Hot Pursuit Rules

These are experimental rules for simulating horseback chases through packed streets, over open plains and along winding mountain roads.

Setting Pace

Pursuit rules work by a 'pace' system by which one member of the chase, the 'objective' sets the pace and all other participants move at a relative speed. This represents the relatively velocities of each of the participants.

The pace is set at the start of the round, before the first initiative order, and effectively represents the objective, or pace setter, getting their move action first, then taking the rest of their actions at their normal initiative order.

Speed

The speed of a participant in a chase is determined by making a horsemanship check. Each participant who is riding a horse (or driving a cart, wagon or carriage) and wishes to move faster (or slower) than their mounts base speed, must make a check. The check is determined by the relative difficulty of the terrain they are racing over. For example, open, empty streets or a clear plains road would be an easy DC, whereas crowded streets might be a moderate one, or a precarious mountain track a hard one.

When making a horsemanship check, you can use a variety of skills and modifiers, with varying results:

Acrobatics
Balancing atop the saddle, reigns in one hand, sword in the other, you urge your steed onwards
+d6 Speed, grant combat advantage, +2 to attack rolls

Athletics
Using your strength and skill, you grip your mount with your legs as you swing your sword back and forth.
+d4 Speed, +2 to attack rolls

Dexterity
You swing your legs over so you standing on side of your mount, bracing yourself with the reigns.
+d8 Speed, pick a side (left or right) you get +2 to defences to attacks from the opposite side and grant combat advantage to enemies on the same side.

Endurance
You lean in close to your rides flank and spur it on, holding on for dear life as the wind tears past you
+2d6 Speed, +2 to all defences, -5 to attack rolls

Nature
Whispering words both soothing and encouraging into your horses ear, it speeds on calm and steadily
+2d4 Speed, -2 to attack rolls

Carriages, Wagons, Carts and Other Vehicles

Sometimes multiple horses are used to pull a vehicle, be it a modest cart or a grand carriage. This has its benefits and disadvantages.

When driving a horse drawn vehicle, you always roll 2d4 for speed, regardless what skill or ability you use to make the check. This represents the more consistent speed you get from having multiple steeds pulling you along

For speed rolls, on a successful check, you roll one speed dice set per horse, add the number of horses and pick the highest result. You then roll a dice, determined by the size of your vehicle, and deduct that amount, determined bellow:

Light Cart or Wagon (1 to 2 horses) - Deduct 1d4
Medium/Large Wagon, Small Carriage (2 to 4 horses) - Deduct 1d6
Large Carriage/Stage Coach (4 to 6 horses) - Deduct 1d8
Battlewagon/Armoured Carriage (6 to 8 Horses) - Deduct 2d6

For example

Borath is riding a stagecoach drawn by 4 horses. He rolls for horsemanship, using his dexterity, and passes. He rolls 2d4 four times, rolling 4, 5, 5 and 7, picking the 7 as his speed roll. He then rolls a d8 and gets a 5. So his final speed is the base speed of the horses pulling the stage coach (10) plus 7 for his speed roll, minus 5 for the drag of the stagecoach, plus 4 for the number horses, giving him a speed of 16 for that round.

Relative Velocities

Your speed is used to calculate your relative velocity. Once the objective his set the pace for that round, you deduct this score from your speed result to give you your relative velocity. this is the distance you move forward or back by, relative to the objective.

For example, the objective, a wagon ridden by the a thief who has stolen a vital artefact, rolled an 11 for speed. On your turn, you roll a 14 for your speed roll, meaning you can move 3 squares forwards. You must **always move your full relative speed** even if it takes you past where you want to be. If you wish to intentional slow down, you may do so, but again, it must by the entire amount of your relative speed.

Actions in Pursuit

Controlling your mount requires you to use your move action. If you wish to use your move action for something else, say jumping from horse to horse, your mount moves at its base speed, as if you'd failed your horsemanship check.

Standard and minor actions can be carried out as usual, with the exception that if you exchange your standard action for a second movement action, your mount doesn't benefit from it.

Combat is performed normally, with adjacent squares measured from your mount. This effectively makes all players large sized, but has no other effect other than the area you occupy in melee. Any action where you grab, grapple or bull rush an enemy requires a jump check as you leap from

horse to horse. Leaping can be performed in place of any action where you would normally make a movement action, such as charging.

Due to the fast paced nature of horseback combat, moving out of an adjacent square doesn't prevent opportunity attacks as it normally would. Additionally, area of effect acts, just as walls, burst and blasts, that persist over time must be targeted at a point on the ground, in which case they will move, relative to the objective, backwards at the set pace. For example, a cloud of daggers targeted 2 squares ahead of the carriage being pursued, will appear to move relative to the party, back 14 squares, the objectives pace.

It is possible to target the mount rather than the rider. In this case, if you bloody a horse that an enemy is riding, it will attempt to throw it's rider. A rider must make a reflex save against the horses base strength and if they fail, they are unseated.

Hazards and Obstacles

Racing along on horseback at breakneck speed can be dangerous at the best of time, let alone when arrows and spells are flying through the air and swords are clashing. As such, certain special rules apply in certain circumstances.

Being Unseated

If an attack or other event should cause you to move from the square you currently occupy, you aren't immediately thrown from your horse, instead you are unseated.
Being unseated counts pretty much as being knocked prone, except you are hanging precariously from your saddle/seat. You must spend a move action to get back in the saddle, but this takes a Horsemanship check. Any forced movement, be it push, pull, etc, only unseats you, you are not moved any further. Your mount will continue to move its base speed as long as you are unseated.

If an attack or effect would teleport you to a area other than the one occupied by your mount, or you otherwise find yourself no longer astride your steed, you are thrown. A thrown rider lands on the ground and can be rapidly left behind if they don't find a mount quickly.
During your turn, if you are thrown, you may move up to the nearest (or if close enough, your preferred) mount and attempt to swing back into the saddle. If the mount has no rider, this is a free action, and you take the reins. If the mount is ridden by an ally, it is still a free action, but you instead ride pinion on the mount. If the mount is being ridden by an enemy, you must make a grapple check to pull yourself up and struggle with your unwilling chauffeur.

Road Hazards

As you race along, there are various hazards that can throw the unwary rider. Here are some examples and the checks that must be made.

Small Obstacle or Gap
A tree trunk, crate or other small object bars your way or a gap in the road, you grip the reins and spur your steed through the air.
You must either move around the object (moving left or right far enough so it is no longer in your path) or make a Horsemanship check, forgoing an speed and combat modifiers, so you may leap the obstacle. If you fail to do so, your mounts base speed drops by 1d4 until the end of your next turn and

you are unseated. Carts, carriages, wagons etc take penalty to this check equal to their speed penalty die.

Low Hanging Obstacle
A branch, tavern sign or piece of loose guttering juts out into empty space, daring to separate the unwary riders head from his shoulders.
A low hanging obstacle can be avoided by making a perception check, with a penalty equal to 1/4 the riders speed (rounded down). Failing this check results in the rider taking d8 + their speed in damage and being unseated.
Alternatively, if they pass the check, they may attempt to swing up onto the obstacle. This requires a successful difficult acrobatics check and allows them to vault onto the nearest horse directly behind them.

Sharp Turn
Ahead of you is a hairpin bend, so sharp you might cut yourself upon it. Gripping the reins with all your might, you lean into the turn and pray you don't topple over.
When making a hairpin turn, you make a check just as if you were leaping an obstacle or gap, you make a Horsemanship check as part of your movement action, forgoing any speed and combat modifiers. If you succeed, you lean into the turn and keep control of your mount, You get +2 to all defences from any attack coming from the outside of the bend. (If you were taking a steep right turn, any attack coming from your left)
If you fail the check, you an unseated in the direction of the outside of the turn and your mount moves 1d4 squares in the same direction. Carriages and other vehicles take a penalty equal to their speed penalty die.