

# Warning Order

ISSUE #66

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WARS OF THE ROSES

TSATF NORTHWEST FRONTIER

ASSEGAI! ZULU WAR GAME

ENGAGEMENTS SCENARIOS



# Warning order

W F H G S

# Upgrades & Redesigns: Do We Really Need Them?

This isn't the first time that this topic has come up in the pages of this magazine, but since there has been an explosion of upgrades and redesigns in the last few years and with more to come, it's probably time to revisit the subject. In fact, the hobby is starting to turn into Hollywood where sequels such as Jaws IV, Tremors 5, numerous Jurassic Park and Transformers while audiences ask if we really needed them!

This subject came up again during a play of the 1815 scenario of War & Peace, one of the more popular games put out first by Avalon Hill, then One Small Step Games some 40+ years later. Here we were, playing on this beautiful board with colorful counters (huge improvement over the original), but we were having a hard time finding rules in the newest version along with flipping over the multi-page reference card to find charts and tables. It caused us to pause for a second and wonder why we weren't just playing the older Avalon Hill version! Sure, the graphics weren't great and the counters were pretty bland, but we knew the system and it played pretty well. However, one of us



had spent \$120+ on this new version, so that's what we were going to play!

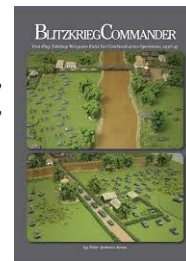
On top of that, there is yet another printing coming out of War & Peace (7th edition) and there is an upgrade so that we can update our 6th edition to the current standard. For around \$60 you get the revised rules, event card deck, and a few other items. Now this is for a game that is getting close to 50 years old, so how many more revisions can there be? On top of that, do gamers really need this?

With rising prices in the hobby, gamers are really starting to take a look at these "upgrades", "revised" editions, and in some cases, so many changes that it's pretty much a new set of rules or game. The game companies seem to be hooked on providing you a game that definitely isn't the final, end all version, but rather getting you interested, then trying to sell you upgrades, new rules, additional scenarios, etc. It must be working as more and more of these things continue to

appear with virtually no end in sight!

Now, this is nothing new in the hobby and there have always been expansions, supplements, additional materials and more. Think of all the stuff for Starfleet Battles, Starfire, Harpoon, Ogre, and so on. However, they weren't trying to sell you a new version every other year! All of these games did get newer versions at some point, but they weren't *envisioned* when the games first came out, which is a big difference. Today, my guess is that many of these games and rules come out with the clear intent to upgrade and revise them within a few years, just to get more sales from existing gamers.

In fact, it could be argued (and this is not a conspiracy theory!) that many of these games, boxed sets, and rules aren't play tested that thoroughly or include all of the designer's ideas because they know that they're going to release another version or an upgrade kit at some point. This certainly makes designing a bit easier in that if there are problems you couldn't solve before publishing, just sell the game now (cont. on p3)



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### Special points of interest:

- Battle reports for BKC IV, Hail Caesar, Warmaster Ancients, FFOL, TSATF, and more.
- Reviews of several new board games, including the much anticipated GTS game covering Utah beach.
- Two new Engagements scenarios.
- A complete Zulu War board game

## Upgrades & Redesigns: Do We Really Need Them (cont.)

(cont. from p2) and later the fixes can be added! This is definitely one of the reasons that “living rules” were created.

Gamers definitely fall into two camps on this and you can clearly see it in various forums and web sites. There are those who missed out on a popular game or series who would like to try it or think that the graphics, rules, etc., from the 70s and 80s needed an improvement. Then there is the camp who is happy with the game or rules that they currently have and are not interested in a new version or upgrade. There is certainly room for both types of gamers in the hobby, but even those who have to get the new or upgraded version of everything are starting to wonder how far this is going to go.

For example, Fortress Europa, a popular Avalon Hill game, got a redesign from Compass Games a few years ago. Now there are two maps instead of the original one, charts and displays for everything, better counters, and rules that have been rewritten and re-examined a million times over the last 40 years. The result is a game with a massive footprint (easily fills a 4 x6 table) that plays very similar to the old one mapper that came out in the 70s. Russian Campaign 5th edition from GMT is much the same way. In fact, I often debate playing that one or just taking out my old Avalon Hill version. Both versions of the two games are playable and after playing the new versions that created so much excitement when they arrived, you start wondering why you didn't just keep playing the older versions.

The redesign of the old Conflict/GDW Bar Lev took a fairly simple system with around 500 counters and turned it into a multi-map monster with close to 1900 counters that would certainly take some time to play the entire campaign. The Compass redesign of GDW's popular Third World War series (reviewed in an earlier issue) was a monumental achievement. However, that did come at a cost with all kinds of displays, charts, and a dazzling color palette for the counters of the various nations. While many gamers

(including myself) loved the new version, some gamers took one look and went back to their originals or started searching for the old ones on Ebay!

The Successors redesign from Phalanx took the Avalon Hill and GMT versions to the next level. Updated rules with extra chrome, new cards, optional cards, three versions of generals (counters, standees, and plastic miniatures), and much more in a beautiful box. While the game is still good, after playing it twice we started to wonder why we didn't just keep the GMT version, which was pretty good and easier to manage. The old Hannibal game from Avalon Hill, then Valley Games, got the Phalanx treatment and while it was pretty good, there were some issues. Now, after already releasing an upgrade/update pack a few years ago, there's going to be yet another one with metal miniatures, solo rules, etc.

Miniatures rules have the same issues. What was wrong with Blitzkrieg Commander II? If you're honest, not much. Yet, most gamers were compelled to buy the disaster that was the third version and then the 4th edition. As reported here numerous times, we waffle back and forth about Age of Reason 2nd and 3rd editions. Why we just didn't go on our merry way and continue with the 2nd is a mystery that might never be solved! I've heard from several gamers that the second edition of Saga isn't very good and they want to continue on with the original version. You can definitely see a pattern developing in that the new versions might not always be the best.

Yet, gamers continue to pile heaps and heaps of cash in front of game companies to get the new versions or upgrades. There is something about getting new gaming materials that is the equivalent of cocaine for gamers. The term “upgrade” has become synonymous with “makes it better” in the gaming world, instead of “Why is this needed?” There's also the fact that there are only so many gaming ideas out there. Why spend time designing and developing a new game about Operation Barbarossa (not that there aren't 200+ of them already out there) when you can take a previous game, upgrade the components, then know that you'll be able to sell it to fans of the

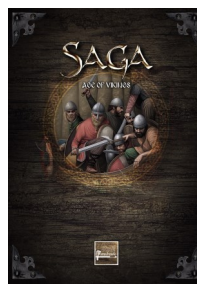
original game?

Games Workshop and Warlord Games seem immune to these kinds of issues and are certainly outliers in the gaming community. After building up dedicated audiences for their products over the years, any new version or upgrade is an automatic purchase. Warlord Games could release a new edition of Bolt Action where German heavy weapons teams are actually Orcs, 60mm mortars can outrange the guns on the U.S.S. Missouri, and British Highlanders can go berserk whenever they're accompanied by Sherman Fireflies and there would be thousands of gamers waiting in line to get their new edition.

The slow realization that many of these redesigns and upgrades don't appear to be that great seems to be upon us. Many gamers are seen questioning these things more and more. Just keeping up with the various changes, which company now owns the rights, the latest edition of the living rules, the current errata list, etc., is getting to be a full time job!

What was working for the game companies for quite a few years seems to be waning. Gamers are slowly coming to the conclusion that a) the chance of you finding someone to game with who uses the same rules or plays the same board games is slim, b) will these upgrades and edition changes ever end? If the answer to these two questions is no, then you have nothing to lose by using rules out of an old wargames magazine, only playing Avalon Hill/SPI games from the 70s and 80s, or just using an earlier edition of whatever miniatures rules you choose.

For the game companies, however, these opportunities are hard to pass up. Why invest a lot of time, money, and effort into a new design that may or may not sell, when you can upgrade an existing set of rules or an old SPI game that has a built in audience? This is not saying that all upgrades or new editions are bad, as many are huge improvements over the originals. However, for every one that is successful, there appears to be one or two that really weren't needed. As the gaming hobby continues to expand, look for more older games to get reproduced and for more current miniature rules to be “improved”!



# BKC IV: Did We Break The Game?

# Battle Report

Have you ever had one of those game nights where you wonder if your group broke the rules? Yes, this was definitely one of those occasions! We had not returned to BKC IV in a while, so it was decided to try a late war Eastern Front clash that was designed for six players, but two cancelled out late, meaning that the forces had to be adjusted on the fly.

The scenario was based off an action in Poland in 1944 where the Germans were holding a central position while two Russian forces attempted to clear the road and link the front of two different corps. This would mainly be a Russian mechanized attack against what we thought would be a German mobile defense. Blitzkrieg Commander games are difficult to balance (despite the points costs in the army lists), but we usually have competitive games.

The Germans had the following and could set up about a foot in from the board edge as well as within a foot from the main village. The Germans had the following, broken into three kampffgruppens:

- (1) infantry battalion
- (2) Tigers
- (4) Panthers
- (3) Stug IVs
- (3) Marder IIIs
- An Alarm force of (3) PZIVhs and a panzergrenadier company.

The Russians had the following forces:



- (2) T-34/85 tank brigades with each brigade having (9) T-34/85s, (1) SMG company, and (1) mechanized infantry company
- (3) SU-100s
- (3) JS-2s
- (1) infantry battalion.

Both sides also had limited artillery support, with all of the Russian support needing to be scheduled before the game began. The Russians had to have the T-34/85 brigades enter from different sides or the top of the board. The Germans were strung out as they weren't sure where the Russians would attack from, but they were ready to shift armor from one area to another quickly.

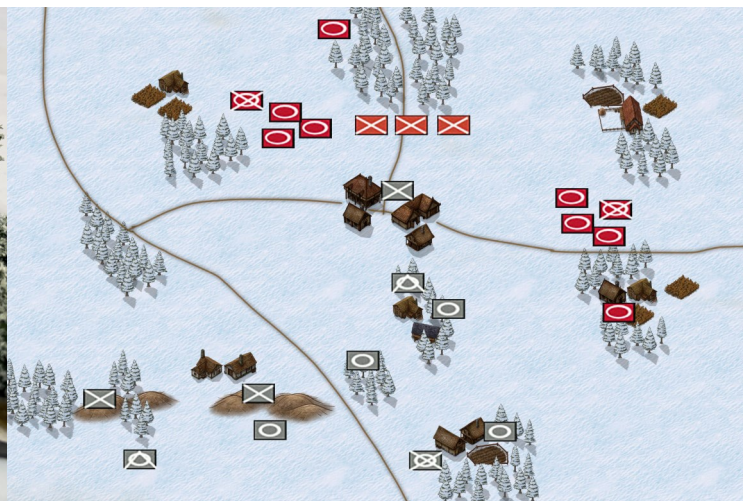
The Russian players had learned through years and years of playing BKC in all of its editions, that its best to advance in a compact mass, which is exactly what they did...and it sort of broke the game. Let's take the duel between one T-34/85 brigade and a few Tigers to show the readers what we're talking about.

The Russian brigade moved up, spread out in a thin line with the mech infantry behind them. The Tigers opened fire at around 55-60cm, so no bonus and scored a few hits. They got lucky with the command roll, then fired again. The Russians had some good saves and in the end one T-34/85 suffered 4 hits (almost knocked out) and another two hits plus a suppression. Not terrible, but not great either.

After returning fire (opportunity fire) after the second German order, then rolling two orders on their turn, the T-34/85s rolled 96 shots back against the Tigers! That the Tigers survived at all was a miracle, only due to poor die rolling (they needed 5s & 6s) by the Russian player and some good saves by the Tigers. All of a sudden the Germans were literally



fighting for their lives! A command blunder made things worse when the Tigers abandoned their cover and headed back to the German baseline. The Germans moved up the Stugs to cover the gap and in the next turn they were met by 72 shots aimed in their direction and at one of the Tigers that they (cont. on p5)





(cont. from p4) could still see. One Stug went up in flames and the other two were suppressed while the Tiger got knocked out as well. Next turn 72 more shots came screaming in and finished off most of the German armor on that side.

On the German right, the Panthers got into a fight with the other T-34/85 brigade, then the Alarm unit moved up with its PZ IVHs and engaged the JS-2s who were also advancing on that flank. This was a bit more of the usual affair where the sides traded shots back and forth. However, the Germans blew a command roll and the Russians got two in a row, meaning that around 25-28 shots per command went into the Panthers, who despite being in a forest, were overwhelmed. With the Germans having three Marder IIIs, a PZ IVH, and a handful of infantry to face 20+ Russian tanks

and supporting arms, the game was called at the end of Turn 5 as a Russian major victory.

The “ganging up” issue has long been discussed by those who play Blitzkrieg Commander in its various editions. We’ve considered it, but most of our games have been fairly close affairs and the system seems to work for us. The last few games, and this one in particular, have really brought the issue to the forefront. Everyone has seen the path to victory, i.e., don’t spread out, do the same order (if Russian-they get a plus), and focus on one of the defender’s areas. It’s a successful tactic and it’s not fun being on the receiving end.

Trying to make a realistic scenario could be the problem as well. Having ad hoc commands, kampffgruppes, armor spread out, etc., as it was historically on

the Eastern Front for the Germans, is definitely a losing tactic at this time. I’m not sure how many times during WW2 an entire T-34/85 brigade concentrated fire against one company or platoon, but that seems to be happening with increasing regularity. Moving up a company of MK - IVHs to plug a gap just means that if the Russians get two command rolls in one turn here comes 72 shots your way! Not much can stand against that.

It seems that there should be a way to add an additional roll for how many tanks, AT guns, etc., can engage any given target per turn. Some players might complain that it limits them, it’s not in the rules, etc., but I think we broke the game system with this last scenario. We’ve been playing this for years and really like some of the systems in the rules, but the “ganging up” needs to stop.



# Engagements 59: River Flanking Attempt

**Situation:** Red has established themselves in a strong position, defending a river where there is only one crossing in the entire area. There is also a village nearby that serves as an encampment and supply center for Red. Blue needs to get an offensive rolling in this region and needs to take the river crossing as well as the village as quickly as possible.

**Period:** Designed primarily for the Horse & Musket period.

**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 strong-points. 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, although would work best for most operational rules where units are battalions or regiments.

## Red Forces:

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

**Set Up:** Red's forces begin anywhere in the box marked by the red dashes. Any unit that starts along the river in that box may be entrenched or in improved positions.

**Red Orders:** Red needs to defend the bridge and the village. Any flanking force needs to be decisively defeated without weakening the river defenses.

**Blue Forces:** Blue has three groups of forces that will participate in this flanking operation, which consists of the following units:

## Group A

- (3) units of infantry
- (1) unit of light infantry
- (1) artillery battery

## Group B

- (3) units of infantry
- (1) unit of light cavalry
- (1) artillery battery

## Group C

- (3) units of infantry
- (1) unit of light infantry
- (1) unit of heavy cavalry
- (1) unit of light cavalry
- (1) artillery battery

**Blue Orders:** Use the forces at A to fix a portion of the defenders while the groups at B & C join to create a flanking force. Launch a coordinated attack that will seize the bridge and the village.

**Blue Set Up:** Units of Group A set up anywhere in the blue dashed box labeled 'A' in any formation. The artillery battery may be in an entrenched or improved position. Group B is assembled to cross the ford at the river. Group C will enter the board on Turn 1 along the road marked 'C'.

**Game Length:** 12 turns

## Special Rules:

- Blue has the first turn in the game.
- Blue's units that enter at C must enter in column.

- Blue's group at B must place a ford along the river somewhere next to their deployment area. This ford should be treated as rough terrain, where only one unit can cross per turn.
- This flanking attempt has caught Red by surprise and Red cannot move any units on the first turn.

**Victory Conditions:** Blue wins by taking the bridge and the village without suffering more than 50% losses in units. Any other result is a loss.

**Variants:** There are a large number of variants that could be added to this scenario:

- Increase the size of Blue's forces, then allow Red reinforcements in terms of either a large group or where various units arrive each turn.
- For play balance, allow Red to build entrenchments and/or improved positions along the side of the village facing C.
- Allow Blue to place a bridge instead of a ford along the river, which will allow them to cross units much faster.
- Allow Red to pick from a list of units to customize their defense.
- Increase the turn length to 15 turns to allow Blue to develop their attack.



# Engagements 60: Advantage to Disadvantage

**Situation:** Red has formed up outside of a town, thinking that the buildings and streets will not be used by Blue as urban fighting of any kind is usually too difficult. Since Blue has more units than Red, the thinking is that by anchoring a flank on the town, Red can defend the narrow part of the board easier and Blue's numerical advantage can be negated. Blue, however, is planning on sending several units through the town, overcoming any resistance there, then descending upon Red's flank.

**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 town is a combination of wood and stone buildings. There are several farms in the area that consist of several buildings that can form strong-points. Woods are light, but provide cover and should disrupt most large formations. The hills are low rises that should have limited effect on movement. The river is impassable.

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

## Red Forces:

Deployed at A:

- (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

Deployed at B:

- (2) units of infantry

**Set Up:** Red's forces that begin at A must have at least 8 units within 18" of Blue's front line units at the start of the game. Red's units at B are deployed for all around defense at the center of the town.

**Red Orders:** Red must disrupt the flanking attack through the town and defeat any attempt by Blue to push through the town and flank the main line of defense.

**Blue Forces:** Blue has four groups of forces that will attempt to quickly push through the town and flank Red's main position outside of the town.

## Force 1:

- (6) units of infantry
- (2) units of archers or lt. infantry
- (2) units of skirmishers/lt. infantry
- (2) heavy cavalry units

## Force 2:

- (2) units of infantry

## Force 3:

- (2) units of infantry
- (1) unit of archers or skirmishers

## Force 4:

- (1) unit of light cavalry
- (1) unit of skirmishers

**Blue Orders:** Pin Red's main line of defense while the flanking forces defeat Red's units in the town. Both forces should then converge on Red from two sides and drive them from the field.

**Blue Set Up:** The force at 1 must have at least 6 units within 18" of Red's front line. The units at 2, 3, and 4 are deployed within the leading houses/structures of the town.

**Game Length:** 12 turns

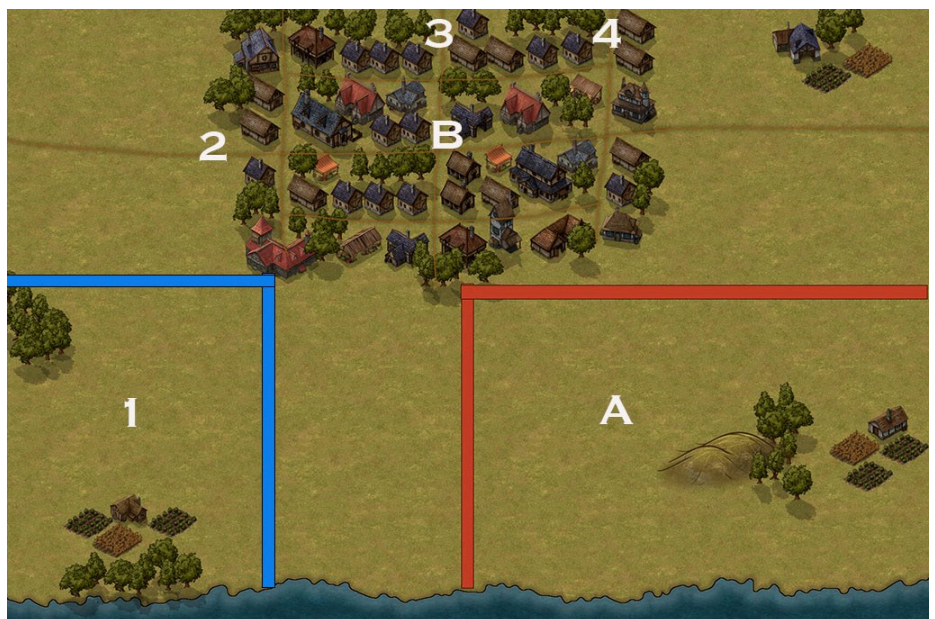
## Special Rules:

- Blue 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 both sides two batteries that are deployed within the boxes at 1 and A respectively.
- The town should have streets that clearly divide the areas (some rules allow defense of entire blocks while others make players designate which side of the area specific units are defending). There should be a good mixture of buildings (large and small), walls, hedges, and some trees.
- Movement through the town should be fairly constricted and most units should be in column.

**Victory Conditions:** Once a side reaches 25% casualties they need to check to see if they withdraw (Red) or halt the attack (Blue). Roll 2D6 and on a roll of 12 that side has lost the game. For each unit that is destroyed or routs off the board add +1 to the die roll. Once a side reaches the 25% threshold it must check at the end of each turn. It is possible that both sides fail at the same time, so the game would end in a draw.

**Variants:** Add additional forces and a large board for bigger group games.



# Memoirs of a Miniatures and Board Wargamer Pt. 53

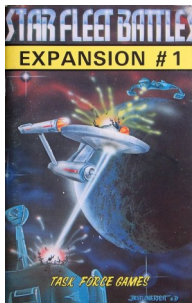
## Supplements: Can't Live With Them and Can't Live Without Them!

One of the more perplexing things in the gaming hobby over the year has to deal with supplements, expansions, add-on material, etc. It is perhaps a necessary evil that sometimes rewards gamers and in some ways at times can be the death of a game system! For every gamer clamoring for more material for their game system, there is another gamer pleading for no more changes. Having played many, many game systems over the years that have featured supplements, I thought it would be a good idea to review some of the more popular ones and their effect on the game system in question.

In terms of a supplement or expansion that had a huge impact on the hobby, one only has to look as far as the very first Starfleet Battles Expansion #1. Sure, there were expansions for D&D, but that is an entirely different beast. Starfleet Battles was already gaining ground with sci-fi gamers, but the jury was still out on whether it was just a one hit wonder or if it could actually grow. This first expansion answered that question by catapulting Starfleet Battles into the stratosphere and making gamers crave a second expansion. It was so well received that it spawned a magazine, separate damage system, increased the number of miniatures and more.

It also at the same time signaled that at some point in the future there would be so much stuff that it would become close to unplayable. The entire game system became an example of too much of a good thing and while it still exists today, there is nowhere near the level of feverishness that occurred back in the mid and late 80s.

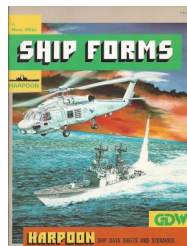
An example of going a step too far would be Battlefield Command, which was Enola Games' supplement to Combat Commander, a set of miniatures rules for Cold War battles. Combat Commander existed in a competitive time, with WRGs 1950-1985, GDW's Tacforce, and Challenger was just be-



coming known as well. We tried several scenarios of Combat Commander and while we weren't ecstatic about it, we considered it for our main set of rules for NATO vs. Warsaw Pact battles.

Then the supplement came out and it took things to a whole other level of complexity. Here was the thing; *we didn't have to use it*. However, there is something about the gamer's mentality where the supplement got tied into the actual rules along with the entire guilt by association argument! Rather than just keep trying Combat Commander, the entire thing got jettisoned and we went with something else.

Another example of too much of a good thing would be the various Harpoon supplements that GDW put out in the 80s and 90s. When Harpoon II came out, modern naval gaming got a badly needed shot in the arm, not to mention it was during the height of the Cold War era. The problem with modern naval combat is that aircraft, weapons, sensors, etc., were continually being upgraded along with many nations building plenty of new ships. To keep on top of this, GDW started issuing data annexes, annuals, scenarios, ship forms, and more that were eagerly gobbled up by modern naval gamers.



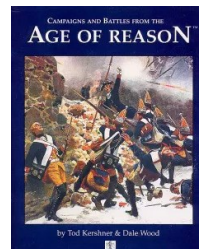
This eventually led to the publication of Harpoon IV, which was a tremendous achievement at the time. Our gaming group used all of the rules, booklets, etc., and actually did several scenarios as well as a campaign or two. However, the game just got out of hand. The complexity of the game system, the endless updates, filling out ship forms, etc., as well as a frazzled referee at the end of each gaming session eventually led to its demise, at least with our gaming group.

Then there are game systems that badly needed supplements and either got hardly any or none at all. Two examples of this would be Avalon Hill's Flight Leader and GDW's Air Superiority series. Flight Leader came out at the right time as there weren't a lot of modern jet games out there. It was fun to play and seemed to be quite

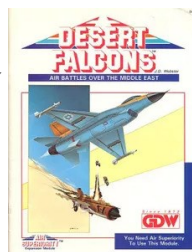
popular at the time. However, not one supplement ever emerged for it, especially at a time where it was probably badly needed. When Air Superiority arrived, many air combat gamers put away Flight Leader and started playing it instead. Despite the ground combat boxed game that came out, only one supplement was ever produced for what was thought to be a well designed, popular system. What seemed to be an area where you could have done scenarios, more aircraft, campaigns, etc., the entire system dried up when GDW went under.

One set of supplements that seemed to hit the sweet spot were the two supplements done for Warfare in the Age of Reason. Minor, if any rule changes, campaigns, army lists for other countries, a naval system, and more got added on to the basic rules. Nothing flashy, but they were eagerly looked forward to and got a lot of use, at least from our gaming group. The only thing that they lacked were uniform guides!

There are of course, hundreds and hundreds of other supplements that gamers can surely think of, but they usually fall into these categories. Where one supplement can pick up an entire gaming system and drag it along to many game systems that badly need one to fix errors, add more material, or just give the base system a needed boost. GDW's Tacforce and Striker needed additional material, Johnny Reb and Empire needed scenario books, while yet others like Arc of Fire needed upgraded components, examples of play, or a campaign or two. There are of course, many reasons why these things didn't happen, from the companies going out of business to just a lack of ideas about how to do a supplement.



Today, most boxed games and miniatures rules usually have additional material coming at some point. In fact, try to think of a popular game system that did not have boxed sets, books, extra figs, etc., that came out within a year. The interesting thing is that in almost 50 years, not much has changed! Some gamers will cry that more needs to come out while others are pleading for the same company to stop and leave things alone.





# Blast From The Past Pt. 52: Dice & How They Hate Gamers

One of the more perplexing aspects of gaming and the hobby in general are dice. They are a necessary evil that drives the engines for our games. Whether it is a handful of them for an epic charge in Hail Caesar or a critical roll of a D20 in an RPG encounter, dice give and they take away. So, how did we get to the point where there are so many kinds of them, different systems that use them, and where some cost a lot of money?



When I first got into gaming with Avalon Hill and SPI games, there were usually one or more dice included in those games. Who here remembers the super tiny D6s that came with all of the SPI flatpaks? Also, who remembers during the oil crisis in the late 70s when SPI put a note in their games saying that due to that crisis they couldn't produce dice for their games? When I started playing miniatures games, my friends and I simply took the D6s from various games. Stores rarely had separate dice for sale and since pretty much every board game and miniatures rules used D6s, it wasn't a serious problem.

The introduction of Dungeons & Dragons of course changed all of that. All of a sudden you had D4s, D8s, D12s, and D20s! Contrary to popular belief, D10s did not come along for a while, even though now they are used by quite a few game systems. The TSR dice were usable, which was the best thing that could be said about them! They came unmarked, so everyone used crayons to color the numbers, then wiped off the excess. After a few hundred rolls the edges started to wear off. Replacements were hard to find, so some dice carried on for years and were so rounded that they would roll on the table for quite some time!

To the everlasting gratitude from gamers everywhere, Lou Zocchi's Gamescience emerged onto the scene. Here was a company that had all kinds of dice in various shapes and sizes. Many gamers started firing off mail orders and soon hobby shops started to see the potential and ordered stock for their customers. This started an



ongoing pattern where when a gamer went into their local hobby shop on a weekly basis to check for new games, miniatures, etc., they almost always bought some new dice!

Gamescience didn't just sell the basic dice, but they started whole new ideas in the dice arena. One year they came out with a D30, which all of a sudden became the thing to have. Next thing you knew, gamers had created tables to use D30s and a few game companies got into the action as well. Later on, they introduced the D100, which turned into more of a conversation piece than anything that was used regularly in a game. The next thing you knew, companies like Chessex, Brookhurst, and others were selling dice as well. By the mid 80s the hobby was literally swimming in dice.

Before we go on to where dice are in today's hobby, it would be remiss to not talk about how dice are used in the hobby and their psychological impacts on gamers! For a long, long time, games and game designers seemed to be restricted by the D6 systems. Pretty much every game or set of rules used D6s and in fact, many gamers became accustomed to the results so that you didn't even need to look at a combat table! D&D must be given credit for getting gamers accustomed to using other types of dice.

It seemed like all of a sudden designers were set free. A whole host of games started using various tables that took advantage of the various kinds of dice. When the D10 was introduced it started to appear in a lot of games while other gamers looked to retrofit their game tables into some other format besides D6. Not all of these were successful, but there were no restraints any longer as you could use a variety of dice to produce whatever range of results that you wished.

Somewhere along the line, gamers started thinking that the dice were against them! When playing Avalon Hill or SPI games, when several die rolls didn't go your way, well, there was only one die, so surely things would turn around! When

gamers started bringing a bag full of dice and things went from bad to worse, the dice got replaced by other dice in the bag. In fact, gamers would often go buy new dice at the game store they were playing at halfway through a game!

This led to all kinds of bizarre behaviors over the last 40+ years that involved throwing the dice out of windows, tossing them into the ocean, burning them, bizarre rituals to cast out gaming demons, and so forth. The usual practice is just to put the offending dice back into the bag, then pulling out new ones or using someone else's! I've never subscribed to any theories other than things balance out in the end, but some gamers take the subject of dice pretty seriously. In today's hobby it would be rare to find a gamer who has less than 100 dice! There's even gamers who won't play certain games if they use a D8, D20, etc., type system where they have had bad experiences with that type of dice. Yes, things can get out of control when you combine gamers with the topic of dice.



Today, there are more kinds of dice than ever. Many kinds of games, such as Saga, Vikings 878, GMT's popular Commands and Colors series, etc., all use special dice with images that affect game play. In fact, finding a game that doesn't use special dice is getting to be a challenge these days! From weather dice for RPG games to even mapping dungeons, there are special dice for almost every occasion. For those with money there are steel dice, dice with gold edges, glow in the dark, rainbow, color changing, and so many more that it defies description. Any visit to a gaming convention will produce several vendors selling every kind of die under the sun.

As long as gamers play games, there will be dice. What those dice are and how they will be used is in a constant changing state. Gamers will continue to curse their dice, buy new ones, cry about how the dice cheated them out of victory, and so on. In other words, nothing will have changed from those first rolls with a single D6 from a SPI game!



# WMA: Roman Saving Throw Magic Runs Out

# Battle Report

First off, apologies for the picture quality as the sun broke through the clouds as we started playing and it took us a while to get the blinds figured out! We had not tried a WMA game in a while, but with only a few of us this gaming night and the recent holiday, it meant we needed something quickly that would not need a lot of pre-planning. We trotted out the Imperial Romans vs. Seleucids again as both of those armies have plenty of units for a multi-player game.

The Romans went with their usual numerous legions backed by auxiliaries. The rule where the legions are self supporting in the first round makes them dangerous opponents and when fighting them it's always a challenge for units to survive that first round. The Roman cavalry isn't that numerous and usually exists to keep opposing cavalry occupied until the legions win the day. The Romans this time also had a lot of skirmishers and archers to screen the main army.

The Seleucids went with a mix of pike, heavy cavalry, and supporting in-



off to a pretty fast start, with pretty much every unit moving and some in the center were able to get in two orders. All of a sudden, there were Roman archers and skirmishers in the middle of the board, putting pressure on the Seleucids to do something about it and get control of the center back. The Seleucids, however, started off badly with their command rolls, which was going to be a constant theme all night!

While some of the Seleucid cavalry moved, nothing in the center was able to move at all. Fortunately for the Seleucids, the Romans blew almost all of their command rolls on the second turn, giving the Seleucids yet another chance to get going. This time the cavalry wings failed and the center units were able to move! This started a multi-turn archery and skirmish duel that saw the Seleucids come out on the losing end. By the end of the third turn, most of the Seleucid skirmishers were dead as were two units of archers. Slowly and surely, however, the main infantry units were getting closer to battle.

The Seleucid Guard cavalry charged several Roman units on the Seleucid left. While initially successful, they started to run into a problem that would plague Seleucid attacks all night. In one combat they caused 8 casualties and the Romans saved 6 of them. In the next they caused 7 and the Romans saved 4. In yet another combat they caused 7 more and the Romans saved 6 of them! In the end the Seleucid Guard cavalry destroyed an archer unit and dam-

aged another for the loss of two stands. On the following turn they charged again, but only scored something like 16 hits out of 48 dice rolled and the Romans saved 12 of those hits!

The pikes and the legions did clash in the center while on another front the Seleucid Thorakites clashed with the legions as well. Again, the Romans rolled an incredible amount of saves, yet the results were fairly even. The Seleucids destroyed one legion and seriously damaged others, but lost both units of Thorakites while the pike units lost a few stands as well. After 4 turns the Seleucids were ahead in terms of units lost, but with a break point of only 10 compared to the Romans 12, the Seleucids had to be careful about how to proceed.

On the Seleucid right the Seleucid cavalry as well as the elephants got into action. The Seleucid cavalry had an indecisive fight with the Roman cavalry, but the elephants did destroy one unit. However, when they pursued they ran into the Roman Save Machine yet again and were pushed back. The Elephants scored 8 hits, but the Romans saved 5 of them while inflicting 4 on the elephants, eliminating a stand. They then followed up and finished off the elephants. The Seleucid command rolls kept plaguing their side, with the Seleucids unable to move for 4 consecutive turns!

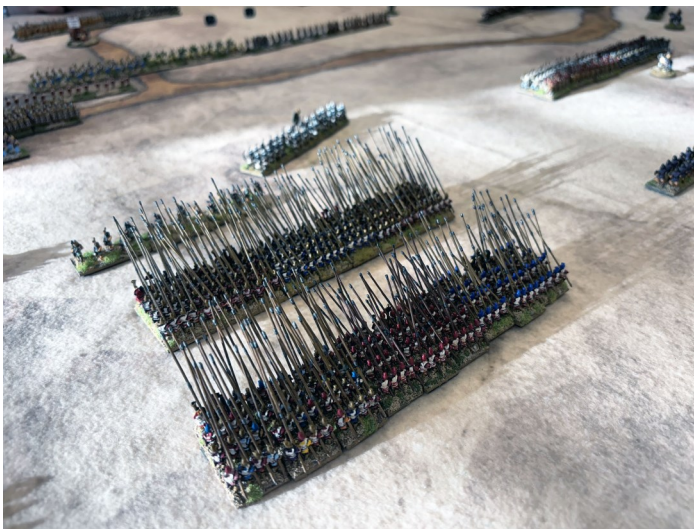
By the end of Turn 5 the Seleucids were frustrated. They had done a lot of things right in terms of attacks, movement of reserves, etc., but could not overcome the Roman saving throws, which were quite incredible this night. Also, every time that the Seleucids were about to break the game wide open they would fail some critical command rolls, which didn't help any. (cont. on p11)



fantry such as Imitation Legions, Thorakites, and light infantry. The force was light on archers and skirmishers, so this would definitely be a clash of different styles. The Seleucid heavy cavalry went to the flanks while the pike and the elephants would focus on the center, trying to advance up the middle and then lurching to the right. These kinds of plans in WMA don't last long with the command die rolls!

Both sides were going to use a fairly simple strategy, but the main stage would be the center where the pikes and legions would ultimately clash. The Romans got





(cont. from p10) The Seleucids did, however, continue to cause casualties and by the start of Turn 6 were ahead 4 units to 7. The Seleucids then changed strategy and started focusing on damaged units. Again, Roman saving throws thwarted most of the attacks and in some cases the Roman counterattacks resulted in more destroyed Seleucid units. The weird thing was that one of the huge Seleucid pike blocks and a brigade of legions never really got into the battle. There was too much traffic in front of them and they kept failing their command rolls.

By the end of Turn 7 things were looking dire for both sides. The Romans were at 10 units and the Seleucids were at 8, meaning that whoever lost the next two units would break and lose the battle. Both sides looked around for their best chance of success, but due to bad com-

mand rolls had to take whatever succeeded. The Seleucids took what was left of the Guard cavalry and made one more lunge at several damaged Roman units. The first attack was a disaster, with the Romans saving 5 of 7 hits (!!!) and killing a stand of Guard cavalry! The Guard continued on and hit the damaged units one more time, which was successful.

The last Roman attacks were ineffectual and several attempts at flanking Seleucid units failed. Seleucid counterattacks killed just enough stand that the Romans hit their break point at 12 1/2 units lost while the Seleucids were at 9 1/2 units lost. In the end it was a very, very close battle that could have gone either way in the last turn or two. One more successful roll here or there could have flipped things around quickly and the results could have been different.

However, the Seleucids really had no business winning! Despite the incredible Roman saving throws, the Seleucids never really got an advance or multiple coordinated attacks going all night. The Seleucid side twice failed to issue a single successful command on two complete turns! Dogged persistence, the Romans failing to issue flanking orders three times, and the Romans rolling badly during their attacks all conspired for a Seleucid victory.

We discussed maybe doing something in the Biblical era next time if we could get up to 1500 points of Hittites (that's a lot of Hittites!) as we also have Egyptians and Assyrians. I need to get the Samurai and Koreans finished at some point, while someone else in our group has a ton of Parthian figs, which would be an interesting matchup for the Romans.



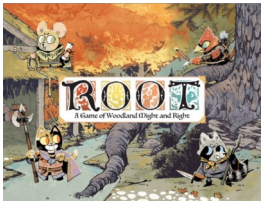
# Quick Reviews



## Clash of Monarchs New Map

One of the better, but much maligned games on the Seven Years War is GMT's Clash of Monarchs. It is a brutal, yet accurate depiction of that war in what is termed a "race to the bottom" type game where you grind down the opposing armies and desolate the countryside until one side screams "Enough!". The game wasn't necessarily complex, but it was difficult to play and the map didn't exactly help things any. When GMT decided to do a mounted map for their Clash of Sovereigns game, they printed basically a fan made map on the other side for Clash of Monarchs.

The new map is definitely more colorful and appears to have a better layout, which should help when playing the game. While this game has not hit our tables in several years, this new map is definitely going to get us to try this again soon.



## Root

I had heard a lot about this game and the fact that its been on quite a few board game Top 10 lists for a few years made me curious about what it was all about. For those of you who think that GMT's COIIN (counterinsurgency) series of games are too complicated, but who like the subject, might want to look here. Basically, this is Vietnam in a fictional forest!

Each faction is trying to take over the forest by extending their control over a number of forest clearings. You have the cats, who kind of have an empire of lumber



mills and towns, the birds who are trying to build roosts everywhere, the mice who are establishing guerilla camps and triggering revolts, armored badgers on a crusade, and much, much more. There is combat, planning, events, and so much going on here that there is tremendous replay value. Trying to come up with a strategy is pretty tough as there are no front lines and each faction has its strengths and weaknesses. There are a number of expansions available as well, Highly recommended.

## Salt Lake Open 2024

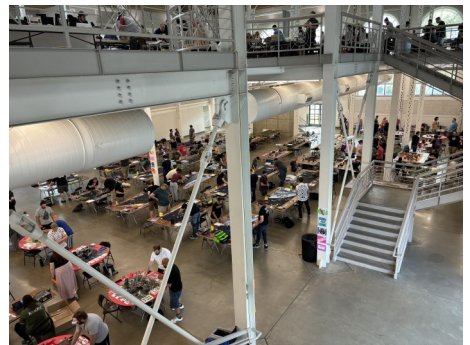
This was the second year for the convention, which this time was held at the Salt Lake Fairgrounds. Not the greatest surrounding area, but the facility was pretty good. About 440 participants showed up for a variety of tournaments, including Star Wars Armada, WH40K, Warhammer Old World, Flames of War, Bolt Action, and more. As many gamers know, the rise of the tournament scene has been a big story within the hobby and most of today's gaming is based around that. Each participant pays a fee, builds their army, then gets a number of games over the two or three days of the convention.

Most of the upper floor was taken up by Bolt Action, Flames of War, and WH40K tournament games. Some of the boards, particularly the WH40K games had a lot of money in terms of figures on those tabletops! It also shows you what a large percentage of the hobby is involved in, i.e., short to the death games with fixed points armies. The bottom floor was mostly fantasy and Star Wars, plus some vendors, including Trenchworx, who was selling their own excellent WW2 vehicles, Reaper figs, and Gunfighter's Ball figures.

Our group ran a Hail Caesar Wars of the Roses game (battle report on p24-27), but other

than the WW1 trench raid game next to us, there wasn't a lot of historical gaming. Yes, Bolt Action and Flames of War are historical games, but they were in use for tournaments, so there wasn't many avenues for participants looking for something different to try.

While the con seemed successful and the new venue was much better, I think there are some missed opportunities here. The con is set up for tournaments, with virtually no demonstration or "learn how to play" type of games that could encourage others to try something new or realize that there is more to gaming than building



your 300 point WH40K army. Definitely something that needs to be worked on.

## Wargames Designs

While building my Irish contingent for the Wars of the Roses, I came across a problem. That problem was what type of flags did the Irish units carry, if any?

While that question was never accurately answered, I started to look for some flags that I could use. Seeing that drawing or painting them by hand was out of the question, I found several sheets by a company called Wargames Designs on Ebay.

You get about 12 flags per sheet and while they look faded and paper thin, they ended up working out pretty well. Once cut out, folded, and then glued to a flagstaff, the colors seem to burst forth. I'm still not sure if my units carried these flags or not, but they look great!

## WARGAMES DESIGNS



When I am looking to purchase a game or a set of rules, I usually try to find out some information about the game first and hopefully some reviews. This isn't always possible, mainly due to the fact that a lot of games are Kickstarter/Gamefound projects or you are purchasing something in a series or an upgraded version. For example, I'm a big fan of MMP's GTS series and some games in that series are over well over \$150 each, but since I collect those and they only come out once in a blue moon, they are an automatic purchase. In most cases you have a good idea about what you're going to get. However, there are plenty of times that you see something much later and think, "Should I buy that?"

In the past you had magazines such as Fire & Movement, The Courier, and more that would do some pretty thorough reviews. Today, when you are thinking about dropping up to \$200 on a game, where do you go for some unbiased views?

That is currently a huge issue in the hobby and one that is not likely to go away soon as the costs of games, miniatures, and rules continues to increase every day. Back in the day, you might not find out that a game was released for sometimes a year and there really wasn't a sense of urgency about the hobby.

That's not what is happening today. Do we put undue pressure on ourselves in regards to hobby items? Yes, most definitely. You usually know about a new release months ahead of time and can follow it on all kinds of media. But, there are more and more items coming out, so there is this artificial deadline in your brain that says you need to decide on this now before it gets washed away in the tidal wave of other new releases. Now this isn't a big problem when games were \$15-20 or a new set of rules might set you back even up to \$30. Now, however, some of these games are easily over \$150 and others with miniatures added on would be over \$250.

Two recent examples would be Red Strike from Vuca Simulations and Korsun Pocket 2 from People's Wargames. We'll deal with Red Strike first, which was released to great fanfare, despite its \$175 price tag. A lot of images featuring beautiful components and the WW3 topic instantly pulled in a lot of gamers, so my

guess is the first run will probably sell out. Being a WW3 aficionado myself, I was quite interested. Having played Mark Herman's Gulf Strike system back in the 80s (which is what Red Strike's systems are based on) and even then it was groundbreaking, but fairly complex. Looking at the maps, charts, etc. spread over a 4 x 8 table with counters all over the place made me a bit suspicious that this thing was even playable.

However, if you have dropped close to \$200 with shipping on a game, are you going to criticize it? Are there going to be a lot of negative reviews?

Maybe if it was a mainstream type game where it sold 25,000+ copies you would get a lot of comments, reviews, etc. In a niche hobby like wargaming and with the price being high, information is going to be hard to come by. For one, who wants to look like an idiot by paying \$150-200 for a game, then saying its bad? After posting positive comments throughout the game's development or Kickstarter program, are you going to all of sudden say that this isn't what you expected? Probably not.

So, what's left? Naturally, several high ratings from the true believers, fan boys, or those who really haven't played the game yet! Is Red Strike any good? It very well could be, but it would be nice to get some balanced reviews before you drop close to \$200. This is happening quite a lot in the hobby right now as there is a shortage of honest, in depth reviews. Granted, doing those take time (I have posted several on BGG that took days to prepare) and who is going to drop that kind of money to buy a game to review that they might not like or aren't interested in?

Another example of this is Korsun Pocket 2. The first version is something of a wargaming legend, being one of the few East Front monster games from the 80s and it has been written about through the years. This second version had a long, torturous route to publication, taking years and years to get to the point where they finally published

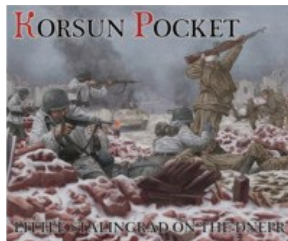
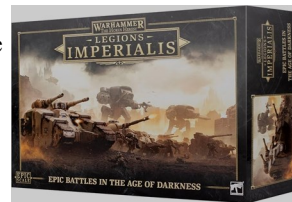
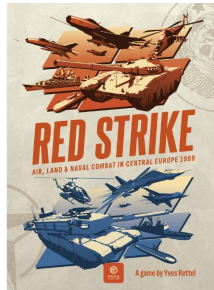
it after overcoming a lot of obstacles. Then there is the eye-popping price of anywhere from \$250-300. The graphics are almost the same as from the 80s, the rules seem to have some issues from the forum questions, and it seems like a lot of work and not much fun.

However, there still isn't a review out and there are some fairly high ratings for it, which don't jive with the questions on various forums. Again, if you dropped \$300 on a game, are you going to go out and criticize it heavily? It seems like when it comes to these expensive games, gamers circle the wagons and attack anyone who says anything that even hints at a criticism. My guess is that if the game had been \$50 you would see a lot more lower ratings and critiques (which again could be that more people could afford it, thus more reviews).

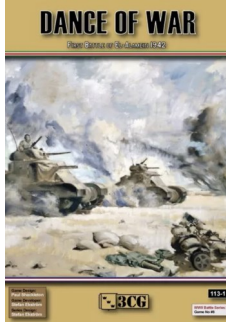
The fact that a game is expensive should not be used as an excuse to assign it fair criticisms. Yet you do see this more and more, especially with the prices on these games and miniatures climbing each year. Legions Imperialis, for example, looks great, but for a club game you're going to be laying down several hundred dollars, often for just one side! Anyone who brings up the price and/or that the rules aren't great is immediately shouted down and if the people who say those negative comments would post their home address, my guess is that some gamers would track them down!

After all, if a game box is huge, has hundreds of miniatures in it, plus all kinds of tokens, cards, and play aids, plus its something that you really want, the natural assumption is that it is a great product! Woe to anyone who would say it's not. If a gamer drops \$300 on said boxed game, who are you to question why it needs a lot of errata, why some systems work poorly, or how a second mortgage will be needed for the supplements.

We really need to get back to the days of more open discussion and better reviews. If an expensive game is worth it, all the better. If it's not worth it, just because its expensive should not be an excuse. As a hobby I think we can do better, especially as prices keep rising.



Like Polar Storm on the next page, this is yet another entry in Three Crowns Games WW2 series, which is built using the A Victory Lost system (with modifications). This time the British have been defeated at Mersa Matruh and Panzerarmee Afrika pursues them to El Alamein station, where one of the more famous battles of WW2 begins. This is a big change for the series, where all of the previous games have focused on the Eastern Front.



few are pulled each turn (the turn track lists how many for each side). This makes long range planning almost impossible, so it creates an ever changing landscape that both sides need to manage. Units of the activated command then move and attack on a standard odds-based table.

Most units have two sides and the CRT does have a lot of step losses coupled with retreats. Both sides have limited air support and artillery barrages occur as random events, which some gamers may find a bit strange. Overall, however, the movement and combat systems are pretty easy to figure out. After that you have replacements and reinforcements, which round out the turn. Most games in the series go 10-12 turns, so my guess is that most players will be able to get in a game within 3-4 hours.



Once again, you get the standard components for this game series. A 22 x 34 map, two sheets of pretty thick, but colorful counters, rules, and a reference card. Yet again, one of my pet peeves is not set up card in the game and personally, I wouldn't mind paying a few dollars extra if the games had them. Also, as I've stated in reviews of the other games produced by Three Crowns, I'm not a fan of the font they use on the maps. However, everything is perfectly usable and any complaints are fairly small.

If you've ever played any of the games in this series or A Victory Lost, you can be up and running in no time at all. Set things up, look over the special rules, check the victory conditions, then start playing in under 30 minutes. Even if this is your first wargame, there really is nothing here that complex and after a few turns you get the sequence of each turn down pretty quickly. This entry into the series, however, does introduce some interesting special rules, which is going to take a turn or two to get used to.



Where things get interesting with this particular game is the extra chrome, which again, is more than what you see in most of the series. For starters, you have the Royal Armored regiments, which have to roll on a special activation chart to see if they get moving or not when their command chit is pulled. Yet another batch of British armored units that come on later in the game have untried strength, so you don't know what they're going to do until they get into combat. Each side also has a laager phase, which was common practice in the desert, where armored units retreat from contact at the end of the turn.

Now these things by themselves don't seem to be too much overhead, but we're actually just beginning! The British have a series of command chits for standalone brigades, of which there are several in the battle. Then there are minefields, fortifications, and random events. The events cover everything from sandstorms to dawn attacks, so you never know what you're going to get. When you

combine all of this, it adds several layers of chaos to an already chaotic battle. Again, there isn't anything here approaching rocket science, but expect to miss a thing or two in your first play.

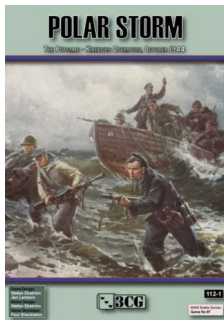
The battle itself opens with the Germans and Italians putting pressure on the British, who are scattered and trying to cobble together some kind of a defense. Slowly and surely, however, more British and Allied units start arriving. The South Africans show up, an Indian brigade, more of 7th Armored, additional aircraft, etc., and soon there is a good sized British force that goes on the attack. More Italians and the rest of 15th Panzer, 21st Panzer, and 90th Light show up, but you can clearly see the battle tilting and the Axis side needs to hang onto their victory point objective hexes.

What makes the game fun is that you never know which command chit will be pulled and the constantly arriving forces makes planning 1-2 turns ahead a challenge. Couple all of that with the random events and the game has pretty good replay value, plus the chit pull mechanic is ideal for solo gamers. Both sides will get their chance at armored attacks, counterattacks, desperate stands, and more as they battle for the objectives.

This is certainly a different take on battles in North Africa. If you like A Victory Lost or have any of the other games in the series, then this is an easy choice. While the price on these is getting up there, the game is still pretty good value for the money and hopefully there will be more games in the series.



It's always good to see a game in a series that you play that deals with an unusual battle. Three Crowns Games from Sweden continues to produce these interesting games in their WW2 series, with Polar Storm being the 7th one in this series based upon the popular A Victory Lost game engine. This time, the setting is northern Finland at the end of WW2.

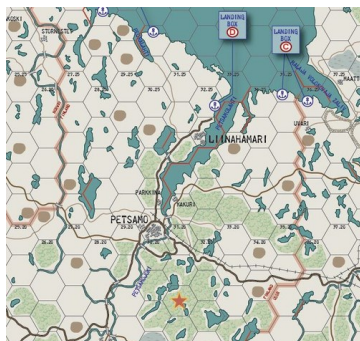


up your first game in not time at all. If you've played other games in the series, then you just look at the special rules, set things up, and start playing the first turn.

To say that this is an unusual battle would be an understatement. The Germans are tasked with doing three difficult things; 1) hold back the advancing Russians, 2) move as many supplies from two locations to safety, and 3) withdraw as many units as possible off the board. The supply movement is a central part of this game. There are two towns (supply centers) with stacks of supply points. Each turn the Germans roll a D6, consult a table, then pull those points from those towns and place them in a box (the Germans score victory points for saving certain amounts of supply). The issue is how long should the Germans try to hold these places?

Polar Storm deals with the "Tenth Shock" operation to clear the upper areas of Finland after the Finnish capitulation in September of 1944. The German retreat back to Norway was complicated by Hitler's orders to save as much of the German supplies as possible before the Russians got to them. The unusual terrain, amphibious landings, and more contribute to a rather offbeat battle than what most gamers play.

The components are pretty standard by this time if you have the other games in the series. When the series was with Revolution games the maps were very good, but with smaller counters. When the series shifted back to Three Crowns the counters got larger and more colorful, but in my estimation the maps took a step back, especially the font used for the locations. Having said that, however, the map is still perfectly functional and the terrain is clearly laid out. The counters, as mentioned above, are of the larger variety, with a glossy finish, and are very colorful, which is very useful in a chit pull game where the various formations are separated by color. The only major complaint is the lack of set up cards, which has been noted in my previous reviews for this series.



The rules are fairly easy and despite the chit pull mechanic, this is as close to a classic hex and counter wargame that you can get. There are ZOCs (+2 to enter/leave), odds based combat tables, retreat/advance, and then there is the chrome that is added for each game at the end of the rules, which is still pretty low overhead. Polar Storm features a few new things, but again, you can finish the rules and set

Next up is the terrain, which consists of a lot of small hills, swamp/marsh areas, and water obstacles that seem to be everywhere. The Russians only have a few armored and motorized units (the Germans have one) that have to stay on the roads, which definitely makes planning attacks with them a challenge. The Russians have several bridging and pontoon units to breach these obstacles, but getting them into position takes some planning as well as luck.

Then there is the NDR, which is a Russian force that consists of various naval infantry that is holed up in a peninsula type area of the board, looking to break out. They also get several units that conduct amphibious landings along the coast. The Germans can't ignore these small units as they could cause considerable havoc if left alone. The Russians also have special forces groups that can block supply lines from time to time.

Finally, adding

to the chaos is the tactical withdraw rule where near the end of each turn, any German unit that is in a Russian ZOC and not in a village, hill, or fortification must withdraw. If a German unit takes a step loss it can choose to retreat instead, so the Germans are giving up ground all the time. Add to this mix a roll for two ran-



dom events each turn and you have a witches brew of chaos! Trying to come up with a plan for both sides is difficult, plus the chit draw can destroy even the best plans.

In the end you have the Russians advancing relentlessly, amphibious landings, attacks against fortifications, supplies being evacuated, desperate last stands, random events, weird terrain, and more. The good thing is that although it sounds like there is a lot that you would need to read about in the rules, most sections are only a paragraph or two, then once you play a turn you get the hang of it pretty quickly.

Are there any issues with the game? If there was one complaint it would be that the game is pretty luck dependent. The random events might eliminate all of the Russian special forces, several chit draws in a row can mean the Germans get out of trouble too easily, or bad rolls on the supply table could mean that the Germans don't earn enough victory points. The good thing is that the replay value is pretty high and while this isn't my favorite game in the series, I can see it getting to the table every now and then just because of the unusual topic.



One of the main goals when I started my Hail Caesar Wars of the Roses project a few years ago was to do a campaign. Besides the various household troops, artillery, cavalry, leaders, etc., there would need to be some kind of effort to produce units of various factions, such as the Scots, Irish, and/or possible mercenary units. With about 50 units now completed for the main armies, it was time to turn my attention to forces that may or may not show up in a campaign. I decided to start with the Irish.



Finding figures for them wasn't too hard, but when you need probably something like 75+, then price becomes a consideration. Footsore, Foundry, Perrys, etc., all had suitable figures, but building a lot of units was going to not be cheap. I considered some of the plastic boxed sets, but I didn't need war dogs/handlers and both sets had some of what I needed, but not both types of units. In the end I went with Old Glory, backed by some command sets from other manufacturers. With the OG Army discount, 30 figs for around \$25 wasn't too bad. If money (especially for overseas shipping) wasn't an object, I would have just ordered a bunch of the Perry Irish packs as well as some of the Saga and/or Footsore sets.

First off, there is literally little to nothing about them during the Wars of the Roses! They only fought at three battles; Mortimer's Cross (for the Lancastrians), Stoke Field (for the Yorkists), and the Battle of Piltown, which was an all Irish affair in The Pale. The first two are fairly well known battles, yet there is not much known about the Irish forces that were present. In fact, just finding out who commanded what is nearly impossible! However, the goal was to get whatever forces we might need for a campaign painted up and we would need an Irish contingent at some point.

I decided to do a generic Irish force that could be used as a contingent that both sides could purchase or gain favor with for the campaign. Pete's Flags has a sheet for Thomas Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, who was one of many Fitzgeralds. Then the questions started to come up. Did he have household troops? How many units under him (or any Irish leader during this time) were in Western style

harness/armor and what were they armed with? What was their livery? After digging here and there, posting questions to various forums, piecing together orders of battle, etc., I was able to come up with enough ideas to build a small force.

First, it appeared that the Irish leaders at the main battles were in Western style harness. They did appear to have household troops, so I decided to do one unit of those. The command stand and household troops would use the Perry plastic figures that I had already used for most of my existing armies. While there appeared to be some Irish cavalry at Piltown, it didn't look like any Irish cavalry units made their way to England. Now it was on to the other major units, which were the Gallowglass and Kerns.

Stepping straight out of the Dark Ages, most Irish contingents had units of Gallowglass, which were medium to heavy infantry with padded armor

covered with chain-mail and helmets. They used two handed axes and would look right at home going up against Normans and Saxons from an earlier era! Then there were the Kerns, who are a mix between light infantry and what many rules define as a warband. They were armed with spears and javelins, but had little armor outside of some having shields (English longbows decimated them at Stoke Field).

shields were a bit unusual in that they were oval shaped when it looked like the smaller, circular shields were mainly carried. When painted up and based they will do fine for campaign purposes.

In the end, it's a good Irish contingent that can be used for some fictional battles, historical refigts, or for a future campaign. The Gallowglass gives the force some staying power while the Kerns can be used in a light infantry role. The household troops can provide a good reserve or can stiffen the line where needed. With the Irish now completed, it's on to the Scots!

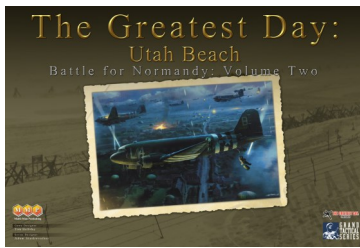






*We did a massive Battletech: Alpha Strike game over the Memorial Day weekend, with 6 players directing mechs, armor, infantry, and aerospace assets. Once both sides closed the range, things really started dying! Much faster playing than its predecessor, although with this many things on the battlefield, the shooting phase can take a while!*

Since we've spent some time this issue talking about reviews of expensive games, the need for supplements, etc., here is a prime example of everything that has been discussed so far. From Multi-Man Publishing (MMP) comes the second game in a trilogy covering the first few weeks of the Normandy invasion in what is called their Grand Tactical Series (GTS). The first volume covered Gold, Juno, and Sword beaches while this game covers Utah Beach as well as the operations by the 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions.



Then there are maps, which are works of art. You get some 22 x 34 maps that are double-sided, some 22 x 34s that are single-sided, plus some smaller maps for the introductory scenarios. All of the maps can be configured in multiple ways to fit the various scenarios and campaigns. Although the maps can't link up to any in the first game of the series, once Omaha is released, all of the maps from all three games will match up!

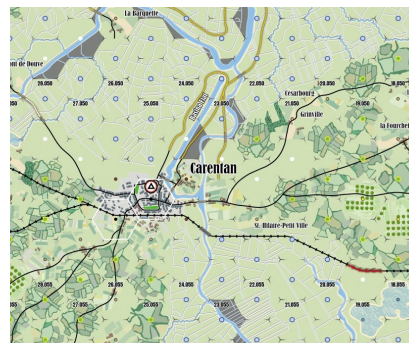
Just by perusing the scenario and campaign books, you can easily see that there is enough here to keep a gamer occupied for at least a year. There are introductory scenarios that just cover a few hours to some that are just the first day or so. You then move up to the Intermediate games that cover various operations, but are still just a small part of the overall campaign. Then you get to the Advanced scenarios that are clearly designed for team play and will take several gaming sessions. Finally, there are the campaigns that cover a lot of ground and will take at least 100 hours if not more to play. The full campaign will easily take up a 4 x 8 table once all of the maps and divisional sheets are laid out.

It's hard to believe, but the first game in this trilogy came out around 9 years ago! Hopefully, the third game on Omaha Beach comes out before most gamers who bought the first two pass on to that great gaming table in the sky. The retail price for this game is a whopping \$332 (!!!), although if you pre-ordered it you got it for around \$275 with shipping. That is still a lot of money and my guess is that most gamers who bought this already had the first game in the series.

For \$332 you should be getting a lot of components and here is where MMP certainly doesn't disappoint as the large box is packed with gaming goodness. For starters, there are the nearly 2400 large counters, which depict all of the combat formations of both sides in this area as well as many informational counters. Coming up with a way to organize all of the various markers plus the formations is going to be a challenge. Then there are the division displays, terrain cards, combat tables, rules, exclusive rules for Utah, and finally not one, but three scenario books.

two divisions on both sides slugging it out for several days.

Units are companies, with named leader counters for regiments/brigades. Each unit is either one or two steps with a lot of info on the counters that deal with fire values, defense ratings, movement, etc. Getting to know what each unit can do is part of the learning process of the game system. There are then all kinds of informational counters such as cohesion hits, suppression, improved positions, etc., that modify those various values. These markers have numbers that match up to the various values on the units, so there's no need to consult additional tables.

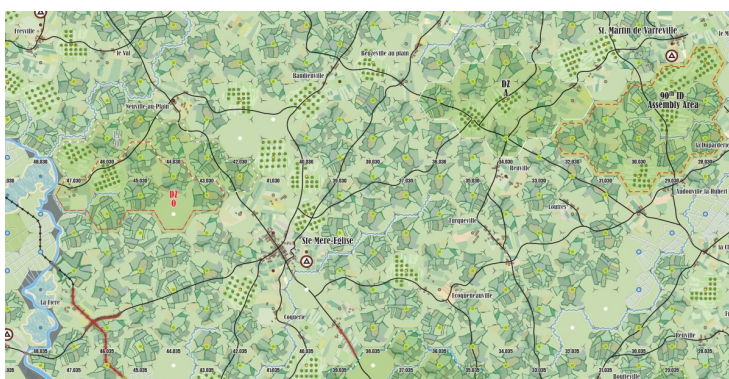


Turns are two hours long, except for the Night turn, which is just one turn for the entire night. GTS uses an interesting command and control system to regulate what formations can and can't do during each turn. In GTS, formations are usually brigades, kampffgruppens, or

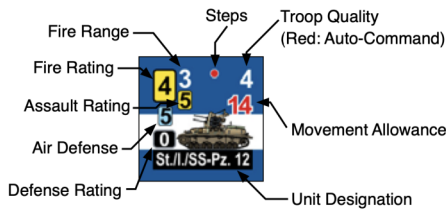
sometimes a series of battalions with attached units. Each formation has an activation marker that can be purchased, which is put into a cup at the start of the turn. When that chit is drawn, you check the command range of the leader for that formation, then you get to move and fire with the formation's combat units. Each division has a mat that tracks dispatch points (used to purchase formation activations), command points (used to perform additional actions), attached units, artillery batteries in parks, and more.

As is usual, there simply aren't enough dispatch and command points to do everything that you want, so deciding what are the priorities each turn is quite the challenge. At the start of each turn, both sides spend dispatch points to purchase formation chits, which when drawn, activate all units in command for that formation. Then there are several other counters added to the draw cup, including the division activation chits, direct command chits, events, etc. What each unit can and can't do is determined by what kind of chit is drawn. Divisional chits activate everything, but your options are limited. Formation chits allow combat units to do almost any kind of action and by spending command (cont. on p19)

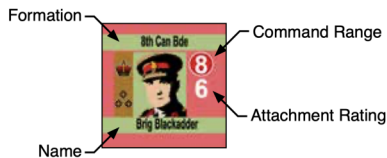
For the uninitiated, what is the Grand Tactical Series all about? Basically, it's a series of scenarios (or battles) focusing on operational combat during WW2. Whether it is invading Sword Beach, defending the Arnhem bridge area, counterattacking Panzer Lehr with the U.S. 4th Armored, or dropping paratroops to seize Maleme airfield on Crete, the system is designed to scale up or down, depending upon the size of the battle. Introductory scenarios may focus on a regiment attacking an objective over a few turns, while Intermediate scenarios might feature one or



## Unit Example



## Leader Example



(cont. from p18) points, they can also take a second action.

Actions include firing, assaults, rallying, building improved positions, movement, etc. Coming up with the right combo in terms of who to move, who should assault, is it better to fire than assault, then how many command points to use for additional actions is a huge challenge. Command points are precious and you never really know how many you will get in a turn and gaining dispatch points is harder still.

As you can see by the map detail, terrain in this series is critical. Knowing what terrain to defend in, how hard it is to move through it, how long it will take to get to the objectives, etc., are all something that needs to be considered in line with how many activations and command points you have. For many types of terrain, you need to switch the combat unit into column, which allows you move faster, but you also become a better target! Many times you can run up against a tough defensive position because you have to get up to it in column or not at all.

Combat seems like it would be fairly complicated, but once you do a few exchanges of fire it goes pretty fast. Pick a unit, check LOS, go through the modifi-

ers, look at the colored column corresponding to the unit's weapons, then roll a D10. You need to roll the hit number or less, then apply the result. Usually this is a suppression or cohesion hit, which drops the enemy unit's effectiveness, but there are step losses as well. Units can accrue several of these, making them almost useless in combat situations until rallied.

Then we get to assault, which actually has a flow chart! Yes, this is the most difficult part of the game system to grasp, although usually it's a lot simpler than the flow chart shows. Units take a bravery check, then approach the enemy unit, which opens up with opportunity fire. Then the unit can charge in, forcing the action, or there are a series of firefights until one side or the other is usually destroyed or ineffective. Getting this part right in the game is going to take a few tries, but it is the primary way to take enemy positions, so it gets used a lot in a game.

Artillery in the game system uses the concept of "artillery parks", which during WW2 was where artillery batteries would set up to begin operations. There's no single artillery batteries running around to fill in holes or offering support at a moment's notice. Artillery units assemble at a hex on the map, then they get in contact with the formation leaders. At some point they will need to pack up and move to another location, starting the process all over again. Artillery fire, whether it is successful or not, places barrage markers on enemy units that hinders their ability to fire and move. The artillery system is definitely one of the more realistic things you will encounter in ww2 operational games.

As you can guess, running a division or two with this system is going to take a bit of work, but everything flows pretty smoothly. The two hour turns allow all kinds of interactions between both sides

and the various formations. There will be numerous decision points in each turn regarding how far to press an attack, where to set up the artillery support, which formations should get priority, and how to use command points to perform additional actions for units.

As stated before, there are smaller scenarios to introduce you to the game as well as large campaigns that are suitable for 4-8 players. Are there any issues with the game or the system? Yes, but the perceived level of these varies from gamer to gamer. First off, there are no set up cards/displays. This isn't a problem if you're playing an advanced scenario or

campaign as you just set up entire divisions. For the smaller scenarios, however, finding the right units for a brigade in a division that might have 75+ counters and markers is a challenge!

The rules themselves can present challenges as well,

just in the style that they are written. There is no SPI style paragraph numbering or GMT like paragraphs. The rules are in sections that do a good job most of the time, but the layout may not be to everyone's liking. Finally, the amount of markers that can get added to the map is quite substantial. Here you have these beautiful maps and units in a variety of colors that you really only see once the game is set up! It's not uncommon for a unit to have an improved position marker on it, a suppressed marker, a cohesion hit marker, and maybe even a step loss marker on it during a turn. This is the one area that turns off many gamers to the GTS system, but it does work for the game.

In the end, this is a monumental achievement and now only Omaha is needed to complete the set (the combined game will be gigantic!). The maps, counters, displays, etc., are top notch and the game play is very interactive. You can reasonably simulate the first two weeks of the Normandy invasion and nothing is really set in stone, so things may not play out historically! The price, however, may put this game well out of reach for most gamers, so hopefully smaller games in the series can continue to come out to let everyone try it.



# TSATF: Fighting Withdrawal

# Battle Report

One of the most challenging aspects of historical miniatures gaming is how to balance Colonial games! The differences in troop types, terrain, firepower, etc., all combine to make it very difficult to put on an exciting and balanced game. Every so often, however, things work out as happened with this scenario, although at the start it didn't look good.

The setting is the Northwest Frontier around 1885. The tribes are in revolt (yet again!) and an Anglo-Indian force has been ordered to abandon their forward position and fall back to a fort. What starts as an orderly withdrawal soon turns to chaos as the Pathans decide to trap this force before it can reach safety.

The British and Indian units would start about 12 inches in from the table, moving along the road with flanking units pushing towards the walled farm and the bridge. The idea would be to leapfrog towards the safety of the bridge, then try to break through any Pathan units that tried to block their way off the board by using the road exit. It was a good plan, but as it was TSATF that we were playing, the chances of things going badly and needing a new plan were around 100%!



### Pathans

- (1) unit blocking the road where the British and Indians would need to exit.
- (2) Units starting at the corners of the board nearest the British and Indian forces.

There would be a total of 6 Pathan units (2 of them armed only with swords) coming after the British and Indians, with two units being added to each of Turns 2 and 3. At the end of each turn a D6 would be rolled and each time the cumulative total hit 10, another Pathan unit would arrive to block the road exit. We figured that the Pathans would probably get at the most 8-9 units during the game against the 4 plus a battery for the British and Indians.

The game did not start well for the British and Indian forces as the Pathans kept moving first, which put a lot of pres-

sure on the withdrawing units. The Anglo-British players decided to race ahead with the Sikh Lancers and the artillery to secure the bridge and occupy the buildings on the other side of the river to cover the withdrawal. This proved to be a good idea as the Pathans were getting lucky with the card draws and the British and Indian forces were going to have their hands full.

Sure enough, a British and Indian unit each rolled a 4 (on 3D6!) for movement the next turn and were caught by the Pathans, who survived the defensive fire, then made their rolls to charge. Not only did this happen on one turn, but on the turn after as well. The result? An Indian infantry unit cut down in half and running for the bridge, while one of the British infantry units was hit in the rear and lost 50% casualties as well. At this stage we were seriously thinking about restarting the game! However, we decided to press on and in the end, that proved to be the correct course of action. (cont. on p 21)



### Anglo-Indian Force

- (2) units of British infantry
- (1) unit of Indian infantry
- (1) unit of Sikh Lancers
- (1) screw gun batter w/2 sections





(cont. from p 20) The Sikh Lancers dismounted and occupied the walled compound to help bring fire across the river. The artillery battery ranged in on a unit of Pathans and helped break up a possible attack. Meanwhile, the remaining full strength British unit was moving and firing, trying to get back to the bridge against overwhelming numbers. They were charged several times, but kept winning the melees. They were finally forced back to the walled farm and after two more attacks, picked up their wounded and headed for the bridge.

On the other side of the bridge, Pathan strength was building. The British and Indian remnants kept up a pretty good fire that at least kept the Pathans at bay. You could feel an attack coming, but at that moment the artillery and dismounted Sikhs were busy trying to pour fire into the flanks of the Pathans that were trying to surround the remaining British unit on

the other side of the river. If the British unit could just get to the bridge, the remaining British and Indian forces could then punch their way through to the road exit and win the game.

However, even though the Pathans had taken a lot of casualties (at least 4 units were below 50% strength), they were still in control of the situation. The remaining British unit tried to move out from the walled farm and once again, rolled poorly for their movement, which allowed yet another Pathan attack. This was defeated, but by this time the British unit was carrying almost as many wounded as they had non-wounded!

The Pathans on the other side of the river finally launched their attack. One Pathan unit failed to close and got shot up for its efforts. The other Pathan unit, however, broke through the remaining Indian infantry unit and took out half the

crew of one of the screw gun sections before being pushed back. Both British and Indian forces were still doing whatever they could to reach safety, but it was becoming apparent that the game was getting out of hand. After discussing the previous turn we determined that some British and Indian stragglers might escape, but this was a Pathan victory.

Even though things looked bleak at the start and there certainly was the temptation to restart the game, we hung in there all the way to the end. TSATF has so much randomness and wild swings that things can turn around quickly. We went with rolling a D6 each turn and on a 5 or 6 would draw an event card. We only drew one event card all night (!!!), so there was far less chaos than our previous game. For the next game it might be time to break out the fort and either do a ladder assault or some type of siege relief game.



# Samurai Era Ambush



Another great Samurai era battle using the Fistful of Lead: Bigger Battles rules. A force is trying to escort two VIPs off the board and is ambushed by several units of samurai and ashigaru, setting off a wave of chaos! Units range anywhere in size from 4 to 10 figures and the system plays relatively quickly. The excellent terrain by Rob Coleman also features lighted building and lamp posts!

One of the most unusual, but popular categories in board wargaming the last several years has been what are termed COIN games, or counter-insurgency games. For a long time in the hobby there were very few of these kinds of games and when they did appear, it usually had something to do with Vietnam! Lately, however, games such as *Fire in the Lake*, *The British Way*, *Ancean Abyss*, and others have appeared, with even more on the way. While some are quite involved (along with being fairly complex), there are others (*The British Way*) that are quick to play and fairly easy to learn.

In the easy to learn category comes a new entry; *A Gest of Robin Hood* from GMT Games. From looking at the components inside the box you might not associate the game with the word “easy”, but everything provided makes a lot of sense after you’ve played a round or two. First off is the mounted map, which while smaller than the average wargame map, is still very well done. The map shows Nottingham, the Shire Wood, and several surrounding parishes (towns). There is an Order/Justice track on the left side that is the primary focus of the game as well as a Royal Inspection track on the right. The map is beautiful, simple, and it works just right for the game.

The other components are a sheet of counters for various game functions, wooden tokens for the henchmen and merry men, and two decks of cards. The cards are tarot size, which are much larger than the standard sized playing cards. One deck features events which drive the game while the other, smaller deck is used for travelers that are potential targets to be robbed. There are also two heavy cardboard mats to place your available forces as well as a summarize of plots and deeds. There is also a screen to hide the mat, which has the sequence of play and other information needed for the game. Finally,



there is a rule book, a play book with a long example of play, and finally a third booklet about the history of Robin Hood. So far, so good.

How does this all work? If you’ve never played a COIN game, then here’s where things can get a bit strange, particularly if can’t think outside the box! The game begins with the Sherriff having a few henchmen on the board and

most of the parishes are submissive. Robin Hood is represented on the board along with a few camps in the forest and some merry men, which all begin the game hidden. You also prepare a deck of cards with 6 event cards, 1 wheel of fortune card, and 1 Royal Inspection card, which forms one “ballad”. The entire game consists of three ballads and the last card is King Richard when he returns home, ending the game.

Each turn a card is turned over, which has one event for Robin Hood and one for the Sherriff. Each player can then play the event, do a single plot, or choose to do three plots and a deed. You can only choose one and then your opponent cannot choose that same option. This also determines who will go first in the next round. For example, if the Robin Hood player chooses to play the event, his token goes on the second Initiative space.

If the Sherriff chooses the single plot option, then he will go first in the following round as that option is lower on the Initiative spaces. This opens up a lot of decisions about doing too little or too much in a turn, so that you can go first or second the next time.

Plots usually consist of recruiting men, moving out patrols for the Sherriff, sneaking, etc. Deeds include inspiring parishes

to revolt, taxing parishes, then moving carriages loaded with gold towards Nottingham, and much more. Some plots cost money while others can be free, so when finances get tight the options become more limited.

The Robin Hood player is trying to keep his forces hidden, sneak into parishes, set parishes to revolting, robbing carriages, robbing travelers, and moving the marker up the Justice track to win. The Sherriff player is trying to find merry men and jail them, find the camps, tax parishes, recruit henchmen, and move the marker down the Order track to win. Trying to pick out the right combo to match your strategy as well as your finances is a continual challenge! The situation on the board can change very quickly, especially due to events, robbing the wrong traveler, a trap by the Sherriff, etc.



After each ballad things are reset, with each side getting more money, half the merry men get released from jail, and



play continues to the next ballad. When the Richard card is drawn at the end of the third ballad, the player with the marker at the highest point of the Justice/Order track wins the game. This all sounds very complicated, but in

practice its actually pretty simple. The reader may think that with 24 cards or so to turn over it might take a long time, but actually, you can finish a game in around an hour with experienced players. Your first game might take a bit longer, but once you get the hang of the turn, things move pretty fast.

Who thought that you could make a COIN game out of the Robin Hood legend? This is a beautiful game that in concept is fairly simple to play. The beauty of it, however, lies in the number of options that each player has in how to prosecute the campaign. The cards, plots, deeds, etc., all combine to give the game pretty high replay value. If you’re just getting into COIN games, this would be a very good place to start before moving on to more complex designs. Highly recommended.



# Hail Caesar: WOTR-Yorkist Army Prevails!

# Battle Report

We had been asked to put on a Hail Caesar game at the 2024 Salt Lake Open by the local Warlord Games rep. Since we ran a Wars of the Roses game in 2023, the thinking was maybe we should change things up and go with Seleucids vs, Republican Romans. In the end, however, the deciding factor was that this would be a good opportunity to try out the newly painted Irish contingent (featured on p16). With that in mind it was back to the Wars of the Roses for the convention game.

When setting up a convention game, you never know who is going to stop by and play. You could get experienced players, first time gamers, various on-lookers, etc., plus members of your own



club members would get 2 commands each and if others joined us there would be extra commands to hand out. The terrain was pretty basic as well, with the town, woods, etc., pushed out to the edges, leaving a nice, flat middle where most of the fighting would take place. The commands were set out in their approximate starting locations. Players could rearrange the units how they wanted, but this was to be a fairly straightforward fight between two equal forces.

As mentioned above, both sides would have four commands; three infantry divisions with one cavalry division. The cavalry divisions consisted of one unit of mounted knights along with two light cavalry units. Each infantry division for the most part had two units of household troops, one unit of infantry, and one small unit of dismounted knights. One division in each army would also have a unit of skirmishers as well as two medium artillery units.

On the Lancastrian side, one of the infantry divisions was the new Irish contingent. This consisted of one unit of household troops, one dismounted knights/men at arms unit, two units of gallowglass, and three units of kerns. The Kerns were used as light infantry, so

they could skirmish, but weren't designed to stand up to heavily armored opponents. In hindsight, the Irish were a bit underpowered, but with no Hail Caesar Wars of the Roses army book yet, you kind of have to guess about their stats.

Just before the game began, it was time for a refresher about the type of units that we would be using. Around 50% of the units are what are called Household troops. These were the paid men who wore a lord's livery and consisted of archers backed by heavily armored leaders as well as bill men. They fought in what was called a "herce" (good luck finding info on this!), but they are the basic unit and are pretty nasty since they can fire out to 20" with their longbows and can re-roll one miss! The heavy infantry are a mix of bill men and men at arms, while the small units of dismounted knights are pretty powerful with their special rules.

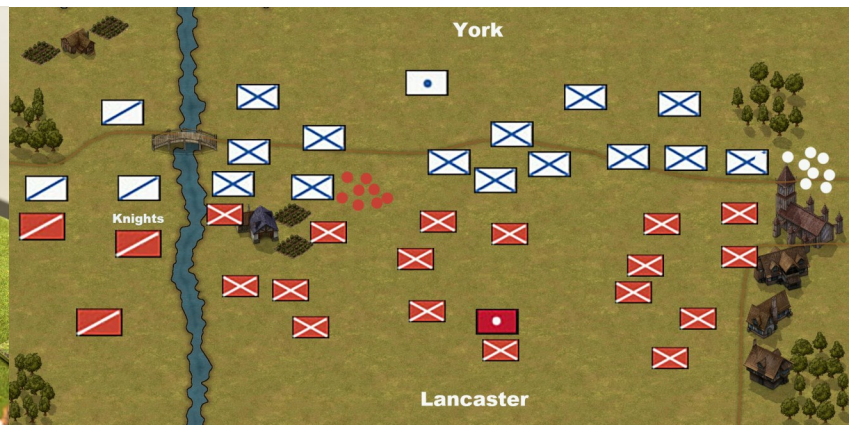
With both sides set up and most questions answered, it was on to the game. The Lancastrians started out and it did



gaming group. Trying to set up some kind of elaborate scenario or historical fight with a ton of special rules is out of the question. Instead, you need something that is easy to explain, gets into the action fairly quickly, and gives new players the chance to roll some dice in a meaningful way.

We would have four of us available to play/help, so the scenario was set up with 8 commands. That way, every one of our

not bode well for the Irish who moved 2 units and failed their command roll! The rest of the forces tried to (cont. on p25)





# Hail Caesar: WOTR-Yorkist Army Prevails!

# Battle Report



(cont. from p24) get out into the middle of the board as quickly as possible. The Yorkist were hit and miss on their first turn, but they did get their cavalry situation straightened out on their far right, setting the stage for a multi-turn slugfest on that side of the river.

The second turn saw the Irish blunder on the first command roll, forcing one unit to almost retreat of its baseline! Not a good start for the Lancastrian right flank. Over the Lancastrian left, the big cavalry showdown was about to begin, with each side's mounted knights charging and obliterating a light cavalry unit. The other light cavalry unit then charged the knights, which although it ended with their destruction, left two badly damaged mounted knight units on that side of the river. The Yorkist mounted knight unit was close to Lord Clifford's archers, who peppered it with bow fire, forcing it back.

In 4 turns the cavalry of both sides was on life support. The light cavalry were destroyed and the remaining mounted knights with 4-5 stamina hits, meaning that they were pretty much combat ineffective.

Action then shifted to the farm compound near the bridge where both sides started to maneuver their forces into charge range. Both sides met in the farm, where after a series of inconclusive combats, the Yorkist pulled back. Seeing an opening, Clifford's knights/men at arms went over the farm walls and attacked. This set off a multi-turn battle, with both sides sending in more units to add to the chaos.

In the center, Oxford (who was the overall commander) had his artillery soften up the Yorkist center, then moved up skirmishers and household troops to start

lobbing arrows at King Edward's units who were in the center. Edward's artillery fired numerous times and only scored one hit the entire day! Both sides were now exchanging bow fire as the hits on units started to accumulate. At this stage of the game (Turn 4) things were still very much in doubt for both sides.

Around Turn 5 the Irish finally got organized and started to forward, where they ran into Fauconberg's and Burchier's units. The Irish kept trying to get into charge range, but were driven back by Yorkist archery. Even when a Yorkist unit was killed off, so was an Irish unit and trying to get the Kerns plus the Gallowglass into charge range was becoming difficult. Finally, by Turn 6 the Irish were ready to onto the attack while across the board the Lancastrians were pushing hard to force a conclusion. (cont. on p26)





(cont. from p25) The Irish tried to coordinate an attack, but failed miserably, only getting one unit into contact. In the center, the Yorkist units attacked into Oxford's positions, driving a wedge between Oxford's and Clifford's troops. On the extreme Lancastrian left, Clifford's troops were making headway, but the inability to bring up fresh troops was hurting their efforts. For a brief moment it looked like things were turning the Lancastrian way. That's when things went from bad to worse for the House of Lancaster.

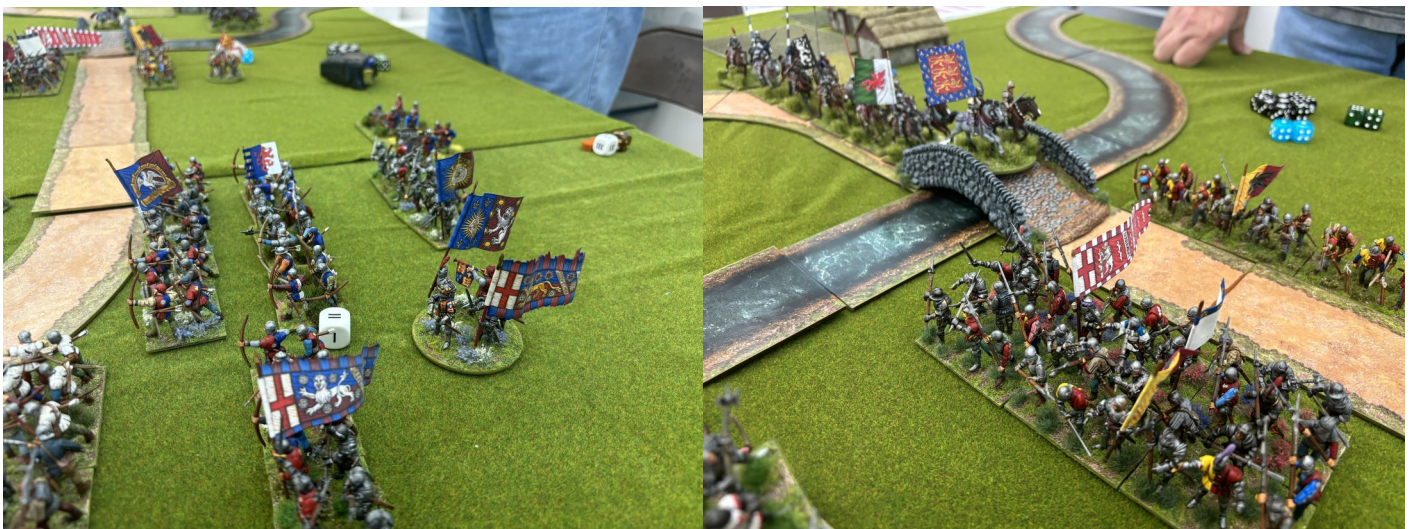
The King's command ordered a general advance, hitting the Irish where they stood and driving them back with heavy losses. In the center the back and forth battles saw Oxford's troops giving way, while on the Yorkist right, they were counterattacking with an eye to retaking

the farm compound. Then, at the worst possible time, Irish commander Thomas Fitzgerald and overall commander Oxford failed their command rolls (Oxford failed his re-roll as well!). The Yorkist units now drove forward, wiping out the Irish and now there were few Lancastrian units to plug the holes. With that the game was called as a Yorkist victory.

A pretty good battle that saw both sides ebb and flow in various parts of the battlefield. The cavalry took themselves out of the action with their charges and countercharges, leaving two broken divisions and ensuring that no help from either side would be coming over the bridge. The Lancastrian command rolls definitely did not help this day, but there were plenty of missed opportunities for them as well, plus the Yorkist units did pretty well with their saving throws!

The Irish need to have their stats looked at more closely. A special rule or two is needed to give them some oomph in the first round of combat. They had plenty of chances to get into the action, but everything went pretty bad, including two blunders during the game. Once again, there were very few instances of commanders attaching themselves to units, so hopefully any Wars of the Roses army book will address that as it was an important feature of that time.

The game ended up attracting quite a few onlookers, but no one wanted to join us and take a command! We were ready and willing to help any new players, but it seemed like everyone was focused on their own chosen tournaments. Next year we'll bring some sort of handout about how to get started with Hail Caesar and maybe give some rule books away.





*Several more images from the battle. These are all towards the end where the heavy fighting on the Lancastrian left spilled over to the rest of the tabletop. The Yorkist reserves, which had been sitting out the fight due to the terrible Irish command rolls, joined the battle and were successful in pushing things to where the House of Lancaster had to concede.*

# ASSEGAI!

## BOARD GAME & MINIATURES CAMPAIGN FOR THE 1879 ZULU WAR

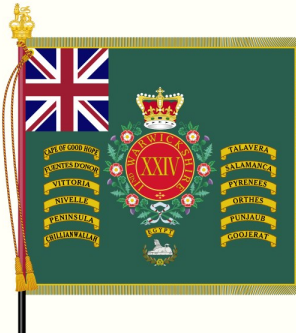


# Introduction

The 1879 war between the British Empire and the Zulus has long been a fascination for both gamers and historians. It pitted a more modern army against a native army with a history of successful warfare against its neighbors. Set against a political backdrop of British expansionism and tensions with the Boers, it produced a most unusual conflict.

Assegai! Is designed as a strategic view of this war. The British must crush the Zulu Empire and occupy its territory. This supplement is designed as both a board game (highly suitable for solitaire play) as well as a miniatures campaign.

The board game version uses an unusual combat system to create the interesting tactical situations that were prevalent throughout the war. As in the real war, British firepower is usually the deciding factor, but one or two mistakes (or poor die rolls) could cost the British side the campaign. As a miniatures campaign, the system should be able to produce some interesting battles rather than the same historical ones during the actual campaign.



The eventual outcome was never in doubt, only the length of time and the cost to the British Empire in reducing the Zulu nation. A failed campaign from January through April could have had disastrous consequences in other areas of the British Empire. It is a challenging situation for both sides and hopefully we will someday add on a supplement for the Boer Wars, Northwest Frontier, or Indian Mutiny.

## Set Up & Prepare For Play

Cut out all of the counters and cards, separating them into their respective piles.

- Place the VP markers so they read 24 victory points as this is what the British player starts out with.
- Set British control markers (flags) in areas 12, 16, 21, 22, 23, and 24.
- Find the counters for the British First Invasion forces, garrison, and column markers.
- Put the garrison markers in areas 12, 16, 22, and 24.
- The British/Colonial units may be divided into forces (**maximum of 5 to start**) and placed in any British controlled area.

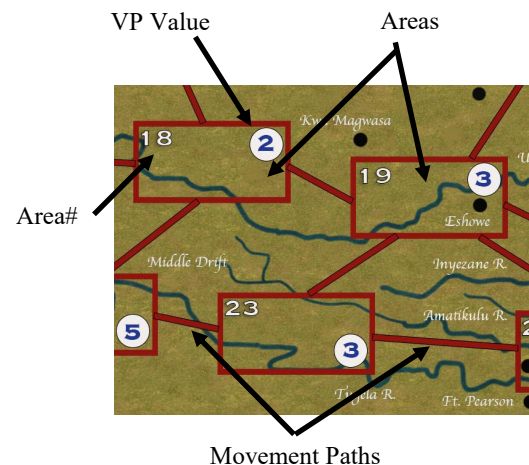
- There are 6 supply wagon markers which each have 15 supply points in each at the start of the 1st and 2nd Invasions.
- Use the column markers to replace large stacks of British forces which can placed into the holding box areas.
- The Zulu forces may be placed in any surrounding area and including the Ulundi area. The larger units which are broken into 2 to 4 counters must be kept together during setup and movement.
- There may be any number of Zulu counters in an area.
- Place the Random Event and Terrain card decks in an accessible location as they will be used throughout the game.

**Note:** A full size map that is available to be downloaded and printed is available at: <https://wfhgs.com/downloads.html>

## Sequence of Play

Assegai is played over a number of turns, governed by the sequence of play below. Each turn, both sides go through these steps in order. At the end of the Bookkeeping Phase, if it is the end of Turn 8, then the 1st Invasion is over and the 2nd Invasion begins. At the end of 16 turns victory is then determined.

1. Roll 2D6 and if the result is a 2 or 12 pull a random event card and follow the instructions on the card.
2. British Movement Phase
3. British Supply Phase
4. Zulu Movement Phase
5. Combat Phase
6. Bookkeeping Phase
7. End of 1st Invasion/End of Game



# Movement & Supply

## Movement

Movement is conducted by various units on both sides according to the Sequence of Play. Movement is from area to area via the movement paths on the map. If an enemy force or unit(s) are present in that area, the moving force must stop and then once all movement for the turn is completed, combat will occur in that area.

All British forces may move one area per turn, including supply wagons. To prevent unwieldy stacks on the map, it is suggested that you use the column markers to represent a force and put the markers into the appropriate holding box.

Each turn the Zulu side rolls 3D6 and

the result is the number of units the Zulu player(s) can move. Zulu forces may move two areas per turn to reflect their ability to cover large distances quickly.

*Note: If a British force consists solely of cavalry units, it may move two areas per turn.*

## Supply

During the supply phase the British player counts the number of units that moved and subtracts that amount from his supply wagons or garrisons. At the start of each turn the British player rolls 2D6 and that is the amount of supplies that arrives in the area. They may be allocated to any of the garrisons which must be kept track of on a separate piece of paper.

Extra supply wagons can be loaded up from a garrison and sent out to forces in the field. **The supplies for moving units can only be deducted from wagons with that force.** Likewise, supplies from wagons can be transferred to garrisons to form a supply and/or forward operating base.

*Note: You only deduct supplies from units that MOVED that turn.*

Unsupplied units deduct one from their firing in combat and for each turn after the first that they are unsupplied, one SP (circle) is crossed off on the unit roster. Also, a force has to roll a 3, 4, 5, or 6 on 1D6 to be able to move to a new area.

# Combat Phase

## Setup & Basics

When forces of both sides are in the same area combat ensues. Terrain cards and counters for both sides are used in an abstract way to simulate the battles. When using miniatures, the combat system is ignored, but the terrain cards are used to help design the tabletop where the battle will be fought.

First, randomly draw 15 terrain cards and place them in three rows of five cards each. The Zulus will start from the top row while the British will begin on the bottom row. Next, roll 2D6 to determine if there are any special start up conditions. On a roll of a 2 or 12 it is a surprise attack and the Zulus start on the middle row. The Zulus may be placed in as few or as many of the top row cards as the player desires. The British player may place units anywhere along the bottom row. (*Note: British units do not move in the Combat Phase, so placement is crucial.*)

Only **two units** plus any amount of artillery may fire out of one side of any card. British units may start in square or all units in one card may be in square. The British side always sets up first, then the Zulus. Then, follow the combat phase sequence of play for the remainder of the battle. The battle continues until either the British force is overwhelmed or the Zulu withdraw.

## Combat Sequence

1. British Fire-All eligible British and

Colonial units conduct fire.

2. Zulu Movement-Zulu units attempt to move to different terrain cards and/or enter melee.

3. Melee-Resolve melees.

4. Zulu Army Withdrawal Check

Two units and any amount of artillery can fire out of each side of a terrain card. Total the amount of fire strength (one circle on the unit roster equals one fire strength point), apply firing modifiers, then roll 2D6, cross indexing the result on the table for the resulting loss to the target unit. Each British unit fires individually and the results applied before firing with the next unit.

After all firing, the Zulu units check individually to see if they can enter a new terrain card by successfully rolling on the Zulu movement table.

British/Colonial non-cavalry units may elect to form square anytime before the Zulus move in each combat phase. The only penalty is the -1 for firing from a square. If there is a Zulu unit in an adjacent terrain card, then the British/Colonial unit must roll 1D6 and on the roll of a 5 or 6 the unit **does not** form square and must remain as it is.

When a Zulu unit(s) move into a terrain card that contains British/Colonial forces, a melee results. During melee, a unit may be attacked any number of times, provided that each defender in a terrain card has been attacked during that

same combat phase. *Ex.; there are five Zulu counters attacking three British units. Each British unit must be attacked by one Zulu unit, then the leftover two Zulu units can make attacks against any of the three British units.* The Melee Procedure table describes how to conduct melee combat and withdrawals.

If using the Optional rules, if an area containing a British garrison is attacked, the garrison counter is put inside of a fort marker. The saving throw for the garrison is increased to a 3,4,5, or 6 on 1D6.

## Withdrawals

British units never withdraw, so multiple rounds of combat will continue until either the Zulu forces withdraw or the British force is destroyed. Colonial units can withdraw to an adjacent area that is unoccupied by any Zulu forces. Each Colonial unit will take 1D6 hits during this withdrawal. If all of the adjacent areas are occupied by Zulu forces, any Colonial unit that withdraws will take an additional 1D6 hits until it can withdraw to an unoccupied area.

Any Zulu unit that is forced to withdraw during the battle is moved back to an adjacent area that is not occupied by any British/Colonial units. Once the battle is over and if all Zulu forces have withdrawn, the Zulu force will lose 1D6-1 hits for each British or Colonial cavalry unit that was involved in the battle. If all adjacent areas are occupied by British units, any Zulu unit withdrawing is considered destroyed.

# Combat Reference Card

## ZULU CARD MOVEMENT (2D6)

- Outer To Middle Row: 10 or less
- Move 1 Card-Same Row: 10 or less
- Move from Middle Row to row adjacent to British/Colonial units: 9 or less
- Attempt to Enter Melee: 8 or less

### Modifiers

+1 For Each Hit in This Battle

+1 If terrain card has a British/Colonial unit in square

-2 If terrain card has a British/Colonial unit NOT in square

## FIRING TABLE(2D6)

Number of Strength Points Firing

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
4	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
5	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
6	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
7	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2
8	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
9	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3
10	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	3
11	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	4
12	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4

## FIRING MODIFIERS

+/- Value of Terrain Card

-1 British/Colonial unit firing from square

-1 Firing at outer row

+1 Firing at Zulus in an adjacent card

+1 Artillery firing at Zulu units in middle row

+2 Artillery firing at Zulus in an adjacent terrain card

## MELEE PROCEDURE

Melees occur when a Zulu unit(s) are in the same card as a British/Colonial unit(s) and has passed their withdrawal check. Melee is figured out unit by unit, matching one Zulu unit against one British unit and resolving the combat before any other melees are resolved.

Each unit gets a number of D6 according to its current strength(round down):

- Cavalry 1D6 per 3 strength points (Zulus feared cavalry)
- British 1D6 per 4 strength points
- Artillery 1D6
- NNC units 1D6 per 5 strength points
- Zulus 1D6 per 3 strength points

Any roll of a 4, 5, or 6 causes one strength point loss to the opponent subject to the following modifiers:

- Zulus fighting cavalry -2
- Zulus attacking a square -2
- Zulus attacking a fort -2
- Zulus vs. unit not in square +1

British units (not Colonial units) get a saving throw against each hit suffered during a melee round. Roll 1D6 for each hit:

- If the British unit is in square, a 5 or 6 negates the melee hit.
- If not in square, a 6 negates the hit.

Against a square, either by a single unit or multiple units, if the Zulus cause triple the number of hits than they lost, they are assumed to have broken the square. Another melee round is fought, but the Zulus get a +1 to their melee rolls. Ex.; five British units are in square and inflict 3 hits while the Zulus inflict 9 hits. The square is considered broken.

At the end of each melee phase if neither side has withdrawn, then further rounds are fought until one side withdraws. British forces never withdraw, but Colonial forces may withdraw. If the Zulus withdraw, British/Colonial cavalry units may pursue.

## WITHDRAWAL CHECKS

Each time a Zulu unit takes casualties, a Colonial (non-British) unit is charged or loses a melee, it must be determined if the unit withdraws. Roll 2D6 and if the result is more than the listed value, the unit withdraws:

Zulus 12                      Colonial units 9

Apply the following modifiers:

- -1 for each hit -1 if lost last melee round
- +2 if won last melee round

British units never withdraw. Colonial units will withdraw to any adjacent area and take 1D6 amount of hits if non-cavalry.

The Zulu army checks withdrawal at the end of each Combat phase, rolling 2D6 and withdrawing ALL units on a roll of 12+. There is a +1 modifier for each 10 hits and +1 for each unit that has withdrawn from battle. The Zulu army will also lose 1D6-1 hits from each cavalry unit in pursuit after the battle.

# Invasions & Victory

The Assegai campaign consists of two invasions, which are essentially two separate games. The first invasion lasts 8 turns and if the British are unable to achieve either a Major or Overwhelming victory, then political pressure would force changes in the military leadership. The campaign would temporarily halt, new forces and leadership would be brought in, then the campaign would continue. The British force structure is then changed on the map and the second invasion begins.

Only the units on the roster as listed for the second invasion may be used. The forces who participated in the first invasion are assumed to have been either sent home to England or reassigned to other theaters in the Empire. The forces can then be set up in any areas used in the

setup for the first invasion. Areas under British control stay in their control.

If the Zulus control either all areas of the map or the British starting areas, then British forces will have to fight their way onto the map. The British forces can enter into any area that was used for the initial setup for the first invasion. Allowing the British side to choose where it would start from might be seen as too much of an advantage, so the area that they would enter could be done by die roll.

On the final turn of the second invasion, the British player counts up the victory points by adding the values for all the areas under British control, then consulting the Victory Points Table for the result. The campaign can certainly end earlier if players decide that there is no point in going on if either side is so far

behind the other that nothing would change in the final turns or if the British get more than 76 victory points at any time. Players can also experiment with the levels of victory to offset one side or the other having more experience with miniatures campaigns or the rules being used for the miniatures battles.

## Area Control



The British are deemed to be in control of an area if they are the last force(s) to have passed through that area. If there is a control marker in an area and a force of Zulus enters that area, then that area is no longer controlled. Due to the number of areas on the map with multiple avenues to several of them, this will probably force the British side to have to leave behind units to ensure control.

# Miniatures Campaign

**Assegai!** can easily be converted into a historical miniatures campaign. Each circle on the unit rosters equals approximately 100 men. The British mounted units in particular can be better simulated as they have been consolidated into fewer counters for playability. Some of the mounted unit counters actually represent 2-4 separate units in real life which can be converted easily with miniatures.

The larger Zulu regiments can be a problem, especially some of the 5-9,000 men units. I would suggest a higher figure ratio than your rules call for to be able to use those larger units. Garrison forces if they come into play can be set up as a Roarke's Drift type outpost. When using rules such as Black Powder or Battles For Empire, just have the larger regiments represented by multiple units, similar to how they are with multiple counters in the board game. This should allow for the Zulus to have more units on the board and should better represent their mass.

Artillery could be the one big question depending upon the rules that you use. If the rules have each stand or gun as a battery, you shouldn't have to make too many changes. If each stand or gun is a section, there might be too much firepower that could skew the game in favor of the British. This is something that you may have to experiment with.

Miniatures would also be a better way to represent pursuits and fighting withdrawals. The board game must abstract these for playability's sake, but the destruction of a British force or the pursuit of withdrawing Zulus by colonial cavalry would make for interesting tabletop actions. You can also represent the supply situation better by having as many wagons as you wish with each of them holding a number of supply points. They then become highly valued items that must be defended and taken into account when setting up a battle. These rules are just the basics to get started and can be expanded or simplified to fit your need.

When selecting terrain for battle you could still use the terrain cards, just use each one to represent a section of the board. Each card could represent a 2 ft. square area with liberal interpretation of how much of the square should the dominating terrain be in. A method of deciding where each force set up will have to be decided upon and objectives should also be set for each side. Most rules have ideas about setting up campaign battles or each group will have to set up guidelines before the campaign begins.

When placing the terrain cards, it would be good to have a referee or umpire help with the placement of the terrain. The main idea for a miniatures campaign is to have interesting battles, so the terrain

does not have to be placed in the center of a 2 ft. square or cover an entire area. Terrain should be placed so that it conveys the card type and "flows" with the other terrain types on whatever cards are drawn.

In terms of fortifications, each set of rules will have something different. There were a number of forts and outposts in the campaign area, but none should raise to the level of a fortified city! The scale of figures and size of forces that you use will determine what kind of fortifications, entrenchments, etc., that the British side can build.

While the board game covers battles in generic terms, the miniatures gamer is not bound by these constraints. Weather, night, hidden forces in riverbeds, etc., can all be added to each battle. Here is where an impartial referee can be quite helpful in drawing the terrain cards, setting the situation, and then helping with any problems governing withdrawals and pursuits.

Finally, a good idea is to have someone start up a campaign journal that can chronicle each turn. Keeping track of the maps, rosters, movements, etc., is critical to the success of the campaign, particularly if questions arise about one turn or the other. It also helps if there is a lengthy delay between campaign turns as is what happens to most gaming groups!



## Turn & Victory Point Tracks

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### Victory Points

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
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0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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### Victory Levels

- 0-15 Major Defeat.** The Boers revolt and the Zulus run wild in the Natal Provinces. A complete disaster which will force troops needed elsewhere to be sent to rectify the situation.
- 16-25 Tactical Defeat.** Most British officers are dismissed and the Boers see their chances of a successful revolt increase dramatically.
- 26-35 Minor Defeat.** British weaknesses have been exposed and the frontier becomes a far more deadlier place.
- 36-50 Minor Victory.** The punitive expeditions have met with some success but have done nothing to solve the long term situation.
- 51-60 Tactical Victory.** The Zulu threat is much diminished and it will be another generation before they are strong enough to make a comeback.
- 61-75 Major Victory.** Zulus are pacified and grant numerous concessions to the victorious British.
- 76+ Overwhelming victory.** The Zulu nation ceases to exist, the Boers have second thoughts about a revolt, and the entire region falls under British control.

### Turn

1 1st Invasion Begins	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 1st Invasion Ends
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9 2nd Invasion Begins	10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Campaign Ends
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# Unit Rosters-British & Allied Forces

## 1st Invasion

1st Bn./24th	OOOOOOOO	1st Artillery	OO
2nd Bn./24th	OOOOOOOO	2nd Artillery	OO
1st Bn./13th	OOOOOOOO	3rd Artillery	OO
2nd Bn./3rd	OOOOOOOO	4th Artillery	OO
Naval Brigade	OO	Rocket Bty	O
99th Rgt.	OOOOOOOO		
Volunteers	OOOOO	Garrison 1	OO
Natal Units	OOO	Garrison 2	OO
Mtd. Rifles	OOO	Garrison 3	OO
Mtd. Natives	OOO	Garrison 4	OO
Frontier Horse	OO		
Zulu Allies	OOOOO	Supplies 1	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
90th Rgt.	OOOOOOOO	Supplies 2	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
80th Rgt.	OOOOOOOO	Supplies 3	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
Native Cont.	OOO	Supplies 4	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
1st Bn./1NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOO	Supplies 5	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
2nd Bn./1NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOO	Supplies 6	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
3rd Bn./1NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
1st Bn./2NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOO	1st Bn./3NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO
2nd Bn./2NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOO	2nd Bn./3NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO

## 2nd Invasion

2nd Bn./3rd	OOOOOOOO	M/6 R.A.	OOO	8/7 R.A.	O
88th Rgt.	OOOOOO	11/7 R.A.	O	N/5 R.A.	OOO
99th Rgt.	OOOOOOOO	N/6 R.A.	OOO	10/11/7 R.A.	OOO
57th Rgt.	OOOOOOOO				
3/60 Rifles	OOOOOOOOOO	Garrison 1	OO		
91st Highland	OOOOOOOO	Garrison 2	OO		
Naval Brigade	OOOOOOOOOO	Garrison 3	OO		
2nd Bn./21st	OOOOOO	Garrison 4	OO		
58th Rgt.	OOOOOO				
1st Bn./24th	OOOOOOOO	4th Bn./NNC	OOOOOOOO		
1st Dragoons	OOOOOO	5th Bn./NNC	OOOOOOOOOOOO		
17th Lancers	OOOOOO	2nd Bn./NNC	OOOOOOOOOO		
Wood's Irreg.	OOOOO				
		Supplies 1	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
Dunn's Scouts	O	Supplies 2	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
Baker's Horse	OO	Supplies 3	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
Bett/Shepstone	OO	Supplies 4	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
		Supplies 5	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
		Supplies 6	OOOOOOOOOOOOOO		
Mounted Rifles	OOOOO				

## Holding Boxes

### 1st Column

### 2nd Column

### 3rd Column

### 4th Column


### 5th Column

*Note: A full size map can be found at:  
<https://wfhgs.com/downloads.html>*


# Unit Rosters-Zulus

uNokhenkhe	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
umHlanga	OOOOOOOOOO
umXapho	OOOOOOOOOO
iQwa	OOOOO
inSugamgeni	OOOOOOOOOO
izinGulube	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
uDududu	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
imBube	OOOOO
isaNqu	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
Thulwana	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
iNdhlonhlo	OOOOOOOOO
inDluyengwe	OOOOOOOOOO
iNgobamakhosi 1	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
iNgobamakhosi 2	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
iNgobamakhosi 3	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
uVe 1	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
uVe 2	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
uDhloko 1	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
uDhloko 2	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
uMbonambi	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
umCijo 1	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
umCijo 2	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
umCijo 3	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
umCijo 4	OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO


### Counter Descriptions



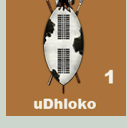
Lt. Blue: British Allies/Colonial units; Red: British, Blue: Naval  
 Unit Symbol; Infantry, cavalry, garrison, or artillery  
 Unit designation




White: 1st Invasion  
 Yellow: Second Invasion




Garrisons represent small detachments that were stationed throughout Natal; i.e., Rorke's Drift.



Units of the Zulu Nation. Some regiments were fairly large and are represented by multiple counters.



Supplies counters represent various wagon trains, pack animals, etc., that were used to support British and Colonial forces.



Control markers are used to mark British/Colonial areas for Victory Point purposes.

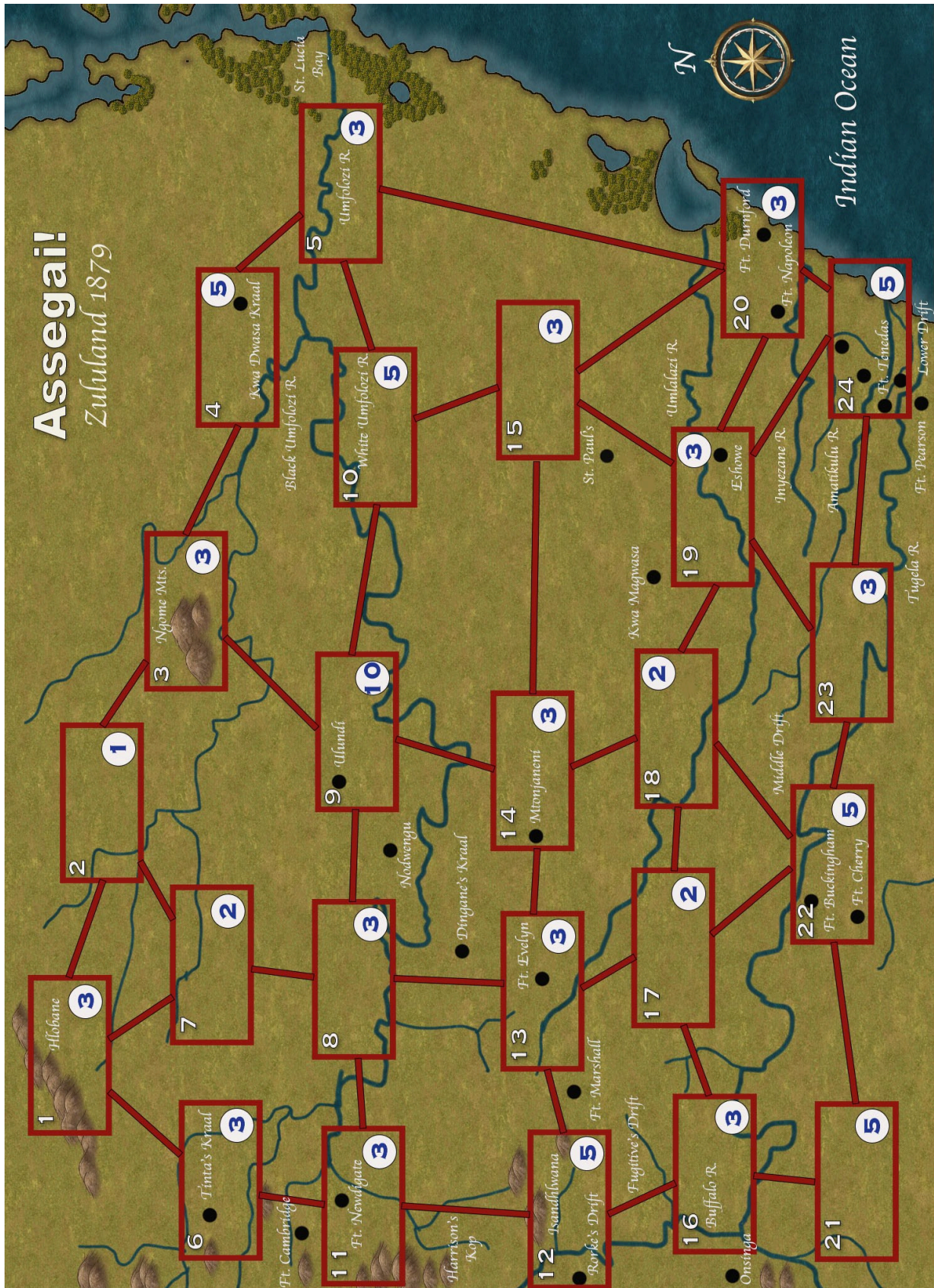
## Optional Rules

### Forts

- Garrisons, when attacked, can be placed in a fort, which increases their save value during combat. Once per turn, the British can build a fort in any area that they a) control, and b) have at least one infantry unit in that area. If there is combat in that area, only **one** unit can be located in the fort. No fort counters are provided, but feel free to use any kind of counter, dice, etc., that you have to mark units in forts on the map.
- For a bit more unpredictability or chaos, pull a random event card when a 2, 3, 11, or 12 is rolled.
- Instead of the strict movement sequences listed here, make up a marker for each British column or force of Zulus, then place those in a cup. During the Movement Phase, draw one out and perform movement with that force, then continue drawing markers until each force has moved.
- Instead of the set ending of the 1st invasion, have a die roll at the end of each turn to see if it ends early or goes an extra turn or two.
- Weather could be added, using a 1D6 or 2D6 system. Excessive heat could reduce British/Colonial movement while rains could make any area touching a river unpassable for that turn.
- Allow both sides to roll for how many casualties (hits) can be removed from the unit rosters, simulating the effects of hospitals, men returning from straggling, or local replacements. This could occur either at the end of each battle or once per turn. This should be extremely limited.

**Note:** A full size map that is available to be downloaded and printed is available at: <https://wfhs.com/downloads.html>

# Planning Map



# Counters

 uNokhenkhe	 umHlanga	 umXapho	 iQwa	 inSugamgeni	 izinGulube	 uDududu	 imBube	 isaNqu	 Thulwana
 iNdhiondho	 inDluyengwe	 1 iNgobamakhosi	 2 iNgobamakhosi	 3 iNgobamakhosi	 1 uVe	 2 uVe	 1 uDhloko	 2 uDhloko	 uMbonambi
 1 umCijo	 2 umCijo	 3 umCijo	 4 umCijo	 1st/24th	 2nd/24th	 1st/13th	 2nd/3rd	 99th	 90th
 80th	 Garrison 1	 Garrison 2	 Garrison 3	 Garrison 4	 1 Artillery	 2 Artillery	 3 Artillery	 4 Artillery	 Rocket
 Naval	 Volunteers	 Native Cont	 Zulu Allies	 1st/1 NNC	 2nd/ 1 NNC	 3rd/ 1 NNC	 1st/2 NNC	 2nd/2 NNC	 1st/3 NNC
 2nd/3 NNC	 Natal	 Mtd. Rifles	 Mtd. Natives	 Fntr. Horse	 2nd/3rd	 88th	 99th	 57th	 3/60 Rifles
 91st	 2nd/21	 58th	 1st/24	 1st Drgns	 17th Lncrs	 M/6 RA	 11/7 RA	 N/6 RA	 8/7 RA
 N/5 RA	 10/11/7 RA	 Garrison 1	 Garrison 2	 Garrison 3	 Garrison 4	 4th/NNC	 5th/NNC	 2nd/NNC	 Woods
 Dunn's	 Baker's	 Bett/Shep	 Mtd. Rifles	 Naval					
									
						 Supplies 1	 Supplies 2	 Supplies 3	 Supplies 4
 Supplies 5	 Supplies 6	 VP X10	 VP X1	 Turn	 1st Column	 2nd Column	 3rd Column	 4th Column	 5th Column

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

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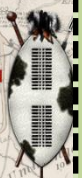
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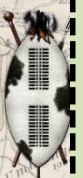
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**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Open**



**No Modifiers**

**Tall Grass**



**-1 to Move Into**

**-1 to British/Allied  
Fire**

**Tall Grass**



**-1 to Move Into**

**-1 to British/Allied  
Fire**

**Tall Grass**



**-1 to Move Into**

**-1 to British/Allied  
Fire**



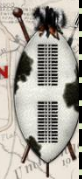
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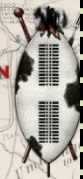
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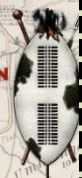
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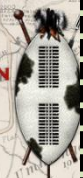
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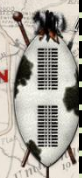
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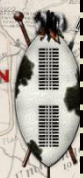
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## Tall Grass



**-1 to Move Into**  
**-1 to British/Allied**  
**Fire**

## Farms



**+1 for Defender**  
**in Close Combat**

## Farms



**+1 for Defender**  
**in Close Combat**

## Stream



**+1 to Move Into**

## River



**+2 to Move Into**  
**+1 to British/Allied**  
**Fire**

## Brush



**-1 to Move Into**  
**-1 to British/Allied**  
**Fire**

## Brush



**-1 to Move Into**  
**-1 to British/Allied**  
**Fire**

## Rough



**+1 to Move Into**  
**-1 to British/Allied**  
**Fire**

## Rough



**+1 to Move Into**  
**-1 to British/Allied**  
**Fire**

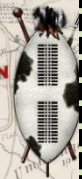
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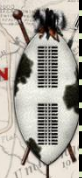
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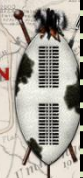
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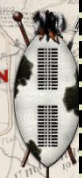
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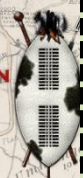
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Event

1



2<sup>nd</sup> Front

Zulus Launch Attack North of the Pangola River

Remove 1 British battalion, 1 artillery unit and 1 cavalry unit for 1D6 turns

Event

2



Drought

High Temperatures Make Operations Near Impossible

All British/Allied units must roll a 4,5, or 6 on 1D6 to be able to move one area. Supply costs for units in combat are double.

Event

3



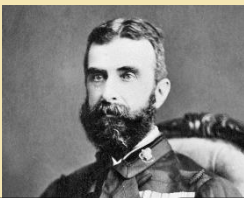
Raid!

Zulus Launch Attacks on Supply Columns

There are no supply rolls for British this turn.

Event

4



Chelmsford

Loss of Chelmsford Affects Campaign

Roll 1D6: 1 Chelmsford Dies-First Invasion immediately ends.

2-4 Chelmsford III-All British/Allied units cannot move this turn.

5,6 Chelmsford Replaced-No British/Allied units can advance for 2 turns.

Event

5



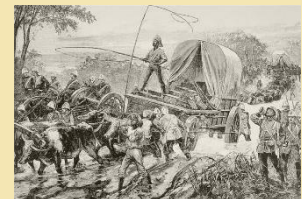
Ambush!

Zulus Reorganize and Attack

Move any 5 Zulu units anywhere on the board during the Random Events Phase. They may then move one more area in the Movement Phase.

Event

6



Supplies

Extra Supplies Arrive

On this turn only the British roll 4D6 for supplies instead of the usual 2D6.

Event

7



Early Arrival

Units Bound for India Are Reassigned

The 17th Lancers and 1 artillery unit arrive at either the Middle Drift or Lower Drift and are available this turn.

First Invasion Only

Event

8



Plague

Disease Sweeps Through

British/Allied Units

All British/Allied units are unable to move for the next two turns and their strength is halved for any combat

Event

9



Revolt!

Province Rebels Against The Crown

Remove 1 British infantry unit, 1 cavalry unit, and 1 artillery battery for 1D6 turns.

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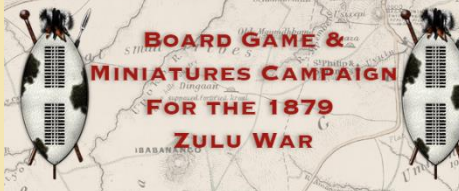
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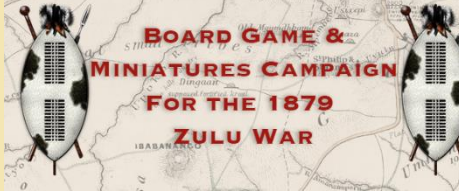
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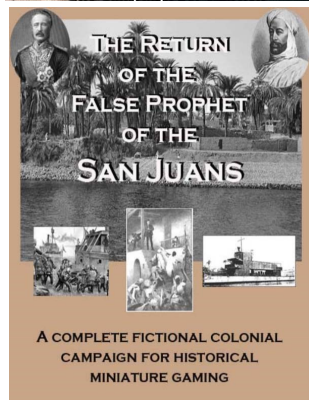
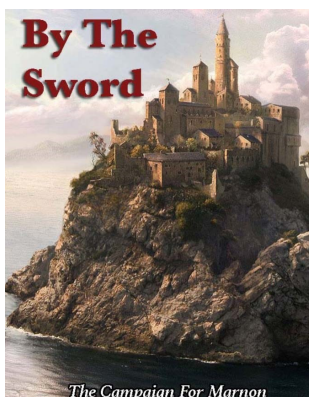
## WASATCH FRONT HISTORICAL GAMING SOCIETY

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...

Email the editor:  
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Since we've been on the topic of upgrades, re-designs, and more from eons past in this issue, we'll finish on whether or not hex and counter sci-fi/fantasy games are making a comeback. Certainly, *Burning Banners* from Compass Games (reviewed last issue) has been a huge success and is going into its second printing with a promised sequel in the works. This game is definitely a throwback to the 70s and 80s era where SPI's *War of the Ring*, *Sword & Sorcery*, *Dwarfstar's Dragon's Rage*, *Chaosium's White Bear & Red Moon*, *GDW's Imperium*, *Metagaming's Ogre*, and many, many others dominated the arena. The success of *Burning Banners* showed that there is interest not only from older gamers who love these kinds of games, but younger gamers as well.



In fact, right after *Burning Banners* came out, it was announced that there would be a Kickstarter project for *Divine Right*, which still to this day has a huge following. The game has gone through a few editions (some popular and some not) and has been in limbo on a new version for quite some time. Finally, Worthington Games now owns the rights and will produce a replica of the original TSR design. Between this and *Burning Banners*, fantasy wargamers should have enough gaming goodness to last themselves for a few years. Now you begin to wonder if there might be other attempts to bring back fantasy and sci-fi games from the late 70s and early 80s. Clearly, some games would not do well as they weren't very good even back then! However, I could see a few that might be ripe for a comeback or be appreciated by a new audience. The big questions as always are; a) who owns the rights?, b) what would it take in time to update the graphics and components, c) should there be a rules update, and d) what would gamers pay for the game?

Games like SPI's *War of the Ring* (which needs a rules re-write) and *Avalon Hill's Magic Realm* probably won't see the light of day, mainly due to rights issues. I could see maybe some of the TSR mini-games being reprinted or a few of the GDW games such as *Imperium*, *Snapshot*, *Fifth Frontier War*, and others. The question about rights, is the designer still around, could the game be updated, etc., are all questions that might not be worked out for some titles. However, there are some like GMT's upcoming *Away Team* that do work out. This game traces its ancestry back to two issues of *Ares*, which was SPI's *Strategy & Tactics* magazine for fantasy and sci-fi gamers. Those games are still popular today and the designer decided to do a combined game with major component upgrades.

Now this strategy won't work with all older games as the stars would need to align. However, for some of us, *Divine Right* and *Away Team* are definitely going to get some serious play!

