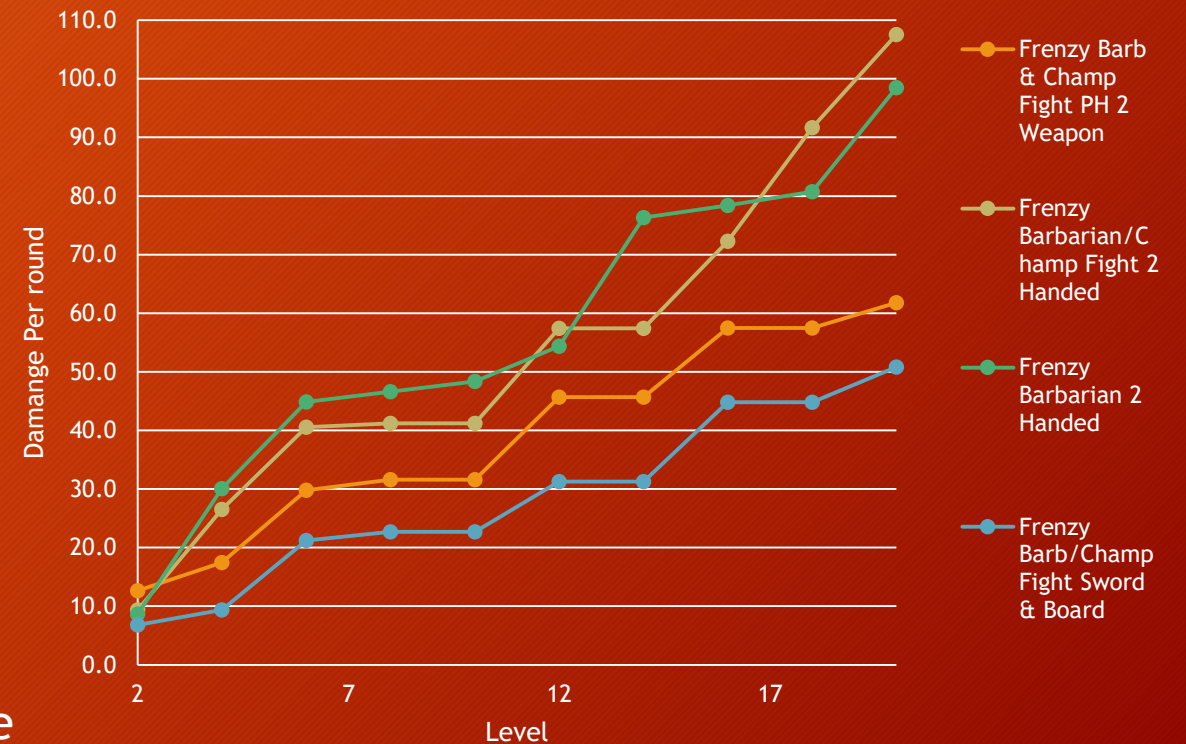
Damage Per Round vs Frenzy Barbarian Level with Feats



Before

- There is little change between with the revised rules.

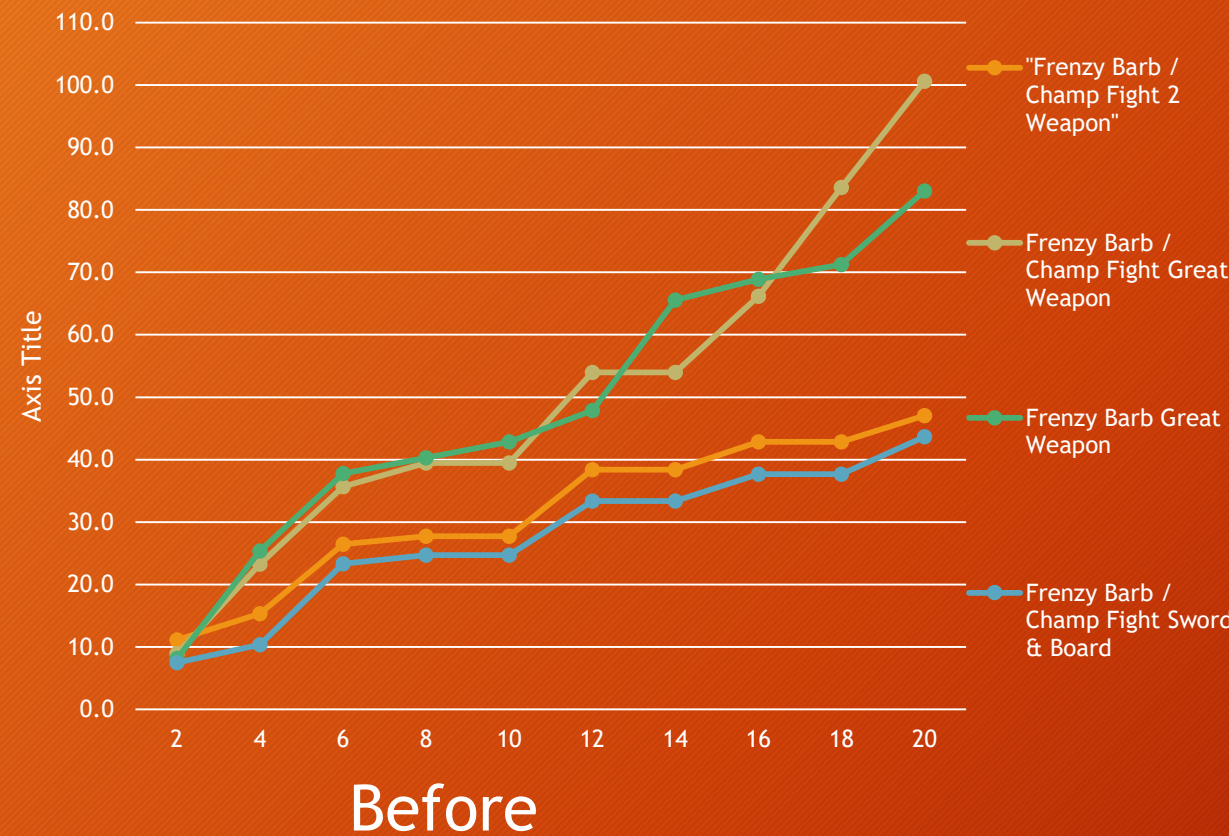
Damage Per Round vs Frenzy Barbarian Level, Rev Rules



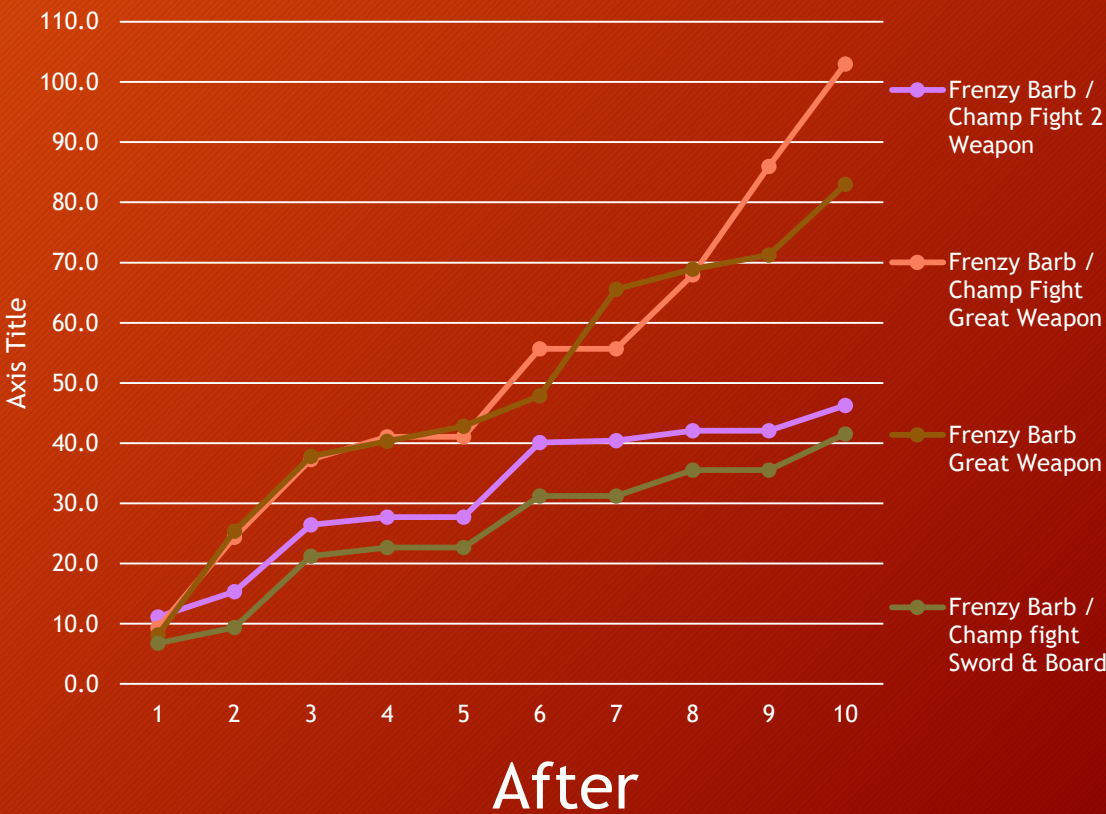
After

Revised Barbarian Class Comparison without Feats

Damage per Round vs. Level for Barbarian Builds, PH
No Feats

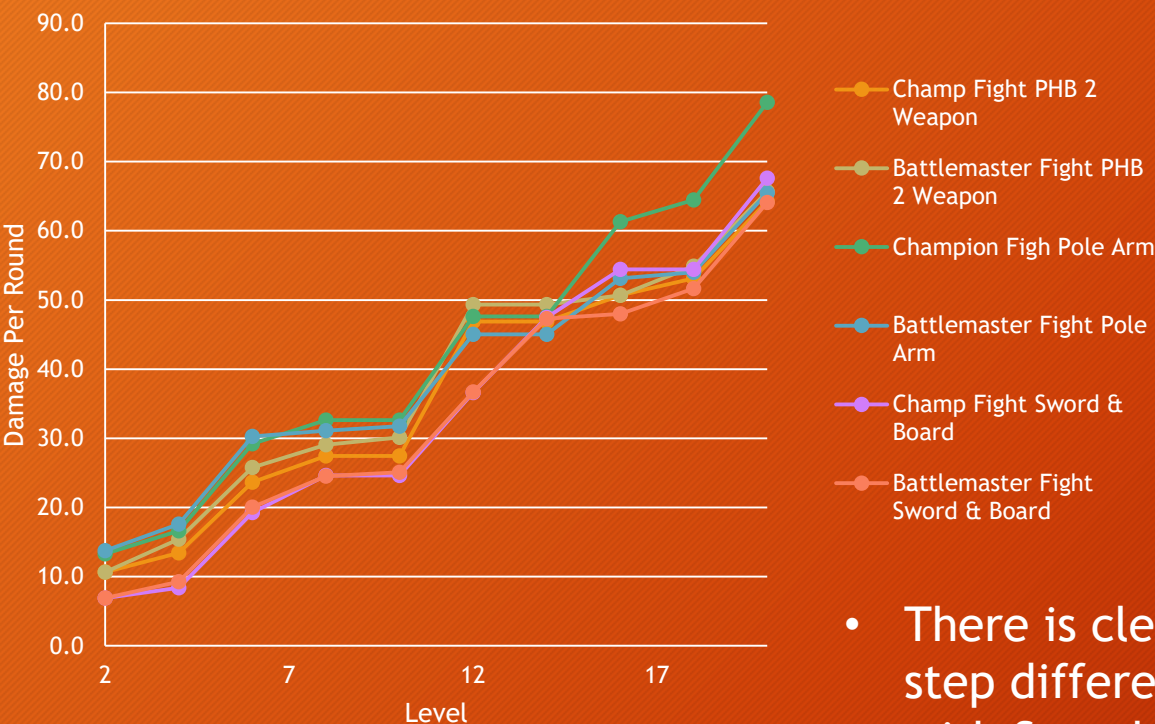


Damage per Round vs. Level for Barbarian Builds, Rev Rules, No Feats



Revised Fighter Class Comparison with Feats

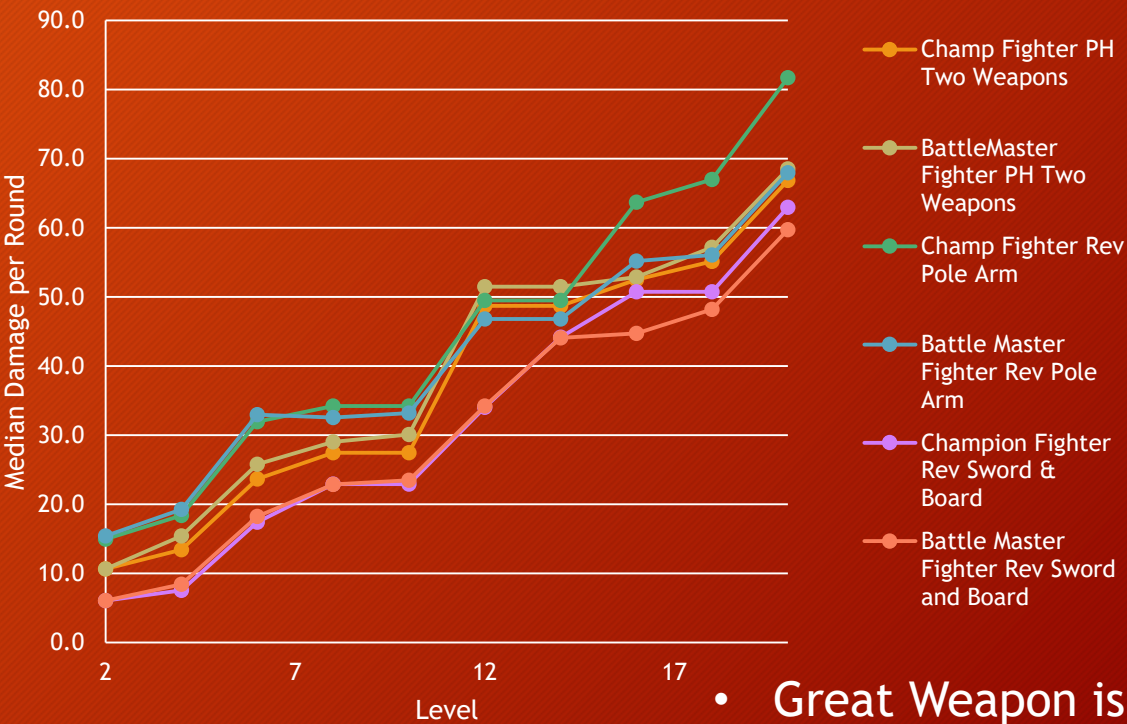
Damage per Round vs. Level for Fighter Builds, PH Rules



Before

- There is clearly a step difference with Sword & Board below Two weapon fighting.

Damage per Round vs. Level for Fighter Builds, Revised Rules

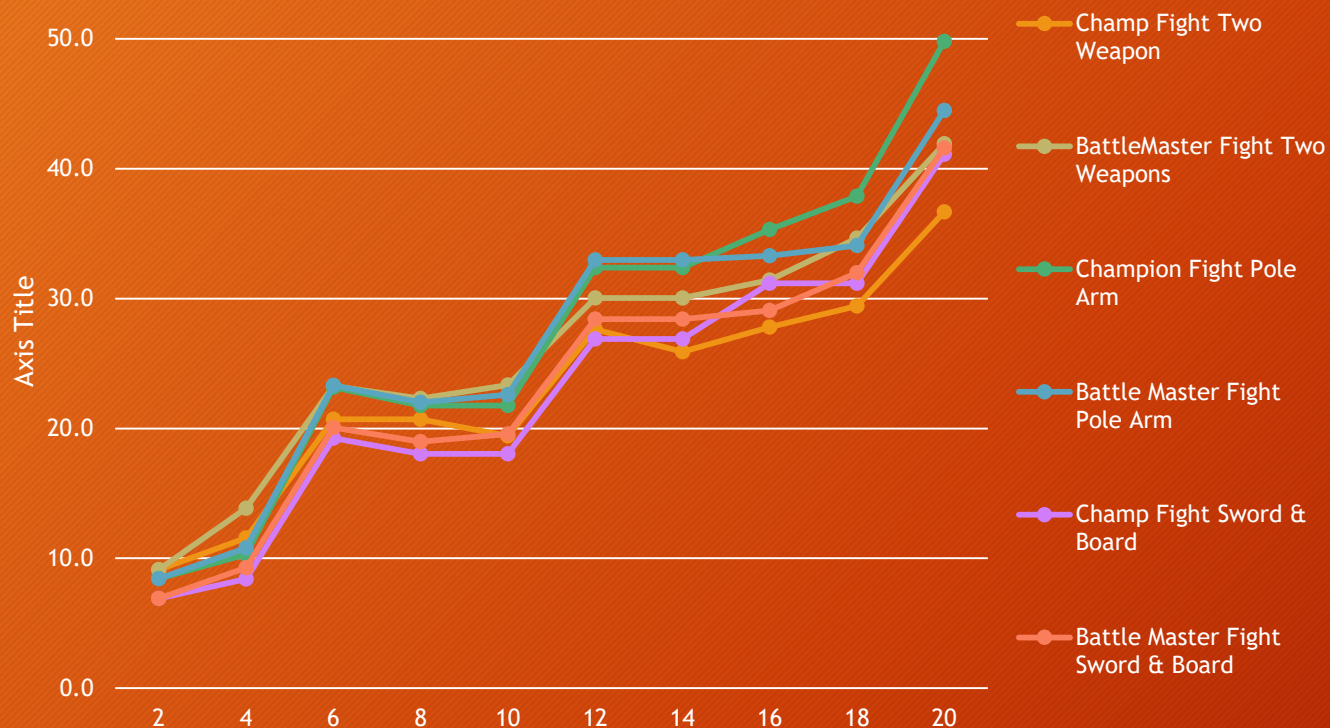


After

- Great Weapon is slightly above Two weapon fighting at most levels.

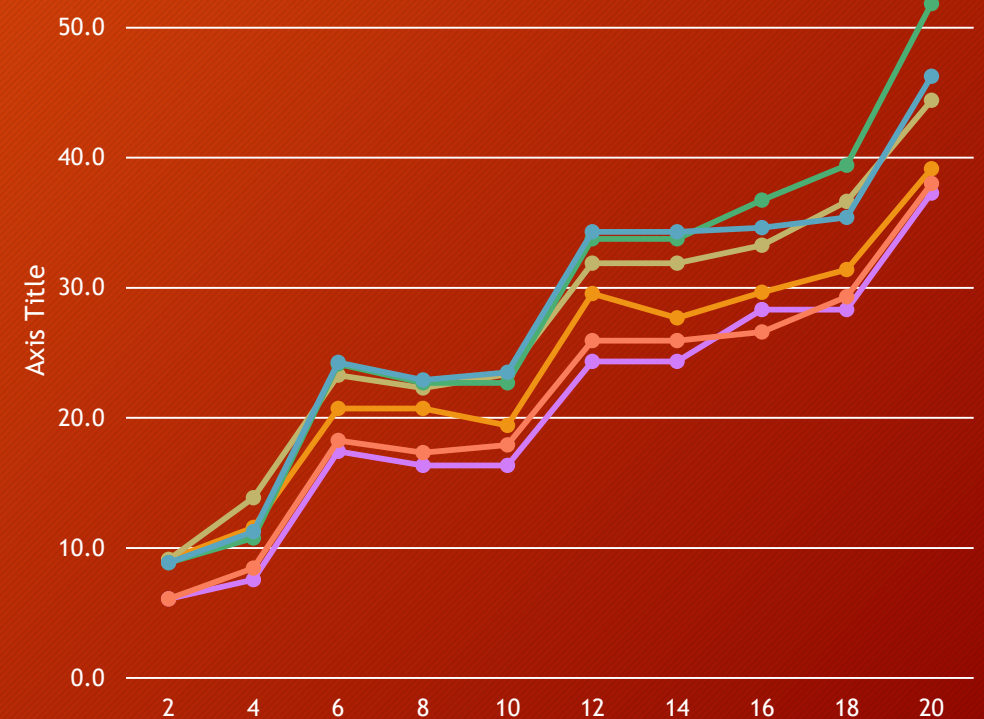
Revised Fighter Class Comparison without Feats

Damage per Round vs. Level for Fighter Builds, PH
Two Weapon



Before

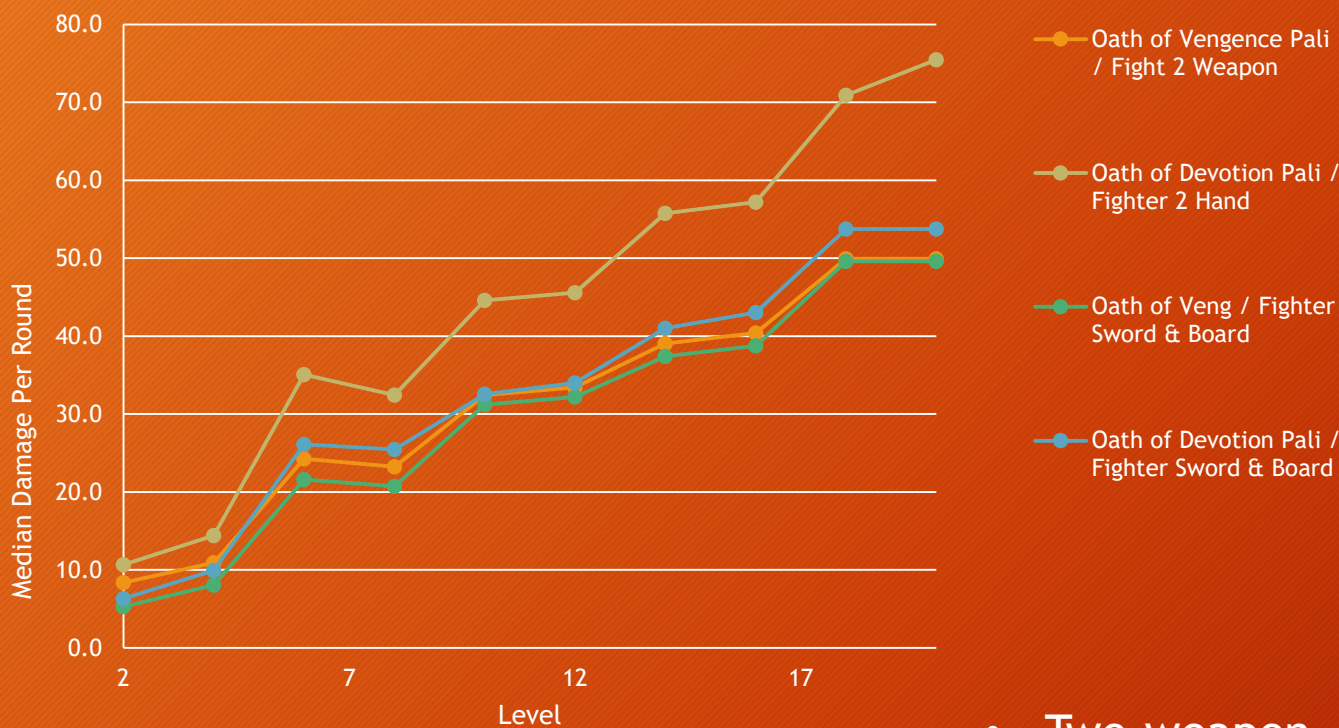
Damage per Round vs. Level for Fighter
Builds, Rev Rules



After

Revised Paladin Class Comparison with Feats

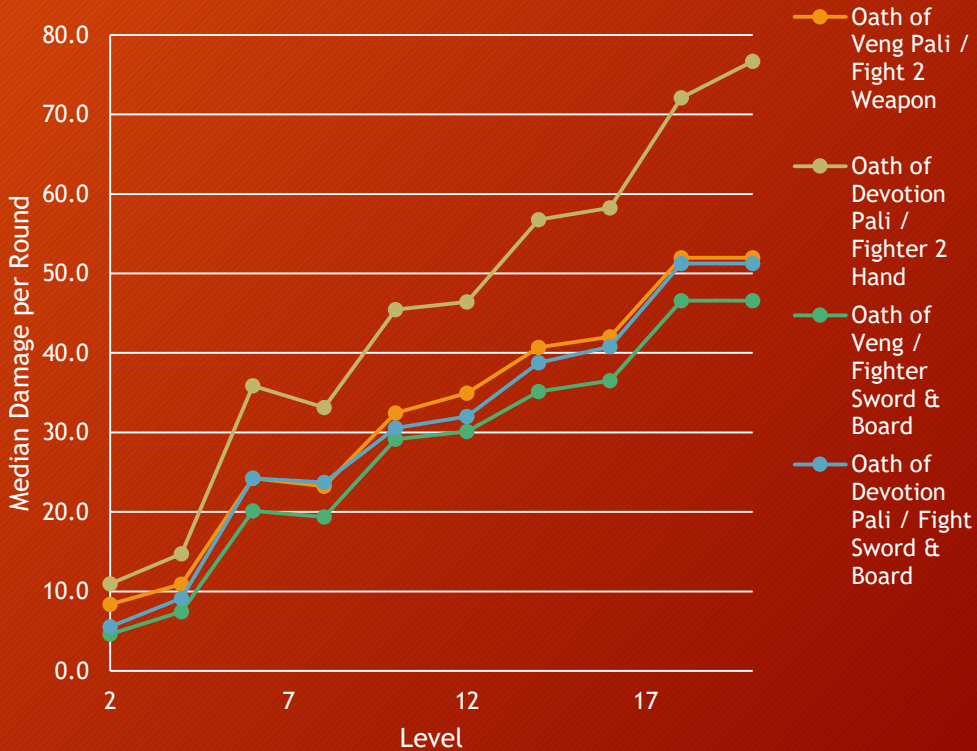
Damage per Round vs. Level for Paladin Builds, PH



Before

- Two-weapon fighting is above Sword & Board

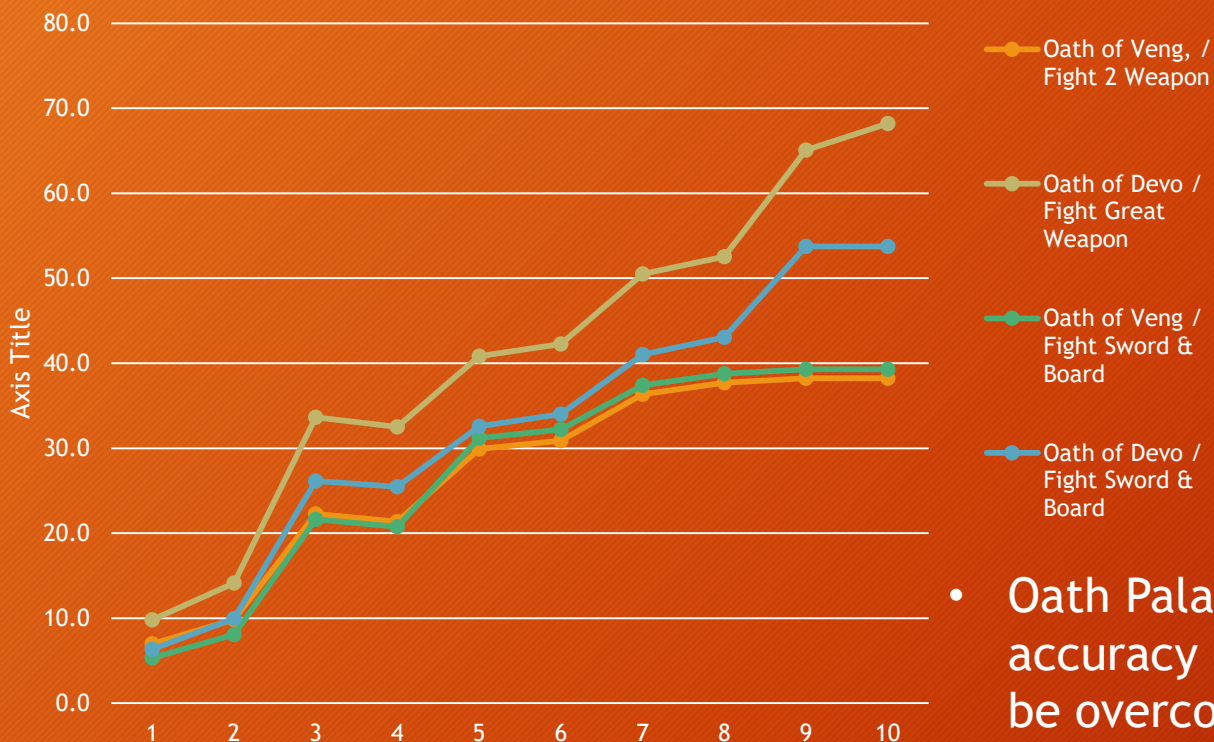
Damage per Round vs. Level for Paladin Builds, Revised Rules



After

Revised Paladin Class Comparison without Feats

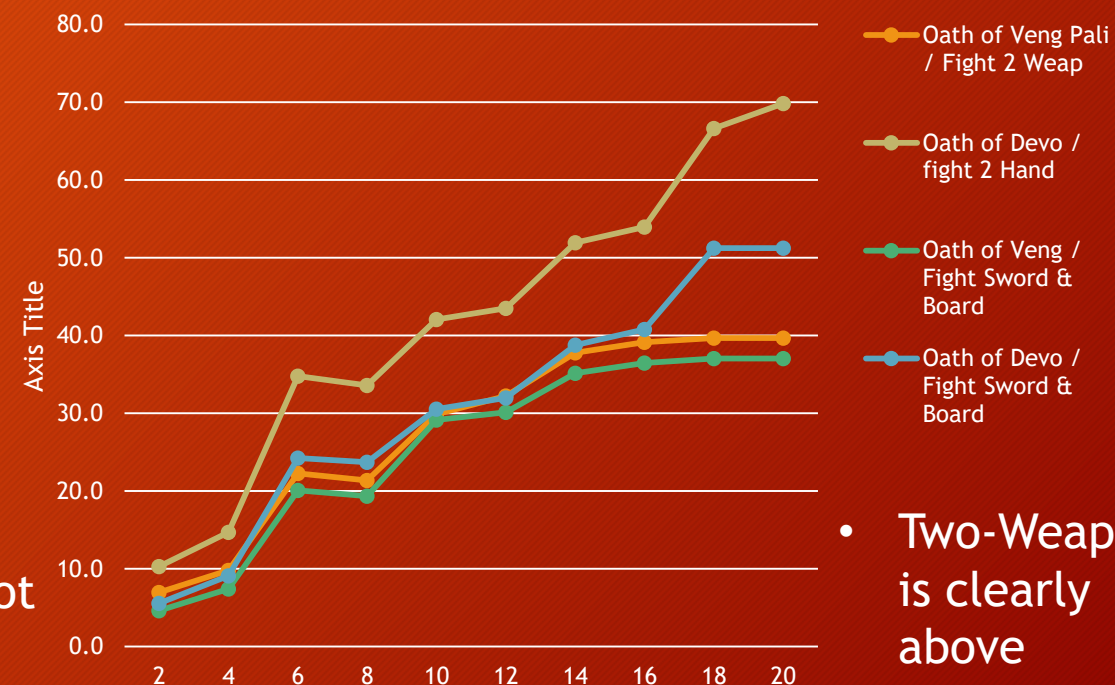
Damage per Round vs. Level for Paladin Builds, PH



Before

- Oath Paladin accuracy cannot be overcome with the design changes.

Damage per Round vs. Level for Paladin Builds, Rev Rules, No Feats
AC per DMG

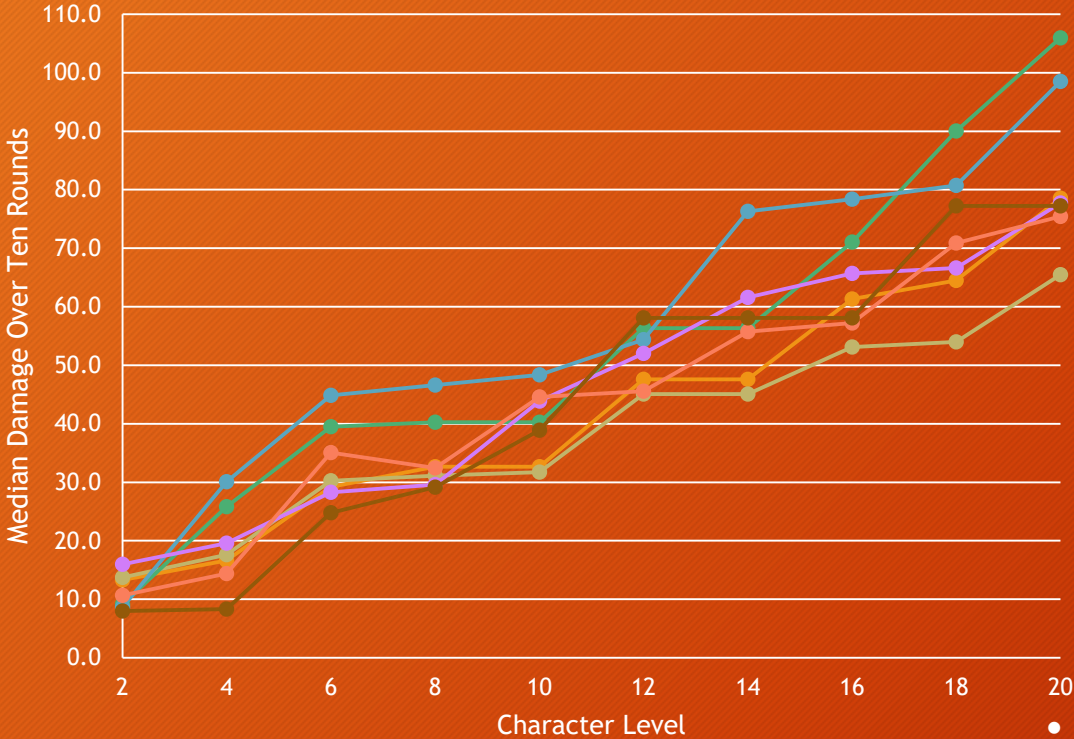


After

- Two-Weapon is clearly above Vengeance paladin S&B

Great Weapon Fighting Comparison

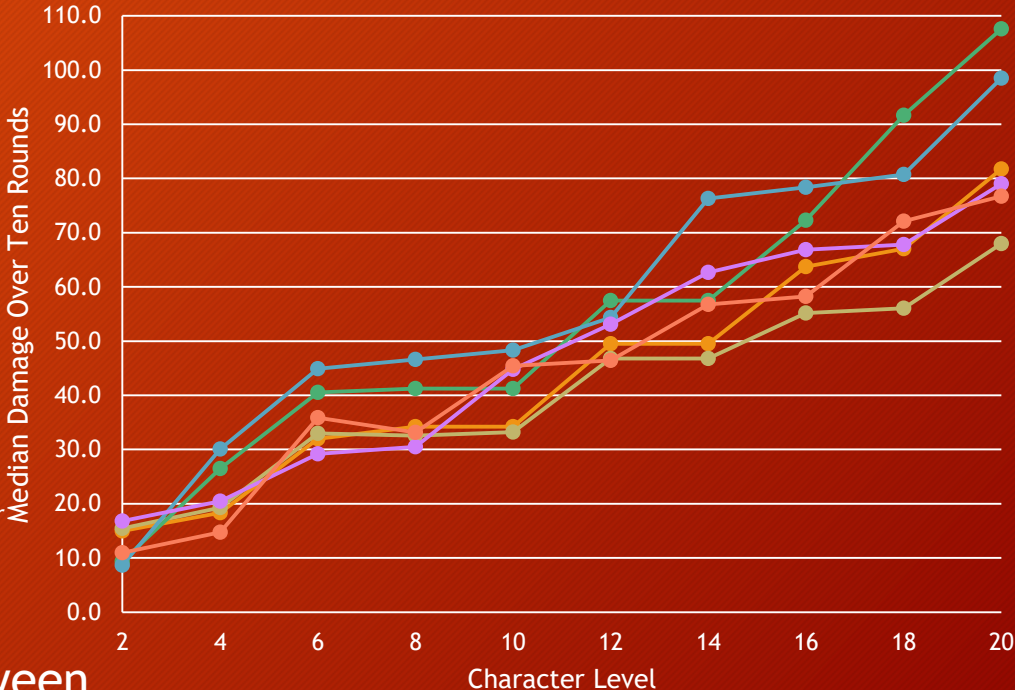
Damage per Round vs. PH Great Weapon Fighting with Feats



Before

- There is between 0.3 and 3.4 points of damage greater with the change.

Damage per Round vs. Two Handed Fighting Rev Rules with Feats



After

Two Weapon Fighting Builds

Character Level	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Champion Fighter	Dual Weilder	Two-Weapon Style, Action Surge (1)	ASI, Improved Critical	ASI	Magic Initiate, Hex		Feat: Sentinel		ASI: Con, Superior Critical	Action Surge (2)	ASI: Con, Extra Attack
Battlemaster Fighter	Dual Weilder	Two-Weapon Style, Action Surge (1)	ASI, 4 Superiority Die d8	ASI	Magic Initiate, Hex, 5 Superiority Die d8	Superiority Die are d10	Feat: Sentinel		ASI: Con, 7 Superiority die	Action Surge (2), Superiority die are d12	ASI: Con, Extra Attack
Monk / Fighter	Dual Weilder	Two-Weapon Style		ASI, Extra Attack		ASI		Feat: Magic Initiate Hex		ASI: Con	
Frezy Barb / Champ Fight	Dual Weilder		Reckless Attack	ASI, Extra Attack	Improved Critical, Action Surge		ASI, Brutal Crit 1d		Feat: Magic Initiate Hex, Brutal Crit 2d	Retaliation	ASI: Con, Brutal crit 3d
Hunter Ranger / Battle Master Fighter	Crossbow Expert	Action Surge	Dual Wielder, Combat Superiority	ASI, Extra Attack	Hunter Mark, Horde Breaker, Add Style Archery		ASI	Extra attack	Sharp Shooter		
Paladin Oath of Vengeance / Fighter	Dual Weilder	Two Weapon Fighting Style	Spl Slots 3, Hunters Mark (1d6) Signature spell, Divine Smite	ASI, Extra Attack, Magic Weapon (+1) Signature Spell, Spl Slots 4&2		ASI, Haste, Spl Slots 4&3&2	Spl Slot 4&3&3	ASI, Spl Slot 4 & 3 & 3 & 1	Spl slot 4 & 3 & 3 & 2	Feat: Sentinel, Spl slot 4 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 1	ASI Con
Pact of the Blade Warlock, Hunter Ranger, Oath of Devotion Paladin	Dual Weilder		Two-Weapon Fighting, Hex		ASI, Thirsting Blade	Horde Breaker	Feat: Sentinel		ASI, LifeDrinker	ASI, Smite, Divine Favor (1d4), Spl Slot R&P (4&2) W3	Spl Slot R&P (4&3) W3

Great Weapon Fighting Builds

Character Level	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Champion Fighter	Pole Arm Master	Great Weapon fight Style, Action Surge 1	Improved Critical '+ASI	+ASI Extra Attack	Feat: Great Weapon Master		Magic Initiate: Hex Extra Attack		Feat: Sentinel, Superior Critical	Action Surge 2	Extra attack
Battle Master Fighter	Pole Arm Master	Great Weapon fight Style	Combat Sup Dice d8 '+ASI	+ASI Extra Attack	Feat: Great Weapon Master +1 Sup Die	Sup die @ d10	Feat: Magic Initiate: Hex Extra Attack		+1 Sup Die, Feat: Sentinel	Sup die @ d12	Extra attack
Frenzy Barb / Champ Fight	Great Weapon Master	Rage, Great Weapon fight Style	Reckless Attack, Frenzy	ASI, Extra Attack	Improved Critical, Action Surge		ASI, Brutal Crit 1d		ASI, Brutal crit 2d	Retaliation	ASI Endurance, Brutal Crit 3d
Barbarian	Great Weapon Master	Rage, Reckless Attack	Frenzy, ASI	Extra Attack	ASI	Brutal Critical 1d	Magic Initiate: Hex	Retaliation Brutal Crit 2d	ASI, Brutal crit 2d	Brutal Crit 3d	ASI Endurance, Primal Champion
War Priest / Fighter	Sentinel	Spells 1st, War Priest bonus atk feature, Guided Strike x 1, Great Weapon Style	Magic Weap +1, Spells 2nd, Spiritual Weapon, 'Magic Weapon is Signature spell	ASI, Spirit Guardians 3d8	Spells 4th, Magic Weapon +2	ASI, Spirit Guardians 4d8, 'Divine Strike +1d8, Spritual Weapon 2d8	Magic Weapon +3	Divine Strike +2d8			Spiritual Weapon 3d8, Spirit Guardians 5d8
Paladin Oath of Devotion / Fighter	Great Weapon Master	Great Weapon Style	Spl Slots 3, Divine Favor (1d4), Divine Smite, Sacred Weapon	ASI, Extra Attack, Magic Weapon (+1) Signature Spell, Spl Slots 4&2	Spl slot, 4&3	ASI, Elemental Weapon (+1,1d4), Spl Slots 4&3&2	Spl Slot 4&3&3	ASI, Magic Weapon (+2), Spl Slot 4 & 3 & 3 & 1	Spl slot 4 & 3 & 3 & 2	ASI, Elemental Weapon (+2,2d4), Spl slot 4 & 3 & 3 & 1	ASI