Issue #65

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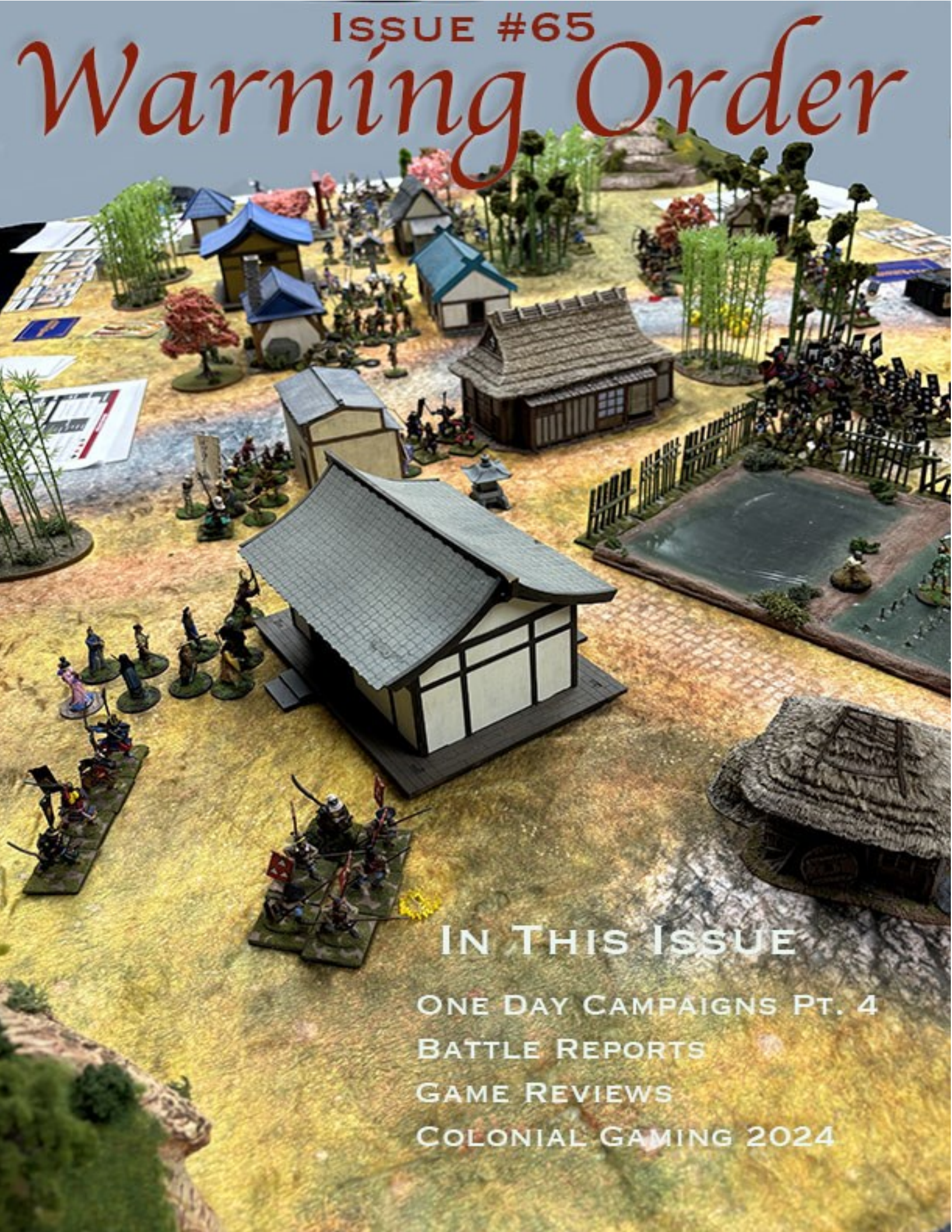

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Issue 65

Winter-Spring 2024

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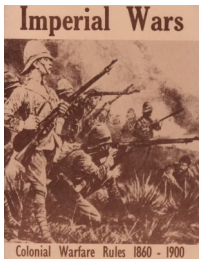
WFHGS

Colonial Gaming: Where We Are at in 2024

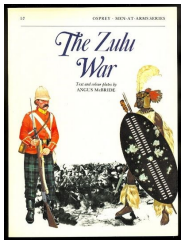
There have been Colonial miniature wargames for as long as the hobby has existed. From playing with 54mm Britain's figurines using Featherstone rules to today's gigantic Zulu Wars boxed sets from Warlord Games, Colonial gaming has long been a staple of the historical miniatures community. For a long time this was mostly skirmish gaming, but there were always those gamers who wanted to do Omdurman, the Siege of Khartoum, Isandlwana, or many other larger battles. Naturally, the main issue became getting the right figs and rules.



Back in the day, while there were Colonial figures out there, you didn't have a lot of choice! 25mm Minifigs, 15mm Mikes Models, and the odd range here and there. You often had to do a lot of conversion and many gamers simply took to buying boxes of Airfix and ESCI 20m figs for their games. In terms of rules, there were a lot of homespun rules out there, with the commercial ones attracting small pockets of adherents.

Many of us tried some of these sets of rules, but they were usually found wanting for one reason or another. Most were simply ACW or Napoleonic rules that had the words changed to British, Indian, Zulu, etc., and not surprisingly, the battles were fought out that way. Some gamers even converted the WRG 1680-1485 rules for use in Colonial games!

Colonial miniatures gaming really got going when two things converged. The first was The Sword and the Flame rules became readily available. Here was a professionally done rule book that was designed for Colonial gaming. There were charts and tables for Zulus, Pathans, and Devishes, plus a painting guide and sample scenario. The second was the release of the 25mm Ral Partha Colonial range. For the time, these figures were state of the art and Colonial gaming had arrived. A honorable mention also goes to The Courier who did an entire year's theme of Sudan gaming.



All of a sudden, Colonial gaming surged in popularity. You had a fun set of rules backed up with some really nice figures that actually looked the part. Gamers ordered Osprey books, dug up old issues of Military Modelling for the uniform sections, and tried to find copies of Zulu and Khartoum on VHS! No more using British Napoleonic gunners for your artillery on the Northwest Frontier! However, the surge also pointed out to several problems in the Colonial gaming community.

The first issue was that outside of the Ral Partha figs, there wasn't much else to go on. Naismith, Minifigs, Lyzard's Grin, and others had Colonial figs, but they were hard to order and you never knew what you were going to get when they arrived! The second was trying to find a set of rules that would allow you to do large scale Colonial era battles. You can only play skirmishes for so long before you start looking for something else.

Through the end of the 80s and into the 90s Colonial gaming was a bit stagnant. Old Glory was producing 25mm and 15mm figs, Essex had their ranges, and there were a few more options for buildings. However, outside of Piquet

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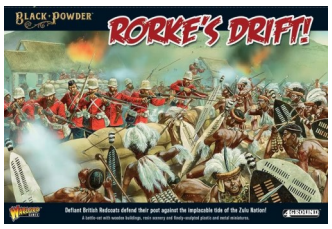
Special points of interest:

- *Battle reports for Age of Reason, Warmaster Medieval, The Sword & The Flame, a Shako Seven Years War variant, Age of Reason, and Fistful of Lead: Bigger Battles.*
- *Game Reviews for Men of Iron V, Burning Banners, and tank Duel.*
- *Two new Engagements scenarios plus all of the regular features.*

Colonial Gaming: Where We Are at in 2024 (cont.)

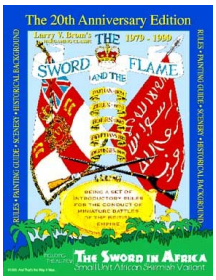
(which you either loved or hated) and some odds and ends, rules were still hard to come by outside of The Sword and the Flame. Even during the 2000s there really wasn't much going on in the world of Colonial gaming outside of the usual skirmish battles. Over the last decade, however, things have improved for the Colonial gamer.

While there have always been Colonial figures in the market place, nothing in the hobby's history matches what is available today. From 6mm to 32mm, the breadth and depth of ranges that are available to the Colonial gamer is staggering. Complete 15 and 28mm ranges for the Boxer Rebellion, Sikh Wars, Zulu War, and the Sudan are readily available. Not only are the figures metal, but there are numerous boxed sets of plastic figures and even 3D models available to print. Back in the late 70s, early 80s, who thought that you could get a complete boxed set for the Zulu War (Warlord Games) with hundreds of miniatures in it? While Colonial figures are much cheaper than their sci-fi and fantasy counterparts, some units are still going to set you back a ways.



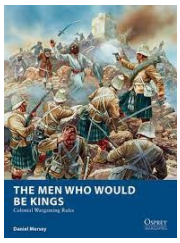
In terms of terrain, there is also a vast amount, although it has to be mentioned that Colonial gaming terrain is still way behind WW2, ACW, and basically any period that uses green mats and trees! However, there are MDF kits, 3D models, gunboats, rock formations, rivers, roads, and pretty much anything that you can think of for your Colonial era games. As usual, it comes down to what you want to spend. If you want a walled city for the Northwest Frontier or Sudan you can certainly get it in pretty much any scale, but the cost might be prohibitive.

As we go into 2024 and beyond, perhaps the biggest change in Colonial gaming are the rules that gamers are now using. As mentioned before, there's never been what one would consider a shortage of Colonial era miniatures rules. However, finding common ground or other gamers who used the same rules as you was definitely a huge challenge! This really is no longer the case. Also, you're really not restricted to skirmish gaming for the Colonial era as several big battle type rules have emerged as well.



First of all, **The Sword & The Flame** is still going strong after all of these years. A company called The Virtual Armchair General offers a wide variety of Action and Event decks to add on to the original rules as well as too many variants and supplements to describe here. While this is not the only Colonial era set of skirmish rules out there, you could argue that it's still the most popular and its influence on the gaming world cannot be denied. There is a rumored 40th anniversary edition that will hopefully see the light of day. This is one of those sets of rules that has everything in it, from uniform info to a sample game, plus all the rules and charts you need for your first game. For a modest investment in figures and terrain, you can get a pretty good start into Colonial era gaming.

The set of rules that is currently giving The Sword & The Flame a run for its money is Osprey's **The Men Who Would Be Kings**. This is part of Osprey's ever growing series of skirmish rules for pretty much every period of history! If you've played any of the Osprey rules then you know what to expect. The rules are designed for each player to run several units with pretty basic movement and combat systems, meaning the game could be over within a few hours. Again, as with most Osprey rules, they provide the framework and the gamer provides the research, scenario, etc., so there is some work that needs to be done for each game.

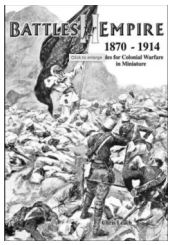


Are there more Colonial skirmish rules? Yes, there's been plenty over the last 40+ years, but these two seem to generate most of the Colonial games that you see. Whether it is on various Facebook groups, gaming forums, convention recaps, etc., it's clear that these two sets of rules are dominating the Colonial gaming scene, at least in the skirmish arena. That's not saying that they are the best rules for the period and something else may come along someday, but for now they're at the top.

Moving up the scale to what would probably be termed "operational" level or big battle, Warlord's Black Powder seems to have separated itself from the pack. Due to the popularity of their rules such as Bolt Action and Hail Caesar, it only make sense that gamers looking for big battle rules to use their 28mm units for ACW, Napoelonics, etc., would come looking to them for Colonial rules as well.

Black Powder (as well as Hail Caesar) are the next step in evolution from the very popular Warmaster rules. Units can be of any scale or size, so long as both sides are based the same. The emphasis is on issuing orders from commanders, then units engage in fire as well as melee combat. The systems are fairly easy to grasp and the large 28mm units look good on the tabletop, which certainly helps to sell the game. There are currently two Colonial supplements out for the Zulu War and the Sudan, but hopefully more will be coming. There are also a few boxed sets available for the Zulu War, which are a great deal to get into the period.

For those who use 15, 10, or 6mm figures, an alternative to Black Powder would certainly be Battles for Empire, now in its second edition (possibly a third at some point). This is another big battle game that uses something very similar to the Fire & Fury movement system. Each unit is composed of 4 stands, representing (cont. on p4)



Colonial Gaming: Where We Are at in 2024 (cont.)

(cont. from p3) a company or a tribal clan. There are different charts for the British/Colonials, Pathans, Dervishes, and Zulus, giving each a unique flavor. Battles For Empire is highly suitable for club games and/or larger battles. These rules also appeal to those who have long been playing rules such as Johnny Reb, Fire & Fury, Age of Reason, etc., as they are seen as leaning towards more of the simulation side of the hobby.

Now, these four sets of rules are not the only Colonial rules out there and before gamers start sending me angry emails, it is important to remember that these are the rules that are definitely being *featured* in many, many posts, forums, etc. I have seen other gamers and gaming groups using many different rules for their Colonial games, ranging from home brew to items that have long been forgotten by most of the hobby! There's no way that you could possibly list everything that is being played at the moment.

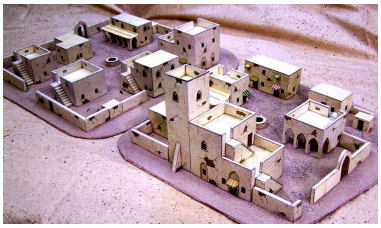
Over the last few years, I have seen games using Piquet, Science vs. Pluck, Age of Tigers (Age of Eagles for the Sikh Wars), and even Principles of War. On top of that I've seen some modified rules for the Colonial era featuring Volley & Bayonet, Fire & Fury, and even the old WRG rules that went up to 1845! The amount of rules that are out there is truly astounding and it should be fairly easy to find something that you and your gaming group feel comfortable with.

As mentioned before, the breadth and selection of figures and terrain for the Colonial era is truly staggering and it really comes down to what scale you want and how much do you want to spend! There are wide ranges of 6mm to 28mm figures in varying ranges, not to mention 3D figures and scenery that can be printed.

In terms of terrain, companies like Sarissa Precision have gunboats available along with many, many other models that can be used for native villages all the way to the streets of Cairo! There are paper models available in several scales that look very good when on the tabletop and if money is no object, then companies like the Colonial Steamboat Company make all kinds of specialized forts, villages, and large building sets. About the only things that aren't readily available are rivers (to simulate the Nile and others) and large hills/mountains. You would think by now these things would be readily available, but they still aren't.

For figures, almost anything you can think of for the Colonial era is available in one scale or the other. Indian Mutiny, Boxer Rebellion, French Foreign Legion, etc., used to be extremely limited and hard to find. Not any longer. You are only limited by your wallet and shipping prices if you're ordering from overseas! No more using Napoleonic troops for Sikhs, cutting off heads for some weird troop type, ordering guns from WW1 ranges, and so on. Whatever period you want can be found quickly.

So, if there are plenty of rules, figures, and terrain, why hasn't Colonial gaming taken over the hobby? The answer is still the same as the one from the 70s; it's a niche period in a niche hobby. The biggest challenge is still research in terms of battles, uniform information, what units to build, how to conduct campaigns, etc. There are more books on the various subjects and you can get most uniforms with a bit of work, but in comparison to Ancients, WW2, ACW, etc., the Colonial era is way, way behind.



Another challenge is doing terrain right for the era that you are trying to portray as well as scenario design. Scenarios for the Colonial era are still one of the weak points for many gamers. The huge problem here is one of balance. Just how many Zulu units against a British force that you painted up should there be? What is the proper ratio of Pathan rifle and sword units to go up against your friend's Indian force? The odds that the contest will be one sided are much higher than in other periods. What is definitely needed for the Colonial gamer are some really well play tested scenarios that will give a good game and provide a foundation for gamers to create their own. Much could also be said for Colonial campaigns in that more are definitely needed.

What does the future hold for Colonial gaming? We've already ascertained that the era is better catered for today than at any time in the past 50 years! As more and more gamers get into the hobby, there is hope that some will tire of the WH40K scene or watching dozens of tanks blow up each Saturday in their regular Flames of War game, then turn towards something new. The Colonial side of the hobby is certainly well positioned to be explored by gamers who are looking for something new as well as a part of the hobby that not everyone is doing.

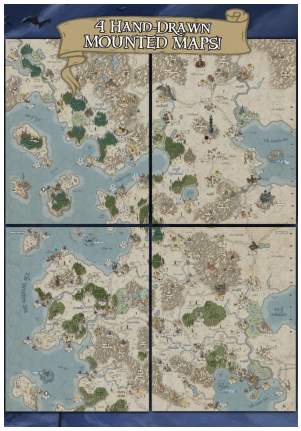
A good guess would be that more figures will continue to come out and hopefully more books that focus on battles and uniforms. Some mats for the Nile and its riverbanks would be a welcome addition! You also have to think that Warlord Games is going to add Zulus and maybe the Sudan to its ever growing Epic line of miniatures. That would certainly jumpstart the Colonial gaming hobby! Hopefully, others will start to explore these little known campaigns and find the joy in them that so many of us have found over the years.

Many gamers have tried a fantasy board wargame at one time or another, particularly if you've been in the hobby for quite some time. I still enjoy a play every now and then of SPI's Sorcerer, SPI's War of the Ring, TSR's Saga, and others. Fantasy wargames in today's hobby are usually very Euro-ish, so when a new one comes out in the wargaming genre, it does attract a lot of attention. Out of the blue comes Burning Banners: Rage of the Witch Queen by Compass Games.

The first thing you notice is that the box is much heavier than most board wargames! That is due to the four mounted boards, featuring beautiful artwork by designer Christopher Moeller. Just looking at the terrain on each individual board evokes maps from The Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones, and other fantasy settings. You also get several sheets of pre-cut, rounded counters, 200+ cards, rules, campaign book, play mats, and much more. All of the components are very well done and it would be hard to find fault for what is included in the game.

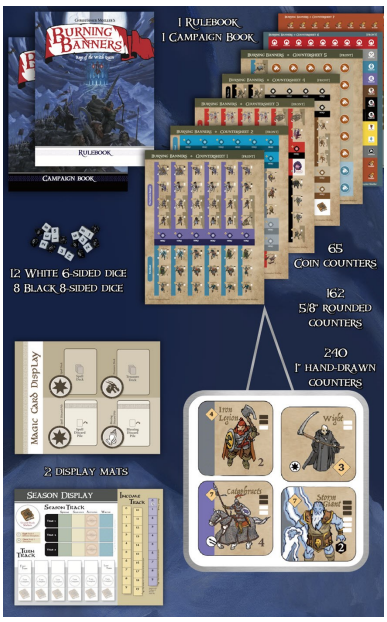
The rules are broken down in to a basic and advanced sections, with the scenarios being in the campaign book. From sorting the components it appears like there could be a lot going on and that complexity might be a barrier to play, which isn't the case. The basic game is actually a pretty standard wargame. Count your income, build units, place units, move, and fight. Only one unit is allowed per hex, so things move along pretty quickly. Each unit is rated for how many D6s or D8s it can use in combat, with usually a 5+ causing a hit. Most units get flipped after the first hit and are destroyed on a second hit. Pretty basic stuff so far.

In fact, I would recommend after playing the first scenario that you read the advanced rules and get started learning that as you play along with the second scenario. The advanced rules add monsters, mages, spells, blessings, treasures, and heroes, all of which add a lot of flavor to the game. Again, what looks like a lot of rules really isn't and once you've played a turn or two things become second nature. One of the interesting things about this game and how it was designed was that everything looks like it should be fairly complex as there are 6 factions, cards, special rules, etc., but everything fits together quite well with a surprising low rules overhead.



As mentioned above, there are 6 factions in this game (more are rumored in future games), featuring an Army of the Night (vampires), Orcs, Goblins, Oathborne (Dwarves), a Viking type faction, and the Empire (Persian/Ottoman/human). All have their own faction cards, interesting force selection, and heroes. The various scenarios usually feature a faction going up against another faction, but there are quite a few where there are multiple factions on each side. Each of the factions plays much differently than the others and it's going to take several games to figure out the strengths and weaknesses of both.

For example, the Orcs and Goblins do not collect income each turn (used to buy more units). They get their money by looting settlements and cities, while controlling these places actually costs them gold! Other factions want to control these areas to raise their income to purchase more units. Each faction also has a selection of cheap units that can overwhelm a foe, standard units, then powerful units such as trolls and dragons, plus siege engines. Finding the right combo to go up against each faction is definitely the challenge here.



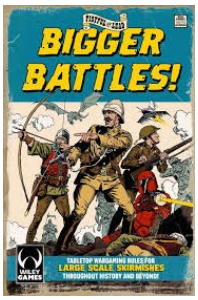
Combat is easy to do and works surprisingly well. There's no stacking (except heroes can stack), so each unit moves and fights by itself. Each unit is rated for how many D6s and D8s that it will use in a combat, with 5+ causing a hit in most cases. You apply the difference in hits to the losing side, with most units flipping to a weakened state after the first hit and eliminated on the second. Some armies such as Goblins have a horde of cheap units that only take one hit, but they can swarm an enemy. There are also modifiers for terrain such as rivers and cities.

In the advanced game there is a magic phase at the end of the turn where you can earn spells for your heroes, blessings for your army, or learn how treasures work that you found. Again, this sounds complex, but it is surprisingly simple in its execution. You can also attack (actually explore) lairs where random monsters are located. If you defeat the monster, your army gains gold and a treasure. Some of the monsters are pretty nasty and there are cards to make them wander around the board, so besides warring with another faction you now have monsters to contend with as well!

With at least 20 scenarios, including a "Chronicles" campaign, which is several of the larger scenarios pieced together, there is a lot of game play in the box. From basic one on one factions that go three turns to six player games that can go 6-8 turns, there is something here for every sized gaming group, plus it plays pretty well solo (there's no solo module, however). If you're into fantasy wargames, then this game is a must buy. The game is dripping with theme and is fairly simple to teach others how to play. I'm looking forward to the next game in the series as it is a fascinating system that should be played.

FFOLBB: Samurai Era Skirmish

Battle Report



Our group fortunately has a pretty good sized selection of figures from the Samurai era, plus as you can see from the images, some really nice terrain to go along with it! Over the years we have tried quite a few systems from the Samurai era, starting with the Old Glory rules when their 25mm ranges were first coming out (does anyone remember those rules?). From there it was on to Warhammer Ancient Battles, followed by a mod for Pig Wars, then most recently Ronin from the Osprey rules series.

Now it's on to Fistful of Lead: Bigger Battles (FFOLBB), which is naturally part of the Fistful of Lead series of rules, that covers everything from Ancients to battles on far flung planets. Bigger Battles is based on the FFOL system, but takes it a notch higher, dealing with larger forces than the handful of figs players usually get when doing the original FFOL rules.

Instead, each player gets a number of units. Most units (not all) are made up of around 8-10 figures who are usually rated a D8 or D10 for combat. There are also cavalry units (we use 6 figure units) and some elite, or higher trained units of around 4 figures each. Each unit can also have special skills, armor, and weapons (see the upper left picture on the following page for an example of the unit cards), which can be customized. Each player for our game also had a leader who can influence the units under his command.

The rules use an interesting system to reflect initiative as well as command & control. Each player gets one card (using a standard deck) for each unit still in play (i.e., 6 units = 6 cards). Starting with Kings (Aces can be used for any card), you progress down the card suite until each player has used their cards. When a card is used, a player chooses a unit, then can basically do two actions, such as move and shoot, move/move, etc. Infantry usually move 5", so if you choose move/move, you can get 10" for that unit.

For combat, you roll a number of dice according to the ability of the unit and how many figures are fighting. Most low quality troops use a D8, trained troops are usually a D10, and some figures use a D12. Basically, a 5 or 6 is needed to hit (there's all kinds of modifiers), then you roll to see the number of wounds, followed by saving rolls. Casualties are in figures removed (killed) or shock. Shock can really hurt a unit, so it needs to be rallied to reduce the number of shock markers as soon as possible. While some of the concepts appear strange and it may take a turn or two to get the hang of it, what results is a fast and chaotic affair!

For our test Samurai era scenario (we had used the rules before for a Medieval game), one side (Side A) had two units of cavalry attached to an infantry force consisting of regular troops as well as several peasant or lightly armored units. The other side (Side B) consisted mostly of regular troops, but no mounted units, so it would certainly be a clash of different styles. There weren't any real objectives outside of defeating the opposing army and the primary goal was to try this out for the Samurai era.

The first thing Side B learned was that being in the open against troops with bows is not good! Soon, everyone was ducking under cover and figuring out how to take care of the bow and arquebus armed troops. Both sides closed fast and this is where troops really started dying. The peasants on the far side of the board pressed their luck a bit too early and got chewed up pretty fast. At this stage, everyone was feeling things out and trying to determine which tactics worked best. While units were fresh, they could do some serious damage, but once the shock started to pile up, things became much more difficult. Both sides moved up more forces to engage.

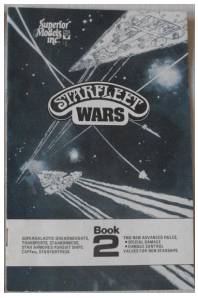
There were a few turns that took quite some time as there was battle after battle. By mid-game there were probably less than 50% of the figures that started the game still on the board! Just when one side looked like they were about to win, a counterattack or lucky card draw kept the other side in it. After 3 hours and about 8 turns, we figure out that it was going to be a draw. Both sides were seriously depleted, but the mounted units were still around and definitely a threat.

Everyone had a good time, especially once you get the hang of the combat system. There weren't any serious rules issues, but there didn't seem to be any morale rules, so units could keep on taking damage for quite some time. It was encouraging enough that everyone said that they would play it again and we were wondering how the system would do for a castle assault, so maybe next time!

A few more images from the big Samurai skirmish. The game is a cross between Saga and The Sword and the Flame, with some large units and then a few, very powerful smaller ones. Unarmored troops die pretty quickly and it is a fast and furious system that can be used for almost any period that you can think of.

Memoirs of a Miniatures and Board Wargamer Pt. 52

Non-Starfleet Battles Space Combat

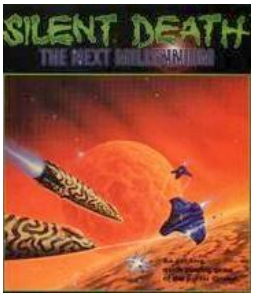


Most gamers have either heard of or tried Starfleet Battles at some point. As far as gaming hobby history goes, it pretty much has achieved legendary status and I've written about this subject a few times before. Its hard to explain properly today just how popular it was back then, but back in the mid-80s it was easily the dominant science-fiction game and spawned multiple books, magazines, miniatures, and so on. However, it wasn't the only set of space rules that was out there at the time, nor was it the only game that we've tried that covered the subject.

Many of the first wargaming magazines such as Battle, Military Modelling, etc., had pages and pages of miniatures ads. Several of these had science fiction miniatures, although the genre was nothing compared to today. However, the rules for those miniatures were pretty unknown and you would be taking a chance ordering them in sight unseen. One company that took advantage of that was Superior Models.

In the early 80s Superior Models came onto the scene with all kinds of spaceships for several races and a set of rules called Starfleet Wars. The rules were about as basic as basic gets, which didn't deter many gamers from going to their local store each Saturday and loading up on the latest releases. While I was playing WW2 micro-armor games I would look over and see 12-20 person battles with hundreds of ships on the table! While several of my group and I were interested in space combat, we never pulled the trigger on the Superior Models stuff.

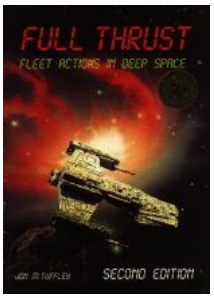
As noted above, we spent years playing Starfleet Battles, but that doesn't mean that no one was looking for alternatives. One of the more interesting sets of rules to come along was Silent Death, which was essentially fighter and small ship tactical space combat. The system was pretty



comprehensive and while on the outside it might have seemed complex, in reality everything flowed together pretty well. Although a good game in its own right, we found ourselves always drifting back to Starfleet Battles.

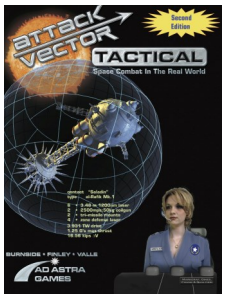
When Starfleet Battles had finally run its course at the end of the 80s, there really wasn't much to replace it. It was almost as if the hobby world breathed a collective sigh and everyone went back to playing ACW, WW2, Ancients, etc. Even the miniatures offerings in the hobby magazines started slowing down and most gamers when asked about getting back into space combat had a "been there, done that" type of answer. Miniature space combat had hit a new low.

As we got towards the mid and late 90s we found ourselves getting back into miniatures based space combat with Full Thrust. This was a pretty well thought out system with enough supplemental material to keep one busy for quite some time. The great thing was that they could be used with any scale or line of starship figures. We played one game, decided it was worth playing again, then took a break. From time to time it would appear again, then vanish for long periods of time.



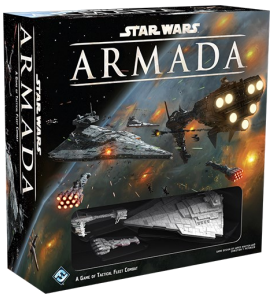
Upon further reflection, space combat miniatures games existed in a weird place for the hobby. Not as in depth as Ancients or Napoleonics, but probably more fun to play than either of those things! The ship miniatures is what usually got people interested, but after one battle it seemed like most gamers had that itch satisfied and then it was onto something else. I think most of this had to do with the fact that trying to simulate space combat always ended up looking like a WW2 naval battle. There were always paper logs for shields, ganging up on enemy ships, and trying to use your gimmick weapon at the right time.

Now there's nothing wrong with this and it was a lot of fun. However, after the battle when we discussed playing a campaign, buying more stuff, expanding into optional or advanced rules, etc., the wheels came off the bus! Everything went back into the closet where it would no doubt return to the table in five years for yet another try. Everyone likes the idea of space combat with miniatures, but really nothing had come along that would make you burn all of your other games and miniatures to just focus on that.



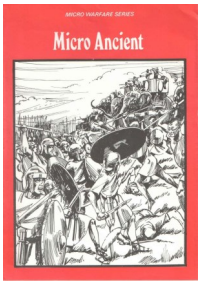
There was the thought of trying even more complex games such as Attack Vector: Tactical, but after a few solo plays trying to learn the system, I decided that trying to run a 6-8 person game would be pretty much impossible. About as realistic as it comes along with true 3D movement, it was probably beyond what the group would consider fun. There was some consideration to go back to Starfleet Battles as there was sort of a revival with a new boxed set, more ships, better SSDs, and more. Truth be told, there wasn't much interest in that, either.

Today of course, you have X-Wing, Star Wars Armada, and many, many other games, including a novel approach with GMT's Talon. All of these games have high quality components, greatly streamlined play, and are designed for gamers to have fun, quick space battles. No doubt they are extremely successful as their sales have been huge and more product keeps coming out. On top of that, many other games such as Twilight Imperium, Eclipse, and others have all kinds of ship models in them for fleet combat. A period that was once hard to find anything for now has all kinds of offerings and we haven't even touched upon the thousands of 3D printed models that are available.



Despite all of this, I have still yet to find something that I'm really happy with for this side of the hobby. It could very well be that since each gamer has their own idea about what space combat should be, that finding common ground could be impossible. That's not saying that I would pass up the chance to blow up some enemy spaceships, but I keep wondering where the game system is that would make me want to play it two gaming nights in a row.

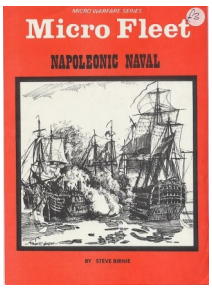
Blast From The Past Pt. 51: Tabletop Games Micro Series



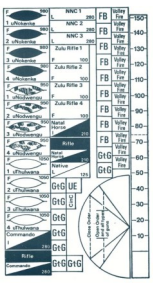
Back in the 70s and 80s when wargaming really started to take off, there were all kinds of products that were introduced to gamers. Some of these worked out well, i.e., The Sword & The Flame, AH's Russian Campaign, 15mm figures, and so forth. Others didn't fare so well and yet other products weren't very successful, but still soldier on today. One of those in the last category was a series put out by Tabletop Games.

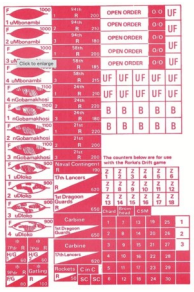
Now during this time board games and miniatures games were still basically in their infancy, so no one really knew which side of the hobby was going to grow the fastest or what gamers really wanted. You also had RPG products soaking up some of the hobby space as well. What about gamers who wanted to do miniatures battles, but couldn't get miniatures or didn't want to paint them? Thus was born Tabletop Games Micro Warfare series.

This series began in 1976 with a few initial offerings, including Micro Ancients. The series continued to expand to nine games overall, including Ancients, Napoelonic Naval, Sci-Fi, Medieval, Colonial, Napoleonics, WW1 Naval, WW2 Naval, and WW2 land combat. On top of that they put out quite a few supplements with new units and stats for most of the basic games.



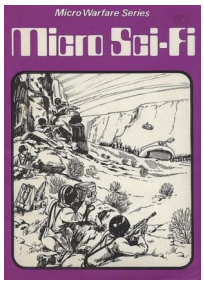
The games themselves used a fairly standard template. For a few dollars you got a zip-loc bag that included everything that you needed to play. Rules, log charts, game cards, and counters were all included. The counters were not cut and represented all of the units and status markers that you would need to game that particular period. The components weren't bad for the era and were certainly functional. The main issue is that you usually only received the units for two specific forces, so you were limited.





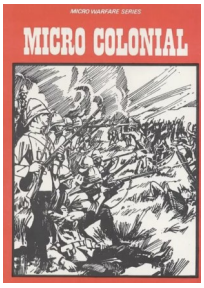
So, for example, if you wanted to play Assyrians vs. Egyptians you would need to buy the extra module that had those armies and info for that period. The cost was fairly low and you could actually get quite a few additional forces for most of the periods, so the variety was available, just not in the initial package. There were at least 17 Ancient armies and 7 Medieval that could be purchased separately. Purchase a few sets of each and you could have some really big battles!

This idea really had merit except for one small problem and that was what to do about the board and terrain. Some gamers used the standard grass railroad mat (remember those?) or a sheet of green felt. Scatter some lichen for woods, a few homemade hills, then felt roads and you were ready to go. Others used poster paper or art board, then drew or painted the terrain on. As long as you had some kind of playable surface that the counters would work on, you were OK. Besides, the terrain rules weren't very well thought out and didn't impact the game that much any way.



The rules weren't that complex, especially considering the era. However, there were some holes in the rules here and there (gamers have been compiling errata for years), but since most gamers played other miniatures rules and/or board games, you were usually able to come up with a workaround. This was an era with a lot of modifiers and these rules were no exception. Combat wasn't difficult, but it wasn't just roll 1D6 and add a unit's combat factor either. The games played at much the same speed as other games from that era such as WRG rules, Newbury, etc., meaning that turns were procedural and games weren't going to be completed in 2 -3 hours!

The main reason for this was the tracking of casualties on the logs that were provided. The combat results tables were casualty driven, so you were constantly marking off hits on your units and referring back and forth to the logs to see where your units were at. This was a pretty common way to track strength in the 70s and 80s which probably wouldn't be tolerated by today's gamers. Either way, this did add to the time it took to do a complete battle, which is why after a game or two many gamers started to look elsewhere.



In the end you had a pretty solid little game that wasn't a board game, but it wasn't exactly a miniatures game either. The series seemed to generate its own specific following, although many gamers would find at least one of these games in their collection for quite some time. The series seemed to operate in this gray area of the hobby world and as miniatures gaming grew as well as board games, this series began to drift off. At the time it was pretty innovative and it pre-dated the System 7 Napoleonics that GDW would introduce, which was an upgraded game similar to Micro Napoleonics. Today, many of the games and supplements from this series can be found on Ebay.

The interesting thing about this topic and what caused me to think about it was seeing a relatively new game called Onus! Traianus, which is a tabletop Ancients game that is trying to be a cross between miniatures and board games. The "units" are cardboard rectangles with beautiful artwork that represent the various forces in ancient armies. The game is heavily dice driven with beautiful components and plays much, much faster than the Micro Warfare series. It is interesting that once you think an era has ended or will never be seen again, something newer comes along to replace it!

Warmaster Medieval: Relief of a Siege

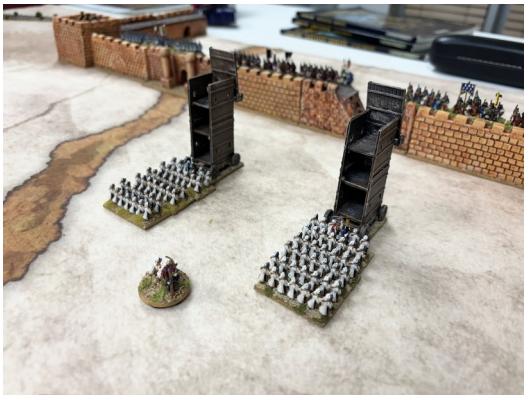
Battle Report

It's been quite some time since we've played a Warmaster Medieval game, so we figured it was time to bring it out of the vault once again. All we have at this time are Crusaders and Saracens, with the latter being a huge force while we're still working on building more Crusader forces. Rather than doing a straight up, force against force battle, we decided to make it a bit more scenario based this time.

The backdrop was a Crusader castle that was under siege. With the Warmaster Medieval rules you kind of have to choose to either do a full siege or just have it as part of the scenery, which is what we chose to do. For one thing, we simply did not have enough Crusader units to run a siege and a good sized, 4 player battle at the same time. In the end,

we set up part of the castle with the siege fortifications around it, which were off limits for attack and defense.

While we have around 3,000 points of Saracens, we only have about 1500 points of Crusaders, so we went with 1500 points for each side. The Crusaders would enter from a corner of the board and attempt to relieve the siege. The Crusaders had to either drive the Saracens from the field (failed break test) or secure



the road leading to the castle by the end of the game.

The Crusaders had a higher break point (12) than the Saracens, but really did not have a lot of skirmish troops available to them. Of course, they had the Templars, knights, and sergeants, so it was a small, but heavily armored force. The knights charge in Warmaster is pretty devastating and it's not uncommon to get 5 or 6 dice per stand in the first round of a charge, which is pretty demoralizing if you're on the other side of that! The down side of the Crusader force is usually just not enough units, so they need to strike hard and do serious damage before suffering death from a thousand cuts.

The Saracens had a lot of troops, but a break point that was lower than the Crusaders (11). The reason for that was the large number of skirmish cavalry units. The Saracen heavy cavalry is particularly nasty as they have a ranged attack (out to 15cm) and there are a lot of cheap infantry backed by units of Gazi, who are some of the best infantry in the system. It's a powerful, numerous force, but a bit hard to use in game terms.

Both sides started off fast, except for the Saracen left, which would have problems all game long! Both sides seemed unsure about what to do with their cavalry, even though they were the main striking force. The skirmish cavalry got out front and started shooting at each other, with a few combats here and there. The skirmish cavalry of both sides weren't very good in melee, so these combats were pretty indecisive. They did, however, give cover for the heavier cavalry units to get closer to the forward edge of battle.

All of a sudden, there were charges on both sides. Whether one player or another thought they had a sudden advantage, or they figured it was now or never, the infantry and cavalry got into melee. Here's where the Saracen side started to see that it could be a long night. The first round of dismounted knights versus Saracen infantry went two rounds on both units, with the Saracens only scoring 6 hits on a total of 30 dice! Yes, not very good and those two units were destroyed for the loss of one Crusader infantry stand.

The Saracens moved up more units and cavalry, getting into a huge melee near the Saracen's center left area. This involved four units of Saracen infantry, a skirmish cavalry unit, and one heavy cavalry unit. While the Saracens did destroy one Crusader unit, they lost 2 1/2 units and fell back upon their reserves. Meanwhile, the Saracen left meandered about, moving once in four turns! Things were not looking good for the Saracens and they wouldn't get any better.

Time and time again, the Saracens would position themselves for an attack, particularly trying to pick on damaged Crusader units in an effort to even out the break points, but that strategy went only as far as the dice rolls allowed! The Saracens actually withstood some of the knight charges and inflicted some losses, but every attempt to follow up was met with failure. By the end of Turn 5 the Saracens were down 5 to 1 1/2 in break points. (cont. on p11)

(cont. from p10) By now the Crusaders had moved up considerably and were in control of part of the road leading to the castle. The Saracens were bound and determined to seize back control of the road and moved up the several units of Gazis to intervene. The Crusader knights continued to attack, wiping out remnants of units and trying to secure the rest of the road. There was a huge cavalry slugfest on the Saracen right, but the Crusaders prevailed in that combat as well. By the end of Turn 6 the Saracens were down 8 break points to 2. Things were not looking good if you were on the Saracen side.

The Saracen left finally got itself straightened out and got off a few shots, then attacked the Crusader crossbowmen on that flank. After some initial success, that was thrown back as well. The Gazis attacked several of the Crusader foot units, hoping for some quick success and at least make the game a bit closer. Things were now getting down to the final turn and while the Saracens were inflicting hits, they were taking them all the same. The Saracens moved up to try one final assault in an attempt to turn the tide.

Unfortunately, that failed too! The Saracens hit their break point of 11 while the Crusaders were still at the 3 1/2 mark. To say that it was an overwhelming Crusader victory would be an understatement. While we were discussing the game (everyone still had a good time, despite the lopsided outcome), we all agreed that the Saracen tactics weren't really the cause of the problems. The bad command rolls for the Saracen left and the horrific combat rolls at times ultimately doomed the Saracen effort.

This is probably our 4th or 5th battle using the Warmaster Medieval system and we're still unsure about it. While Warmaster works really, really well for Ancients, the results for the Medieval period seemed mixed. The point values for some of the units seem a bit off and there needs to be some more special characteristics for the armies. A re-reading of the Medieval supplement is probably needed to make sure that we're using the right special rules!

We did discuss afterwards that we probably need to do a full siege again, as the first one was pretty fun. We also recognized the need for more Crusader units to be painted, so we'll put that on the list of things to do, which must be a mile long by this time! The game system is still a lot of fun and we were able to complete the game in a little over 3 hours, which worked out well.

Engagements 57: Seaborne Raid

Situation: Blue has a long coastline to defend against Red's incursions and raids. A system of watchtowers and reserves has been set up in this areas to respond to any attack. Red will invade the area, seeking to brush past the defenders in the area, then raid the villages and surrounding farms before Blue can gather large forces to repel the attack.

Period: Designed primarily for the Ancients as well as Horse & Musket periods.

Table Size: 6 x 4, but a larger table could be used with more terrain added.

Terrain Notes: The open ground is relatively flat. The village is a combination of wood and stone buildings. There are several farms in the area that consist of several buildings that can form strongpoints. Woods are light, but provide cover and should disrupt most large formations. The hills are low rises that should have limited effect on movement.

Scale: The scenario is designed for any scale. Skirmish systems might be a better choice for rules.

Red Forces:

- (6) units of infantry
- (2) units of archers or light infantry
- (2) skirmisher units or light infantry
- (1) unit of heavy cavalry
- (2) units of light cavalry

Set Up: Red's forces begin anywhere along the coastline. Red picks a spot on the tabletop/map, then all of Red's forces need to start within 12 inches of that point.

Red Orders: Red's forces must move out quickly from the coast, overrunning any watchtowers in their path. Once clear of the coastline, they need to fan out and achieve their victory conditions.

Blue Forces: Blue has three groups of forces that will attempt to repel Red's attack; The first group are the watchtowers (see Special Rules). The second is the command designated for the defense of this area, which consists of the following units:

- (3) units of infantry
- (1) unit of archers or light infantry
- (1) unit of light cavalry

The final group are the reserve forces, which will enter from the two raod entrances marked at A & B. Each turn, roll 1D6 to see which unit arrives and then 1D6 and on a 1-3 it arrives at A and on a 4-6 it arrives at B.

Die Roll	Unit Type
1	Heavy cavalry
2	Archers/Lt. Infantry
3	Infantry unit
4	Infantry unit
5	Skirmishers
6	Light cavalry

Blue Orders: Defend the village and farms where possible. Destroy as many of Red's units as possible.

Blue Set Up: The defenders may start anywhere within 12 inches of the village.

Game Length: 12 turns

Special Rules:

- Red has the first turn in the game.
- Depending upon the period that you are playing, some of the infantry units can be of elite or heavier status.
- Archers could be crossbowmen.
- Artillery could be added to either side. Give Red two batteries for their initial forces and one battery to Blue's forces that start on the board. Blue will get an additional battery on each of Turns 4 and 8.
- Watchtowers could be handled one of three ways. The first, if using skirmish rules, is to station a few archers and/or infantry figures at each one. The second if using larger scale rules, is to position the smallest unit allowed in the rules at each one or break down a unit so that it can recombine if it pulls back from the watchtowers. The third and easiest way is to assign some sort of D6 roll for hits/casualties to an enemy until the watchtower is occupied/ destroyed.

Victory Conditions: For each farm that Red pillages, score 2 points (possible 10 points). A farm is pillaged if one of Red's units spends a full turn not moving at its location. Pillaging the village is worth 10 points, but requires two units spending one turn each not moving at its location. For each Red unit eliminated (routed off board or destroyed), Blue gains one point.

10+ points	Red victory
5-9 points	Draw
Less than 5 points	Blue Victory

Variants: Add additional forces and a large board for bigger group games. Change the victory conditions so that Red's forces have to retreat back to the coast.

Engagements 58: Peninsular Withdrawal

Situation: Blue has been forced back into a peninsula and is hoping to evacuate its forces. Blue has fortified a line across the peninsula in an effort to delay Red while transport ships come into the port to withdraw the units that are trapped there. Red needs to punch through the main line of defense, then prevent as many of Blue's units as possible from evacuating the peninsula.

Period: Designed primarily for the Horse & Musket period, but with modifications it could be used for many other eras.

Table Size: 6 x 4, but a larger table could be used with more terrain added.

Terrain Notes: The open ground is relatively flat, but the lone hill commands the area on the map and there should be movement penalties of at least 50% for moving on it. The river that is crossed by the bridges at A & B can be crossed by infantry and cavalry at the cost of one turn of movement. The village is made up of stone and wood buildings. See the Special Rules for the main line of resistance.

Scale: The scenario is designed for any scale.

Red Forces: Red's forces have been preparing for an assault and have assembled the following units:

- (10) Infantry units
- (3) Light infantry units
- (2) units of heavy cavalry
- (2) units of light cavalry
- (3) artillery batteries

Set Up: Red's forces may enter from the western edge of the board on Turn 1.

Red Orders: Break through the defenses and seize the village and dock area to prevent Blue from evacuating all of their forces.

Blue Forces: Blue has the following forces available to defend the main line of resistance:

- (6) infantry units
- (2) Light infantry units
- (1) Heavy cavalry unit
- (1) Light cavalry units
- (2) batteries of artillery
- (4) Disorganized infantry units

Blue Orders: Hold the main line of resistance for as long as possible while the disorganized units are evacuated. Fall back to the dock and try to save as many units as possible.

Blue Set Up: Blue's forces may be set up anywhere to the eastern side of the main line of resistance. The 4 disorganized infantry units are in the village/dock area.

Game Length: 15 turns

Special Rules:

- Red has the first turn in the game.
- One of the bridges at A or B may be rigged for demolition. Blue can attempt to destroy the bridge when one of Red's units gets closer than 6 inches from the bridge. Roll 1D6 and on a 1-5 the bridge is destroyed.
- The main line of resistance is the brown line marked on the map. It consists of a shallow trench/ditch that should be a 25% movement penalty. Blue may also have entrenchments for up to 4 infantry units and both artillery batteries.
- Evacuation-each turn, one unit that is at the dock may be evacuated. The first 4 units MUST be the disorganized infantry units that are already at the village and dock area.

Victory Conditions: At the end of 15 turns, victory is determined by how many units were evacuated, including the four disorganized infantry units that started at the village and dock area.

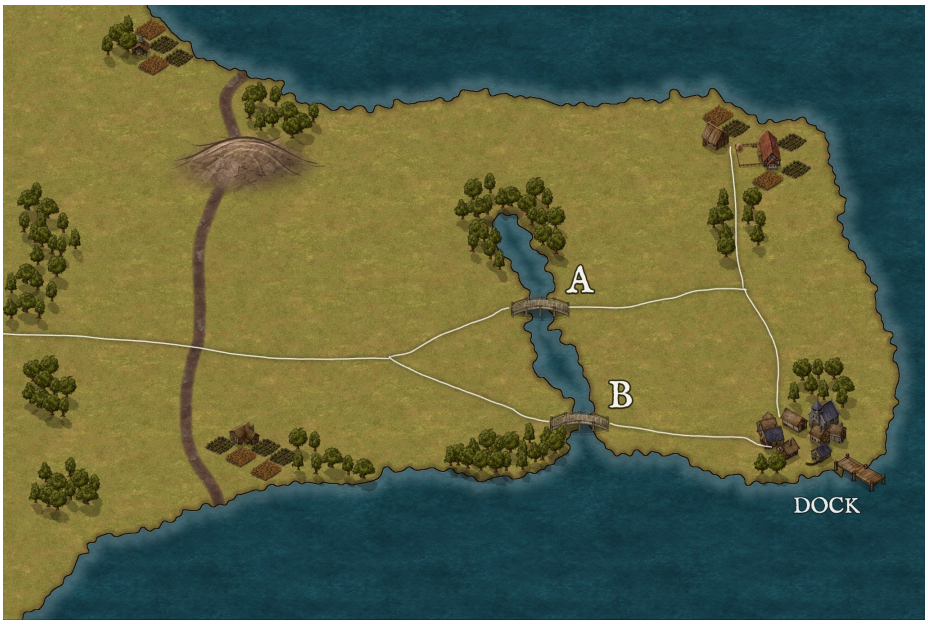
4-6 units	Blue Loss
7-9 units	Draw
10+	Blue Victory

Variants: Feel free to add more units to both sides and/or adjust the victory conditions. For the Ancients period, add some units of skirmishers to both sides.

If playing a WW2 scenario, do the following:

- Change Red's artillery batteries to being off-board.
- Heavy cavalry units are converted to armor units.
- Light cavalry units are converted to recon units.
- Add a unit of combat engineers to both sides.
- Change the light infantry units to mech infantry units.
- Add one heavy weapons unit and AT battery to each side.

Each side could also be assigned a number of airstrikes and Blue could have fire support from off-shore.



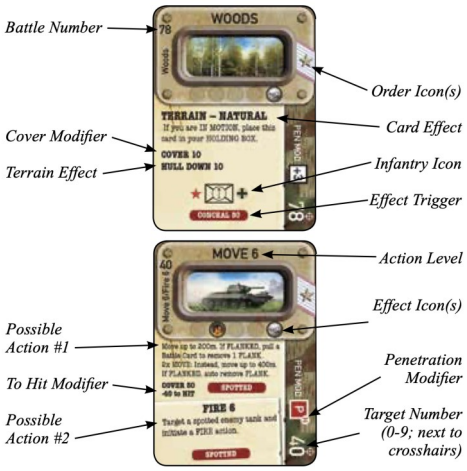
Gamers are fascinated by tank combat, whether it's early WW1 tanks trying to cross enemy held trenches, Panthers vs. hordes of T-34s, or M1 Abrams in the Gulf Wars. With the incredible amount of games coming out each year you knew it was only a matter of time before someone hit upon the idea of just doing a game about combat between individual tanks. While there have been many, many board and miniatures games set at 1:1 scale that featured detailed armor combat, there's not been many that I can recall where you commanded an individual tank.

Enter GMT's Tank Duel. When you open the box the first thing that strikes you is that there is no map! What you do get, however, are quite a few tank displays, player aid cards, two sheets of markers, and lots of cards. All of the components are up to the usual high standards of GMT and you do get quite a few. You also get a rule book and a play book, with an extensive example of play, which is pretty helpful while you learn the game.

The rules are fairly easy to digest, but this is definitely one of those games where just reading things doesn't necessarily help you to understand how to play! The best thing to do in this case is to familiarize yourself with the tank display cards and the actual playing cards themselves. The base game comes with German and Russian tanks from late '41 to the end of the war in '45. Each display has tracks for range, the status of the crew, the firing tables, and then a generic track to mark move/fire levels, VPs, etc. Again, it looks easy to use, but you need to run through a few turns to figure it out.

Then there are the Battle Cards, which make up most of the cards that you will use each turn. At first glance, it looks pretty confusing with all of the symbols, text, options, etc. There is also a deck of damage cards, On Fire, Broken, and then alternate terrain cards. The Battle Cards are essential to the game and is what drives the action. Each turn a player usually gets 4 cards plus 2 for each tank that they are controlling.

One of these cards is set aside to be used to determine initiative for that turn. When its your tank's turn, you can then play one or more cards to move, fire, increase % to hit, and so on. When you use a move card you are considered to be in motion and only stop when you either discard a card or place a terrain card. If you can successfully conceal yourself, all tanks who had spotted you lose that status. When you need to do a die roll you flip a card and the number at the bottom serves as a D100 roll.



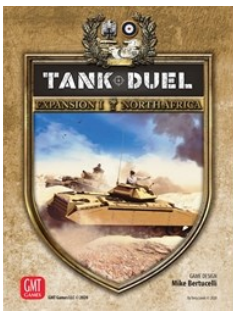
Firing is a bit more complex than moving. You measure the range, adding together where you are in relation to the middle of the battlefield and where the enemy is. If you are 600 meters from the center of the battlefield and your opponent is 400 from that same spot, then you look up 1000 meters on the firing table for your tank. You then add cover, tactics cards, leadership cards, target profile, etc., to get the final number. Flip a card to see if you hit and if you did, then you need to roll the location, then check the penetration modifiers, all of which are on the cards. If you penetrate the enemy tank, you then flip a damage card.

Damage ranges from crew members being killed/wounded to catastrophic explosions. Crew members may need to switch positions, movement can be halved do to track damage, the tank is on fire, and more just add to the chaos. If your tank is destroyed, you simply bring in another one from a "reserve" behind the lines. This keeps all players in the game until the end, which is determined by how many decks you go through during the battle. On the final deck a "Game Ends" card is inserted into the bottom half of the deck, which is a clever way to keep things interesting. Victory is achieved by scoring VPs based on killing tanks and crew.

It should be mentioned that the game can hold up to 8 players! There are sufficient displays, cards, etc., for some really huge battles, or players can each run multiple tanks which is a challenge from my experience. The base game play book comes with several basic scenarios plus two historical ones and you can make your own. There are also optional rules to add a bit more complexity as well as quite a few terrain cards for city fights, battles for hills, and more. There certainly is a lot of game play in the box for your money.

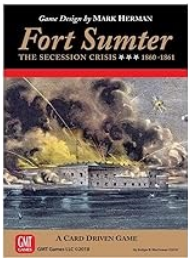
If there is one problem with the game it would be that a level of "sameness" could creep in, meaning that whether you are commanding a T-34/85 or a Panther, after a while all the tanks seem to play the same. Yes, they have different firing charts, armor values, etc., but you're using the same cards and just trying to knock out the enemy tanks. While we had fun with our first group game, I could see where after the third or fourth time the interest level might drop a bit.

However, the series has proven to be popular (as our most GMT series) and there are already different tank packs out with more planned. There is a new North Africa supplement and my guess is that before long the system will move to the Fall of France, Korea, and maybe even more modern settings.



How Fast Playing Does It Have To Be?

I was looking at a monthly production update from a gaming company and kept seeing the term "fast playing". Obviously, this isn't the first time I've seen that term in wargaming circles recently, but I've been taken aback by how often it is getting used! It seems like almost every new board game or set of miniatures rules heralds itself as being "fast playing", as if there is some sort of competition out there to see who can design the wargame or miniatures battle system that can be completed the fastest.



Where did all of this come from? Well, it's been building up for quite some time and the ripple in the pool has now reached tidal wave proportions! SPI, Avalon Hill, GDW, WRG, and many others share some of the blame with all of their games and rules through the 70s and 80s. It wasn't uncommon to spend 6 hours playing a dogfight with SPI's Air War or an all night NATO vs. Warsaw Pact slugfest using Challenger 2, but as the years moved on, so did many of these game systems and during the 90s and early 2000s we seemed to have reached an equilibrium.

Starfleet Battles was supplanted by Full Thrust, Empire by rules like Age of Eagles, Johnny Reb by Fire & Fury, Third Reich by Axis & Allies, and so on. Not in all cases, but there were clearly some faster playing options available for similar themes. Many gamers went on with their older games or tried and true systems, but others kept looking for newer designs and ways to do things. Now, however, we've really started to test how fast wargames can be played.

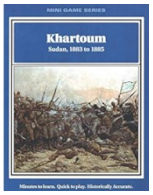
The Warhammer game series was probably the first to really start this trend, shortening down the turns in a game and making forces a bit smaller than they used to be. To their credit, they realized that their customer base for today and more than likely tomorrow wanted cool miniatures with easy rules that could be finished in 2 hours. Obviously and based on their growth, they called that correctly. Other companies took notice and soon there were all kinds of gaming systems, both board and miniatures based, flooding the hobby. Today, the trend towards quicker playing games (whether they are all classified as wargames could be debated) is growing and there seems to be no end in sight.

Personally, I hold no grudge against faster playing wargames as long as there is something of *substance* to them, which is usually the problem. Take for example, GMT's Fort Sumter, which is part of a growing series of games that you could play over lunch. Beautiful game, fairly easy to learn, and yes, you can easily get in a game in under an hour. The problem? After you've played it two or three times there's really nothing more to learn or get excited about. Where in the past these kind of games were usually restricted to Metagaming, TSR, or Task Forces' micro-game formats for $3-5, now you're talking about paying $50-70 for the same sort of thing.

I'm a big fan of the Homeworld real time strategy computer games and had always hoped that someone would do a board game about that series of games. Well, someone did and when I first looked at the Kickstarter project there was a certain level of excitement seeing all of the ships in plastic from the computer game. That excitement was quickly tempered when I looked at the combat system. Basically, you'll pack the board with plastic ships and fighters, then roll dice to kill things at an alarming rate! Count me out for that.

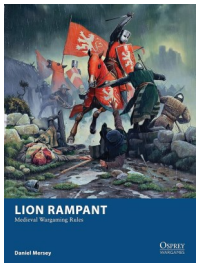
There are also all kinds of solitaire wargames today as I've reported in earlier issues. Some of them, such as Compass Games' Silent War, are quite involved and the campaign game could take 100+ hours. However, there are also many, many others that are so simple that I'm surprised that they sell. Rolling a D6 to see if you take the right or the left path on a Napoleonic or Colonial campaign doesn't seem to be a lot of fun to me, but some gamers get pretty defensive about these kinds of games. In fact, there's almost an entire sub-section of wargaming that has evolved for these solitaire games.

Many other fast playing games, in particular miniatures based systems, have tried to separate themselves from other fast playing rules by adding gimmicks, such as



special dice, tokens, faction sheets, cards, or anything else to make it seem like their game is new and/or better when compared to others. There's always been these kinds of things in miniatures games, but nothing to the level that they've reached now. Roll a handful of special dice and if you get two axes, a spear, and a penguin, then you just destroyed the French Imperial Guard! Again, however, for every person like me who says that a game does a poor job of simulating almost any kind of warfare, there's a gamer standing by to drop a ton of cash on the game's next supplements!

Another trend is simple, but generic sets of rules and/or board gaming systems. Here, you just take the base system and apply whatever theme that you want to the rules. Everyone hits on a 5 or a 6, but in a set of Samurai rules you get to re-roll all 3s and 4s, while in the Napoleonic rules a cuirassier charge gets to roll an extra dice. Nothing about command & control, national differences, eras of training, and terrain is only marginally discussed. What many like about these kinds of rules are that you need few figures (painting takes too much gaming time), you don't need to really know the history (again, reading takes up gaming time), and the only tactics you need to concern yourself with is how to game the system to use more special dice than your opponent (tactics really weren't important in historical battles anyway).



What we're left with is a lot of gamers claiming to have played a Dark Ages raid, a battle in the Crusades, or the main attack at Borodino, all in under 90 minutes. But did they, or is it just a mirage disguised by using simpler, faster playing rules with those themes tacked on? Over the last several years I've played some of these systems and once I'm through with the game I can't really remember what we were playing or why as everything was so generic.

But I guess that's what most of today's gamers want and it's their money, time, and choice. I still think that there are many gamers who prefer rules and board games with more substance, but I wonder how much faster playing can things get!

1/285th terrain exists in this weird place in the hobby where on one hand you desperately need it for your micro-armor battles, but then again it seems like too much work! Instead, most gamers throw down some hills, rubber roads, and whatever they have for trees and call it good. However, a good looking 1/285th game, whether it depicts U.S. forces driving on Falaise or Prussians attacking Austrians in the Seven Years War, buildings need to be an integral part of the terrain.

Obviously, there are a lot of 1/285th buildings around for gamers to use for their games. However, that's not saying that all of them are good! Many from the 70s and 80s are still around today, but were plaster lumps with windows and doors carved into them! Today, however, there are 3D printed ranges, companies with large selections (Levan, Timecast, GHQ, etc.), plus some incredible paper buildings. The amount of selection is pretty incredible and you should be able to find whatever piece of terrain that you need.

However, what do you do with the buildings once they arrive? While paper buildings are mainly pre-colored for you, they may still have to be based. What is a good process for doing this and how should a gamer approach getting 1/285th buildings ready for a game? Here are hopefully some helpful hints.

1. **Determine Base Sizes**: I am of the firm belief that 1/285th buildings need to be on a base. This helps with not only the layout, but with handling during set up and take down of the game. They also give you a chance to make a mini-diorama and usually takes a game to the next level. Before beginning a project, I'll put a few buildings on several different sized rectangles to see what works best. Once you've determined a good size, then you should try to keep to that size where possible for all of your buildings.

2. **Base Material**: I use basswood as it cuts fairly easily, takes paint well, and most importantly, isn't very flexible. When using plastic or thinner balsa wood, the base might flex a bit and the buildings, walls, etc., can suddenly pop off!

3. **Create a Layout**: This sounds easier than it sometime is. Take your standard base, then lay out the buildings on it to see if everything fits. Do you need room for trees? Will there be walls around some of the buildings? Did you want to add a road or parking lot? Maybe three buildings won't fit after all, so use two and add some extra trees. Planning things out ahead of time prevents disasters later.

4. **Prime, Base Coat, Ink, and Dry Brush**: I usually prime my 1/285th buildings white, which helps them to take lighter shades of colors better. Then I paint the base coat followed by using a water/ink mix that flows into the cracks and details. Finally, I dry brush the buildings with the base color + a bit of white.

5. **Add The Details**: The next stage is painting the doors, roof, and windows. For a long time I used a light blue-gray for windows, while many gamers use black. For modern buildings I've been using a watered down blue ink wash that seems to give them that tint you see in many cities.

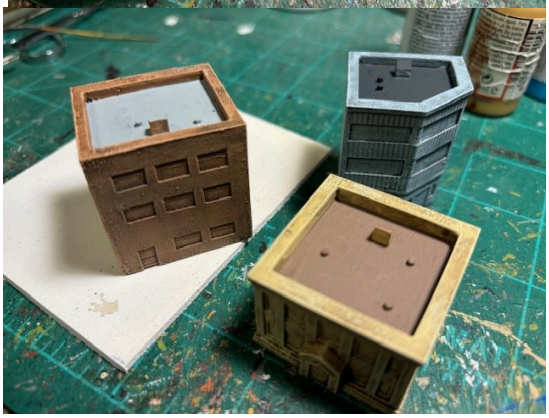
6. **Prep The Base**: At this stage, the streets, sidewalks, etc., need to be painted onto the base. The areas in between the buildings, park strips, etc., need to be flocked with whatever color grass that you use. I always go a bit further than I marked on the base as gluing the base down perfectly is hard and sometimes the buildings aren't perfectly flat, so the base can show under them.

7. **Glue the Buildings to the Base**: At this stage it's time to glue the painted buildings to the painted bases.

8. **Add Trees**: I usually drill the holes for the trees before flocking the base, but it can really be done at any time in the process.

9. **Seal The Buildings**: I usually spray one coat of clear gloss or semi-gloss, followed by one or two coats of clear flat spray.

There's your finished buildings on a base! 9 steps sounds like a lot, but this doesn't really take up a lot of time. With some practice you can take what is thought to be a boring chore and turn that into a miniature work of art!



When GMT's Men of Iron first came out, I wasn't sure where the game was going. It was fun to play and an interesting take on medieval combat. There were some odd rules questions here and there, plus no real examples of play, particularly regarding two on one melees. The counters, while usable, were hard to pick out for setting up scenarios. We played a few games of it, then set it aside to see what developed.

Now 19 years later and the fifth game in the series has arrived: Norman Conquests. What you get in the box is very similar to the previous games in the series, although there have been some minor improvements here and there. First, you get three 22 x 34 double-side map sheets for the various battles included with this game. The maps are kind of unremarkable, solely for the fact that there wasn't a lot of terrain at these battles! The counters are now 9/16ths, which is a huge improvement and thankfully the various factions are of different colors, which greatly helps in the sorting of them.

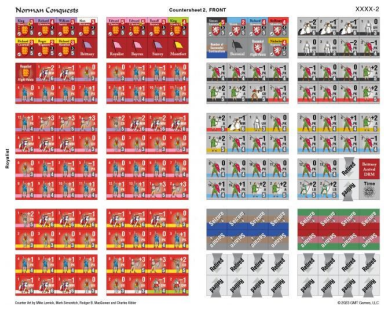
The big improvement is a unified set of rules for the entire series, with color-coded sections that only apply to certain games. The rules were never too hard to begin with, but now at least you know which sections to read for which games. The terrain charts and combat tables are nicely done and there is a playbook with all of the scenarios. The only complaint is that it would be great if the scenarios were printed on cards rather as pages in the play book. Overall, the components are pretty good and things continue to show small improvements as the series progresses.

The battles include:

- Civitate 1053
- Fulford 1066
- Stamford Bridge 1066
- Hastings 1066
- Tinchebrai 1106
- Lewes 1264
- Evesham 1265

All of these battles are fairly small and are listed as taking anywhere from 1 -2 hours. We've found that these allotted times are a bit generous and our games usually take an additional hour or so to play with the looking up of rules or trying to figure out a strategy. Having said that, however, these scenarios are perfect for either a short game session or introducing new gamers to the system.

For those who are unfamiliar with the system, each battle is fairly straightforward (as were a lot of battles during this period). Each side has a number of commands with each command having a leader. The leaders are rated for their ability to activate a command, their command range in hexes, movement factor, and their charisma. The various units of each command have colored stripes across the counter that match their leader. Each unit has an icon for its troop type (pike, men at arms, archers, dismounted knights, etc.), it's defense rating, and movement. The other side of the combat units is used when the unit becomes disorganized (which happens a lot).



There really aren't any turns per se (some scenarios have a time mechanism when commands pass on an activation), so the game begins with a command activating. When a command activates, you check the command range of the leader, then all units in range that share the same color code can move/shoot/melee. When that command is finished, the player can roll for a "continuation" by rolling another leader's activation rating or less. If successful, that command then activates. If unsuccessful, the opposing player can select any command to activate. You can't activate the same turn twice in a row, but this system keeps things in a continuous and chaotic flow as the game progresses.

Combat is in two forms; shooting with archers and crossbowmen, and melee. Shooting is pretty easy as you check the range and roll a D10, which results in either a miss or the target being disorganized. If already disorganized it might be forced to retire. Melee is a bit more complicated and has a lot more modifiers, but the results again are that the enemy unit is not harmed, disorganized, or retires. There is a constant back and forth along the main line of contact, then all of a sudden holes open up. Also, a lot of units get disorganized, so some activations are spent rallying them. Retired units are moved back to the rallying standard that each force has and then they have to be rallied to return to the fight.

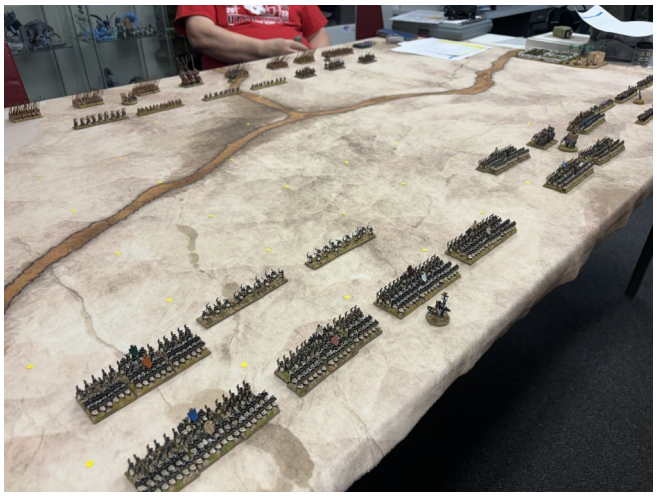
When you first play a scenario from the Men of Iron series there are usually a lot of questions and it takes a few combats to figure out how things work. While there isn't anything here approaching rocket science, the two on one type combats were always a bit confusing. Fortunately, the consolidated rules and play book have an example of that type of combat. Usually, your second game goes much better and it is one of those game series that you can break out at any time, do a quick rules refresh, then start a game.

This is a good entry into the series. The battles are fairly small and can be completed quickly. At this time there is some discussion about Fulford having an incorrect map, so we'll see what GMT's response is. If you like medieval battles, then this series is something that you should really look into. With five games in the series now, there's around 25+ battles to keep you busy, plus it looks like more games in the series are planned for the future.

Ancients: A Different Approach

Rules Play Test

A while back, our gaming group did a play test of an interesting set of rules called **Control to Catastrophe**. At that time it was a set of reference sheets, some ideas on paper, and some hastily built army lists. The rules since then have been to the point where they are basically finished, with images, diagrams, scenarios, and an extensive range of army lists. We were asked to do one more play test to make sure that the rules were in a state to be published at some point.



For the battle we would have use of a 6 x 4 table, which precluded us from using the 28mm Seleucids and Republican Romans that we would regularly use. Instead, we went with 10mm Seleucids and Indians as they would fit the table well, giving us some maneuver space. In the rules the Indian heavy infantry is comprised of bow and spear, so this worked out well by putting a bow armed unit in front and a spear armed Warmaster unit in back. Other units, such as pike, skirmishers, and cavalry could be used as is. The rules give suggestions for basing, but you can pretty much use any figs that you have.

The first thing you need to know about the rules is that they do use a gridded mat, which seems to be a recent trend for game designers. Not having one, we marked out the boxes with some yellow dots on the desert mat, which showed us where they were without being too annoying. We scaled down the boxes to 6 inches square for 10mm, but the players are left to decide which size boxes would work best for their games.

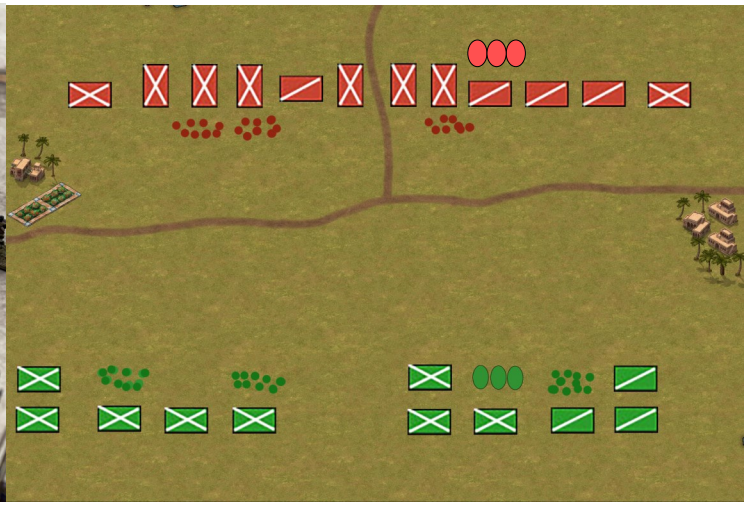
We settled on 150 points per side, which would give the Indians numerical superiority, but some of the Seleucid units would definitely be of higher quality. Not knowing what to really pick from the army lists or how they would play out was a challenge, so we just made up the armies and started deployment. There are army lists that cover everything from Egyptians to the War of the Roses, so most gaming groups should be able to use their Ancient or Medieval armies for this.

We went over the primary systems, mainly by going through the player reference card, which has all the info that you need for the game. Movement is basically one box for heavy units, two for skirmishers and some cavalry, and there are some units that can do three boxes. Each unit, depending upon size, can sustain a range of hits before going shaken, then needing to check for what is called catastrophe and/or rupture. For example, an Indian heavy infantry unit (mixed bow and spear) would be marked 6-12 (3), which means it goes shaken at 6 hits, then once it hits 12 you need to roll a 3 or under to avoid catastrophe (the unit breaks apart and is removed from the game). Each unit also has a morale value that is used for various functions.

Command and control is fairly simple, but effective. As long as all units of a brigade are touching, the brigade is in control and can move. Once a gap forms the general of that brigade must go with one group or the other. The one he does not go with is splintered and each unit must roll versus its morale value to move. Once combat starts happening this situation definitely starts to occur across the board! Add in what is called Momentum, in which heavy units (pike, massed warriors, etc.) start moving forward they can be hard to stop. This is a very interesting take on ancients combat and I wish it was in more rules.

Shooting is pretty basic; just add up the modifiers and you roll a number of D6s with 4+ to score a hit. Melee is a bit more involved and there is an interesting modifier where the type of unit has superiority over another, such as pike vs, massed foot, which gives the superior unit an extra D6. Roll a number of D6s looking for a 4+ to hit, then the loser sees if they hit their catastrophe number. If not, the melee continues. (cont. on p19)

The Seleucids are in red/pink while the Indians are depicted as green. The dots are skirmishers and the ovals represent elephants.



(cont. from p18) All of this sounds like a lot and the rules are pretty comprehensive. However, once you start playing and getting the hang of things, all you need is the player reference card and the army stats. It took us a turn or two to figure out what happens with movement, but you could clearly see that units are going to close on each other pretty quickly. Skirmish combat is covered in detail in terms of evading, shooting, etc., which some Ancients gamers will like. We quickly learned to leave spaces for the skirmishers to evade to!

Once combat started to occur all across the board, things really got interesting. For one, keeping your brigade together in the midst of charges, counter-attacks, units on the flank, etc., began to be a serious issue. Then in some combats, when a unit loses by more than its catastrophe number in a single turn, you roll a D6 versus that number and if you fail, the unit "ruptures". All of a sudden, there is a hole in your lines and hopefully you have reserves to plug the hole! There were also several combats that went on for quite some time, with both units taking hits way past their catastrophe limit.

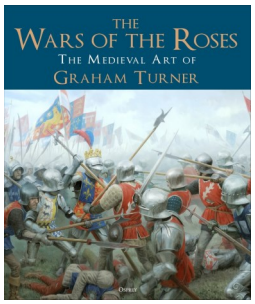
The big danger with a gridded system and how units move is being flanked. Once that happens you need a miracle to survive, so what you're left with is a series of crisis points across the board where you are trying to get units up to stem the tide of an advance, flank an opponent, or just backstop what you think is a losing effort. The boxes on the game board really change what you're use to and you need to start thinking in more linear terms instead of the free wheeling battles that most Ancients rules create.

In the end, the Seleucids prevailed, but it was a fairly bloody contest! The Seleucid heavy cavalry did what they were supposed to, which is cause chaos in the Indian formations and the pike units proved to be too much to overcome. The important thing we thought, however, is that it *felt like* an Ancients battle. All of the systems seemed to work well and there is some interesting game play with these rules.

Now where do these rules fit in is the question. Many gamers already have their chosen set of rules and/or have their forces based in a specific manner. However, if you have access to a gridded mat, these rules may be worth a try, if for nothing else than to get some good ideas for your battles. There are some innovative things here that are definitely worth trying at least once.

The Wars of the Roses

by Graham Turner



If you game the Wars of the Roses, either miniatures or board games, then you know that information is hard to come by, especially in terms of painting the units that were in the wars. Up to this point, there have been a few beautiful images in the Osprey Campaigns series, but they only cover three of the numerous battles that took place over a period of 28 years.

Those Osprey images were done by medieval period artist Graham Turner and are now featured in a large, beautiful book that sells for around $50. Not only are the images from the Osprey books present, but there are blown up details and sketches for those images as well. While you may think that those could be the only paintings in the book, you would be seriously wrong as this book is much, much more than that.

For one thing, there are paintings and sketch drawings of many of the major commanders along with their history. There are paintings of the leaders at court, on the march, knighting subjects, jousts, and more. On top of all of that, there is information about the battles, armies, armor, and discussion about liveries, all accompanied by paintings, actual images, and sketches. This book is highly recommended for anyone with an interest in the Medieval or Wars of the Roses periods.

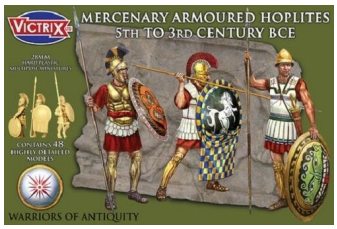
The Cousin's War

by Surprised Stare Games

Speaking of the Wars of the Roses comes this little box with a lot of goodness packed inside. In terms of components there isn't much. A small map, some red and white colored wooden cubes, and around two dozen cards. At first, the rules seem a bit baffling, but once you start playing you can see the genius behind the system.

Each turn the players get a handful of cards which are used to sort of bid for who goes first. Then you try to raise forces, adjust influence on the map, then fight a battle at the end, using the cards and cubes. Once you get the hang of the system you can complete a game in under an hour and there's a lot of replay value here. I also had a chance to try a print 'n play Napoleonic version which was also a lot of fun.

Victrix Hoplites



When I decided to add some units to my Seleucid forces so that it could represent some of the other Successor armies, I knew that I needed at least a division of hoplites. After looking around at various manufacturers and having had good luck with the Victrix Republican Romans, I decided to order some of their hoplites (the Christmas sale didn't hurt either!) along with some LBMS shield transfers. About a week later I saw that they had their additional Greek hoplite head variations available again, so I ordered some of those as well.

You get 48 hard plastic hoplites in each box/bag with a large variety of heads, arms, weapons, and of course the famous circular shields. There really aren't any command figures to speak of, although there is a set of arms for a trumpeter. All of the pieces seem to fit pretty good, but I would recommend assembling one of each of the variations shown in the instructions before proceeding, as that will help you in determining which arms, heads, etc., can best be used with the different bodies.

The additional heads that I received were in a strange resin/plastic and needed some work on the piece attached to the sprue to have them fit on the bodies. The LBMS transfers are beautiful once they are on the shield, but they do take some work to get right. In the end you get a solid block of 48 hoplites with several variations that will look good in any skirmish game or in a phalanx.

The Fantasy Trip: Bestiary

For those who still love the old Metagaming Melee and Wizard series of games, Steve Jackson Games finally put out their own version of the old D&D Monster Manual for use with The Fantasy Trip series. This is a good sized hardbound book with tons of illustrations for most of the common monsters used in this fantasy system. If you purchased the entire package, then you also received four sheets of counters that represent all of the monsters in the book along with a series of cards with the stats to be used in the game. The components and artwork are top notch and is actually a bargain compared to most other RPG series. If you play TFT then this is a must buy.

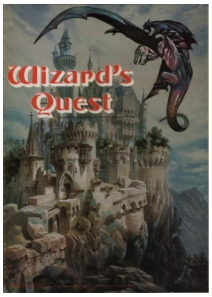
Etsy Twilight Imperium Add-Ons

While many games can simply be played as is, the recent trend in board gaming (and perhaps miniatures as well) is to produce a wide variety of components that can be used to enhance play. One of the games that cries out for more add-ons is certainly Twilight Imperium. There is already so much going on in the game that anything to help ease the confusion is welcomed.

Through Etsy, there are multiple companies offering everything from wormholes, to card holders, trays for the faction cards, scoring trackers, frames for the hexes, ship miniatures, acrylic fleet holders, and much, much more. Over the last year I've purchased some of the acrylic hexes that stand over the map board and hold ships, wormholes (replaces the flat markers), and a scoring tracker that holds the objective cards. Most of the items are 3D printed and will stand up to repeated game play. The cost wasn't too bad and they definitely helped us in our last game. You could however, spend a lot of money on these type of add-ons!

We've been attending SaltCon for several years now and there's been a few reports in this magazine about our gaming endeavors at this local gaming con. However, they discontinued miniatures gaming a few years ago, mainly due to the rise in attendance and needing more space for board gamers. This four day con has grown from just under a thousand gamers attending to being completely sold out with pretty much limited openings at tables in the convention center!

We decided to go a different route this time. Over the last few years we realized that we were paying for the full 4 day package, but were playing the same games that we could just play at someone's house! Yes, we're not the Euro-friendly, go from table to table trying 100+ games, which is what most of the gamers there are all about. In fact, one of the most popular aspects of the con is a game checkout service, where they literally have 1000+ games that you can check out and play while at the con. The main hall, adjoining rooms, hallways, alcoves, etc., are packed with gamers playing all sorts of games. Unfortunately, not many of them are wargames!



Instead, we decided to do two days of gaming at a member's house near the convention center, then just attend the Saturday session. Not only would that save us a lot of money, but we would still be able to see the exhibitor's hall and game swap rooms, while at the same time experiencing the convention atmosphere.

The group decided to play Twilight Imperium on the first day. We weren't able to get set up and started until around 1pm on the first day (some of us needed to work in the morning), but it was another epic bout of chaos! Many see Twilight Imperium as a grail game and for good reason. Yes, it is long and seems like it could go on forever, but it produces a game that you won't forget for quite some time. After nearly 7 hours a winner appeared and by that time we had so many ships and cards in front of us that we felt we were losing control of things! Still, it was a great game and everyone wouldn't have missed it for the world.

The next day we had resolved to play three games, with the first game being Kingmaker II. Three of us had played it once before, but it would still be a teaching game for all involved. The new version has much better components and is supposed to play faster, which we have found out to be mostly true. A four player game should take just under three hours, but ours took about 4, mainly due to some weird situations. As with many sessions of Kingmaker, things can seem like a stalemate at times, then all of a sudden the end rushes upon you. In this case, one of the most powerful stacks got separated by event cards and defeated in detail. The other powerful faction had all the necessary tools and sole heir, so it was off to the cathedral to be proclaimed king and winner!

We then had an epic game of Wizard's Quest, which is an old classic from Avalon Hill. These games usually take about 2 hours, but this one went just over 3! Everyone went back and forth, conquering and being driven to the brink of extinction. As is usual with this game, there are wild swings of fortune, especially with the dragon and wizard randomly appearing. We had been doing our share of "orc genocide" and got down to the point where there were only a handful of orcs left on the board, but all of a sudden they were everywhere again! After much back and forth, yellow emerged as the winner. An oldie, but a goodie.

Finally, with the time remaining, we did another learning game of Tank Duel by GMT Games. This game surprised some people who thought it might be a simple card game, but it turned out to be a deadly serious tank vs. tank battle! A PZ IVG and a Stug IIIG took on two T-34s and by the end of the game both T-34s were ablaze and there was certainly interest now in trying out some of the scenarios sometime soon.

Saturday at the con was fairly uneventful. The place was packed, however, and one thing I did notice was the ever increasing RPG population. For those who thought RPGs had gone the way of the dinosaurs, you would be sadly mistaken! There was a huge room filled with RPG games, not to mention most of the dealers had dice, bags, characters, and many, many other RPG products. In fact, it looked like RPG products outnumbered board games for sale!

The one thing that was noticeable once again, was that there seemed to be two types of games that were really prevalent. The first type were huge games with lots and lots of components. There were numerous tables where there were board games with all kinds of plastic monsters, cards, tokens, etc., in huge boxes. The second type was really small boxed games that could be played in 15-30 minutes. Definitely an unusual phenomenon and it will be interesting to see how long this lasts.

Due to some unforeseen circumstances, it ended up where there were only two of us this day at the con. After gaming our brains out for two straight days, we decided to do something that wouldn't take any more reading of rules! We settled on a few games of Space Hulk which worked out well. We'll probably have to discuss our level of participation for next year as wargamers really don't fit in at these type of shows any more. Not sure why, but there's not a lot of war based strategy games going on, despite the strength in the hobby at the moment. However, it was a good weekend of gaming and everyone had fun.

AOR: Prussian Cavalry Collapses

Battle Report

With time running out during our regular gaming week, we chose to do an Age of Reason 3rd edition Seven Years War battle, featuring the Austrians and the Prussians. We set up some generic terrain and gave both sides 16 SPs (units), which would be more than enough for a 4 player game. This usually gives both sides 4-5 cavalry units, plenty of infantry, and a few artillery batteries.

We're still getting used to the 3rd edition army lists after playing the 2nd edition for 20+ years! Basically, each side got 4 cavalry units, split into two brigades of two cavalry regiments each. For this battle the Austrians and Prussians both put their cuirassiers on the same side of the battlefield, which negated any advantage that they would have over average cavalry units. The infantry were broken into three brigades on each side, with a few units of grenadiers sprinkled here and there. Both sides also had a skirmisher unit along with 4 artillery batteries of mixed weights. Both sides were basically even in terms of the number of units.

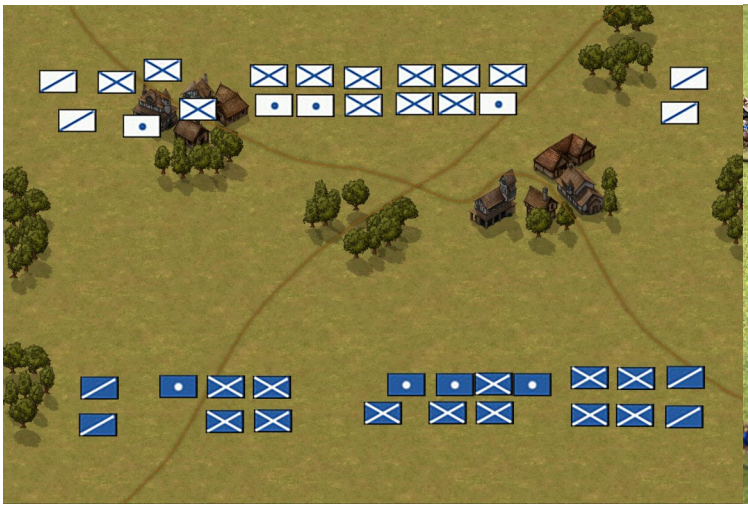
Both sides set up with the familiar cavalry on the wings. Why we continue to do this time and time again is mystifying, as we end up having these decisive cavalry fights in the first few turns every game! While many Seven Years War battles did feature massive cavalry battles on the flanks, they were usually pretty far away from the infantry contest in the center. Both sides had their infantry poised in the center, but there were different variations on the set up and where each would be going once the game began. Before turn 1 it looked like both sides would contest the flanks with their cavalry and let the infantry decide the battle in the center.

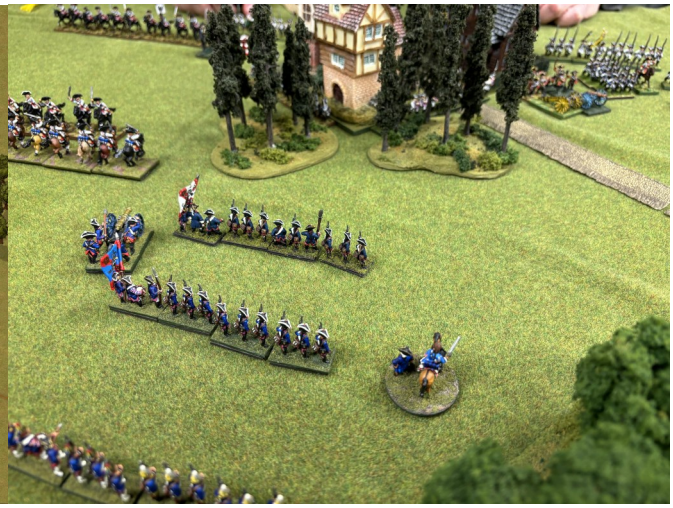
The Prussian plan went out the window on turn 2! Both sides cautiously moved up on the first turn, then a series of cavalry charges occurred on the flanks. On one flank the Prussians held their own for a turn or two, but then were routed on bad die rolls by the Prussians and good ones by the Austrians. One Prussian unit routed toward the end of the board while the other was defeated as well. Unable to evade, they were both hit in the rear and fled off the board. On the opposite flank the Prussian cavalry was overrun as well, so by turn 4 there was no Prussian cavalry left on the board!

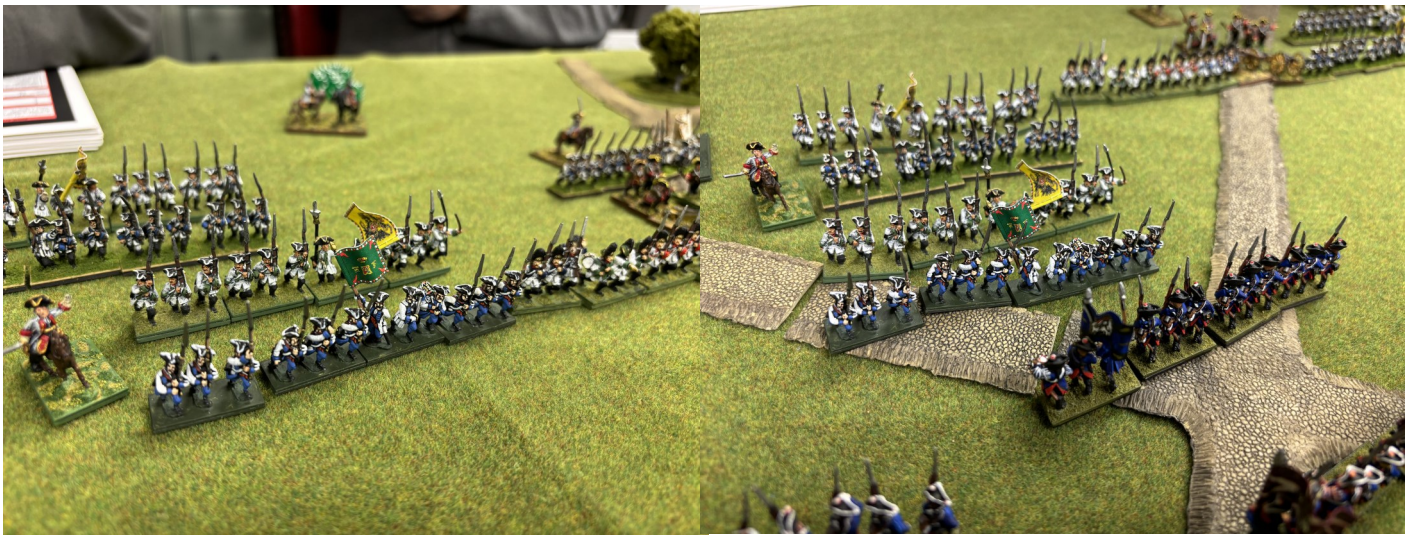
This naturally brought up a topic that we've been discussing for the past few years, which is once this happens, the losing side is in a lot of trouble and quickly. Certainly, this happened many times throughout history, but could the victorious side get their cavalry to intervene in the infantry battle? That was not always the case, but when you're playing on a 6x4 board it happens pretty quickly! We really felt that a 8' wide board would give some more options and/or fighting the cavalry battles somewhere off table.

The only saving grace this time was that the Austrians lost two cavalry units who left the board in pursuit. The other two units needed to rest a turn and then move into a threatening position. This meant that the Prussians had a few turns to press the issue in the center before things got a bit dicey on the flanks. The Prussians on the left flank started curving back to form an "L" to protect against cavalry getting around their flank while the two other infantry brigades pressed the attack in the center.

At this point in the game things did not look good for the Prussians! Nothing had happened in the center, but both flanks had caved in. There was a fresh Austrian cuirassier unit on the Prussian left and a somewhat fresh Austrian cavalry unit on the Prussian right flank. Due to the "edge of the board" syndrome, the Prussian right was OK in (cont. on p23)







(cont. from p22) that the Prussian infantry brigade on that side could just extend itself and couldn't be flanked. On the Prussian left, however, things did not look good.

There was one huge advantage that the Prussians were about to unleash and that was the +1 Prussian firing, which is in the 3rd edition. With the ability to advance a half move and fire without penalty, the Prussian infantry attacked. After a few turns, the weight of the Prussian fire started to wear down the Austrians in the front line. A few good die rolls here and there suddenly changed the situation. The Prussians on the left were still getting hammered, so the two Prussian infantry brigades in the center and center-left of the battlefield would need to carry the day.

In this they almost succeeded! One of the Austrian brigades collapsed under the combined Prussian infantry and artillery assault. The center Austrian brigade was locked in a serious firefight with the Prussian brigade opposite of it, with both sides taking casualties and stand losses almost every turn. The Austrian cavalry on the Prussian left charged and was routed, so the threat on that side of the board was negated.

The Prussians continued to press the attack in the center and the Austrians were not in great shape. One brigade was down to 50% strength and falling back to reorganize a defense. The center brigade had taken a lot of casualties, but was still fighting. More fresh Prussian infantry units came up, using their fresh, first fire advantage, adding to the carnage in the now diminished Austrian center and causing both sides to reconsider things.

By the end of turn 8 the Prussians were at the withdrawal check threshold, but due to various factors, they were still in good shape even though they were approaching 30% losses and had all four cavalry brigades routed off the board! The Austrians were nearing the 25% threshold, but similar to the Prussians had some factors in their favor. After discussing the withdrawal factors (some things were really weird in this game), we determined it could go on for quite some time, so we called the game as an Austrian marginal victory.

While it was a hard fought game with some interesting infantry battles, we still don't know what to make of the decisive cavalry battles on the wings, even after all of these years. We're determined to find a solution (probably just a longer table) as we love the Seven Years War.

TSATF: Pathans Own the Game Night!

Since there was an article about the state of Colonial gaming in 2024, we thought it might be a good idea to have an actual Colonial battle report to go along with that! So, back to the Northwest Frontier in the early 1890s using The Sword & The Flame rules (TSATF). We have several hundred 28mm figs for the game, so we can do pretty much any size battle, but as usual, trying to represent the rocky, hill covered landscape is a challenge.

The scenario was quite simple, but proved difficult in execution, especially if you were on the Anglo-British side this night! A large column was on its way to occupy an enemy held village and put down a revolt. They got more than they bargained for and now with heavy casualties and running low on ammunition, they decided to return back to their base. They have sent an advance guard to secure a mountain pass, then a bridge that lies beyond an Afghan village. Unbeknownst to the British, this area has also gone into revolt, sending a large force to seize the mountain pass. Both sides are strung out along the road, so this would be a classic meeting engagement.

The Anglo-British force consisted of the following units:

- (1) Sikh infantry unit
- (1) Gurkha infantry unit
- (1) Highlander infantry unit
- (1) Sikh lancer cavalry unit
- (1) screw gun battery (2 sections)

The Pathans had two forces, each consisting of three infantry units. They would be starting along the road, spread out with a few inches in between each unit. The Anglo-British force was allowed to have two units at the entrance to the pass, with the remainder entering the road behind them. The Anglo-British force needed to get through the village and seize the bridge at the far end, while the Pathans had to hold the pass to win the game.

Although we regularly use the Northwest Frontier Action Deck (from the Virtual Armchair General site) and that has events in it, we also use the TSATF Events deck. These events can be crazy and in the past we've tried everything from rolling for events to just drawing one each turn. This night we chose to go for total chaos and pull one each turn, which proved to be a big mistake!

Despite all of the planning and design for the scenario, you just can never imagine what will happen when you combine aggressive gamers with random card draws! Who would have thought that the first 4-5 movement cards would be for the Pathans and that they would move up towards the Anglo-British force as quickly as possible? Who would have thought that the Anglo-British players would have chosen the Sikh lancers to be out of the pass first and that they would charge into the mass of Pathans near the large compound? This is exactly what happened where they were all shot down. The next turn the British were even more aggressive, moving to close range where they were charged and overwhelmed by two Pathan units.

By the end of Turn 4 the Anglo-British were down to 60% of their force and an event card had all of the Pathans charge at once when the turn started. The game came to an end as the Pathans were going to easily hang onto the bridge and bludgeon the remaining Anglo-British units. On to game #2 this night! Surely, things would improve for the Anglo-British players if we restarted the game? As we were to find out, the answer would be no!

Again, the first few movement cards were Pathan and when the Anglo-British units in the pass entrance moved, they rolled really bad. The screw gun battery got unlimbered, but was unable to fire as the firing phase came to an abrupt end when a Halt card was drawn. The next turn the spread out Gurkhas and Sikhs were overwhelmed by a series of charges and fire from several directions. By turn 3 again the game was over and the event cards that had been drawn did not help the British side at all! We discussed moving back the Pathan forces to the village and started game #3 this night, hoping this would work. (cont. on p25)

(cont. from p24) Things started out for the Anglo-British players a bit better in game #3. They advanced quickly into open order and headed for the village, while the Pathans took up defensive positions and started to move around the flank. An early charge by a Pathan unit was defeated, but not without the British Highlander unit taking some casualties. There was some fire coming in from the village and the British return fire was ineffective.

Then the event cards hit. In three consecutive turns, the Anglo-British players got a sabotaged artillery ammo card (the screw guns would only have one shot each), a thirst card (all firing and melee were at –1 until they got next to the stream), and a lieutenant goes blarney card, meaning the Highlander unit had to roll to see what it would randomly do each turn! The Sikh lancers came up and dismounted to engage the Pathans in a walled field, but things were not looking good for the Anglo-British side.

This was confirmed in the next two turns when the Pathan fire started to take a toll. We use a house rule that the Pathans (who are in mass formation) can only fire half of their figures in any turn. Even then, they were getting pretty good die rolls and the British units started to wilt under the fire. After a few more turns it was clear that they would have to fall back and would probably be overwhelmed near the pass. The third game was called as a Pathan victory, making them three for three this night!

So, what happened to the scenario? A lot of things and unfortunately, all of them bad! Upon further reflection, the Anglo-British units should have gotten a free move out of the pass. We also need to paint up some more sword armed only Pathan to balance out the rifle armed units (all of the Pathan units were rifle armed this night-it's all we had). Also, never underestimate how aggressive gamers can be, so all of the scenario design where the large compound near the pass would provide a staging area for Anglo-British never came into play (not one Anglo-British figure entered it!).

While the games were fun, we're going to dial back the event cards. Although they add some flavor, getting hit with a few bad ones can really change the game. The Pathans seem to get the good cards while the Anglo-British got the bad ones this night and it was too much to overcome on the third game. Anyway, we'll return to this period again and it's back to the scenario drawing board.

Tricorne-1st Try

Battle Report

Lately, we've been on a sort of "Holy Grail" type quest regarding Seven Years War rules. While we've played Age of Reason for around 30 years, we've run into some issues with the 3rd edition and just the fact that the games usually devolve into something that doesn't resemble the period at all. We tried the new Osprey rules for the period and determined that it might be worth a second try and we're reserving Black Powder as a last chance.

For this game we decided to do a version of Shako (yes, the Napoleonic rules) that has been modified for the Seven Years War called Tricorne. Having played Shako back in the day and determining that it was not our cup of tea for the Napoleonic period, we thought that maybe with a few changes it might work well for this period! The blog that features the rules only has the four reference cards (although they are professionally done) and they are in a weird format that is hard to print! Hopefully some day they are turned into a legitimate set of rules.

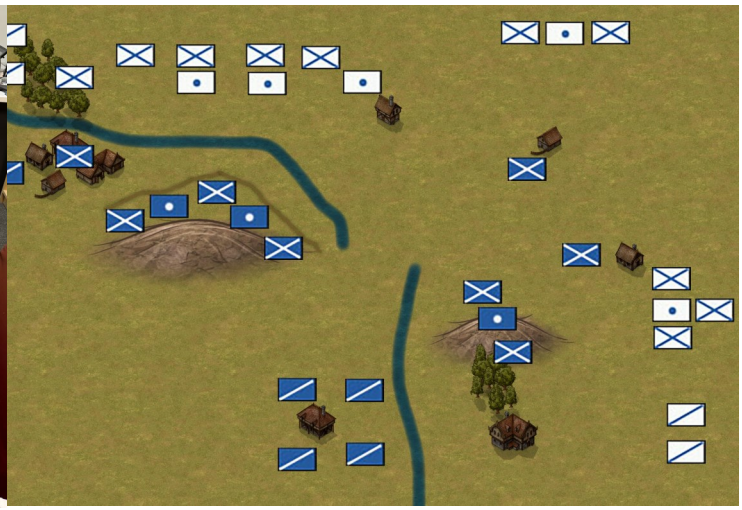
Tricorne is a set of operational rules designed for large battles. Each infantry unit is a battalion, artillery is represented as one gun being a battery, and cavalry are in regiments. The interesting thing to note is that battalion guns are represented on the table and not just factored into the infantry battalion's firepower as in most rules. We spent a good deal of time setting up the game as our figures weren't really based for these rules! We had to mix and match stands, bring out some older figs, then attach labels to each unit. After about an hour we had everything sorted out and were ready to start going over how the rules work.

The historical scenario (Maxen) saw a large force of Reichsarmee attempt a flank attack against a split Prussian force. The Prussians were firmly established in a redoubt and some villages on the far left of the battlefield. A mass of Prussian cavalry guarded the center, while a second infantry based force was on a hill guarding the right flank. The Reichsarmee forces were on three sides of the board and definitely had numbers on their side. The redoubt, however, looked pretty formidable and taking it with Reichsarmee troops (which were of much lower quality than the Prussians) was going to be an almost impossible task.

That, however, doesn't stop gamers from trying! Upon the initial setup you could see how the Reichsarmee won the battle in that they simply had to take the one big hill on the Prussian right flank,, then roll up the rest of the line. Historically, they took the hill, but then for some inexplicable reason, stopped! Here, there would be no stopping as there simply weren't any scenario rules for that. After looking things over, both sides got ready for the first turn.

Tricorne uses an interesting initiative system where each commander rolls 1D6 and then the commands go in that order. Overall commanders get to roll a number of D6s, then can substitute those for their subordinate's rolls. Each command can then move its units, which is followed by a general fire phase (both sides), then melee. Another interesting aspect of the rules is that artillery goes first in the turn, which took some getting use to! Movement is pretty straightforward and there's no "bonus" movement for charges, so you got a slow, steady advance across the board, which looked like a 7YW battle.

The other interesting thing is that units can only fire straight ahead. That's right, no weird angles, units in a trapezoid shaped brigade formation to maximize firepower, and generally treating the 7YW like an ACW affair. You march your units to get into firing range, then both sides blaze away. Most units seem to take 4-5 hits, so firefights developed everywhere. Despite that, (cont. on p27)



(cont. from p26) units can die at an alarming rate, which explains why the rules are for big battles. Once you get hit by artillery, then shot at a few turns, units get dangerously low on hits and entire sections of the line can vanish. Melee is even more decisive and most units can vanish in one turn.

The Reichsarmee did what the Prussians expected on one flank, but not on the other. They actually tried to take the redoubt, which was repulsed with a lot of casualties. After a turn or two of that, the Reichsarmee commands started to move towards the center to get around the redoubt! Here they were met by the Prussian cavalry, which after falling back several turns, decided to charge into the mass of Reichsarmee units in front of it. Death or Glory!

Unfortunately for the Prussians this meant death. The initial charges wiped out a few infantry units, but there were just too many units to overcome and the Prussian cavalry was defeated. On the Prussian right the Prussians initially held some of the villages (each building in the images represents a village-pretty high scale), but then slowly gave way. The Prussian cavalry was defeated on that flank and things looked bad for the Prussians.

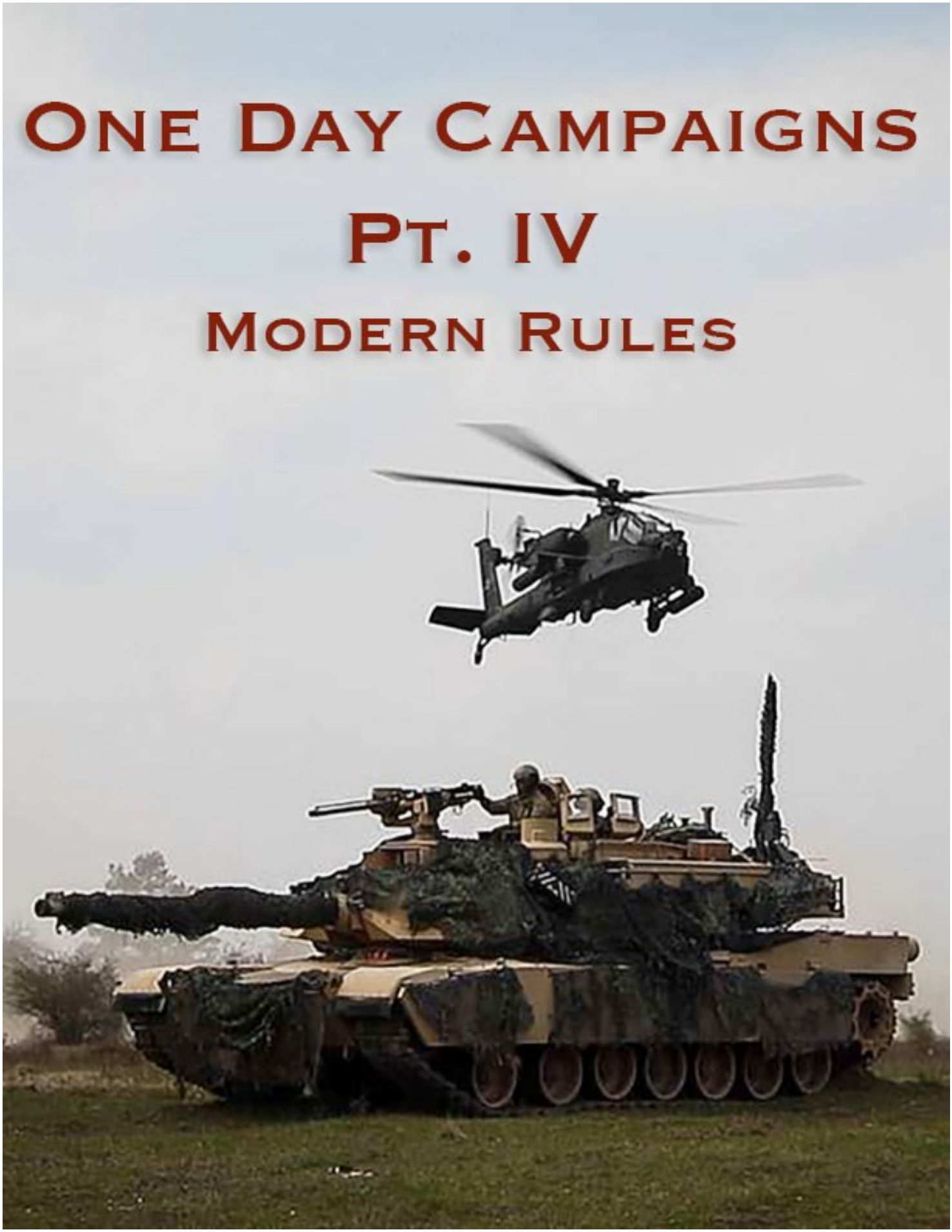
After about 10 turns it was time to take stock of things. The Reichsarmee attack against the redoubt was a failure, as was trying to force their way into the villages on the left flank of the redoubt. The Reichsarmee had held in the center and were slowly advancing there. On the Prussian right the Reichsarmee was simply overwhelming the Prussians, which happened historically. The game was then called as a Reichsarmee victory.

The initial response after the first game with the Tricorne rules was that they were encouraging. While the sequence of play and combat tables took some getting used to, the rules showed promise. The game *looked* and *felt* like a Seven Years War battle, which again for us, was a positive sign. Making labels every time we would choose to play it, however, seemed a daunting task, not to mention that we would need to rebase most of our forces, buy battalion guns, etc.

With no "formal" or published rules, we're unsure about what to do next here. While we like the Seven Years War, finding a rules system that meets our current needs is proving to be quite the challenge. With everyone getting up there in years, the fire to rebase or paint more figs for the period is gone, so we'll see what happens next.

One Day Campaigns Pt. IV

Modern Rules



Sequence of Play

Turn Sequence

I. Initiative Phase

II. Initiative Side Movement/Combat

A. Move/Fire Phase

B. Artillery Phase

C. Air Attack Phase

D. Close Combat Phase

III. Non-Initiative Side Movement/Combat

A. Move/Fire Phase

B. Artillery Phase

C. Air Attack Phase

D. Close Combat Phase

Initiative Phase: Each side rolls 1D10 and the highest roll decides which side will go first during the current turn. This can be important as if one side goes last, then first again in the next turn it will allow their units to possibly fire twice in a row, which offers some advantages. Note: **The attacker automatically gets the initiative on the first tactical turn.**

Movement/Combat: During their turn, each side will move and/or fire their units. Units cannot move and fire during the turn, so they can only perform one or the other. There is no set order in how each side handles their part of the turn in regards to movement and combat. A side can move all the units that they want, then have the remainder fire, or have all the units that could fire do that, then the remainder can move. Another method is to just move across the board, moving and firing units until that side has completed the phase. It may be helpful to use markers to signify which units have moved or fired for the turn.

Artillery & Air Attack: Artillery and air attacks are conducted against units of the other side. Follow the procedures to determine accuracy, the effects of the attacks, and any save rolls.

Close Combat: Units that have moved into contact with enemy units conduct close combat.

Move/Fire Phase

The Move and Fire Phases are combined as each side must go unit by unit, deciding if they will move or fire. Units are NOT allowed to do both during each turn. Since this could become confusing during each turn, it is recommended that gamers use dice and/or markers to identify which units have already moved and/or fired.

Movement

To move, check the unit's movement rate on the chart according to its movement class. The unit can then move up to that distance during its turn. Where the unit will be moving over two or more different types of terrain, you will need to pro-rate the movement. Units mounting/dismounting from vehicles use half of their movement.

Ex., an M-1 Abrams tank is moving along a road, then moves off the road into light woods. Looking at the Tracked row on the movement chart, the M-1 could go 20 if it used its full movement on the road. The M-1 moves 10 along the road, which is half of its movement allowance. Movement in light woods is rated as 10 for tracked vehicles, but since the Sherman has already used half of its movement, it can only go 5 in the light woods, which would complete its movement for the turn.

Fire Combat

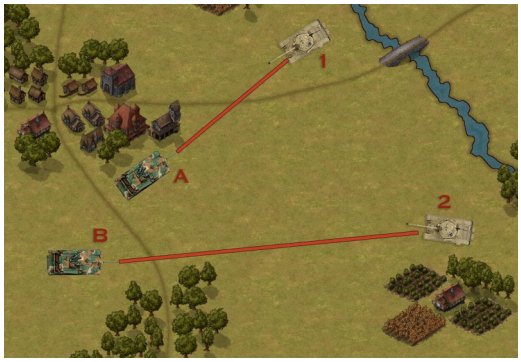
To fire, a unit must have a target in a clear LOS (Line of Sight) and in range. To fire at a target, complete the following steps in order:

- Read along the row for the appropriate type of weapon.
- Check the modifiers.
- Roll 1D10 for the result.
- Roll for any saves on an eligible target that is hit.

All units are rated for their weapon and armor class. For example, an M-1 Abrams tank would be an A-IV, meaning that it fires on Row A and saves on a 7-10. The combat results are:

- Miss-No effect
- H-Hit: Target suffers one hit. Units with an armor class of 1 or 0 are destroyed.
- X-Destroyed: If an armor unit does not have a hit and rolls a successful save, the destroyed result is changed to one hit.

Class 0 and I armor, along with infantry and weapons only take 1 hit, so any H or X result eliminates them. Units with Class II-IV armor saves take two hits to eliminate.



Two M-1 Abrams are firing at two advancing T-72s. M-1 A measures the range to T-72 #1, which is 20, then sees that there are no applicable modifiers. One D10 is rolled and the result is an 9, which is an X result on the T-72. The T-72 fails its save rolled and is knocked out. M-1 B measures the range to T-72 #2, which is 30 and that means the next range band will have to be used. The M-1 rolls a 10 on the D10, which again is an X result. The T-72, however, rolls an 8 against its armor class of III, which is a save. The T-72 takes 1 hit. Cover, attacks to the flank/rear, or a unit's status (Elite/Green) could have produced modifiers that would have changed the results.

Artillery & Air Attacks

After the Move/Fire Phase, the next step is the Artillery Phase followed by the Air Attack Phase.

The first step in the Artillery Phase is to designate targets. It is assumed that if you are using the campaign rules (Part One of this series on One Day Campaigns), then artillery has been assigned to particular formations or is available on call. Depending upon how you set up your formations for the campaign, you can handle artillery fire support in several ways:

1. Let any company or battalion command vehicle/stand call for support-no die roll needed.
2. Company or battalion command vehicles/stands need to make a contact roll to call in artillery on a target. Roll 1D10 and on a 6-10 the artillery unit is available for support.
3. Attach Forward Artillery Observers (FAOs) to units who can call in artillery support.

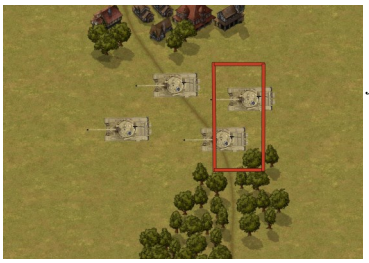
The command vehicle/stand or FAO must have a clear line of sight to the target to call for fire support. Measure the impact area (depending upon the scale you are using) and then roll to see if the fire support is on target. This process is repeated for EACH artillery battery that is firing in support.

There are three results when determining if the artillery support is on target:

- Miss-No Effect
- Good-Roll 1D10
- On Target-Roll 2D10

For each unit in the impact area, roll the dice from the accuracy roll above. Consult the Target Type column, then read across for the type of artillery that is firing. Apply the result to the unit in the impact zone.

Ex., a medium artillery barrage is going to attack a group of advancing T-72s. The impact zone is placed so that at least two of the four tanks are in the area. A D10 is rolled for accuracy and the result is a 7, meaning that each target in the impact area will have 1D10 rolled for it on the Artillery chart. Cross referencing the Armor roll with Medium artillery



shows that a 9 or 10 is needed for a hit. The first roll is a 7 for a miss on one T-72, but the second roll of a 9 score one hit on the other T-72. The T-72 rolls a 5 for its save (needing 8-10), which results in one hit on the T-72.

Air Attacks

Air attacks follow a similar process. If playing with the campaign system, each air point equals one air attack against ground units. Air attacks do not need spotters and may attack any enemy units on the tabletop.

- Determine impact area.
- Check if there are any anti-aircraft units in range of the impact area. If there are, roll once per AA unit on the Anti-Aircraft table.
- Any surviving air points may now roll 1D10 per attack on the Air Attack table.
- Apply hits and saves to the target

Infantry vs. Armor & Close Combat

The Direct Fire table is used for infantry vs. infantry or weapons (AT guns, MGs, etc.). It is assumed that many infantry stands will have integral anti-tank weapons. Before the campaign or battle begins, players will need to note and/or assign AT weapons to their infantry units. Each infantry stand equipped with AT weapons may fire during the Move/Fire phase of each turn. All infantry type AT weapons have a range of **8** and use the Direct Fire modifiers.

Weapon Type	To Hit
A	1-8 Miss 9-10 Hit
B	1-7 Miss 8-9 Hit 10 X

Close Combat

Close Combat is fought when both sides have infantry and armor in base to base contact. This could be armor overrunning infantry in the open, infantry assaulting an enemy held building, or a mounted attack by vehicle borne infantry. A number of D10s are assigned to each side for close combat, then the totals are compared to see the results of the combat. The attacker determines how the close combat engagements will be fought in the case of multiple attackers or defenders. They can be fought as single engagements or as one larger engagement.

Close Combat Procedure

- Move infantry/vehicles in the Move/Fire phase into contact with enemy units. Supporting armor should be placed behind attacking infantry if it is a combined arms assault.
- During the Close Combat phase of the player turn, determine the results of any close combat engagements.
- The attacking player decides if each stand will fight its own engagement or there will be one engagement with numerous stands/vehicles.
- Both sides figure out the number of dice available.
- Both sides add up their rolled total, then compare it as a ratio of attacker vs. defender. Refer to the Close Combat results table.
- Apply combat results.

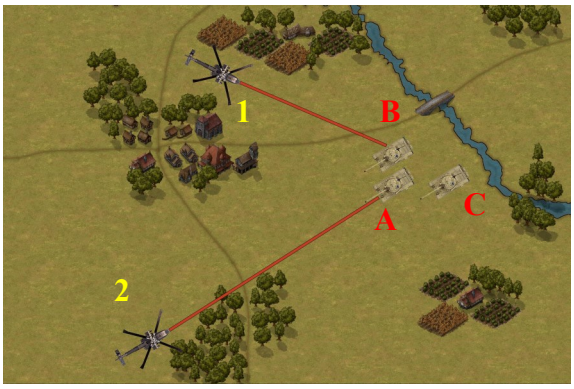
Ex., One Dutch infantry stand and one combat engineer stand along with an IFV are assaulting two Russian infantry stands in a building near a village. The Dutch would roll 4D10 (1 for the infantry, 2 for the engineers, and 1 for the supporting IFV). The Russians will roll 3D10 (2 for the infantry and 1 for defending the building). The West Germans roll 28 and the Russians roll 13, which is a ration of 2.15. Looking on the results chart the Russians would lose one infantry stand and the remaining stand would fall back 5. The Dutch would advance and occupy the building.

Modern Specific Rules

Helicopters

Helicopters are a regular feature of modern battlefields and the data charts in these rules list some of the more common types that would be found in any Cold War or Modern setting. Helicopters are broken into two categories; attack and transport.

Attack helicopters can move over the battlefield quickly, so are treated similar to air attacks. During the Air Attack Phase of each turn, the controlling side for the helicopters moves the helicopters from a friendly board edge to any location on the battlefield, tracing their line of movement to the opposing side. Any air defense assets can fire at the helicopters



using the AAA/SAM firing procedure. When using helicopters, use the following steps during the Air Attack Phase:

1. Move any helicopters on the board. If they are entering the board for the first time, they must have entered from a friendly board edge.
2. Fire any air defense assets that were either a) able to fire at the helicopter if there was a clear line of sight during its movement, or b) when the helicopter is stationary and preparing to fire.
3. Any surviving helicopters now fire at enemy targets.

Ex., AH-64 #1 moves from the edge of the board between the village and some farm fields to get a flank attack on T-72 B, who has just crossed a river. There are no air defense assets on the board, so the player goes straight to the firing stage. The AH-64 gets one ATGM attack and at a range of 20 rolls a 7, which is a hit and the T-72 rolls an 8 which is normally a save, but the –1 modifier for being hit in the flank applies, so the save fails and T-72B is marked with a hit. AH-64 #2 moves onto the board and skirts the tree line, then fires an ATGM at T-72 A, rolling a 2, which is a miss. If there had been air defense assets on the board, the could have fired at each helicopter if they were in range and had a clear line of sight before the helicopters fired their ATGMs.

Several attack helicopters are rated to fire both ATGMs and rockets/cannons (D class attack) when firing (listed on the helicopter data chart). This will allow some helicopters to make one ATGM attack and one D class attack each time they fire as long as both are within a 45 degree arc from the front of the helicopter.

Transport helicopters are rated for how many infantry units that they can carry. Transport helicopters can both move and unload troops, or load and move in the same turn. Infantry units that are unloaded can only move half of their movement allowance in the turn that they are unloaded.

NOE-Advanced Rule

Attack helicopters can do Nap of the Earth (NOE) type attacks where they "pop up" behind trees, buildings, hills, etc., to launch their attack, thus limiting their exposure to anti-air defenses. When using this rule, any time a helicopter using NOE suffers an Abort or Destroyed roll, roll 1D10 and if the result is 6-10 the result stands and if 5 or less is rolled the helicopter suffers no effect. *This rule definitely makes attack helicopters extremely dangerous on the battlefield.*

Upgraded Armor

Many modern tanks have increased armor protection, ranging from composite armor to active defense, affording them additional protection against ATGMs and other anti-tank weaponry. In the vehicle data notes any tank with a '*' next to its save number gets an additional saving roll, needing to hit the number listed in parentheses. *Ex., a Leopard 2 gets hit by a Soviet T-72. The Leopard 2 would ordinarily save on a D10 roll of 7-10, but since the armor is listed as class IV*, it gets a second D10 roll needing a 9 or a 10 to save if the first roll fails. This method could also be used to simulate the effect of fortifications, hull down positions, etc.*

Moving and Firing

Unlike the WW2 rules where a unit could either move or fire, in Modern combat many vehicles are equipped with gun stabilization, advanced gunsights, and fire control systems that allow for the vehicle to both move and fire. For purposes of these fast play rules, armored vehicles are allowed to both move and fire in the same turn. Vehicles are classified into eras with firing modifiers which are used when the vehicle moves and fires in the same turn.

- 1970s-early 1980s -2
- Mid 1980s—2000 -1
- 2000+ No modifier

ATGMs and infantry can still only move or shoot during a turn. Players are encouraged to modify the vehicle stats where necessary or change the modifiers for their games.

Warsaw Pact Objectives

To better simulate the rigidity of the Warsaw Pact command system (when playing Cold War campaigns) each time a tactical engagement begins on a game board, each Warsaw Pact formation must have a clearly defined objective. This should be written down such as "Formation A will attack towards the crossroads" or Formation B will seize the village, then switch to defending it". Warsaw Pact formation must then follow their instructions to the best of their ability. During each operational turn, the objectives can be changed for each Warsaw Pact formation. This will increase the paperwork for Cold War campaigns, but it will make them a bit more realistic.

Artillery & Airstrikes

The standard artillery and airstrike rules should work well for most Modern battles. For those who feel that post WW2 artillery and airstrikes are much more on target and devastating, you can add a +1 to die roll for contacting artillery support, determining if it is on target, and finally the results against enemy units. Many ground support aircraft missions would be using cluster munitions, guided weapons, etc., so a +1 modifier could be used to determine hits as well.

Optional Rules

As you can see, these are very basic rules intended to allow for a large number of miniatures and players over multiple game boards in sync with the campaign system. Here are some additional rules that could be added to the basic set that would add a bit more realism.

Opportunity Fire

If an enemy unit moves within the line of sight and is within range of a friendly unit, that unit may fire during the opposing side's Move/Fire phase. The enemy unit may be stopped at any point along its movement path, then the friendly unit may fire. If the enemy unit is not destroyed, it may then continue moving. Each friendly unit may only fire once during the opposing side's Move/Fire phase. Place a marker next to any friendly unit that fires during this phase and in their next Move/Fire phase all firing is done at a –1 to the die roll.

Suppression

Units that take a hit, but are not destroyed are Suppressed. Place a marker next to the unit to signify that it is Suppressed. For the remainder of the current Move/Fire phase and the next Move/Fire phase, that unit cannot move and fires with a –2 die roll modifier. At the end of the next Move/Fire phase (enemy or friendly) the marker is removed.

Forward Artillery Observers FAOs)

In the basic game, any unit can be used to sight for artillery fire. With this optional rule only designated command units or forward observers may be used to call in artillery. Each formation should have a HQ unit and a number of forward artillery observers should be assigned to each side for the campaign. HQ units and FAOs need to have a line of sight to the enemy unit to be able to roll for artillery fire attacks.

Additional Movement Classes

While there are only three movement classes in the basic game, this could be greatly expanded. Rules and movement rates for fast/slow tracked vehicles, moving heavy weapons, etc., could all be added to the charts. If weather is being used, then a separate column for mud, snow, and even movement at night could be added as well. Instead of the current system, a random movement system could be used instead, giving each unit a variable number of dice for movement.

Multiple Rocket Launchers

Multiple rocket launchers, MRLS, etc., type systems are not present in the basic rules. Different blast radii, modifiers to the die roll, etc., could be added to take into account these weapons instead of classifying them as normal artillery.

Ground Attack Aircraft

In the campaign game and in the tactical game each air point assigned to ground attack generates one roll of the die on the Air Attack table. While this would entail more paperwork for the campaign, air points could easily be split up into fighter, fighter-bomber, and ground attack points. Give each fighter-bomber one roll on the table, but each dedicated ground attack air point would generate two rolls (A-10, SU-25, etc.).

Morale

In both the campaign and tactical games it is assumed that units will keep fighting on regardless of casualties. Then, during an operational turn at some point the survivors of a formation will get reinforced or combined with some other group. Instead, a morale system could be used during the tactical game. Each formation would need to have a morale rating assigned to it before the campaign begins.

To keep things fairly simple, each time a formation reaches 50% casualties, it must roll on the morale table below. Once the unit hits the 50% threshold it must then roll on the morale chart every time it loses a unit. Roll 1D10 and consult the following table:

Modifiers

Morale	Good	Wavering	Retreat
A	1-7	8-9	10
B	1-6	7-8	9-10
C	1-5	6-8	9-10

Formation in defensive positions -1

Formation is wavering +1

Morale Results

Good-The formation continues normal operations.

Wavering-The formation cannot advance against an enemy (it may take up defensive positions).

Retreat-The formation must move so as to exit the current board it is on, towards any board controlled by its own side.

Rallying Formations

Units that are Wavering or in Retreat can rally. Roll 1D10 and if the result is in the following ranges, that formation rallies. A formation that is Wavering will return to Good and a formation that is in Retreat will return to Wavering.

A: 7-10

B: 8-10

C: 9-10

Note: If this optional rules is used, Morale and Rallying should become Phase E during the Move/Fire segment of the turn.

Tactical Command & Control

In the basic rules there is no command & control, so units can be spread all over the game board. With this optional rule, units must be within a certain range of their HQ stand, vehicle, etc. belonging to their formation. Each formation can be assigned a command rating that designates how far a unit can be from its formation commander to be able to move/fire. If they are outside of that range the unit can only move to get within range, although it can defend itself and use opportunity fire.

Command	Command Range
A	20
B	15
C	12
D	10

HQ units that are destroyed can be replaced during that side's following tactical turn, but at the next lowest command rating. Gamers should feel free to assign various command ratings and morale grades to formations to reflect elite units, operational doctrine, poor training for conscripts and militia, etc. HQ units can also be used to spot for artillery and airstrikes.

Modern Vehicle & Weapons Data

The following data for artillery, anti-tank weapons, and armor are to provide a basis for gamers to create their own more comprehensive lists. As with other aspects of the rules, feel free to change these ratings based upon your own research, to balance out the game, or expand them with additional categories.

Artillery	
Light	up to 76mm
Medium	77mm to 105mm
Heavy	120mm and up

Infantry Anti-Tank Weapons	
Category	Type
A	RPG-7, Carl Gustav, etc.
B	M 47Dragon, Panzerfaust 3, etc.

Anti-Aircraft (AAA + SAMs)	
Light	up to 37mm/SA-7, Stinger
Medium	40mm-57mm/SA-9, SA-13
Heavy	75mm +/SA-6, SA-11, Patriot

United States	
M1 Abrams	IV*-A
M-60A3	III-A
M551	II-B
M2/M3	II-C
M113	I-MGs

UK	
Challenger	IV*-A
Chieftain	IV-A
Centurion	III-A
Scorpion	II-B
Scimitar	II-C
FV-432	I-MGs
Warrior	II-D

West Germany	
Leopard 2	IV*-A
Leopard 1A4	III-A
Marder	II-C
Tiger I	IV-A
Tiger II	IV-A
Jagdpzr Kanone	II-B
Jagdpzr Raketen	II-ATGM
Gepard	II-D

USSR/Warsaw Pact	
T-80	IV-A
T-72	III-A
T-62	III-A
T-55	III-B
BMP-2/3	II-C
BTR-60/70	I-D
BRDM-2	I-MG
PT-76	I-MG
ASU-85	III-B
ZSU-23	II-D

Note: Naturally, this list does not include every vehicle and/or weapons system from the Cold War and Modern eras, but it should give a starting point for how to classify the armor and weapons rating for any vehicle that you wish to use.

Helicopter Type	ATGM	D Attack	Transport
AH-64	X	X	NA
AH-1	X	X	NA
Lynx	X	NA	NA
Mi-24	X	X	NA
UH-60	NA	NA	1 unit
Mi-8	NA	NA	1 unit
CH-53	NA	NA	2 units

Helicopters Notes

- Some helicopter types can perform an ATGM attack and a D attack (rockets/cannons) per turn if there is an X in that box.
- Attack helicopters have a movement allowance of 40 per turn while transport helicopters are 36.
- Units dropped off by helicopter can only move half for that turn.

Designer Notes

This is the fourth and final installment in the One Day Campaigns series, this time focusing on mostly the Cold War era, but can equally be used with any Modern era type setting. The Modern era poses plenty of unique problems for game designers as there are a large number of weapons systems, not to mention electronic warfare, SAMs, sensors, satellites, AWACs, and more. Our focus, however, is still to create a set of rules that will allow games to be played across multiple boards all in one day.

To that end, things have been kept as simple as possible. Many will no doubt recognize that the framework is the WW2 rules that were introduced back in part two of this series. Helicopters, ATGMs, ceramic armor, etc., were all added in bits and pieces so that you get the flavor of modern combat while still keeping the rules overhead quite low. I'm sure that there will be many questions about the weapons ratings, how the charts work out, etc., and you are free to change things to better suit your gaming group. Again, the idea is to provide a base set of rules where you can bolt on additional complexity, but still get through a large number of games as quickly as possible for your one day campaign.

If time permits, I would like to some day post more campaigns that can be used with this system.

Reference Card

Sequence of Play

Tactical Turn

I. Initiative Phase

II. Initiative Side Movement/Combat

A. Move/Fire

B. Artillery Phase

C. Air Attack Phase

D. Close Combat Phase

III. Non-Initiative Side Movement/Combat

A. Move/Fire

B. Artillery Phase

C. Air Attack Phase

D. Close Combat Phase

IV. Operational Turn

Initiative Phase: Each side rolls 1D10 and the highest roll decides which side will go first during the current turn. This can be important as if one side goes last, then first again in the next turn it will allow their units to possibly fire twice in a row, which offers some advantages.

Movement/Combat: During their turn, each side will move and/or fire their units. Units cannot move and fire during the turn, so they can only perform one or the other. There is no set order in how each side handles their part of the turn in regards to movement and combat. A side can move all the units that they want, then have the remainder fire, or have all the units that could fire do that, then the remainder can move. Another method is to just move across the board, moving and firing units until that side has completed the phase. It may be helpful to use markers to signify which units have moved or fired for the turn.

Artillery & Air Attack: Artillery and air attacks are conducted against units of the other side. Follow the procedures to determine accuracy, the effects of the attacks, and any save rolls.

Close Combat: Units that have moved into contact with enemy units conduct close combat.

Operational Turn: If 10 tactical turns have passed, the battle is temporarily paused so that both sides can conduct an Operational Turn for the campaign. Once that is completed, play resumes with the start of a new Tactical Turn.

Movement Rates/Terrain Costs

Troop Type	Clear/Open	Light Woods	Heavy Woods	Village/Town	Urban	Road	Hills
Tracked	15	10	Only on Roads	10	Only on	20	10
Wheeled	12	8	Only on Roads	10	Only on	25	8
Foot	8	6	5	6	6	10	6

Movement Modifiers	
Mounting/Dismounting	1/2 move
Crossing Fortifications	1/2 move

Infantry vs. Armor

Weapon	To Hit
A	1-8 Miss
B	1-7 Miss 8-9 Hit 10 X

Modifiers	
Green	-1
Elite	+1
In cover	-1
Vs. 0 armor	+1

Close Combat

# of Dice (D10)

Infantry/Weapons	1
Combat Engineers	2
Armor/IFVs	1
Defending buildings, difficult terrain, and	+1
Elite troops	+1
Green troops	-1
Armor/IFVs vs. Infantry	+2

Result Ratio	Close Combat Result
-3.1 +	**Attackers Defeated**: Attackers lose 50% of attacking force and fall back 10.
-1.1 to 3.0	**Attackers Pushed Back**: Attackers lose one stand and/or vehicle, then fall back 5
-1.0 to 1.0	**Indecisive Fighting**: Re-roll close combat
1.1 to 3.0	**Defenders Pushed Back**: Defenders lose one stand and/or vehicle, then fall back 5
3.1 +	**Defenders Defeated**: Defenders lose 50% of attacking force and fall back 10.

Reference Card

Direct Fire Table

Range

Weapon Class	1-8	9-20	21-40	41-60	61-72
A **105mm+**	1-3 Miss 4-7 H 8-10 X	1-4 Miss 5-7 H 8-10 X	1-5 Miss 6-8 H 9-10 X	1-6 Miss 7-9 H 10 X	1-7 Miss 8-9 H 10 X
B **76-100mm**	1-4 Miss 5-8 H 9-10 X	1-5 Miss 6-8 H 9-10 X	1-6 Miss 7-9 H 10 X	1-7 Miss 8-9 H 10 X	
C **30-75mm**	1-4 Miss 5-8 H 9-10 X	1-6 Miss 7-8 H 9-10 X	1-7 Miss 8-9 H 10 X		
D **Up to 30mm**	1-6 Miss 7-8 H 9-10 X	1-7 Miss 8-9 H 10 X			
Infantry (vs. Infantry & Weapons only)	1-6 Miss 7-8 H 9-10 X				
MGs/ Light Mortars	1-6 Miss 7-8 H 9-10 X	1-7 Miss 8-9 H 10 X			
ATGMs (1st Gen.)		1-6 Miss 7-9 H 10 X	1-6 Miss 7-9 H 10 X	1-6 Miss 7-9 H 10 X	
ATGMs (2nd-3rd Gen.)		1-5 Miss 6-8 H 9-10 X	1-5 Miss 6-8 H 9-10 X	1-5 Miss 6-8 H 9-10 X	1-5 Miss 6-8 H 9-10 X

Results	
Miss	No Effect
H	1 Hit
X	Destroyed

Modifiers	
Green	-1
Elite	+1
In cover	-1
Vs. 0 armor	+1

Saves	
IV	7-10
III	8-10
II	9-10
I	10
*	(9-10)

Flank/Rear -1 to roll

3rd Gen. ATGM –1 to roll

# of Hits	
III-IV	2 Hits
0-II	1 Hit
Inf./Weapons	-1 Hit

Artillery

Artillery Class

Target Type	Light	Medium	Heavy
Armor	10 H	9-10 H	8-10 H
Open Top Armor	9-10 H	8-10 H	7-10 H
Soft Vehicles	7-10 X	6-10 X	5-10 X
Infantry in Open	7-10 X	6-10 X	5-10 X
Infantry in Cover	10 H	9-10 H	8-10 H

Artillery/Air Attack Accuracy

D10	Accuracy
1-5	Miss-No Effect
6-8	Good-1D10
9-10	On Target-2D10

Impact Area

Artillery: 8cm x 24cm/4” x 10”

Air Attack: 10cm x 10cm/3” x 3”

Air Attack

Target Type	To Hit
All	1-6 Miss 7-8 H 9-10 X

Modifiers: In Cover -1

Anti-Aircraft/SAMs

Range

AAA/SAM Type	Light 8	Medium 24	Heavy 72

Roll 1D10: 1-7 Miss 8-9 Abort 10 Destroyed

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Meets every other Friday night in the SLC, Utah area. We play a wide variety of games in 1/300th, 10mm, 15mm, and 28mm, including Hail Caesar, Age of Reason, Age of Discovery, Age of Eagles, Fire & Fury, General de Brigade, Warmaster Ancients/Medieval, TSATF, Phantoms, Mustangs, Battlegroup Panzergrenadier, Saga, Ronin, DBA, BKC4, board wargames, and more...

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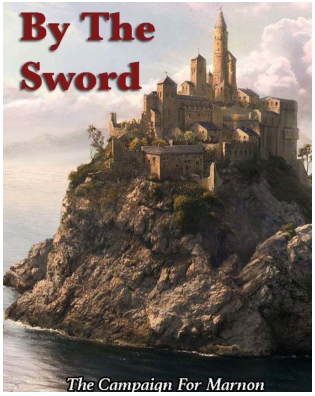
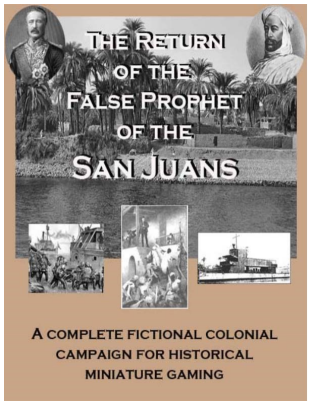
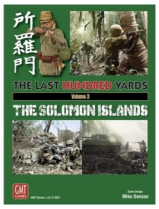


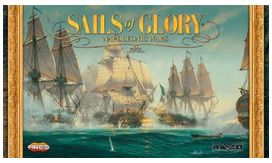


While playing Tank Duel with my gaming group I came to the realization that there are a lot of games out there right now that have an element of "sameness" as a central theme. I've reviewed many of these over the years and credit the games for having beautiful components, introducing new ways of doing things, and providing some interesting game play. They all also share one other common thing and that is that there is an unrelenting stream of supplements, add-ons, and more coming out for them all the time.

Back in the 70s, 80s, and even the 90s you would purchase a game and the designers as well as the game publishers usually packed the game with a lot of replay value. Now this wasn't always successful (some games just weren't very good), but you knew that a supplement wasn't coming for quite some time. There were few games coming out each year, so you played the heck out of some of them, always hoping that a supplement or additional boxed module would make an appearance at some point, so you didn't run into the "sameness" issue too often.



Today, however, it's hard not to notice it when you come across a new game. I'm not picking on GMT here, but just as an example you have Tank Duel, Last Hundred Yards, and Wing Leader, all of which are popular games. They all also have numerous supplements, additional scenarios available online, and more are surely planned. You also have this in the miniatures world, not to mention games like Wings of Glory, Sails of Glory, Memoir '44, and many, many more. This is great for the gamers who love these series and obviously they are selling as more and more product continues to get shipped for them.



However, if you think about it, there is a lot of "sameness" in these game series. Whether you are leading an assault in Normandy or defending an island plantation in Burma in The Last Hundred Yards, it's the same non-descript forces trying to achieve an objective. In Tank Duel does it really matter if I'm fighting a SU-100, T-34/85, or KV-1 with my PZ IVG? Not really. All I care about is coming up with the right cards to score victory points for my side. In Memoir '44 or the Command and Colors games you can tell me that it's the Battle of the Bulge or Austerlitz because we put down some extra terrain hexes on the board, but really I just need to know what cards and special dice I get for that turn. The system is the driving force here and the armies, period, terrain, year, etc., are just tacked on to make the theme more attractive.

There's nothing really wrong with this approach and it is clearly successful. I don't mind playing the games once or twice, but I eventually sold off some of these series as there's other more in depth games I would rather spend my time on. My guess is that for the future you're going to be seeing a lot more "sameness".