

Warning Order

ISSUE 70



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Warning Order

The Problematic Issue of Casualty Removal

Whenever a new set of rules comes up in a discussion, the first two questions are usually what are the basing requirements and how are casualties removed? The truth is that one answer ties in with the other in that how figures are based usually (not in all cases, however) drives how casualties are removed in the rules. This will then cause a response to where gamers are still interested or because their figures are based in some other fashion or for example they don't like stand removal, the rules are dismissed outright.

The truth about the hobby is that yes, these two things really do influence what we play and/or are willing to try. While basing issues can generally be overcome with movement trays, basing ranks that can be closed up or broken apart, or some other method, casualty removal is pretty well a fixed thing in the rules. There's not many options for single casualty removal if you have 12 figures glued permanently to a base!

For a long time single figure casualty removal was the driving mechanism in miniatures gaming.

Pretty much every set of rules had you count the number of figures that were firing and the casualties caused by that die roll were removed individually.



Quite simple really, especially since most armies in the 60s and 70s were single figures arranged in units! I'm sure that moving hundreds and hundreds of individual figures in formations around the board was certainly challenging, but that was miniatures gaming in its early days. Another thing about this kind of casualty removal was that you could at a glance see the strength of a unit, which today is still something that gamers look for.

Not entirely sure when it

happened, but somewhere along the line multiple figures on bases started to emerge. The bases would of course be arranged into units and formations, which made movement far easier on the tabletop! Once bases became established in the hobby, then the question of scale started to move to the forefront. The long established 1:20 was soon challenged by other scales. The interesting thing is that most rules still used single figure casualty marking! Who can forget the endless white casualty caps or rings for your miniatures games? Good times indeed!

After that the hobby started to see pipe cleaners of various colors to indicate not only figure losses, but the status of the unit, i.e., yellow for disorganized, orange for broken, etc. That worked for some and there are still a lot of rules that (cont. on p 3)



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Special points of interest:

- *Desert Rebellion, a mini-campaign that can be used for any Colonial period or rules.*
- *New Engagements scenarios.*
- *Plenty of battle reports featuring Warmaster Ancients, Scouts Out, Age of Discovery, Blitzkrieg Commander IV, and more.*
- *Review and battle report for Kampfgruppe Commander 3.*

The Problematic Issue of Casualty Removal (cont.)

(cont. from p2) use that type of system. From there it was only a matter of time until rules evolved to start taking off entire bases. For a long, long time you had your choice of games where you would either do single figure casualties somehow or remove entire bases.

At this same time there were games that used rosters for unit strength. Take a few casualties, mark them off on the roster, then when a unit hit a certain number either a stand or the whole unit would be removed. One of the biggest problems with the roster system is that an opponent has no idea what the strength is of the units opposing them so they need to continually ask about their status. While some kind of record/stat sheet works well for naval and sci-fi fleet battles, roster games never seemed to rise to the popularity of most other sets of rules.

Finally, we arrive at the current state of the hobby where for many rules systems the number of figures, base sizes, etc., really don't matter much at all. Rules such as Hail Caesar and Black Powder track hits and once a unit routs it is removed from the board. This has now become almost the default for most commercial rules released in the last decade or so. It also makes painting and basing easier, plus many units can be used for several sets of rules.

Where casualty removal starts to come to the forefront of gaming discussions is in two areas; how does one tell what the strength of a unit is and should a unit's frontage/depth reflect this? Think back to how many times you and your gaming group have had this discussion and it's probably more times than you would think! Gamers want to know what the strength is of the units opposing them and when you remove figures and stands it can create some unique problems with most sets of rules in terms of frontages.

Let's tackle the unit strength issue first. Rosters are the worst for this

as you will need to continuously ask your opponent(s) what the strength is of the units opposite you. Not only that, but you need to look at your own rosters from time to time each turn to see how your

losses affect firing, morale, etc. Obviously, markers/tokens for things like routing, disorganization, shaken, etc., will often give you a good idea that a unit might be in trouble, but it is one of the more

annoying things with rosters.

Using sections of pipe cleaners and/or casualty caps is another time tested method of casualty removal. Of course, having both sides using the same method such as everything to the left of the pipe cleaner is a casualty is often a problem! The good thing here is that you can tell at a glance what a unit's strength is or at least a good approximation of it. This system doesn't do much for how things look on the tabletop, but it does work.

Over the last decade or so the preferred method for casualty removal in many rules is just tracking hits on an entire unit. Some gamers use multi-colored dice, some use tokens, while still others use elaborate figure casualty bases or dials. Regardless of what is used, all gamers can quickly see how many hits a unit has. The only issues with this that we've seen is when gamers use different

colors of dice or count down from how many hits the unit should have instead of counting up to its limit.

Yes, gamers will be gamers!

The big question is

what are we trying to simulate with casualty removal? Is it a loss of combat effectiveness? Sure. Is it an issue about frontage and depth? For some rules yes, and for some no. What about mass effect when a larger unit charges a damaged one? Again, this depends greatly upon the rules that you are using. It also could be a way to gauge complexity. In some, but not all cases, those systems that allow for single figure casualties, +/- modifiers for frontage and mass, etc., are usually a bit more on the complex side.

Casualty removal can impact games in various ways. Take for example a set of rules that allows for single figure casualties or after so many hits you lose a stand. There's a unit in column waiting behind the front line as a reserve. There's no place for it to move up to the front line as the unit in front of them has all of its stands. There is an exchange of fire and that front line unit loses a stand or two. Now all of a sudden there's room for a column to march through! Probably not the most realistic development as the unit

that is there probably in real life still occupies roughly the same frontage, but the depth and mass have taken serious hits.

Likewise for when casualties result in the removal of the full unit, ala Hail Caesar, Black Powder,

Battles for Empire, and many other rules. All of a sudden, a unit that is occupying 8 inches in some cases on the tabletop is gone! Units can advance through it, charge into the rear areas of the losing side, exposing flanks, dropping rear support, etc. In reality, elements are probably still fighting on, there's rear guard and heroic last moment actions occurring, and that battlefield area is wrecked with bodies, equipment, burning wagons, etc. Trying to maneuver another unit through there immediately would pose some significant challenges.

This also comes up when discussing mass in miniatures rules. Let's say you're playing Age of Eagles, Fire & Fury, or any one of two dozen similar rules and you have 8 stands charging 7 stands. For the first round the battle is even, but the side with (cont. on p18)



Age of Discovery: A Very Strange Encounter

Battle Report

We've lost count with how many times we've played Age of Discovery over the years. While we've experimented with some other rules for the Renaissance period we keep coming back to this particular set. That's not saying that everything is great with the rules! It takes a while to grasp the combat charts each time we play, there's some sections of the rules that need fleshing out, and there are times where things just don't seem right! However, it does a great job of simulating the chaos of the battles during this period and everyone has a good time, so we stick with it.

There were two options for this particular evening; go with a French vs. Imperialist 1525 era scenario with 17-20 units a side, or a 1544 era scenario using the giant tercio, but with a lot fewer units. The group decided to go with more units, especially since we had six players this night. The scenario was fairly simple, with both sides setting up 8 inches from the center of the board (yes, units start close together if you want them to), meaning that there was only 16 inches in some places between opposing lines. The idea was to force the other side to hit their withdrawal number or we would play until one side or the other conceded.

The French had fewer units, but they also had some very good ones. Age of Discovery has a unit grading system with a 1 being basically militia while 4 were elite units. There were four units of Swiss pike, who were grade 4 and they ignored modifiers for enemy units on their flank, making them some tough customers. The French also had two



units of gendarmes, which were grade 4 heavy cavalry in horse armor (the best armor in the game). There were some Italian pike units, mounted arquebus, stradiots, and a few units of foot arquebus as well as two heavy guns (once deployed they can't move). A powerful force, but not as many units as their opponents.

The Imperialists, meanwhile, had four units of German landsknechts, two units of Spanish pike, two units of Italian pike, and some skirmishers. Their cavalry had one unit of German heavies, some Spanish lancers, and some various units of light cavalry. There were also two medium and one light artillery pieces. All in all, a fairly large force with varying quality.

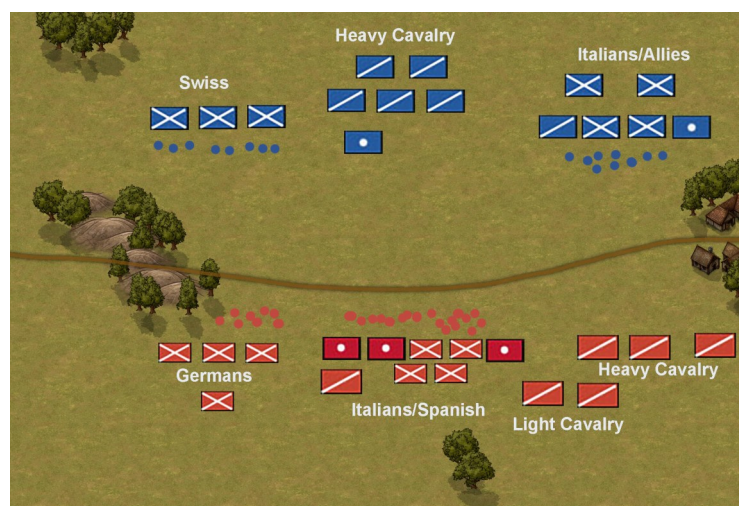
There was a lot of discussion before the game on the Imperialist side about putting all of the good cavalry in a division right in the center. The players went back and forth, even right up to the deployment time! Finally, a decision was made to deploy most of the cavalry on the

far right, the better pike on the far left, and all of the medium and low quality units plus the artillery in the center. The idea was to crush the flanks while the center desperately held on somehow.

The rules use a deployment system based on a chart where a D6 is rolled, then a result of something like A, A, B, A, B, B is given for setting out the three commands of each side. The Imperialists put out their cavalry and center, then watched in horror as the French put their heavy cavalry in their center! Not only that, the Swiss were placed opposite the Germans. The Imperialist side was a bit distraught at this and it was going to take some luck to pull out a win.

Both sides moved out, except for the Imperialist right flank, which was unsure of how to proceed. Opposing them were a few units of pike, a heavy gun, some light cavalry, and some foot arquebus. The French commander for that side moved some things around, but was in a solid formation, centered around his one unit of Swiss pike. With the village on his left, he was anchoring the French left pretty well. This meant that the Germans were going to advance to face off against the Swiss and the French heavy cavalry bore down on the Imperialist center.

Here's where things went a bit wonky and it broke down into a bar fight! The French heavy cavalry charged right into the middle of the Imperialist line, scattering the artillery crews (they have to flee when charged), forcing the light cavalry to evade and running over a foot arquebus unit. Also, one unit (cont. on p5)



Age of Discovery: A Very Strange Encounter(cont.) Battle Report



(cont. from p4) captured the Imperialist camp, which gives a huge withdrawal modifier. All of a sudden, the Imperialist center was ripped apart and units were scattered everywhere.

To make matters worse for the Imperialists, the Swiss started to bear down on the German pike units for what the French side was going to be the hammer blow that would end the game. On the French far left, the division posted there was arrayed in a defensive position, confident that the center and right were going to win the day. This is where things really turned around and in a strange way.

First off, the German pike withstood the Swiss assault and actually pushed one of the Swiss pike units back. The next turn one of the Swiss units routed while the others were getting whittled down. The fact that the German units were also

suffering a lot of casualties was OK for the Imperialist side as long as the Swiss advance was checked. All of a sudden, the Imperialists had neutered the Swiss attack and were patching up the center.

The main issue with the center is that that once the French cavalry had dispersed everything, other units came up to fill the gap and started shooting at them! The French cavalry, who really wanted to withdraw, kept passing key morale checks due to their high morale grade, so they just wouldn't leave the center! This meant that they just kept getting shot at, attacked in the flank by light cavalry, and soon the entire French cavalry force was down below 50% strength.

With the Imperialist center stabilized and the right flank in good shape, it was time for the cavalry division to get in on the action. They advanced cautiously

towards the mixed French division, then launched a series of charges. The first charge routed a light cavalry unit, which in turn created a chain reaction that forced several other units of lower morale grade to fall back. This created openings where the Imperialist cavalry poured through and within a few turns the Imperialist position was in deep trouble as only the sole Swiss unit was still in good shape. After looking around the battlefield the handwriting was on the wall, so the French conceded the field.

Another hard fought Renaissance battle, but one that was a bit strange, particularly in the center where the French cavalry simply didn't want to leave! This resulted in them being destroyed piecemeal and then the Swiss not doing what they usually do in running over people sealed the victory for the Imperialists.



Engagements 67: Line of Communication

Situation: Red has been trying to take control of this town that is surrounded by hills on two sides. The town is a major supplier of food to Blue's war effort as well as the items produced in the town's workshops. It's loss would be a serious blow to Blue in this region. However, the town is easily defended, although there is only one escape and supply route over the river. If that is taken, the town would have to surrender at some point. While Blue's forces are almost equal to Red's numbers, Blue is spread out trying to defend several avenues of attack.

Period: Designed primarily for the Horse & Musket period, but could be used for Ancients or Renaissance actions as well.

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

Terrain Notes: The town is a combination of wood and stone buildings with a variety of large and small buildings. The wooded areas are light woods, but will limit movement. The hills should be treated as rough ground. The river is impassable except across the pontoon bridge. There are several farms in the area as well.

Scale: The scenario is designed for any scale, but if 28mm is used the table may need to be expanded to a 5 x 8.

Red Forces:

- (12) units of infantry

- (2) units of light infantry
- (3) artillery batteries
- (1) unit of heavy cavalry
- (2) units of light cavalry.

Set Up: All of Red's units enter from the bottom of the game map on Turn 1 in any formation.

Red Orders: Seize the bridge over the river and hold it against all counterattacks. If possible, assault and take the town as well.

Blue Forces: Blue has rushed reinforcements into the area along with the local militia in order to defend the town and the bridge.

- (6) units of infantry
- (1) unit of light infantry
- (2) units of militia
- (3) artillery batteries
- (1) heavy cavalry unit
- (1) light cavalry unit
- (1) infantry unit in entrenchments at the bridge.

Blue Orders: Defend the hills outside of the town in order to prevent Red from quickly seizing the town. The bridge must also be held, so prepare defenses for

the open area and have a reserve ready to move to any threatened area.

Blue Set Up: Blue's forces may start anywhere on the map. Any unit that starts in the hills is assumed to be entrenched, including artillery. Blue has 12 inches of entrenchments and one fortified artillery position that is placed in the open area between the end of the hills and the river.

Game Length: 12 turns

Special Rules:

- Red has the first turn in the game.
- Infantry units are generic, but could be a mix of line, grenadiers, garrison, etc., according to the army lists in your rules.
- Blue's entrenchments are a mix of trenches, firing parapets, and gun positions that should give a favorable modifier for shooting and melee.

Victory Conditions: Red wins the game if at the end of 12 turns they control either a) the bridge, or b) the town.

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

- One variant would be to have Blue defend for a random number of turns (ex., $4 + D4$), then have to withdraw forces over the river to safety. If Blue gets more than 50% of their forces over the river they win a victory.
- Give each side additional forces and allow Blue to create additional fortifications and obstacles in the open area near the town.
- Have Red break their forces into a number of groups, then randomly determine where they arrive on the map to simulate a less well planned offensive or to balance player experience with the rules.
- Allow both sides reinforcements after so many turns.
- Make the hills very rough ground with limited access to artillery.
- Extend the number of game turns so that Red could use their entire force to attack through the hills.



Engagements 68: Expanding Bridgehead

Situation: Blue has surprised Red by quickly constructing a bridge using an island in the river and launched a dawn attack on a town in the area. Red has contained the attack so far and has artillery shelling the crossing area. Unknown to Red, however, a secondary attack has crossed the river and will try to destroy Red's artillery position. Blue will then try to quickly expand the bridgehead area before Red's forces can gather for a counterattack. If Blue can maintain control of the town and bridges then major reinforcements will arrive by nightfall to continue the attack.

Period: Designed primarily for the Horse & Musket period, but could be used for Ancients or Renaissance actions as well.

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

Terrain Notes: The town is a combination of wood and stone buildings while the wooded areas are light woods, but will limit movement. The hills are low rises that should be treated as rough ground. The river is impassable except across the pontoon bridge over the island. There are several farms in the area as well, which should not pose a serious obstacle, but larger farms could offer protection from missile and/or musket fire.

Scale: The scenario is designed for any scale, but if 28mm is used the table may need to be expanded to a 5 x 8.

Red Forces: Red's forces are split into three groups:

Containing Force (at B)

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

Blocking Force (at A)

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

Reinforcements (at C & D)

- (6) units of infantry
- (2) units of light infantry
- (2) artillery batteries

- (1) unit of heavy cavalry
- (1) unit of light cavalry.

Set Up: The Containment and Blocking forces begin on the board as listed in Red's Forces. The Reinforcements enter at either C or D beginning on Turn 3. Each turn, any two units may enter the board.

Red Orders: Maintain pressure on Blue's crossing, then when sufficient forces have been assembled, counterattack against the town and destroy the bridges by occupying the position.

Blue Forces: Blue has four groups of forces; the first is located near the town (1), the second waiting to cross at (2), the third is backed up along the road waiting to move to the island then over the bridge to the town (3), and the fourth is launching a surprise flanking attack (4).

Assault Force (1)

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

Crossing Force (2)

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

Reinforcements (3)

- (4) units of infantry
- (1) unit of light infantry
- (2) artillery batteries
- (1) heavy cavalry unit

Flanking Force

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

Blue Orders: The Assaulting Force should quickly move into the town and push out further

if possible. The Flanking Force needs to quickly force back Red's units on the hills at A. Move up reinforcements and consolidate the positions in the town and hills.

Blue Set Up: The force at 1 is placed 6 inches outside the town in any formation. The Flanking Force's units begin with 6 inches of 4 having already crossed the river. The Reinforcements are placed in march order off the board and enter the board in the order placed.

Game Length: 12 turns

Special Rules:

- Blue has the first turn in the game.
- Infantry units are generic, but could be a mix of line, grenadiers, garrison, etc., according to the army lists in your rules.

Victory Conditions: At the end of the game Blue must hold the town, hills, and bridge area to win. Any other result is a loss.

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

- The reinforcements of both sides could be randomly determined as well as which turn they would arrive. The game length may need to be extended for several turns.
- Allow Blue's force at 2 to be entrenched.
- Change the Victory Conditions so that Blue has to seize the road exit at C as well.



BKC IV: Attack on Elst 1944

Battle Report

After some non-historical BKC IV battles, we decided to try an actual scenario and see how that is different than what we usually throw together at the last minute. Fortunately, there are a lot of free scenarios on the web and there was one about Elst which seemed to use platoon based units. With BKC IV being in that scale we thought it would be pretty easy to translate onto the board, which in the end produced mixed results.

The British attack on Elst occurred right at the end of Operation Market Garden. Although the British paratroops were still hanging on by their fingernails, operations continued apace up and down the corridor. British high command decided to seize the town of Elst, so the 7th Somerset Light Infantry and the 1st Worcestershire battalion were ordered to attack. In their way was a German kampfguppe consisting of various units with some reinforcements moving to the area.

Doing historical actions is tough as mentioned before in these pages, mainly due to trying to get the terrain right! So it was in this case as well, where trying to find sections of roads to make the actual map was an exercise in patience. Not to mention trying to figure out which buildings were which and where the town started and ended! On top of that, the weird command structure for the Germans caused us to interpret things in game terms plus the rain had to be dealt with alongside everything else.

The British would have two infantry battalions of roughly 3-4 companies each, some attached mortars and MGs, plus each had a squadron of Shermans consist-

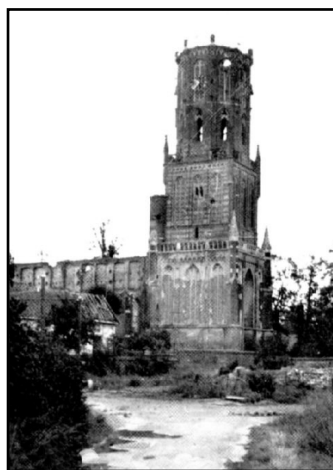


ing of two regular Shermans on one Firefly. There were two batteries of 25 pounder artillery on call. The objective was to push down the roads and take the rail line at the far end of the table (just off map). Both British battalions and their supporting assets would start just on board in the SW corner.

The Germans had a depleted kampfguppe consisting of several companies of dismounted grenadiers, plus some mortar and MG assets. There was a separate command of an AT battery and some infantry along with a lone Panther that could be ordered by any command stand. A company of Stug IIIs was in reserve just off board along with a sole PZ III. There were also two nebelwerfer batteries available with the spotter in the center of town (historically he was in the church tower pictured above). This

would be a very different game for us with not much armor and a lot of infantry!

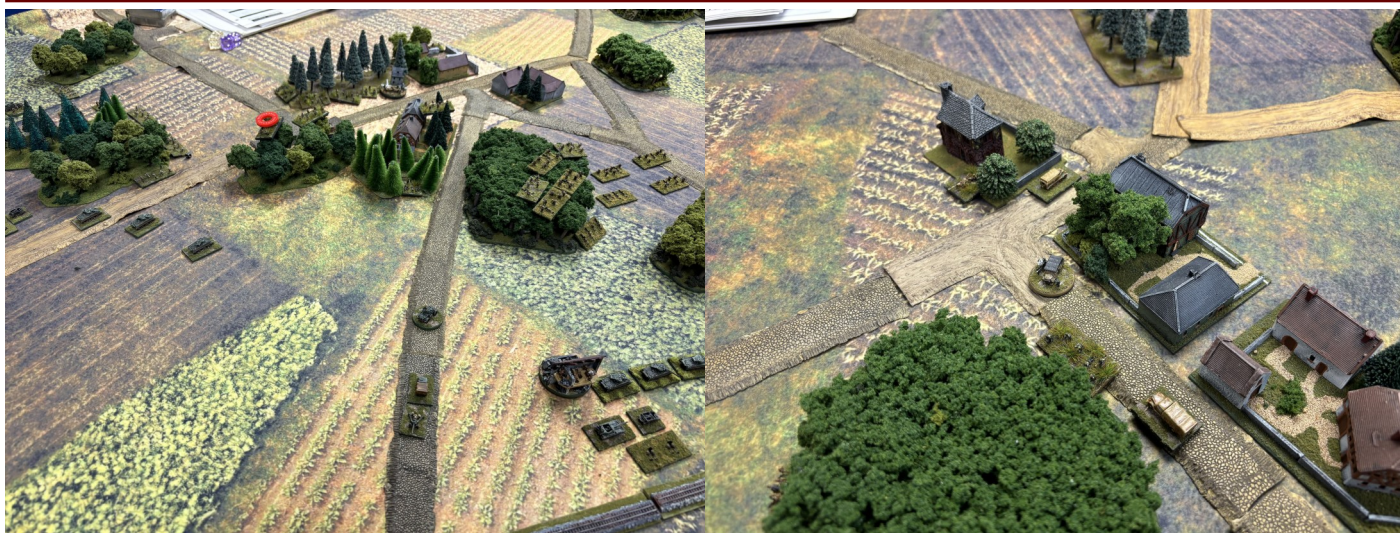
The British would try to use the Worcestershire battalion to pin the Germans while the 7th SLI moved to the flank to trap the Germans in the center. After that it should be easy to move and take Elst on the run. Not so fast. The rain limited visibility to 20 CM and all wheeled vehicles were confined to the road while tracked units could move half their movement if going cross country. This made things much easier for the German side of things as in BKC IV you can't even see concealed infantry until you're within 10 CM and there would be no overwhelming the German armor with long range fire.



The consistent thing throughout the game was the Worcestershire battalion, which continually failed its command rolls and at the same time fulfilled its mission by having several units eliminated! The battalion simply could not get moving and the Germans saved up their best combat die rolls for shooting at the few units that did move. After six turns the battalion was barely to the tree line outside the crossroads and

had lost three infantry stands! The attached Shermans did engage the lone counterattacking Panther, but they as well couldn't see anything and even if they had, they failed command roll after command roll. (cont. on p9)





(cont. from p8) The 7th SLI was able to get moving and maneuvered to take the first buildings in the center of the board from the flank and rear. They were soon engaged by the German panzergrenadiers and mortars, but the Germans were unable to call in their nebelwerfers, which would have been devastating with the British infantry moving en masse. By turn 6 the British were just outside the crossroads area and were able to call in artillery on the German positions.

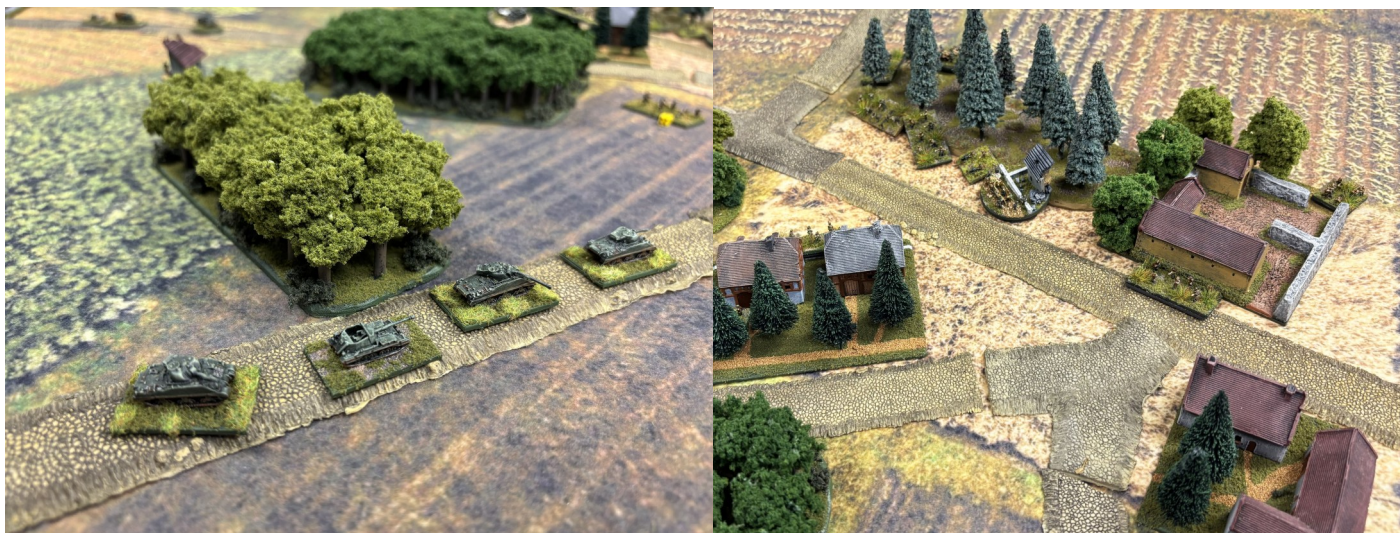
The Germans, meanwhile, seemed to be trying to decide whether to hold in place and let luck decide things, or pull back to Elst and defend their end of the board. In the end, events overtook their plans, forcing the main kampfguppe to defend the crossroads and middle of the board to the death, which they did. The Germans finally got their Stugs released and they moved down the road to take up

positions in and around Elst. The British were clearly running out of time (the scenario said they needed to be at the end of the board by turn 11, which seemed impossible) and had suffered a lot of casualties.

The British attack went forward, with the panzergrenadiers being attacked from the front and flank, which means that infantry stands started to die. Although the British were taking hits as well, there was a lot of fire coming into the German positions. The Shermans were adding their fire into the equation and by turn 9 there weren't a lot of Germans left in the middle of the board. The British started to discuss their plans for the attack on Elst itself and how to break through the last line of defense. It was at this point that the British players concluded that they simply did not have the strength to get their in time and conceded the game.

Historically, it was the 7th SLI who had problems moving up and the Worcestershire battalion carried the attack forward. Elst and the rail line wasn't cleared until two days later, so the battle ended with the historical result. The rain really caused problems for the British and limited their armor from making end runs around the German defenses.

Everyone thought that it was a pretty good scenario and in the context of limited armor and mainly an infantry fight, the BKC IV rules worked out pretty well. There were no 6-8 tanks firing at a single target or long range gunnery duels that went on forever, which are problems we usually encounter. The artillery still gives us fits as the number of dice that you can roll per target is astounding at times and only armor can survive. A pretty challenging scenario for both sides.

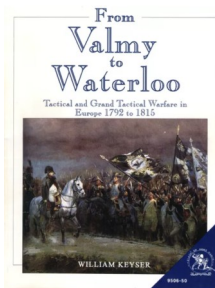


Memoirs of a Miniatures and Board Wargamer Pt. 57

When Rules Don't Work For Your Gaming Group

I'm pretty confident that all of us have tried many, many rules over the years. With a handful of miniatures rules coming out each week for the past dozen years or so, it's not a stretch of the imagination that most gamers have bought several. That's not saying that they've actually used them! Maybe read through them, put a few units on the board, tested the systems, and some might have even tried a game or two. The big question is why do some rules work and some don't for a gaming group?

When we finally got tired of the 100th+ argument over the rules in Empire, it was time for a change. There were a lot of advertisements for a new set of rules for the Napoleonic period called From Valmy to Waterloo. We ordered a few copies, looked them over, liked what we saw, then went right into a game. The first game wasn't too bad, but during the second game we had a large cavalry attack then an infantry attack on a town that literally took hours. The rules became

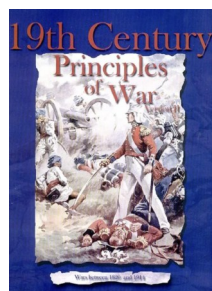


bizarre times, strange combat results, and the game just seemed to be so random that you couldn't make sense of anything. **When your group thinks there's something wrong with the rules, there's no point in trying to rationalize continuing to play them.**

Back in the 90s, tired of TSATF games and looking for something new, we latched on to the new Old Glory 25mm Colonial figure lines and the Sons of the Desert rules. What's not to like? Colonial skirmish game, French Foreign Legion, a walled outpost, etc. It certainly had all the makings of a great game...except that it wasn't. We started to get apprehensive when the first morale checks were made and the better a unit or officer was the more their troops panicked! That wasn't the only issue as Legionnaires died like flies, not to mention plenty of gaps in the rules. After 2-3 hours of this we shut things down early and the rules went back on to the shelf. **Rules designed specifically for a miniatures line are usually not very good.**

While we played a lot of Colonial era skirmish games, there was always this idea about finding a "big battle" set of rules so that we could maybe one day do a campaign. Having looked through several sets, we saw that Principles of War had a 19th century version out. The base rules were getting some positive energy in the wargaming magazines, so they were certainly worth a try. Open the book and yup, you needed unit rosters. While most rules were going away from these at the time, this set of rules had them front and center.

The rules were tried in a Colonial game and a Mexican-American war game with mixed results. The rules seem to be designed for a one on one type game and the only difference between units were the strength of the units on the roster sheet. Thinking about how we would



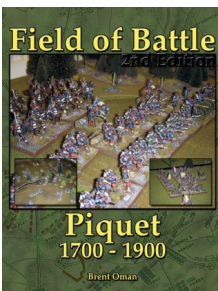
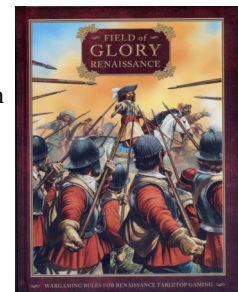
apply these in a 6-8 player game and with some of our members anti-roster we gave up. **It's important to realize what your gaming group may or may not like. There's no need to force something on them.**

We've been using Age of Discovery for a long, long time for our Renaissance games. While it's fun, quirky, etc., there's always that nagging feeling at the back of your mind that there could be something better out there. At the time, Osprey's Field of Glory series was all the rage and when the Renaissance book came out it was time to try these out. Looking things over initially, this was a serious attempt to game the Renaissance! Plenty of color diagrams, lengthy army lists, and it certainly looked more realistic than AOD for the period. There was just one problem..

That problem was that again, these rules were primarily designed for one on one play and each player really needed a copy of the rules, plus had thoroughly read them. Now usually that doesn't work with many gaming groups and that's what happened here. The play test game went well, but there was a lot of looking through the rules and if you didn't own the rules, you were in trouble not knowing the myriad of options, responses, etc. **For complex rules, if everyone isn't going to invest in owning and reading the rules, chances are things won't work out.**

Now for many gamers these rules are great and have probably been used for many games over the years. Just

because we didn't continue to use them doesn't mean that they are bad rules. We've made many mistakes before in the hobby and will continue to do so! However, when deciding on when and how to bring a set of rules to the group for a possible game, there needs to be some level of commitment or it's going to fail. Providing cheat sheets, designing a basic scenario, stepping through the rules slowly, etc., are all things that are needed to ensure at least a successful play test. Even after that you might find that the group just doesn't take to the rules, which is fine. The one truth to this subject is that there are going to be more rules getting published and many more chances to try new things out.



such a burden that we decided that the Empire scale of doing things was not our cup of tea any longer. **Just because you like the period doesn't mean you will like the rules.**

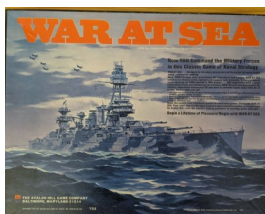
One time we had a club member who

swore by Piquet and constantly tried to sell us on its virtues. Finally, we relented and let him run a Seven Years War game for us. Now those who play Piquet love the card driven mechanics, "fog of war", and other chaotic attributes associated with the rules and there is a loyal, enthusiastic following for them. For us, however, it fell completely flat. The main reason was there was a cavalry melee that went on for several turns in the middle of the board. Infantry and cavalry units started marching around it and moved on down the table, that's how long it took! There were several out of ammo results at

Blast From The Past Pt. 56: The Test of Time

When we look back upon the many board and miniature games that many of us have either owned or tried over the years, what stands the test of time to you? This is an interesting question and as I approach retirement, it caused me to think about which games and/or rules systems have I played the most and most importantly of all, *which ones do I want to keep playing?* There comes a time for every gamer where chasing down the latest and greatest becomes an impossible task. Many of the new games are barely getting played once nowadays, so why continue to pursue more of them?

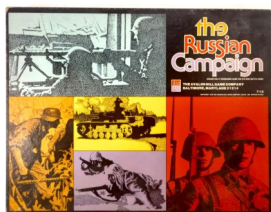
While staring at my game collection one day, I started to think about the around 30+ Avalon Hill games that I own. What struck me is that there were a handful that get played pretty much at least once a year. When you think about it, there are far more beautiful games out there with much more streamlined systems competing for your attention. Why is it then that many of us continue to go back to games we've been playing for 40+ years!



War at Sea is one of those games along with its sister game, Victory in the Pacific. I usually play these at least

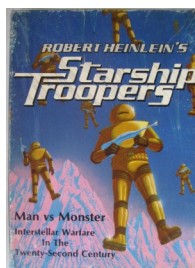
once a year. Set up is quick, you know the rules, and there are so many die rolls that you never know what is going to transpire. The latest version, Admiral's War, combines both games, but for some reason I never bought it and continue to play my older versions. The game is still fun and you can teach anyone in less than 15 minutes.

What more needs to be said about The Russian Campaign? Originally from Jedko then picked up by Avalon Hill, it is approaching its 50th year. Avalon Hill produced three versions, then one by L2, then another by GMT Games. It is one of the few games where you can play the entire WW2 Eastern Front campaign in several hours and it's all done with just a few pages of rules. While I own the GMT version and it's very nice, I still pull out the Avalon Hill version as the



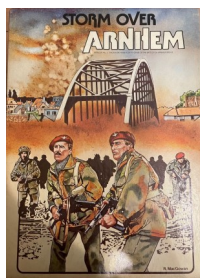
one map set up seems to still work pretty good.

As I was scanning the shelves of games, another one that I've owned for close to 50 years is Starship Troopers. While it got a lot of play in the 70s, the game was kind of forgotten about for close to 30 years, but I simply couldn't get rid of it. Then I came across an old General article called Alone Against the Bugs, which was a solo system for the game. Since I found that article I've played it five times and have plans to continue trying it every so often as it's a lot of fun, although things die in droves!



Avalon Hill produced many, many games over the years. While some are fondly remembered such as Squad Leader, Third Reich, War & Peace, etc., there were plenty that weren't very good such as Kriegspiel, Elric, and others. Still, I've kept most of the ones I've bought over the years and have rarely sold one. As with many gamers, you always have plans to play your games, "get back to such and such a game", try a variant you read about, and so on. Why you only pull out certain games from time to time and play them is one of the hobby's great mysteries.

For example, I have Panzerblitz, Panzer Leader, and Arab-Israeli Wars from the late 70s. However, they only come out maybe once every five years. Third Reich, which we played to death for a few years when it first came out, still sits there on the shelf without having been played probably in the last decade. The rules for these games aren't hard to follow, set up is minimal, but then you always seem to go on to newer games in your collection or someone you know got a new game and wants to try it, pushing your plans to bring out these old games back.



1981, which seems like a steal now some 40+ years later and considering how

many times I've played it. Meanwhile, I have the \$200 Devil's Cauldron which covers the same area and more on my shelf that hardly gets played!

As mentioned before in these pages, nostalgia is a tough thing to deal with. It can make you purchase things you don't need, have you waste time going back down rabbit holes, and then sometimes there is this nasty feeling that what brought you joy back in the day isn't so good now. That's not happening with these games. They brought joy back in the 70s and early 80s and continue to this day. Why that is could be a research thesis, but I can see myself playing these games until I can't play any longer. They'll probably outlast me and hopefully a home can be found for them some day, but those of us who still enjoy Avalon Hill games are certainly a dying breed.

Even in this day and age you can get an Avalon Hill game that can still be enjoyed, even though it came out a long time ago. Take for example, Wizard's Quest. I bought it when I saw a good copy that was unpunched for a pretty low price. Even though it came out decades ago I thought I would buy this copy and try it out on a gaming night about four years ago. Well, it was pretty fun and we've now played it about ten times in the past few years! Meanwhile, we're surrounded by games that go for \$100 or more that will barely see the table once. Now we might get a copy of Amoeba Wars (same designer and system) and see how good that is!



Whatever magic Avalon Hill possessed, it still continues on to this day. To think that the games that they produced would still have a loyal following for this long is pretty incredible. Especially when you consider the competition that is currently out there. Every type of genre with color rulebooks, amazing components, cards, and more are all out there for the taking. Yet, many gamers still go back to these games and have fond memories of them, despite their flaws and older components. I plan to play mine for as long as I can!

Space Empires: All Good Things

Game Review

When GMT's Space Empires originally appeared back in 2011, it was a breath of fresh air for those who loved what are commonly termed "4X" games. Science fiction war-games were few and far between since the 80s and while Godfire, Stellar Conquest, Imperium, and others had their fans, those games could be quite long. All of a sudden, here was a new take on the theme, with beautiful graphics, a solo system, and it was fun to play. The question at that time was, will there be more and could this game last more than a few years?

The answers to both of those questions has been a resounding yes. Two other boxed supplements arrived; Close Encounters which added ground troops and race characteristics, then Replicators which added a new race and even more options. The final volume, All Good Things is now available to complete the series. If you have all four boxed sets you will own a rich and rewarding look at sci-fi wargaming, combining research, exploration, production, combat, and a host of different scenarios including a solo system.

First off, this supplement comes in a huge box and is simply packed to the brim with components. Once you open it there is a bit of trepidation as you try to figure out what to do with everything! Of course, the obvious answer is just to keep all four boxes, but for those who want to consolidate, there are so many options that it would take another article to describe all of them. Much of this will depend upon how many times that you're going to play this game. If it's multiple times then investing in some counter trays, plastic storage boxes for each race, card trays, etc., is a must. Other than that, the plastic baggies might work out well enough.

The first thing you can do, however, is to get rid of the rules, scenario books, pads, and play charts that were in the first

few boxed games. All Good Things comes with combined rule and scenario books, which is greatly welcomed. There are some errata cards which fix a few things as well. Then there are the new Scenario cards, which are a great way to add some variety to your games. After that it is a lot of counters that add logistics to the old races, satellite defense networks, cyber armor, new terrain tiles, and much, much more. You also get two new races that have different ships/costs, which adds even more variation to any scenario.

It's been quite some time since we reviewed the last Space Empires supplement, so for the uninitiated, what is Space Empires all about? First, each player starts with a home system and so many production points. You then send out scouts and colony ships to start your empire in your local environment. As colonies get established, you get more and more points to be spent on ships and research. Once you venture out into deep space, that's where the problems begin. Alien controlled planets, doomsday machines, black holes, and more dangers are lurking out there, so expect to lose some ships!

Meanwhile, other players/races are expanding outwards as well, meaning at some point you're going to be running into each other or fighting over a planet to be colonized. At the same time that this is going on, you're trying to research better weapons, defenses, and other technologies, while producing ships to help your fleet protect what you have. The game uses a unique concept of numerical markers under each ship type that shows how many ships are actually there, plus you need to be sending them home every so often to get the latest upgrades. Managing your empire while fighting others is certainly challenging.

For the base game there are

optional rules such as Raiders, X-ships, and Merchant Pipelines, but overall, you can expect a 3-4 player game to go around 4 hours and there is some paperwork involved. Now, many gamers simply stop here, but if you really want to go further, then this is the game for you. Ground units, flagships, research centers, boarding ships, and much more can be added. The issue here is that with each thing you add the game gets a bit longer. We've had 4 player games actually get called after 7-8 hours of play and we're still not at the actual end!

All Good Things simply adds more and more to the mix, not that it's a bad thing, but it comes down to how long do you want your games to be? There are variable starting home system counters, crew cards, scenario cards, and more that can generate a bewildering amount of starting positions, characteristics for races, and we haven't even discussed the really good solo

system that is included. The scenario book is pretty thick as it includes all manner of different player combinations and set ups. For those with time on their hands, you can even incorporate GMT's Talon to fight the space battles!

All Good Things is a tremendous package, but it could be also called Too Much of a Good Thing. If you're going to play a 4 player game with everything, including the new crew cards, logistics, etc., you'll be looking at least 7-8 hours for a game and longer if not all of the players have played at least once before. A better option might be to pick and choose which optional rules and systems to use before playing instead of the entire kitchen sink, which might be too much for most gaming groups.

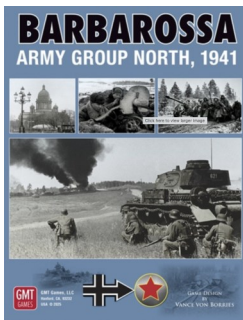
However, if you like science fiction wargaming, then this is the game for you. Build up your fleet, explore dangerous areas, exterminate the other players, fight ground actions, and more are all waiting for you. All Good Things is definitely a fitting end to this gaming series.



After waiting for more than 10 years, all of a sudden we've had the re-worked Barbarossa Army Group North (AGN) join Army Group Center (AGC), with Army Group South (AGS) coming up next. Joined together with Kiev to Rostov and Crimea, you will have all of Operation Barbarossa up to 1942 ready for you to play. AGN, AGC, and soon AGS had to be brought up to the current standard used in Kiev to Rostov as well as Crimea. This meant new maps, revised counters, and the latest version of the rules. This is a massive project by GMT as they get ready to expand the series into 1942.

The AGN box is one of the bigger ones that you'll see and there is a reason for that. For one, the box is packed full of components and no one can argue that you didn't get your money's worth of cardboard and paper! We'll go over the maps first, which are designed not only to be used with some of the smaller scenarios, but join together in various combinations for the larger scenarios and AGN campaign. On top of that, they will mesh with the maps from AGC if you want to do an even larger campaign! The details on the map are amazing, particularly all of the roads, tracks, swamps, and other nasty terrain around Leningrad. There is also a separate Leningrad inset map for battles in the city in case the Germans get that far.

On the counters and there are several sheets with two of them being the informational type. One solid sheet of Germans while the Russians almost get two entire sheets to themselves. The combat units are fairly detailed as evidenced by the graphic depicted here. The one thing that you notice is the bewildering amount of different Russian units, from NKVD to coastal artillery to various motorized formations. Sorting the Russian units out is a challenge and during set up there's usually going to be a lot of hunting and pecking around for the right ones. Also, you see that there are naval units in this game along with a naval module to go along with them.



Then there are the reference cards...a lot of them. There is the turn record card, air displays and replacement tracks for both sides, then fold out cards for movement, terrain, combat, air combat, and yes, the sequence of play requires four sides! All of these are very well done and no amount of space is wasted. However, it does give you a glimpse that this is a pretty involved game system. Finally, there is the introductory scenario on a card and a fold out card for a naval/amphibious scenario. In terms of components there is really nothing to complain about.

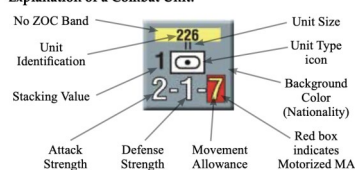
The rules by now have been thoroughly dissected and incorporate years of testing and errata. That the standard rules are fairly lengthy should surprise no one as this is a detailed operational treatment of AGN's initial operations in 1941. The playbook adds in exclusive rules for the game, the nine scenarios (including the full campaign), and finally, extensive examples of play. Again, all of this is very well done and one wishes that most games would have this level of thought put into them. Reading the rules with all of the various reference cards close by is a good way to learn the system, then break out one of the smaller introductory scenarios which are usually on cards. The card has the map, turn track, special rules, and unit displays right on the card.

Luckily for gamers there are a few introductory scenarios that take place on cards. These often are just to get you used to movement and combat, with the supply and replacements handled a bit differently or not at all. This is a good way to get right into the basics of the system, then you can gradually add on more and more sub-systems until you're playing the full game.

There are also some more involved scenarios covering the initial invasion across the border, the first assault on Leningrad, then a Russian counterattack as the Germans tried to extend the siege lines. Basically, there's something for everyone including the full campaign with all of the maps and counters.

b. Explanation of Ground Unit Values

Explanation of a Combat Unit:



The East Front Series is at its heart a classic hex and counter game series...but with a lot more steps! The sequence of play shows the differences in the German and Russian command structures with the Germans moving, Russian limited reaction, combat, German motorized movement, Russian motorized movement, German reaction, combat, then all Russian movement. This keeps things very interesting as trying to counterattack as the Russians requires a lot to go right during a turn!

There is a full air system, detailed supply system (keeping your supplies moving and close to the front is a challenge), and artillery really plays a critical role in attack and defense. Combat results in step losses and retreats, but it's probably one of the easiest parts of the game! Of course the terrain, weather, different kinds of roads, railway conversion, etc., are all detailed here as well. Add to that all kinds of different replacement points, weird units, and special rules which make this a very detailed look at the German drive towards Leningrad.

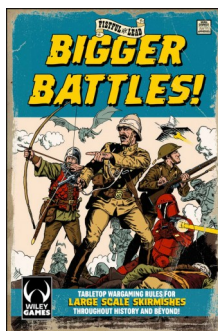
Naturally, this series is not going to appeal to everyone. If you have an interest in Operation Barbarossa, WW2 East Front operational combat, or just like detailed games then this is definitely for you. As the German player, planning the invasion, using your armored formations, keeping supplies moving, and dealing with hordes of Russians is really tough. As the Russian player, organizing a defense with limited command, scattered units, and limited airpower is tough as well. Another outstanding volume in this WW2 series of games.



FFOL: Trojan War Battle

Battle Report

This gaming night didn't start off so well as even though we knew that we would be playing one of the Fistful Of Lead sets of rules, there were some communication issues. All of us had been given a set of the Bigger Battles rules as a gift, but everyone didn't bring them! This put a lot of pressure on the gamemaster to keep things running and made everyone else playing feel pretty dumb!



While the scenario had pretty basic objectives (capture two of the three specific locations on the board), there had clearly been a lot of time spent on the game itself. A really nice temple scene, market stalls, and lot of Greek and Trojan heroes with their native units. Cards had been prepared for all of the heroes as well as the units. While the base game is fairly simple to set up and execute, preparing

larger games than the usual skirmish scale which the rest of the rules series is known for. So instead of one on one battles, here it is unit on unit. If a unit of 8 spearmen attacks an enemy unit then it rolls 8 dice. Once you get the hang of things the turns definitely go faster.

When units go and what they do is determined by a handful of cards, with each side getting one card per unit plus one for the overall commander. You then proceed down from the King of Spades (Aces are wild cards) to the 2s, with a unit being nominated for action. Units can move twice, move once and fight, rally, and have several options about how to conduct their turn. Again, once you get used to how things work the turns go by

pretty fast. Certain cards give combat modifiers or allow certain actions for the unit that was activated.

Both sides closed the gap between them pretty quickly. By turn three units were already engaged in hand to hand combat and both the Greek archers and Trojan slingers were raining down death and destruction! At first, the Greek right was doing pretty well, but the real crisis for the Greeks was on the left. This was a bit surprising in that the Greeks had some of their strongest units there, but bad die rolls are always the great equalizer! Casualties were really starting to mount and both sides moved up their units for a major attack.

Turns 4-6 saw both sides commit pretty much everything they had with varying results. The Greek right was still doing well, wiping out one unit of Trojan warriors and pushing back the others. The Trojans counterattacked, but were thrown back. Even in losing many of these melees, the Trojans were certainly causing a lot of casualties. The Greeks had a lot of shock that

needed to be rallied so that they could continue the attack while the Trojans pulled back to await developments.

On the Greek left and center the Greeks were showing progress, but then the Trojans got a pretty good string of die rolls and after several turns of bitter



fighting everyone's units were down to one or two figures! The Greek archers had been wiped out in a counterattack and now the Trojan slingers were really making their presence felt. Each turn they managed to kill 4-8 figs just by themselves!

By turn 10 casualties for both sides were well over 50% and the Trojans still had control of two out of the three objectives. The Greeks made one final push on the Trojans over on the right flank and came close to finishing them off, meaning that they could now close on the bridge and way across the board to the temple. Everywhere else things looked OK for the Trojans. We made a quick assessment that the Trojans were likely to win this thing in the end and it would take the Greeks well over an hour to get to the other side of the board, so the game was called as a Trojan victory.

Plenty of action, lots of melees, and the system seemed to work well with a lot of units. We did discuss the shooting as if there had been more units with ranged weapons it would have been a much shorter game! Both sides had their chances, but the card draw and lots of die rolling can sometimes produce weird results!



everything for this scenario showed a lot of dedication and care!

There were about 9 forces per side, with each force made up of one hero from legend along with 8-12 soldiers. Each hero had specific fighting stats along with special skills while the basic units all had the same stats. This keeps things easy as you usually just need to keep track of what the heroes can do in battle. Each side also had only one unit that had ranged weapons, with the Trojans having a unit of slingers while the Greeks had one of archers. We've seen in the past that ranged weapons can be overpowering at times and this night would be no exception!

Both sides were allowed to set up within 12 inches of the river, then the game began. For those who have not tried these rules, they are designed for



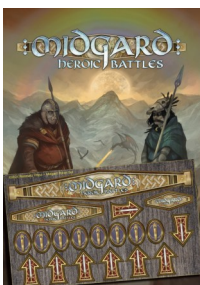
Several more images from the battle showing the large variety of units as well as all of the terrain that was built for the battle. Many of the Greek and Trojan heroes were present this day along with their contingents, so there was a wide variety of special skills and troop types which kept things interesting!

There was a very interesting Geek list on BGG entitled, "My 15 Unpopular Opinions on the Hobby", which although designed for board games could clearly be applied to miniatures gaming as well. The very last item generated a lot of discussion as his assertion was that there were just too many games out there right now. Also, if you have a large collection, how often are you playing them? His calculation is that (at least for him) owning 40 games is the optimum and even then, you probably won't cycle through your collection once a year.

Now there is a lot to unpack there and of course gamers opinions are going to be all over the place. Even if you are in one of the most die hard, no holidays off, no vacations, play once a week gaming clubs, the most board and miniature games that you could play in a year would be 52. Even then you likely wouldn't be playing any of them more than once, nor would you get better at any of them as for most games/rules it takes multiple plays.

So this gets down to the main questions, which are; what kind of gamer are you and is there enough time to play the games that you and your friends own? Probably a third of gamers are pretty casual. They own multiple sets of rules, maybe have an army or two, plus some board games. They're not always buying new items and go with the flow in terms of what the group is playing. Their figs might get pulled out every now and then, they may play a board game or two, but they're not going to lead the charge on painting up two 500 figure armies to try out a new set of rules.

Another third own more than 10+ sets of rules, have forces for multiple periods, and own/play a variety of boardgames. The hobby is important to them and you're going to game with them at least 20 times a year. Then there is the third that have thousands of figures, play multiple periods, own at least two dozen sets of rules that they've never played, and buy mounds of new products for a project "some day". Gaming is a serious hobby and they would like to game at least 30+



times per year. A club will usually have gamers from all of these sub-groups, meaning that it will be rare to play the same period, rules, or board game more than twice a year.

So why do we have so many games and rules? Sure, there are the collectors among us who try to complete a series, have played a certain company's games since they started, are really interested in certain time periods, or buy limited items and hope to get to play them somewhere down the road. Still others just can't sit still and have to be continually moving forward, trying new rules, painting new forces, and not that interested in doing the same thing over and over. There's certainly a place for all of these gamers in the hobby and no one approach is right or wrong.

However, there is one element in this equation that never changes and that is the concept of time. All of us as gamers get older, there are family/life commitments, financial considerations, and more that limit our time to paint, read, and play board or miniatures games. It is an inescapable part of the hobby and after you've been in the hobby a while you really start thinking about it! If you belong to one of those gaming groups that only plays one period or set of rules 90% of the time then your hobby is right on track! For everyone else it might be time to consider what exactly are we doing in the hobby.



Take for example GMT's Next War series, of which I own all of the games, the three supplements, and I had pre-ordered the 2nd edition of the Taiwan game as well as supplement #4. Notice how I used the words "had ordered" as I recently canceled the orders and now have plans to sell off the entire series. Why? I'm a big fan of modern warfare, GMT does an outstanding job on this series, and the games are always being updated to stay current. However, every time you pull one off the shelf, the time spent re-learning the advanced rules and playing the game takes a major commitment. Once you've finished a scenario you really should be moving on to another game in the series, but there are too many other games competing for your attention.

Likewise for miniatures rules. We recently tried Midgard Heroic and thought we should play it again at some point. When? We haven't played Phantoms in probably three years, Mustangs in five, Boilers & Breechloaders in fifteen, only have played Sword and Flame once in 2-3 years, and so on. Should that move in front of the other games that we would like to get back to some day? I have a 1,000+ figure 15mm collection for Battles For Empire that has seen the tabletop maybe twice in five years. There are just too many rules, periods, scales, etc., that we own and I'm not sure that it's going to change any time soon!

So, what's the answer? There are currently two lines of thinking on this topic. The first is to keep going as we are, which is a helter-skelter schedule with BKC IV one week, Warmaster Ancients another, followed by a Battletech miniatures game, then probably play a game of Kingmaker II or something similar. See any consistent theme there? The second is to take a long, hard look at what are we going to devote our time to and what should we be playing in the next 3-5 years. What are the odds of that happening? Pretty low. Too many shiny objects, quests for the best rules for a certain period, etc., makes the second option almost a non-starter.

That Geek list, however, can really cause you to think about your gaming future. As I near retirement and read gaming articles where for about one out of every four gamers who enter retirement have reported that their gaming time increased, you start wondering if you need to adjust what you're doing. What's the point of owning the entire GDW Series 120 game set if you're never going to play them again? Why continue to paint new units for a game that hasn't seen the tabletop in five years?

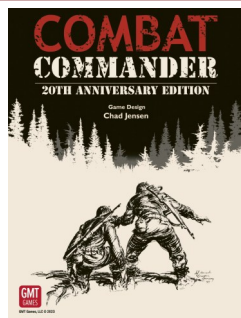
I look at my copy of Successors by Phalanx, which has all of the miniatures actually painted. We've played Successors twice in 10 years, but everyone loved it. I need to get back to playing it at least once every year or two, but to do that I will need to part with a lot of games, rules, and figs. This is going to be one of the hardest things I've ever had to do in my hobby life, but I feel that it needs to be done. With the amount of games I buy for review, keeping everything I have until the end of life is not very smart.

Combat Commander 20th Anniversary Edition Game Review

It's hard to believe that the Combat Commander series of games is now 20 years old! Combat Commander: Europe introduced some radical new concepts for gaming small actions and its popularity enabled GMT to add several more boxed sets, a half dozen supplements, and in 2026 we will see Combat Commander: Vietnam as the series expands out from its WW2 origins.

The 20th Anniversary Edition combines Europe and the Mediterranean boxed sets into one box. You definitely get a lot of components in the box for the money (retails around \$160), starting right off with six card decks for the various factions, 12 double sided maps, seven sheets of counters, then rules, a playbook, and finally all of the displays needed for the game. While the maps are more functional than anything, the rest of the components such as the cards and counters are pretty well done. The one thing I learned, however, is that if you own the original two games you really don't need to buy this! I think that so many gamers (including me!) see anniversary editions, re-designs, etc., and think things will get fixed, updated, etc., but that's not the case here!

For those not familiar with the Combat Commander system, it is a series of historical small unit actions during WW2. Each scenario details one of those actions, along with the forces of both sides, set up info, then the victory objectives. Victory is usually defined by one side or the other reaching their surrender threshold by suffering unit losses or by securing the most points via objective hexes. Each side also has a card deck for their nationality. The card decks are not the same! Each one has its own mix of fire and maneuver cards based upon that country's real world tactics. The



attacking side can usually hold onto 6 cards, a defender 4, and in a meeting engagement both get 5.

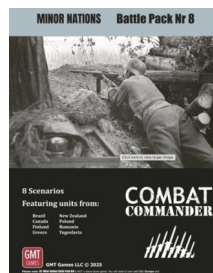
During a turn a player activates an officer, then plays a card. All units in his command range can then activate for movement, fire, advance into close combat, or rally. Usually, there are additional actions on other cards that give modifiers for firing, defense, or allow units a special function such as building foxholes. This is definitely a card management type game where on some turns you'll have really good cards to play while on others you may be discarding most of them in the hopes of drawing better replacements. Each time you run out of cards or play a Time card, the turn number moves down the track. Once it hits the time limit there is a good chance the game will end and you add up victory points to see who won.

The cards also provide a series of random events such as snipers, minefields, a unit breaks, etc. These usually happen at the worst time possible! Also, the cards are used for die rolls, with two tiny dice symbols on the bottom of each card. Once you play cards for your turn, draw cards for die rolls and/or resolve events, then draw cards to bring you back to your hand limit, you can go through the deck pretty quickly. Knowing how to use your leaders, which cards to keep, which ones to discard, what combinations work best for your forces, etc., will take a few games to figure out.

As could be suspected, there are a wide variety of good, bad, and average leaders, plus units with different ratings such as Russian Guards, German panzergrenadiers, American paratroops, etc. Most scenarios will have forces composed of several types of units plus weapons such as MGs, mortars, etc. There are a wide variety of scenarios with a good mix of the forces from Russia, Germany, France, England, the USA, and Italy. On top of all of that, there is a random scenario generator that is pretty good and that will allow you to continue playing long after you've finished the 20+ scenarios.

GMT also has a Pacific boxed set, Resistance (covers guerilla actions), and several zip-loc supplements for Stalingrad, Normandy, Operation Sea Lion, and more. After years of brief activity, GMT seems to be firmly invested in growing the Combat Commander family of games. There is a new Pacific module coming out soon and next year will see the release of the massive Vietnam boxed set. The question about when will armor be added is still unanswered, but with renewed emphasis on this series it may happen in the near future.

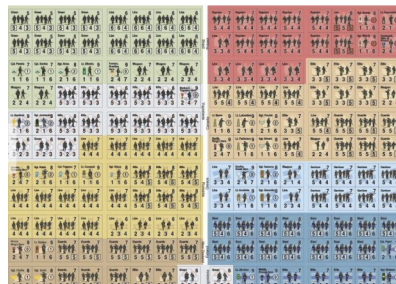
Naturally, the topic of how does this compare to Advanced Squad Leader usually comes up and they are completely different games. ASL is more procedural and formula driven while Combat Commander is much more random. In fact, gamers who do not like Combat Commander use that as a major complaint in that there is too much chaos.



The cards do add a level of chaos to the game and there certainly is a card management element here. Choosing the right cards when, activating the right units, then coming up with a winning strategy to seize the various objectives is quite the challenge! The good thing is that once you learn how to play, the scenarios can be completed in around two hours each and you really will just need to read the special rules on the scenario listing.

At the same time that the 20th anniversary boxed set was released, another battle pack was shipped at the same time. Number 8 focuses on minor nations, with counters and scenarios for Poland, Greece, Brazil, Finland, Romania, New Zealand, Canada, and Yugoslavia. The scenarios cover everything from the Brazilian army in Italy to the New Zealanders holding onto Maleme in Crete.

This is another great scenario pack that will give you hours of gaming joy in some unusual settings with forces you wouldn't usually choose! It looks like the Combat Commander series is back on track...



The Problematic Issue of Casualty Removal (cont.)

(cont. from p3) with the 7 stands loses one in the melee. Now for the second round or continuation of the melee, the side with the 8 stands gets a +1 as they now outnumber their opponent 8 to 6 or 1.5:1. There's still major fighting going on, casualties everywhere, but one side figures that they have the enemy right where they want them since now they have an advantage in men! +1 may not sound like much, but in some rules it can be a huge advantage.

Systems that use stand loss also can show some wackiness from time to time. Take Age of Reason for example, where a high quality unit suffers just enough casualties to cause the loss of a stand. A minute ago it was firing at full strength, still a morale grade 3 (pretty good in AOR) unit, but one more hit caused the loss of a stand. Now all of a sudden its frontage has shrunk by 1/4th and its morale roll is penalized since losing 25% of its force, yet a moment ago it was at 17% losses, but suffered no effects!



Of course miniatures rules have to regulate things somehow and to create percentage based tables for all losses, markers for where destroyed stands still have survivors present, etc., would be a huge undertaking. Not only that, but

the fun aspect with any set of rules trying to do those things would go right out the window! You could literally turn a basic exchange of fire into an hour long ordeal. While casualty presentation is important, it probably isn't worth it to explore it beyond where we are today.

So, where is casualty removal going in the future of the hobby? Already we are seeing companies like Litko come out with all kinds of markers and tokens to track hits, casualties, unit status, etc.



Warlord just came out with multiple boxes of casualty/hit markers for their Epic scale version of Hail Caesar and my guess is that more are coming from other companies. Many gamers have posted images of their own casualty bases or ways of tracking hits, of which some are quite original.

For the time being, the marking hits per unit until the unit is destroyed seems to be the most popular option outside of skirmish games where individual figures are removed. We seem to have reached a ceiling for the time being, but it remains to be seen what can possibly be done, especially with 3D printing and how fast gamers can create accessories right now. It's probably not the most realistic way to show casualties, degradation of combat ability, morale, etc., but it's fast and simple, which is what gamers are currently all about.

Will we see some new system come about in the near future? You would have to think so, just based upon all of the gaming innovations in the last 20 years. This is not the last we've heard about casualty removal and its effect on miniatures games!

Dragons Down: Natives & Legends

Several issues ago there was a review here about Dragons Down, the spiritual successor to Avalon Hill's Magic Realm. The base game plus the first expansion, Desolation, has proven to be pretty popular, walking a line in between the complexity of Magic Realm and many of the simple dungeon crawlers that are out there now. It certainly seems like this game is going to feature a number of expansions and Natives & Legends is the second one.

You get the same sized large box as the first game and the expansion, which means that you really don't need all of the space and most of this will fit in either of the two previous boxes. There is a large assortment of cards of various sizes, tokens, and more chips that represent the new natives plus additional items. There are also quite a few cards that are either



errata or changes from the previous games. Luckily, this is spelled out on one side of the promo flyer for the next expansion being designed now!

This expansion adds a few new characters, tons of new treasures, brand new sites to explore, and as mentioned before, all of the fixed cards. There is also a short rules supplement for the natives and all of the treasures/spells. The new items are pretty easy to integrate and if you've played the base game you can get into this pretty quickly.

The main focus of course are the new natives, many of which you can hire to go with you on treasure and monster hunts. There are also new tokens to explore such as the Inn and Campfire, where groups of

Game Review

natives may be present. This means that you can possibly interact with the natives almost anywhere, as well as encountering them at established sites. This adds a highly requested feature to the game, making it similar to Magic Realm, but much easier in practice.

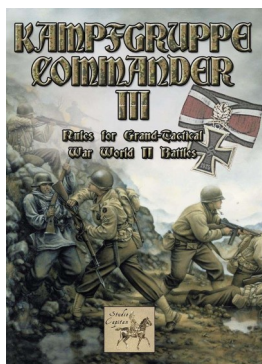
While the new treasures, character classes, natives, etc., are welcomed, you start to wonder if there is maybe too much being added! The base game and first expansion gave you an ever changing world that was different almost each time that you played. Now there are so many things that could possibly happen it's almost overwhelming and more seem to be coming. What would be really nice is a comprehensive character class, spell, and treasure guide instead of having to look in multiple places. Still, this game continues to expand, opening up the world even more and providing all kinds of interesting things to explore and fight over.

Back in 1993 Clash of Arms Games came out with their own set of WW miniatures rules called Clash of Armor. At that time Command Decision was all the rage for many WW2 gamers, so this set of rules was certainly in direct competition as they were set at the same scale. It wasn't until some years later when we tired of large games of Command Decision taking 6+ hours that we tried Clash of Armor. There was some good and some bad, but after playing it twice we looked elsewhere. Now, some 30+ years later, Kampfgruppe Commander III (KGC3), the third edition of the original rules, has been released.

First off, you can purchase this as a download from Wargames Vault, but then you will need to print and bind it yourself. There were some printed copies with spiral binding, of which I was fortunate enough to get one. At some 130+ pages, being able to lay it flat will come in handy more than once! The sheer size of the rules may be off putting to some gamers, but there are scenarios, data charts, unit cards, and sample organization data included, which takes up a good sized section of the rules.

In terms of scale and/or using your existing armies, KGC3 can be played with 3mm, 6mm, and 15mm with either the base scale/ranges or extended scale for larger miniatures. As long as the basing is consistent, whatever you currently use for your WW2 games should work. You will need command stands for the formation commanders, stands for assets (AT guns, MGs, mortars, etc.) and recon vehicles who all play a part in the rules. We used our basing for Blitzkrieg Commander 4 and it worked out fine.

KGC3 emphasizes command and control, with the movement and combat systems as important, but secondary roles. If you don't like command and control you probably want to stop reading right here! If you do like this for your WW2 games, then this rules system is right at the top for that. Each turn the formation commanders roll an averaging die and add their command rating to it. If you're playing 1941-42 Eastern Front for example, the Germans will be getting +2 and +3 to their roll while the Russians just get what is on the die. In most cases this means the Germans are going to have at



least 5 command points and as many as 8, where the Russians will usually have 3 or 4.

These command points let you move and attack with the various formations, along with rallying, responding to enemy fire, etc. For each additional action there can be penalties, depending upon the quality of your forces. Taking 1941-

42 as an example again, the Germans usually don't get penalized for multiple actions until the 3rd or 4th one, where the Russians will be lucky to do the same thing twice! During play this will definitely show itself as the Germans zip around the board while the Russians really need to think about their moves and fire plan.

Combat is pretty interesting as well. You nominate a target then roll 1D10 for each tank/infantry stand in the unit. If there's a German Pz IIIM unit of three tanks you would roll 3D10. You check the range, add/subtract modifiers, then roll under the number for hits. The targets then make defense rolls based on their armor and terrain (i.e., sort of a save mechanism). Each unit is rated for hits, so if the rating is 3, then for every 3 hits you remove a vehicle or infantry stand. Once all of its vehicles or stands are eliminated, that unit ceases to exist. When a unit retreats or is eliminated, you remove a number of force morale points. Once you reach 0 that entire side pulls back and that's the game. In most scenarios each side will have somewhere between 6 and 8 points, which doesn't seem like much, but they last longer than you would think.

Units that are fired at can respond by falling back (take only half the hits) or returning fire. These command points are then marked and taken off from that formation during the next turn, so both sides need to think about whether they will respond or not as you could use up all of your points for next turn, leaving you with nothing. This creates a highly interactive turn where both sides need to pay attention to what is happening on the battlefield.

Artillery is handled a bit differently by the rules and is not the overpowering force it is in many games. The size of the guns are rated and you simply place the barrage templates then roll for everything

beneath them. At most you're going to get 2 hits and even with good rolls probably only 1 hit, which is a bit more realistic than in many games. Also, each battery has ammo boxes and you'll be lucky to get 3-4 barrages from each battery per game, so you need to time them well.

There are so many additional rules such as infantry screening armor, hidden forces, recon, close assaults, airpower, and much, much more. The section on combined arms is really interesting and something you don't see in a lot of WW2 miniatures rules, plus there are unique rules for several of the nations. Finding things in the rules can be a bit challenging at times as while there is a table of contents there is no index.

There are several historical scenarios included, which are great for first time games as well as seeing how things need to be laid out when creating your own scenarios. Each scenario has a map, formation cards with all of the pertinent information, and any special rules for the scenarios. What is really needed is an entire scenario book! After that there are pages of charts covering artillery, gun types, vehicle stats, etc. Just about every type of gun and vehicle during WW2 has an entry, so it's pretty comprehensive. Finally, there are two tear away reference cards at the end of the rules, which have pretty much everything you might need during a typical turn.

The rules, like many, are a curse and a blessing! That they are comprehensive there is no doubt, but they might scare away a lot of gamers use to playing WH40K and Flames of War. It's going to take a while to go through the rules, do a sample direct fire engagement, and fully understand how things are supposed to work. Even with our experienced group of gamers we had to stop every now and then, peruse the rules, then discuss how something was actually supposed to play out. There are a lot of new concepts here and it takes your brain a few turns to wrap your head around them. Also, if not using the ready made scenarios, then filling out the formation and vehicle cards is going to take some time, so be prepared for that.

If you're looking for a new take on WW2 operational level combat, then this set of rules should be considered. There are some interesting concepts here that are worth the time to explore, especially if you like command and control.

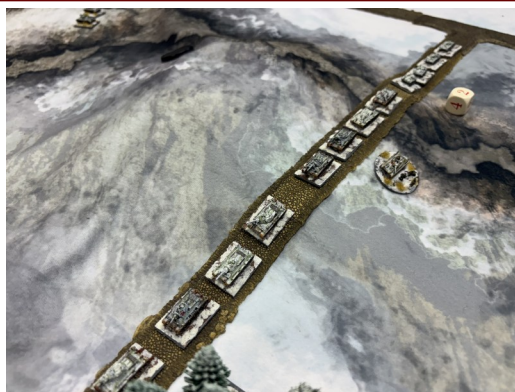
Kampfgruppe Commander III First Try

Battle Report

While we still really enjoy BKC IV, from time to time there are some frustrations with the all units firing at the same target and the artillery fire, which can be devastating at times. We decided to take a break and try Kampfgruppe Commander III, which is the 3rd edition of the old Clash of Armor rules from back in the 90s. After reviewing the rules, copying all of the charts and unit cards, then finding all of the necessary markers we would need, it was time for our first scenario.

Since we have winter terrain and early Eastern Front forces, the scenario Battle for State Farm 79 was selected. This took place in 1942 and consisted of a Russian armored force (with some infantry) trying to push through a panzergrenadier battalion to exit off the opposite map edge. Two panzer and one panzergrenadier battalions were moved into the area and hit the advancing Russians in the flank, driving them back and inflicting significant losses. The battle highlighted the effective German command and control as well as combined arms practices.

The scenario was meant to be played on an 8x5, but unfortunately for this evening all we had was a 6x4 table, so we focused on the main area where the Russians would run into the deployed panzergrenadier battalion and we cut off



much of the table edges around the map. The Russians had three formations; two were powerful tank units with 8 T-34/76s and 4 T-70s, while the other was a large infantry formation supported by some KV-1s. There were also two entire battalions of artillery available for support.



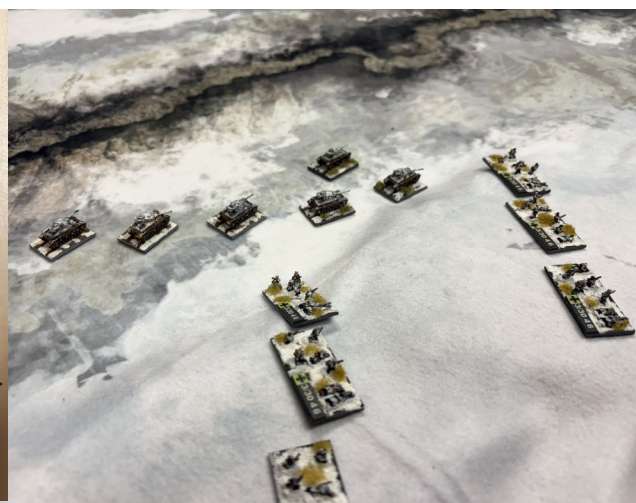
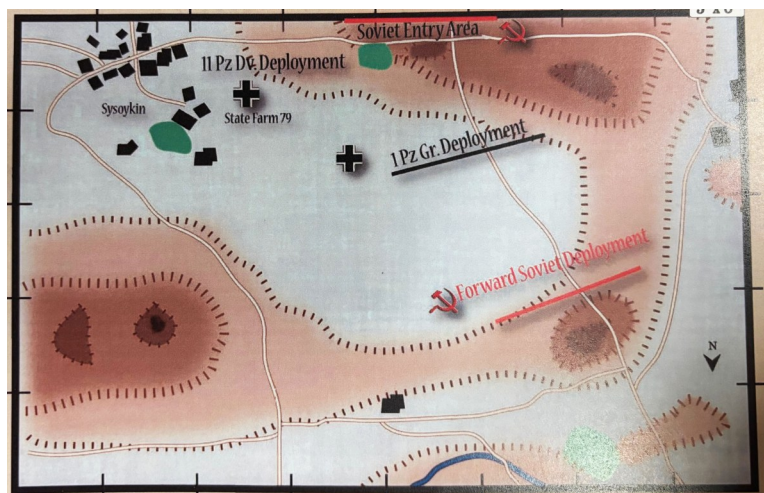
The Germans had the panzergrenadier battalion deployed directly in the path of the on-coming Russians. The other three German formations consisting of two panzer battalions (one with PZ IIIMs and the other with PZ IVF1s) and one panzergrenadier battalion, started way off to the side near a Russian village and farms. The Russians were going to hammer at the Germans blocking their path while trying to prevent themselves from being flanked

while the Germans were going to try to blunt the Russian armored attack through superior command and control.

We decided to NOT use hidden movement and recon assets, which in hindsight was a huge mistake. At the time we felt that the rules had so many new concepts that adding hidden movement would only bog the game down. Unfortunately, it also meant that the Russians could face the German flank attack, which would make it almost impossible for the Germans to succeed! This is one of those scenarios where no one should know any of the forces and/or layout ahead of time, so we already blew it here.

The first shock with these rules was the grand tactical move, which the Germans pulled off brilliantly. With their extra command actions they quickly advanced right to the front and started shooting at the Russians in the flank! This is where we got our first taste of combat and the response actions available to each side. The Russians in some cases fell back, cutting their casualties in half while other Russian units returned fire. This brought up some harsh realities for both sides when using these rules for the early Eastern Front. First, the German armor could not hope to knock out the heavier T-34/76s in a frontal engagement. The second was that the Russians could not do much each turn except turn to face the Germans and get off a shot every now and then.

The German Marders, however, definitely had some hitting power and knocked out a T-34 stand pretty quickly. However, their armor isn't great, so the return fire knocked out (cont. on p21)





(cont. from p20) one Marder and forced the others back. We then tried to do an artillery barrage, but we were missing something in the rules and it took us a while to figure out how to do this! Eventually we came across the right table and were able to complete the barrage. With this set of rules, artillery is more of an annoyance, although as we saw, it can cause some hits to armor every now and then.

We were only able to get in a few infantry fights, so it was hard to tell how that system truly works. Again, it seems to be more of a function of training levels, good dice rolls, and putting your troops into a position to win with overwhelming firepower. Meanwhile, the Germans were having a hard time knocking out the Russian T-34s in frontal engagements. The Russians for their part

were having a hard time just doing anything!

As mentioned before, we messed up by not having hidden movement, although it should be said for a first game we would never have completed two turns if we had used it! Basically, the Russians started to form gun lines with their formations, which the Germans were going to have a hard time overcoming. This checked the German tactical advantages in command as their guns simply could not knock out the T-34s except on the flank. The Marders could punch through, but they were off in the distance trying to rally the remnants of their formation to rejoin the fight. After a few turns we saw that the fight was going to be inconclusive and really needed to be restarted, but we had run out of time for this gaming night.

Once everyone got the hang of things, the command and firing systems seem to work well and we didn't feel that they slowed down the turns. The artillery could have been explained a bit better in the rules, but we did figure things out. What we did like is that it felt like an early Eastern Front battle with the German command allowing their formations to run wild while the Russians were just trying to stay alive.

While everyone thought that the system merited another play (and we probably will do that sometime in the future), the amount of work that has to go into filling out the vehicle and formation cards means that you need to commit to some serious game prep. A separate booklet of pre-filled cards would really help this game system. Still, we feel that it deserves another try.



There is already a plethora of WW3 games out in the hobby, yet more continue to come our way each year. The topic is a baffling aspect of the hobby, where a war that never happened is still very popular with many gamers. The reasons for this are many, but mostly due to the fact of seeing huge armies slug it out with modern weapons! It also has an appeal to WW2 gamers who want maneuver, large armored formations, etc., in a more modern setting.

From Strategist's Den Games comes Forward Defense '85, which is a solitaire game with a WW3 theme. The game and its accompanying campaigns are available as downloads through Wargames Vault for a fairly reasonable price. The solo gamer takes command of various U.S. and West German companies in a multi-turn campaign, trying to hold back the Warsaw Pact hordes of mechanized vehicles. The gamer uses a variety of platoons to defend or seize an objective on a randomly created operational map while tracking losses, receiving reinforcements, additional assets, etc., in a campaign setting.

Whenever you're discussing a PNP (print 'n play) type game, the components and how hard it is to build takes center stage. In this case you get a series of files which includes the rules, map boards, cards for the platoons, then counter sheets. Now comes the question of how far do you want to go with this? You can of course just print everything on paper, then cut things out and try the game. If it works well, then maybe do a second print with better components. I went the route of having the map tiles on thick cardboard for longevity, then did the platoon cards on cardstock with rounded corners and card sleeves, then finally the counters on some thick artboard. A lot of work



The base game comes with two campaigns; the first is Helmstedt where elements of 2nd Panzer are trying to delay elements of 3rd Shock Army. The second is in front of Hanover where 1st Cavalry and West German forces are up against more 3rd Shock Army divisions. Each campaign has a unit tracking sheet, set up information, then the charts and tables to generate the Warsaw Pact forces for each battle.

Helmstedt has four battles and Hanover six. The Warsaw Pact forces are controlled by the game system.

To start a battle, the NATO player rolls a number of "supply" dice (everything is D20 based) to get chances to roll for air support, artillery, at-



tached units, or to replace knocked out vehicles. Once this is completed, the board is randomly determined by drawing 12 map tiles laid out in a 3 x4 set up. The player then

checks if they will be attacking or defending, then rolls for where the objective will be placed. Most battles are only 5-6 turns long, so the games can go by pretty fast which makes the campaigns very playable. Once the map is laid out the Warsaw Pact forces are determined.

The method for this is pretty interesting and seems to work well. Based on

the Warsaw Pact's current attrition level you roll to see how many companies are present, then what their make up is. There are T-80 platoons, T-72s, T-64s, T-55s, then BMP and BTR-60 mech units. Each platoon is assigned a quality rating/chit, usually ranging from 1-3. Once the forces are rolled for and you have the cards and counters for them, there are deployment cards that show where the Warsaw pact forces will be entering from. A very interesting way to determine the opposing force and the



replay value is pretty high as you will see a variety of forces during the campaign battles.

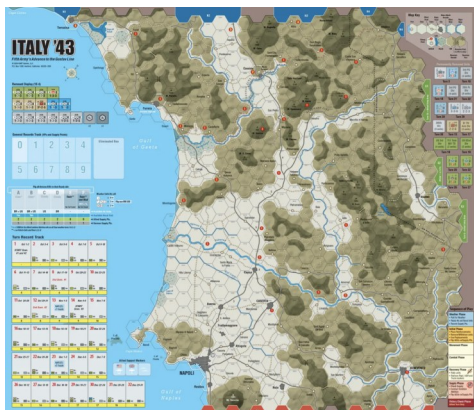
As with many solitaire wargames there are a lot of die rolls! Just setting up one of the campaign battles will take quite a few rolls such as deciding if the player is the attacker or defender, where the objective is, the size and quality of the Warsaw Pact forces, etc. Once you get to the tactical system there's even more die rolls, especially for firing. Platoons (one counter) are activated, then move and fire. You roll a number of D20s equal to how many vehicles are in the platoon. You roll for accuracy (Acc# + Quality), then re-roll hits for penetration (Hard Atk # -target armor), then put KO or Suppressed markers on the target platoon's card. You would think by rolling a lot of D20s and needing under some fairly high numbers would mean a lot of kills, but surprisingly the system seems pretty balanced.

Once a platoon starts taking Kos, their quality goes down as well as they need to check if they retreat. Marders, Bradleys, BMPs, and BTR-60s can put dismounted markers on their cards to show that their counter is now an infantry force, which changes the rules for firing at them. The player can purchase airstrikes and artillery support, which can help the player's forces either take or defend the objective. After 5 or 6 turns the campaign battle ends, then a new battle is set up. In between the player can use their supply dice to replace vehicles/crews and get new assets for the next scenario. There is a campaign roster that tracks victories/defeats, tracks the enemies attrition value, prestige (affect supply dice), and momentum. If you're momentum falls too far you lose the campaign.

If there are any problems it's that the unit counters could use some work to make them stand out more. Also, a one sheet reference card with all of the modifiers, special rules, terrain costs, etc., would really come in handy rather than having to look through the rules all the time. Granted, the rules are only about a dozen pages, but a reference card would mean you only need that to play. Overall, this is a fun and interesting solo game with a WW3 theme.

Mark Simonitch's 1940-44 operational games are definitely one of GMT's more popular series. The latest installment, Italy '43, covers the Allied assault to the Gustav Line during the Italian Campaign. This is a companion game to the Salerno '43 game released over a year ago and it will join up with yet another forthcoming game set in Italy (Anzio) that will allow all three to be combined into one long campaign.

In terms of components you get an unusually square map, which is a change from the 22 x 34 ones that GMT usually produces. If you are unfamiliar with this game series, the designer, Mark Simonitch (who also does the maps), puts everything you will need right on the map itself. All of the entry points, supply tracks, breakdown counters, etc., all have their places on the map. The terrain is pretty nasty and special attention has to be paid to the mountain passes and hill hexsides as they have a profound effect on things.



There aren't many counters in the game, but once again, they match the other games in the series. Again, this is great if you play the other games in the series as you just need to learn the special rules for this game and you're ready to play. Two player reference cards, dice, and a rule booklet with an example of play round out the package. A mounted board was sold separately, but only the paper maps will join together for the three game series once that is completed. Not sure why it was designed that way, so keep your paper maps if you did buy the optional mounted version.

The game series focuses on operational level battles and with this game the units are usually battalions and regiments. There is a stacking limit of 6 points, so in most cases you are going to get 3-4 units in a stack at the most. With how thin both sides forces are and the ground that they need to cover, usually you will be seeing two in a hex. Movement is fairly your standard hex and counter fare, but zones of control are a bit different. The idea of what are termed ZOC Bonds are used with this series, which prevents an enemy force from sneaking through the open area between your units and vice-versa. Use of this feature is essential in defense and attacking units in well thought out positions is going to be a challenge.

The combat system is fairly basic, however, there are a few interesting things with the system. First off, the maximum combat strength that you can have is 20, which reflects the reality that you can only fit so much combat power into a hex. This doesn't include shifts for artillery, air support, etc., but this means that units defending in hills or towns are going to start out at 1:1 odds. This means a lot of low odds attacks across the board, which unfortunately for the attacker in this case, works for the Italian campaign. The other aspect of this is the concept of Determined Defense, which is another feature in this game series. Units don't have to retreat every time, but instead can try to remain in the hex. There is a die roll with modifiers such as artillery support, being Elite, what type of terrain the unit is in, etc., then the defender might stay in the hex, still need to retreat, or might even take a step loss.

Most units take two step losses, but there are a few remnant counters for those who can take three. Both sides of course get replacements, but in this kind of grueling, slow grinding attack, it won't be long before most units are half strength.

Also, trying to keep your artillery units supplied so that they can provide support is also a challenge in this theater. Each side only gets a small number of supply points per turn, with the German number determined by how bad the weather is.

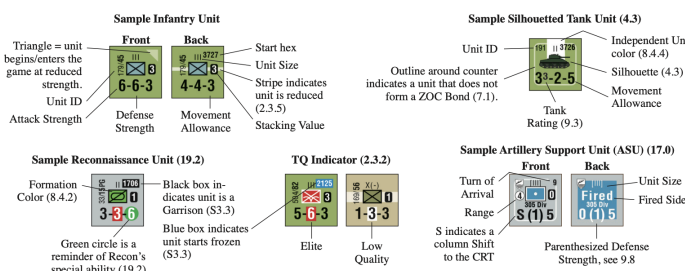
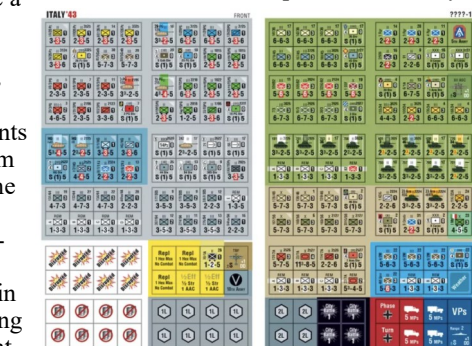
This game, much like Salerno '43, features some really nasty terrain, limited supply, not many avenues of attack, desperate defense by the Germans, and more.

The weather isn't very cooperative for the Allies as well, which makes things even harder! There are quite a few special rules that add flavor to this battle such as nebelwerfers getting extra supply, German panzergrenadier units guarding the coast that can only be released on

certain circumstances, the building of the Gustav line, and more. Fortunately, there is nothing here that is hard or that you won't grasp after you read through it once or twice.

The game has a short, 7 turn introductory scenario that is perfect to learn the game system, a scenario that covers the second half of the campaign, then the full campaign, which has something like 31 turns! There aren't a lot of formations on the map and with the weather along with supply situation, some turns are going to go by pretty fast. Still, the full campaign will take some commitment.

In the end you have another great title in this great series of WW2 operational games. While the Italian campaign is not everyone's cup of tea, it does provide a change of pace in a unique setting. The rules are easy to grasp, the set up is quick, and the game has good replay value. Now all we need is the third game which can then be combined with Salerno '43 and Italy '43 for the full Italian Campaign in WW2.



Scouts Out: Tank Recovery

Battle Report

Scouts Out, a World War One set of skirmish rules, was on center stage this night. Rob had spent quite a lot of time on WW1 European scenery in 28mm along with the figs, so it was time to put them to use! We only four players this night, so we went with a fairly basic setup in giving each player a squad and a specialist or two, meaning about 10-11 figs per person.

The scenario was also simple, but tough for both sides. A British tank had broken down in the town and was being repaired when the Germans attacked. The side that controlled two of the three objectives (the tank, the engine down at the end of the street, and the building with the gas/parts) would win the scenario. Both sides started 10 inches on the board and although it was night (limited firing out to 16 inches), things were going to get started pretty quickly.

Movement is simple, with most infantry going 6 inches, although the German



get spread thin trying to cover everything, which is what exactly happened here! With the range of the weapons nearly covering the width of the board, you soon found yourself trying to find cover and shooting positions anywhere you could. Also, most of us had no idea how the system would work, so some experimentation, i.e., running out in the middle of the road, shooting at long range, etc., would be taking place at the start of the game!

Both sides immediately moved out quickly and started searching for cover. The British consolidated on the right flank between a few buildings that gave good cover while the Germans on that side pressed ahead, trying to punch a hole before the defenses could be set up. By turn two there were shots being fired, but the defense rolls for both sides prevented any deaths. Both sides continued to close the range and search for better positions. Once we saw how the shooting system worked, everyone started to look around to see where they would be vulnerable.

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The third turn ended with a few killed on both sides. When your defense roll fails, it really fails! No second chances, no saving throws, etc., just one dead figure! We figured that if this had not been in an urban setting most figures would probably be dead if they were in the open. The LMGs of both sides opened

up as well as the snipers, making crossing open ground extremely dangerous. No one really had an objective yet, but the British, in avoiding fire, did capture the middle objective.

Now there was some intense firing as both sides started to get into the buildings. There was an interesting trench fight where the Germans got a few figures into the British held trench. There was some back and forth and in the end just another pile of bodies! There was also a fight for a shed where the Germans came off the worse for wear, but the British were taking casualties as well. The fighting now returned to the other British flank where the Germans were maneuvering well, but kept getting caught with bad defense rolls.

One final push by the Germans on the British right met with defeat as the British were now moving out of the buildings and starting to flank the remaining Germans. On the British flank both sides had fought themselves out and only had a few figures each still remaining. At this point the Germans decided to withdraw and the British had a tactical victory.

A pretty fun and fast playing system! You could easily run a large number of figures, so this set of rules is highly suitable for group play. There are some similarities to Sword and the Flame, so if you like those rules give this a try. We'll have to do some actual trench raids and use some artillery as well as mortars the next time we try this, but that's another night.



stormtroopers for this game could move 9, which definitely was an advantage. That was offset by the British able to use the "rapid fire" skill. Combat is quick and easy to learn as well. Roll a D6 added to the weapon strength and subtract the target's defense strength plus a D6. If the attacker is higher then the defender has to make a sort of saving throw or they are dead. After a few turns you get the hang of it and the game moves along at a pretty good pace.

For the British strategy, the idea was to go for the objectives at the ends of the street while covering the center objective. In the end this kind of worked out, but as per usual in skirmish games you tend to





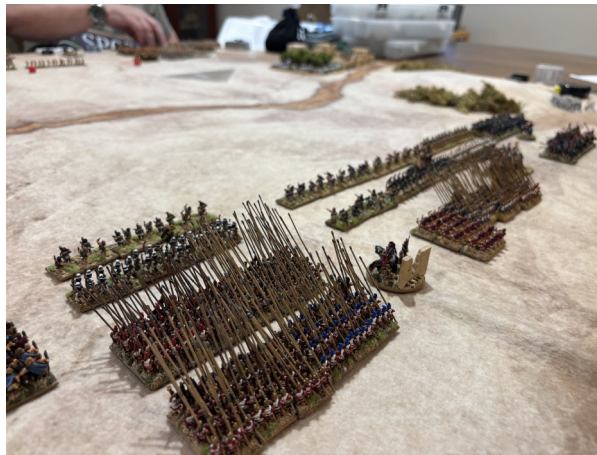
Several more images from the World War One skirmish game, with the British trying to advance in the face of German fire. There really was no safe place to hide as everyone seemingly had good angles of fire from all over the place, so both sides took fairly effective fire during the entire scenario that quickly became a battle of attrition.

WMA: Massive Thanksgiving Game

Battle Report

As many readers of this magazine know, we usually do some big games on the day after Thanksgiving and this year was no exception. We decided to max out our Roman and Seleucid forces for a huge WMA slugfest. We usually go with 1500-2000 points, which is great for a 4 player game, but will fit 6, even if some commands are a bit small. With 2500 points each on the table there would be plenty for all!

For the Seleucids this meant taking pretty much everything that was painted! You had 6 units of pike, four units of heavy cavalry and cataphracts, elephants, hordes of archers, skirmishers, Galatians, scythed chariots, light infantry, bow armed light cavalry, and more. While the break point was 12, many of the Seleucid units didn't count towards that, so there were 30+ units on the table! With only one general and two leaders, there would certainly be command problems.



units and worried about deployment that you really don't even look across the table until everything is set up. There was some terrain, but it would mainly affect the flanks where the cavalry was operating. A few patches of rough ground surrounded the hills, which would also channel attacks towards any unit defending the tops of the hills.

In terms of battle plans there were the beginnings of them, but not much else! When playing in our 1,000 point tournament games or the usual 1500 point Friday night games there is usually a clear or apparent strategy. With all of the units on the board, the uncertainty of the command die rolls, etc., we went with the idea of "let's see what moves up to the middle of the table and go from there" type strategy! In the end, that's exactly what

happened. Both sides took what they could get to the middle of the table, reassessed things, then went forward with what they thought was the best path to victory.

The Seleucids had probably their best two opening turns ever in terms of command rolls. Almost the entire Seleucid force moved out on the first turn and probably around 90% of the army on the second. All of a sudden we found ourselves in unfamiliar territory, i.e., most of our units close to the

middle of the board while the enemy was milling about! The Seleucid cavalry on both flanks determined it was time to attack, so every unit that could charged into combat and the battle began.

The Romans had considerable problems with their command rolls and in fact some of the units on the Roman right didn't move at all the first four turns! They moved some units towards the hill on their right and the village on their left in an effort to prevent the Seleucid cavalry from getting around the flanks. This was successful and forced the Seleucids to launch several frontal attacks, which were hit and miss in their effectiveness. A troubling theme emerged in that in most of these attacks the Seleucids were only managing a hit rate of about 40%. Not many WMA games are won with that low of a percentage.

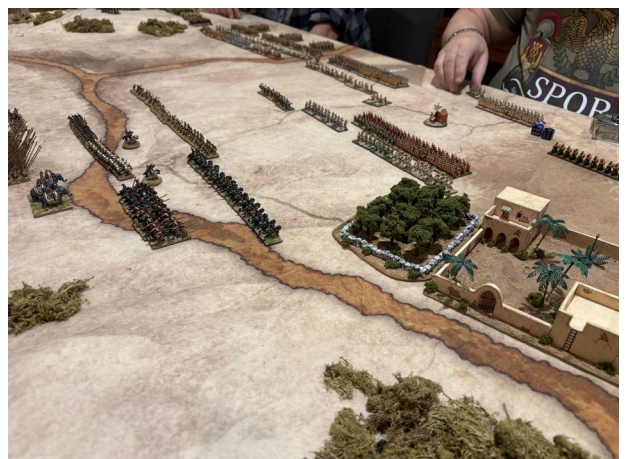
The center units of both armies were slowly moving forward. This meant that the action for the first 5 or 6 turns was mainly focused on the flanks. There were a large number of cavalry combats as both sides inflicted a stand loss or two, but no real gains were being made. The Seleucid mounted archers were forcing Roman units back and disorganizing them, but both flanks soon turned into attritional based stalemates. With all eyes turning towards the center, the flanks were denied any reinforcements. Both sides would need to deal with the enemy using the forces at hand.

Around turn 6 the center finally sprang to life. Massive exchanges of archery and skirmish fire set the stage for some large infantry attacks, even though both sides struggled to get (cont. on p27)



The Romans for their part were going to use all of their skirmishers, archers, cavalry, and plenty of leaders. Usually its mainly the legions supported by a few odds and ends, but this time you would see the full array spread across the tabletop. What was interesting for this battle is that both sides would have artillery, which is something that usually gets left out for the smaller battles.

There was so much stuff that we didn't use the standard brigade by brigade set up. We figured that any hidden or surprise deployments would be offset by just having so many units to cover the width of the board that no one would be fooled! Also, you're placing so many





(cont. from p26) as many units as possible forward for their attacks. The Roman legions, Galatians, elephants, and pikes all got into some long and prolonged combats. The main issue again for the Seleucids was the lack of hits during combat. In one follow on attack the Seleucids rolled an amazing 24 dice and got 7 hits! Then the Romans saved 3 or 4 of those, so the Seleucids were not doing well in the combat portions of the turns.

For a while the Seleucids held their own in the center and continued to press in on the flanks. The Seleucid strategy now became one of desperation, i.e., inflict as many casualties as possible to force the Romans to break. The thinking here was that the Romans were doing well enough that if things proceeded at this pace, they would simply outlast the Seleucids. The Romans had certainly had

command problems, but now they had fresh reserves while the Seleucid front line units were down in strength. Later, the Romans would claim that was their strategy all along!

However, the Seleucids had caused some serious damage to the Romans as well. Several Roman cavalry, archer, and legion units were already in the dead pile, with more units down a stand. Again, however, the Seleucids were just not causing enough hits while the Romans were certainly doing better than average. The Seleucid elephants knocked out another Roman unit, but they themselves succumbed to multiple attacks. The Seleucids were losing core units faster than the Romans were and by turn 8 the score was 9 1/2 Seleucid units to 6 Romans.

The attacks on both sides continued at a frenzied pace as both sides tried to fin-

ish off damaged (2 stands still alive) and crippled (only one stand left) units to score points. Around turn 10 there were two or three crucial combats where the Seleucid attacks failed, the Romans followed up with counterattacks and finished off the Seleucid units. The Seleucids hit their break point and the game was then called as a Roman victory.

While it was a lot of fun, managing these huge forces with just four players was a daunting task! The command system was unpredictable as always, which makes coming up with a long term strategy a challenge. The Seleucid inability to score at least 50% hits in combat and the army list which featured a lot of cavalry, contributed to the defeat. We'll definitely have to do this again, but this time the Seleucids might go with more infantry and see what happens.



BKC IV: Knife Fight at the Train Depot

Battle Report

Back to the Eastern Front, but this time it would be the winter of 1944 and using the Blitzkrieg Commander IV (BKC IV) rules. The situation is that the Russians have broken through the front and are heading towards a German held train depot. The depot supplies all of the German forces in the area as well as serving as a staging area for German reinforcements. The Germans have reacted quickly to the breakthrough and have dispatched their reserve to intercept the Russian attack and defend the train depot.

The Russian attack would be led by two T-34/85 groups. The Russians had the following forces:

1st and 2nd Breakthrough Group, each consisting of the following:



- (4) T-34/85s
- (2) SMG stands (riding on tanks)
- (2) trucks w/(2) infantry stands

Attached forces

- (3) SU-100s
- (4) SU-76s
- (2) trucks w/(4) infantry stands
- (2) 81mm and (1) 120mm mortars
- (2) batteries of 122mm (off-board)

All Russian forces would enter the main road and had to move at least one command along the road before veering off,



German forces consisted of the following:

- (4) Panthers
- (4) Stug IVs
- (2) Tigers
- Panzergrenadier battalion consisting of (7) infantry stands, (2) MG stands, (1) mortar stand, and (1) 50mm AT gun along with halftracks and trucks.
- (2) 105mm batteries (off-board)

Like the Russians, the Germans would enter from the road at the opposite end of the board and had to spend at least one command on the

road before they could either continue on the road or move off in other directions.

In an attempt to solve the command issues at times, particularly for the Russians where if they rolled right you could get 30+ shots at a target, the Russians were given one command stand per breakthrough group. This meant that even under the best conditions the most tanks you could get to fire at the same target

would be 4 and if there was a gunnery duel between companies it would make the battles a bit more realistic. In the end this was the right call and things seemed a bit better to all of us playing this night.

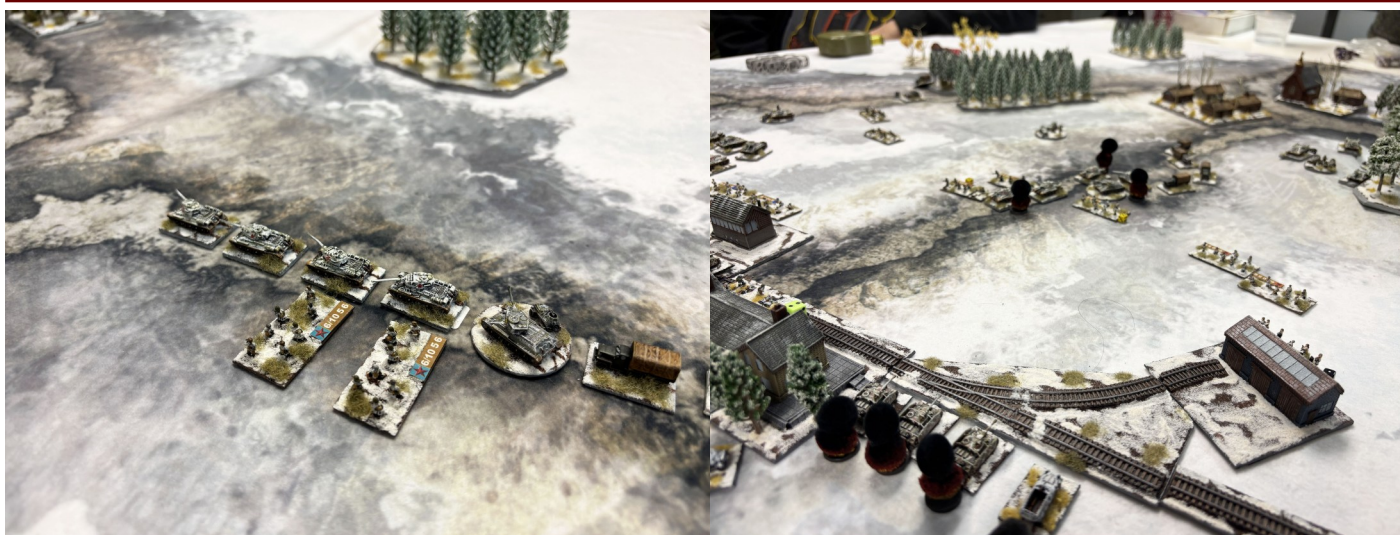
The Germans moved out far faster than anyone thought and it seemed like they would reach the train depot first, then just entrench themselves. Backed by their heavy armor, they could just stay on the defensive and blunt the Russian attack. However, this is BKC IV and things don't go well for long! One of the panzergrenadier companies got to the train depot area first, then dismounted and tried to take up positions.

Their supporting cast, however, was scattered behind them and this is when the battle truly started.

The Russian breakthrough groups moved quickly and soon were in range of the train depot area. One group of T-34/85s started swapping shots with the approaching Tigers, setting off a multi-turn battle where no one really wanted to get between them! The Russian infantry forces dismounted and started to assault the buildings. This in turn set off a ton of opportunity fire, moving forces to react to the other side's maneuvers, and everyone trying to unload everything that they had in the direction of the enemy!

The SU-100s finally got up on a hill and could see the approaching Panther company, which had been taking its time at the back of some woods (failed command rolls 4 times in a row!). The Panthers and SU-100s were soon engaged in a long range gunnery duel (cont. on p29)





(cont. from p28) that left both sides with one unit in flames. The Stug IVs worked their way into the train depot area and around the railroad line, exchanging fire with the T-34/85s right in the middle of the road.

There was definitely chaos everywhere! The Tigers were slugging it out with the T-34/85s on the Russian right, the T-34/85s in the center were dueling with the Stug IVs, the SU-100s were fighting the Panthers, and the infantry of both sides were locked in firefights. On top of all of that, the artillery started to find the range, adding more hits and suppressions to the swirling mess in the center. While we have had some desperate battles before, this seemed to be one of the more serious no quarters fights.

By turn 8 half the armor on the board, both Russian and German, was burning.

The German panzergrenadiers now were under pressure and an infantry attack drove them back from one side of the train depot area. The other company of panzergrenadiers counterattacked the T-34/85s near the rail line, but they were driven back, then wiped out when the SU-76s finally joined in. The Germans had launched a few counterattacks, but nothing seemed to be working all of a sudden.

The Russian infantry pressed on, despite their losses and secured three of the four buildings that made up the train depot. The Stug IVs were all knocked out by now, but one of the Tigers and two of the Panthers were still responding. The Germans tried to coordinate a counterattack with the artillery and infantry, but it was pushed back by the weight of Russian fire. The Russians made one more all out push which finished off pretty much all of the panzergrenadiers and the

Germans had little to respond with. At that point the game was called as a Russian tactical victory.

At first it seemed like this might not be that great of a battle and these kinds of things are hard to balance out. The Germans were moving up fast and seemed to have the advantage in firepower and armor. However, the aggressiveness of the Russians caught them a bit by surprise as they continually pressed forward, despite their losses. Both sides had a lot of good and bad die rolls, usually at the worst times possible!

The move to limiting the size of commands for the Russians seemed to work well and we will try this out again. The one thing we are still working on with BKC IV is the artillery and the insane number of dice that can be rolled, but we'll eventually figure out that, too.



Desert Rebellion

an Engagements mini-campaign



Introduction

The Victorian Colonial era is certainly a wargaming period that is conducive to playing a campaign. From the Sudan to India to the plains of Southern Africa, there are all kinds of campaigns that can be done. Recreating the river and desert columns to rescue Gordon, taking the coastal forts in China to rescue trapped forces in Peking, or just a punitive campaign in the mountains of the Northwest Frontier are all possible topics for a campaign.

However, one of the toughest subjects in gaming is trying to design or manage a successful Colonial era campaign. For one thing, not many players want to be on the side of the native forces, watching your units get continuously destroyed while hoping for that chance to get close and create some havoc for any sort of Imperial forces. It's a great experience when you pull a surprise attack off and it breaks a square or results in a rout, but you may have to wait several games for that to happen.

There is a tendency in most campaigns to limit losses, so one side or the

other usually doesn't go full out in an attack as they are always trying to save units for another day. Also, how can you reflect native strategy when players have an Olympus like view of the map? These two things are usually the major obstacles for a Colonial era campaign.

The solution presented here with this mini-campaign is that all of the players are basically on the same side, playing the Imperial forces (British, a coalition, or other nations) in a fictional campaign. The players will win or lose as a group, based on their performance during the campaign. The natives are controlled by the system and as the rebellion spreads, the decision making and actions taken by the players will make for an interesting campaign.

Each time there is a battle the forces for the native side will be randomly determined. At times it might be a small force that is easily brushed aside and at others it could be a mass of infantry and cavalry that will overwhelm the Imperial forces. Also, native losses are not kept track of, so they can be used in all out

attacks without fear of losses or having to save their units for a decisive battle somewhere down the line.

While the natives forces and campaign actions are determined by the system, when there is a battle the players can roll for who will be on each side as some players will need to direct the native forces on the tabletop. This will give everyone a chance to play on both sides during the various campaign battles. This system also encourages planning sessions by the players to direct the use of command points each turn and where forces should be sent. This is one of the most enjoyable parts of a miniatures campaign as well as fighting unequal battles at times.

The players will need to select the forces that they will use as well as the native side (Zulus, Pathans, Dervishes, etc.), then go through the campaign set up. Once the rebellion has begun, the players begin with Turn 1 and start planning their campaign to restore order in this region. Along the way there will be many decisions to be made as well as several battles to be fought...

The Map



Counters

5

Askari

1/3

Askari

1

Askari

3

Askari

1

Artillery

4

Militia

3

Infantry

Blue Askari-Veteran/Good

Yellow Askari-Unreliable

Green Askari-Veteran/Variable Quality

2nd

Artillery

1/2

Infantry

1/17

Lancers

Gunboat

Transport

Force A

1/42

Black Watch

Imperial Artillery, Infantry, & Cavalry

Gunboat & Transport

Force Markers

Optional Unit Markers

ISSUE 70

Page 31

Set Up

First, print and assemble the map. If you're going to use pins for the forces, then only a small version of the map is needed. If you wish to use the counters provided with the game, then you will need to enlarge the map by printing it in sections or by going to a professional printing shop or Kinkos. Depending upon the rules being used and the period being played, decisions will need to be made regarding the size of the units for the campaign. All players should probably have a copy of the map as well as the reference card. Set out the starting forces, then roll for the location where the rebellion begins and begin with Turn 1, following the Sequence of Play.

Starting Forces

<u>Location</u>	<u>Units</u>
Bezou	1 Askari Regular Inf., 1 artillery battery, 1 Askari cavalry, 2 Fortress Garrisons, 1 Gunboat, 1 Transport
Nsesisi	1 Askari Regular Inf., 1 artillery battery, 1 Askari cavalry, 1 Militia.
Louboma	2 Askari Regular Inf., 1 Askari cavalry
Mongoa	2 Askari Regular Inf.
Zimbezi	1 Askari Regular Inf., 1 artillery battery, 1 Askari cavalry, 1 Fortress Garrison, 1 Militia
Biro	1 Askari Regular Inf., 1 artillery battery, 1 Askari cavalry

Place 1 Askari Regular Infantry unit at the following locations: Kanaido, Djemefi, Djawo, Mbini, Endji, and Foukolo.

Place 1 Militia unit at the following locations: Rafaye, Mokote, Kazeka, Guiban, Tibasamba, and Garene

Note: When placing the Askari units, draw them randomly from a pool of both green, yellow, and blue Askari counters. The green Askari units represent the majority of the local government's forces. The blue and yellow Askari counters are meant to be foreign mercenaries or from other tribes in the area. Set all other Askari and Imperial forces aside as they will enter the game as reinforcements.

Set the VP marker to 5.

Roll 1D6 with 1 = Kaneido, 2 = Djemefi, 3 = Djawao, 4 = Mbini, 5 = Endji, and 6 = Foukolo, then place a marker on that location to signify that it is in revolt. Remove the Askari unit that was at that location (it's assumed that they join the revolt or are overrun). A good suggestion is to use the colored glass stones sold at craft stores. You will need three colors; black to show areas (villages and towns) in revolt, green for areas retaken by Askari forces, and Red for areas retaken by Imperial forces. All areas start under Askari control except for the starting location in revolt, so there is no need to mark anything on the map except for that one location.

Force markers can be used to mark the locations where there are large numbers of units.

Unit Identity & Quality

The counters that are included with the rules should be used merely as guidelines to what forces you have. If you don't have enough Askari forces for example, use whatever figures that you have. There are counters designated as Marines, Naval Brigade, Guards, etc., but these can be used to represent any units that you have for the period that you choose for the campaign. This is a fictional campaign in a fictional setting, so no points will be subtracted for using the wrong units!

In terms of unit quality, this will be up to the players to decide according to the rules that they are using, but here are a few guidelines:

Imperial-Veteran/Excellent

Blue Askari-Veteran/Good

Yellow Askari-Unreliable

Green Askari-Veteran/Variable Quality

Expedition Units-Unreliable/Variable Quality

Militia-Poor

Fortress Garrisons-Average

Until the Imperial forces arrive the Blue Askari units are the best forces that the local government have and this should be reflected in the rules that you use. For most other units, even the regular Askari infantry/cavalry, their quality should be randomly determined and this is what can make playing the local forces fun!

In terms of the gunboats and transports they should not be too heavily armed as they should represent hastily converted steamers used to patrol the river and transport limited number of troops. Artillery should be based upon the figures that you will have available for the campaign. Try to limit the artillery to what you would usually see on the field of the period that you will be playing, so siege guns and coastal batteries should be avoided.

Finally, there are counters provided for those who wish to add in Highlanders, Australians, Indians, etc., to give your forces some flavor. Imperial will usually mean British for many gamers, but the game system is set up for any type of 19th century Imperial power.

Sequence of Play

Each turn of the campaign follows a set sequence of play. Players roll for command points, determine the state of the rebellion, conduct operations, then perform certain end of turn functions once all command points have been used. Play then proceeds to the next turn.

1. Command Points

Roll for Command Points (1D6) at the start of each turn. Command points cannot be saved from turn to turn.

2. Rebellion

Players check on the state of the rebellion on the campaign map. Villages, towns, and fortified towns are checked to see if they revolt or are besieged.

3. Operations Phase

During this phase of the turn, players may spend Command Points (CPs) to do any of the following:

- A) Assemble a force-2 CP
- B) Move a force-1CP
- C) Move a unit-1CP
- D) Purchase replacements-1 CP per replacement point (maximum of two CPs per turn)
- E) Activate Naval Forces-1CP

4. Resolve Sieges

If there are ongoing sieges anywhere on the campaign map they are now resolved. Follow the Siege sequence to determine the outcome of the siege for each location.

5. Receive Replacements

Accumulated replacements may now be added to Imperial or Askari units that are understrength. Note: A maximum of two replacement points may be purchased each turn.

6. Adjust Victory Point Totals

Subtract the VPs lost to Rebel forces or add VPs from spaces taken back by the Imperial-Askari forces. Victory Point totals may also be adjusted by the turn number or victories/defeats from battles that occurred during the turn. Adjust the totals on the Victory Point Track, then check to see if there is an automatic victory or certain events that will take place next turn.

How The Rebellion Spreads

After command points are determined at the start of the each turn, the state of the rebellion is checked. This usually involves rolling for locations to see if they join the rebellion. On the first turn only the location rolled for during Setup is in revolt. Locations can be checked in any order that players see fit, but **ALL** locations on the map are checked each turn (except Bezou and Zimbezi-see note). Once a location is in revolt it stays in revolt unless retaken by Askari and/or Imperial forces (pacified).

Revolt

The basic number for a location (villages and towns) to revolt is a 6 on 1D6. Nsesisi is a fortress town and needs a 7 to revolt. To this roll are added the following modifiers:

- +1 Each adjacent location in revolt.

- +1 At least one adjacent location worth 10 or more VPs is in revolt (all locations are in revolt-maximum of +1))

Example: Mokote and Loubama are in revolt. When checking for Rafaye you would add +2 to the die roll (+1 for all adjacent locations in revolt and another +1 for Loubama being worth 10 or more VPs.)

Occupied Spaces

When a location with Askari forces present is rolled for and the result is that it goes in revolt, there is a special procedure to determine the fate of those forces and the location. If there are three Askari (defined as non-Imperial) or less in a location when it goes into revolt, roll 1D6 on the following table to determine the fate of the units:

- 1,2 Units Mutiny-all Askari forces at that

location join the revolt and are removed from the campaign map.

3,4 Units Retreat-all units attempt to fight their way to the nearest location that is not in revolt. Units at locations that are along the river are allowed a free move to any other friendly controlled location on the map. If there is no friendly location that can be reached, the units are destroyed.

5,6 Revolt Stopped-For the time being the revolt is suppressed. This location will need to be rolled for again next turn.

Sieges

If there are four or more Askari-Imperial units at a location that is rolled to revolt, then that location is under siege. Refer to the Siege rules section to determine the status (cont. on p32)

How The Rebellion Spreads (cont.)

(cont. from p31) of the siege and that of the defenders at that location.

Important Note: Bezou cannot revolt or be placed under siege. If all other locations on the map are in revolt it is assumed that Bezou and the entire region would fall to the rebellion. Zimbezi cannot be placed under revolt, but it can fall to a siege. If on any turn Garene and Tibasamba are both under revolt and the VPs are at 75 or less, then Zimbezi is considered to be under siege.

Pacification

When Askari or Imperial forces retake a location, that location is deemed to have been pacified. If using glass stones as markers, place a green colored one on locations retaken by Askari forces and a red colored one on those retaken by Imperial forces. Locations pacified by Askari forces can still end up revolting a second time. However, they will need to roll a 7 (with modifiers) to be placed in revolt a second time. Areas retaken by Imperial forces are considered pacified for the rest of the game and are never

rolled for to be placed in revolt again.

This rule is meant to show that in the short time frame of this campaign villages that revolted, but retaken would be far less likely to do it a second time. Also, Imperial forces would be far less tolerant than Askari forces in this matter. Leaders would be rounded up and dealt with, plus Imperial officers would be far less susceptible to corruption or "looking the other way" as their Askari counterparts during this period.

Movement

Each turn Askari-Imperial forces can move throughout the map area. Units or forces are activated through the use Command Points (CPs), which are rolled for at the start of each turn.

Using Command Points

Each turn the Askari-Imperial side rolls for the number of CPs that they can use for the turn. CPs can be spent in any order. CPs are paid for the following actions:

- A) Assemble a force-2 CP
- B) Move a force-1CP
- C) Move a unit-1CP
- D) Purchase replacements-1 CP per replacement point (maximum of two CPs per turn)
- E) Activate Naval Forces-1 CP

Forces

If units are not in a force, they must be paid for individually to be able to move. A force is defined as three or more units, but forces must be assembled first. Once assembled, it costs only 1CP to move the

entire force, no matter how many units are assigned to that force. Forces can drop off individual units along their movement path, but cannot pick them up unless they go through the assembly process again.

Movement Rate

Units move on the campaign map at the following rates:

Infantry	3 spaces
Cavalry	4 spaces

Forces that consist of both infantry and cavalry move at the infantry rate.

Naval Movement

Naval forces consist of a gunboat and transport that can assist in transferring troops and in some instances, support troops in combat.

Naval units are able to do three functions each action round that they are activated. Each naval unit can perform the following functions:

- Move from one location to another
- Load/unload units
- Repair damage

For example, the gunboat and transport at Mokote are activated for the current turn. They can load three units for one function then move to Biro for their second function, then unload the units for their third and final function of the turn, which ends their activation for the turn.

Transporting Units

Naval forces can transport any Anglo-Egyptian unit to any location in the San Juans. Gunboats may carry one unit and Transports may carry up to two units. Infantry, cavalry, and artillery units that are activated must spend one of their movement points to load onto naval units and one movement point to unload at their destination.

Repair Damage

Depending upon which Colonial miniatures rules you use, the gunboat and transport could be damaged in combat. One function can be spent when either is activated to repair any damage.

Encounters & Combat

When Askari-Imperial forces move on the campaign map there is a chance that they will encounter Rebel forces. For each space that an Askari-Imperial force moves into, the players roll 1D6, add or subtract any applicable modifiers, then consult the Encounter table for the result.

Fortified towns that are controlled by the

Rebels will always have an enemy force. The modifiers are cumulative. If the number needed is rolled, then movement for that Askari-Imperial force stops for that turn and a battle is fought. Regardless of the outcome, that ends the movement for that action round for the Askari-Imperial force.

Example: An Askari force that has retaken Mongoa is activated with 1 CP and is going to try to retake Biro, which is Rebel controlled. The force, being primarily infantry, has a movement rate of three spaces, so it can reach Biro easily. The force moves out from Mongoa to the next movement point. Mbini is Rebel controlled, but no other VP locations are

Encounters & Combat (cont.)

Rebel controlled at this time. There is a +1 modifier to the D6 roll as Biro is Rebel controlled. Biro (10 VPs) is a town, so ordinarily a 4, 5, or 6 is needed for an encounter, but there is a +1 modifier. A 4 is rolled, making it a 5 with the +1, so there is an encounter in the movement space before Biro.

Encounter Table (D6)

<u>Situation</u>	<u># Needed</u>
Movement point	6
Rebel controlled Village	5,6
Rebel controlled Town	4,5,6
Rebel controlled Fortified Town	Automatic

Modifiers

<u>Situation</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
All adjacent VP locations are Rebel controlled	+2
At least one adjacent VP location is Rebel controlled	+1
Movement point between two Askari-Imperial controlled VP locations	-1

Combat

Once the size of the Mahdist force has been determined the next step is to determine what type of battle is to be fought. Roll 2D6 and consult the following table:

Type of Battle

<u>Die Rol</u>	<u>Result</u>
2	Rebel Surprise Attack
3	Ambush
4-5	Probing Attack
6-9	Encounter
10-11	Defense
12	A/I Surprise Attack

Rebel Surprise Attack: Set up the Askari-Imperial forces in the center of the board (in square or columns), then start at least 25% of the Rebel force in charge range and another 25% no closer than two moves from the Askari-Imperial forces. The remaining Rebel forces start no closer than four moves away from the nearest enemy.

Ambush: The Askari-Imperial forces start in the middle of the board in any

formation and/or facing. 25% of the Rebel force begins hidden no closer than two moves from the nearest enemy. The remaining Mahdist forces may enter from any side (s) of the board on Turn 1.

Probing Attack: The Askari-Imperial forces start in the middle of the board in any formation and/or facing. 25% of the Rebel forces begin no closer than three moves from the nearest enemy. Within the first five turns the remainder of the Rebel forces may enter from ONE side of the board.

Encounter: This is a straightforward meeting engagement. Both sides enter from opposite ends of the table.

Defense: The Rebel forces will focus their defense around a village/town if present, or the best defensive terrain present. They are allowed to have rifle pits or some type of fortifications present. The Askari-Imperial forces enter from the opposite side of the board.

Askari-Imperial Surprise Attack: Rebel forces are set up in the middle of the board (or, if a village/town is present, centered around that). Roll 1D6; 1-3 it is a dawn attack and Rebel units cannot move or fire until at least one unit is contacted by the enemy. Then, each Rebel unit must roll a 5 or 6 on 1D6 to move or fire the following turn. On the following turn all Rebel units may act normally. On a 4-6 it is dusk/night attack. Roll 1D6 each turn to see if Rebel sentries sound the alarm. On a 6 the alarm is sounded, otherwise treat as a dawn attack. 50% of the Askari-Imperial force may start in charge range in a dawn attack while for a dusk attack they start four moves out from the closest Rebel unit. The remaining forces in both cases enter on one side of the board on Turn 1.

Note: Rebel occupied fortified towns have special rules and these are covered under the Sieges section.

After determining the type of battle, the gaming group then needs to lay out

the battlefield. This can be accomplished in one of several ways. First, someone in the gaming group can have pre-drawn maps available for the various islands, towns, etc., and one can be chosen or rolled for randomly. The second method is for the gaming group to lay out the terrain the best way possible to create an interesting battle. The third and final method is to roll randomly for each square foot on the gaming table to see what type of terrain is present.

It is important to note that if there is a village or town at the battle location it should be present on the table. Likewise, if there is a port or harbor there should be a section of the table set aside for this. The remainder of the tabletop can be rolled for using the chart below. Roll 2D6 for each square foot of the table outside of any terrain dictated by the campaign map villages, towns, etc.).

Once the terrain has been laid out and the type of battle determined, then players should fight the battle with their chosen rules set. If your rules do not have forced withdrawals, break checks, etc., then a good rule of thumb for the Rebel forces is that they need to check to see if they withdraw from the battlefield once they reach 50% casualties. If they do with-

Random Terrain

<u>2D6</u>	<u>Result</u>
2	Hill w/impassable area or cliff on one side.
3	Oasis
4	Small hill
5	Dry river bed
6	Open/Clear
7	Open/Clear
8	Open/Clear
9	Open/Clear
10	Rocky area/scrub brush
11	Dry river bed
12	Large hill

Feel free to move these terrain pieces around to make a more logical battlefield. For example, if you roll three dry river beds in various sections, move them so that they all connect to form one long section of river bed.

Combat (cont.)

draw then nothing more needs to be done with the Rebel forces. If the Askari-Imperial forces hold the field or seize their objectives, then play proceeds to determining their actual casualties before proceeding back to the campaign sequence of play.

Note: If an Askari-Imperial force retreats that ends its movement for the action phase. If it is victorious then the force can use its remaining movement.

Askari-Imperial Withdrawal & Pursuit

If the Askari-Imperial forces decide to withdraw by the players, are forced to retreat or fall back by the rules, or simply break according to the rules, then the following procedure needs to occur:

1. Determine the effects of the pursuit by Rebel forces.
2. Roll to see the actual casualties of the Askari-Imperial force.
3. Move the force to an adjacent point on the campaign map.
4. Proceed with the campaign sequence of play.

Determine Casualties

Not all casualties during a game are permanent. Units get intermingled and broken up, there are stragglers during charges, light wounds are dressed, etc. Once a battle is finished the Askari-Imperial side needs to roll for the casualties suffered during the game to see if

they are permanent. For each stand, figure, or unit that you lost (depending upon the rules used) roll 1D6. If the Askari-Imperial forces held the field then on a 5 or a 6 that stand, figure, etc., is returned to the force. If the Askari-Imperial force was forced to retreat and survives the Rebel pursuit, then a 6 would be needed to return the stand or figure to the force.

Ex.: An Askari unit using Battles for Empire rules takes six hits during a battle, but the Askari-Imperial forces hold the field. They roll 6D6 and get a 2, 3, 4, two 5s, and one 6. Three of the hits are not permanent and for the next battle the unit would start with only three hits.

Retreat Position

If an Askari-Imperial that retreats/withdraws, or breaks, and survives the Rebel pursuit, then it will move to an adjacent point on the campaign map,

Pursuit Table

Roll 2D6 and add or subtract the following modifiers, then consult the results below.

Modifiers

Situation	Modifier
Anglo-Egyptian force has no cavalry on board	+2
Anglo-Egyptian force is surrounded on all sides	+2
Anglo-Egyptian force outnumbered >3:1 in units	+2
Anglo-Egyptian force outnumbered >2:1 in units	+1
Each unit of Anglo-Egyptian cavalry on board	-1

Note: Units in rout are not counted towards modifiers.

Die Roll

Result

2,3	Force withdraws in good order-no additional casualties
4,5	Fighting withdrawal-10% additional casualties
6	Hard pressed-25% additional casualties
7,8	Running battles-30% additional casualties
9,10	Rear guard overwhelmed-40% additional casualties
11	Near disaster-50% additional casualties
12	Disaster-Entire Anglo-Egyptian force is wiped out

preferably from where it originally moved from. If all adjacent points are controlled by Rebel forces then the Askari-Imperial force is destroyed. If the only retreat path is by ship, then a number of units equal to the transport capacity of the ships at that location can withdraw to the closest port. Any unit in excess left behind is destroyed.

Sieges

Under Siege

Each time a location with four or more Askari-Imperial units is rolled to revolt, that location is said to be under siege. Immediately place a Siege Level 1 marker on the location. From this point forward until the siege is lifted, no Askari-Imperial units can enter or leave the town unless by ship and if the location under siege is a port. If it is not, then a battle must be fought (use the normal rules to determine the size of the Rebel force) for units attempting to leave or enter the besieged location. The siege will continue until either the location falls to the Rebel forces or the siege is broken.

Siege Outcome

At the end of each game turn, after all Action Rounds have been completed, there is the Resolve Sieges phase of the turn. This phase follows a strict sequence listed below that is applied to each ongoing siege.

1. Garrison Sortie/Breakout?
2. Roll on the Siege Table
3. Adjust Siege Level

Garrison Sortie/Breakout

The first phase is to determine if the garrison wishes to sortie out and disrupt the siege or attempt a breakout. If the answer is no to either of these then play proceeds to phase 2, which is rolling to determine the outcome of the siege. If

there is to be a sortie attempt, then a roll is made to determine the success of the sortie. If there is a breakout, then a regular field battle is laid out with the Askari-Imperial forces objective being to move off an edge of the board into an adjacent movement space.

Even if the Askari-Imperial forces are successful in breaking out, they will still need to roll for encounters in the adjacent movement space, plus they will likely be out of supply. However, this may still give them a chance to make it to safety, particularly if the siege is going badly.

Sieges (cont.)

Siege Table		Sortie Table	
Roll 2D6 for siege results.		Allocate a number of units to attempt a sortie, then roll 2D6 and apply the following results.	
2	Siege is lifted/broken	2,3	Disaster -Lose half of the units involved and advance the siege to the next level.
3,4	Siege continues-no additional losses.	4,5	No Effect -Lose 25% of the units involved.
4,5	Siege continues-lose one unit.	6,7	No Effect -Lose one unit of the units involved.
6,7	Siege continues-lose two units	8,9	Limited Success - Reduce the siege level by one and lose one unit.
7,8	Siege tightens-adjust siege two levels this turn.	10,11	Limited Success -Reduce the siege level by one.
9,10	Siege tightens-lose three units.	12	Complete Surprise -Reduce the siege level by two; if this drops the siege level to zero the siege is broken.
11	Desertion, Famine, & Plague-lose 50% of units.	Modifiers	
12	Surrender-Location falls to siege; lose all units.	+1 for each multiple of four units assigned to the sortie.	
Modifiers		+1 for two or more cavalry units assigned to the sortie.	
Siege Level 2	+1		
Siege Level 3	+2		
Siege Level 4	+3		
Less than 2 units left in a village, 3 in a town, or 4 in a fortress: +1			
Disaster rolled on the Sortie Table this turn: +2			
Limited Success rolled on the Sortie Table this turn: -2			

Size of the Rebel Forces

When a Rebel force is encountered on the campaign map, a series of die rolls are made to determine the size and what type of units make up the Rebel force. For each force encountered, roll the following dice to arrive at the number and type of units present for the encounter:

Rebel Force Size	
3D6	# of infantry units
1D4	# of cavalry units
1D4	# of rifle armed units
1D6	Result of 6 adds one artillery piece or machine gun to the Mahdist forces (roll 1d6: 1-4 it is an artillery piece and on a 5 or 6 it is a machine gun).

Modifiers & Notes

Rebel held fortified towns will always roll one extra D4 for the number of rifle armed units present. Also, roll 3D6 for the chance of artillery or machine guns present instead of the normal 1D6 with any 6s rolled resulting in artillery pieces being present.

Victory or Defeat?

The campaign is played until either the Askari-Imperial forces defeat the rebellion or are forced to withdraw from the area. This is determined by the Victory Point Track and the current totals.

If the numbers on the track ever reach 125 then the Askari-Imperial forces have won, even if Rebel forces still hold several locations. This assumes that the rebellion slowly dies off and these areas come back under Askari-Imperial control.

If the totals ever hit 0 then the rebellion has succeeded and the governments of the Askari-Imperial coalition have decided

that the area is not worth the cost, so they withdraw. The campaign immediately ends whenever one of these totals are met. At the end of 20 turns if the victory point total has not reached 0 or 125 then the game ends as a draw where the war will drag on for several more years and may turn into a guerrilla type campaign.

Players need to keep careful track each turn of the number of victory point locations that are seized/lost, battles won/lost, events that influence victory points, etc., then adjust the totals accordingly at the end of each turn.

Optional Rules

Depending upon how complex you want your campaign to be, consider adding these additional rules:

- Supply
- Random Events
- Weather
- Change the modifiers for the VPs
- Pre-made forces for the Rebels rather than rolling for them.

Counters & Holding Boxes

Bezou  Fortress	Bezou  Fortress	Zimbezi  Fortress	1/1  Askari	2/1  Askari	1/2  Askari	2/2  Askari	1/3  Askari	2/3  Askari	2/3  Askari
2/4  Askari	1/5  Askari	2/5  Askari	1  Askari	2  Askari	3  Askari	4  Askari	5  Askari	1  Artillery	2  Artillery
1  Askari	2  Askari	3  Askari	1  Askari	2  Askari	1  Askari	2  Askari	1  Askari	3  Artillery	4  Artillery
Gunboat 	Transport 	1  Militia	2  Militia	3  Militia	4  Militia	5  Militia	6  Militia	3  Askari	4  Askari
EXP 1  Infantry	EXP 2  Infantry	EXP 3  Infantry	EXP 4  Gendarmes	EXP 5  Local	EXP 6  Scouts	EXP 7  Camel	EXP 8  Artillery	1st  Artillery	2nd  Artillery
1/1  Infantry	2/1  Infantry	1/2  Infantry	2/2  Infantry	1/3  Infantry	2/3  Infantry	1/4  Infantry	2/4  Infantry	1/5  Infantry	2/5  Infantry
1/10  Hussars	1/17  Lancers	1/9  Dragoons	1/1  Naval Brigade	1/1  Camel Corps	1/42  Black Watch	2/42  Black Watch	1/KRRC  KRRC	1 NSW  New South Wales	13  Bengal Lancers
1/15  Bengal Infantry	2/15  Bengal Infantry	TURN			VPS X1	VPS X10	VPS X100	FORCE A	FORCE B

Force A

Force A

Force B

Force B

Campaign Reference Card

Command Points			Encounter Table (D6)		Random Terrain	
<u>DR (2D6)</u>	<u>Local Govt</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Situation</u>	<u># Needed</u>	<u>2D6</u>	<u>Result</u>
2	5	6	Movement point	6	2	Hill w/impassable area or cliff on one side.
3	4	5	Rebel controlled Village	5,6	3	Oasis
4	4	5	Rebel controlled Town	4,5,6	4	Small hill
5	3	4	Rebel controlled Fortified Town	Automatic	5	Dry river bed
6	2	3	Modifiers		6	Open/Clear
7	2	3	<u>Situation</u>	<u>Modifier</u>	7	Open/Clear
8	3	4	All adjacent VP locations are Rebel controlled	+2	8	Open/Clear
9	3	4	At least one adjacent VP location is Rebel controlled	+1	9	Open/Clear
10	4	5	Movement point between two Askari-Imperial	-1	10	Rocky area/scrub brush
11	5	6	controlled VP locations		11	Dry river bed
12	5	7			12	Large hill

Type of Battle	
<u>Die Rol</u>	<u>Result</u>
2	Rebel Surprise Attack
3	Ambush
4-5	Probing Attack
6-9	Encounter
10-11	Defense
12	A/I Surprise Attack

Command Point Costs	
A)	Assemble a force-2 CP
B)	Move a force-1CP
C)	Move a unit-1CP
D)	Purchase replacements-1 CP per replacement point (maximum of two CPs per turn)
E)	Activate Naval Forces-1CP

Rebel Force Size	
3D6	# of infantry units
1D4	# of cavalry units
1D4	# of rifle armed units
1D6	Result of 6 adds one artillery piece or machine gun to the Rebel forces (roll 1d6: 1-4 it is an artillery piece and on a 5 or 6 it is a machine gun).

Pursuit Table	
Roll 2D6 and add or subtract the following modifiers, then consult the results below.	
Modifiers	
<u>Situation</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
Anglo-Egyptian force has no cavalry on board	+2
Anglo-Egyptian force is surrounded on all sides	+2
Anglo-Egyptian force outnumbered >3:1 in units	+2
Anglo-Egyptian force outnumbered >2:1 in units	+1
Each unit of Anglo-Egyptian cavalry on board	-1
<i>Note: Units in rout are not counted towards modifiers.</i>	
<u>Die Roll</u>	<u>Result</u>
2,3	Force withdraws in good order-no additional casualties
4,5	Fighting withdrawal-10% additional casualties
6	Hard pressed-25% additional casualties
7,8	Running battles-30% additional casualties
9,10	Rear guard overwhelmed-40% additional casualties
11	Near disaster-50% additional casualties
12	Disaster-Entire Anglo-Egyptian force is wiped out

Siege Table	
Roll 2D6 for siege results.	
2	Siege is lifted/broken
3,4	Siege continues-no additional losses.
4,5	Siege continues-lose one unit.
6,7	Siege continues-lose two units
7,8	Siege tightens-adjust siege two levels this turn.
9,10	Siege tightens-lose three units.
11	Desertion, Famine, & Plague-lose 50% of units.
12	Surrender-Location falls to siege; lose all units.
Modifiers	
Siege Level 2	+1
Siege Level 3	+2
Siege Level 4	+3
Less than 2 units left in a village, 3 in a town, or 4 in a fortress: +1	
Disaster rolled on the Sortie Table this turn: +2	
Limited Success rolled on the Sortie Table this turn: -2	
At least two artillery units still present at siege location: +1	
Adjust Siege Level	
If the besieged location does not surrender or if the siege is not broken, then the siege level is now adjusted by one with a maximum of four and play proceeds to the Receive Replacements phase of the turn.	

Victory Point & Turn Tracks

0	0	0
1	10	100
2	20	
3	30	
4	40	
5	50	
6	60	
7	70	
8	80	
9	90	

Turn Track

Victory Points

Note: Campaign starts at 125 VPs

- +/- Value of villages, towns, or fortified towns lost to the rebellion or recaptured by Imperial-Askari forces.
- -10 Each battle lost by Imperial-Askari forces.
- +10 Each battle won by Imperial-Askari forces.
- -5 Each battle won or lost by Imperial-Askari forces where they suffer 50% casualties or more.
- -5 for each Command Point played for replacements.
- -5 for each turn from Turn 10-15 that the Victory Point level is still at 50 or less.
- -10 for each turn from Turn 16-20 that the Victory Point level is still less than 75.

Event Triggers

- Once the VP total drops to 80 or less, an expedition is mounted to clear the area of rebels. The Askari-Imperial governments create a force to engage the rebels without having to use Imperial forces. The 8 units marked EXP arrive at either Bezou or Zimbezi (even if Zimbezi is under siege these forces can still arrive there). They must immediately move towards the closest Rebel held village or town in an attempt to retake it. They must continue to campaign against the Rebels until they are at 50% strength, at which time they are treated as standard Askari units. All forces of the expedition should be the lowest rated troops possible in your rules.
- Once the VP total drops to 50 or less, Imperial forces arrive at Bezou. 8 infantry units, 2 cavalry units, and two units of artillery are placed at Bezou and may be used at the start of the next turn. Additional counters are included if the Imperial force is to be expanded or if you prefer more traditional British type units.
- Once the VP total falls to 25(after Imperial forces have entered the campaign) the Rebellion phase of the turn is skipped from this point until the end of the game.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Campaign Map



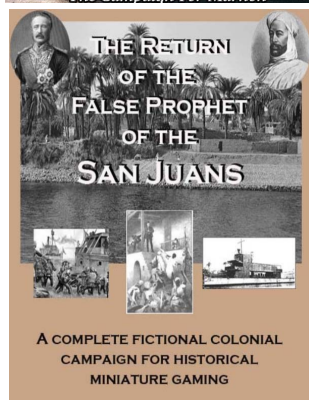
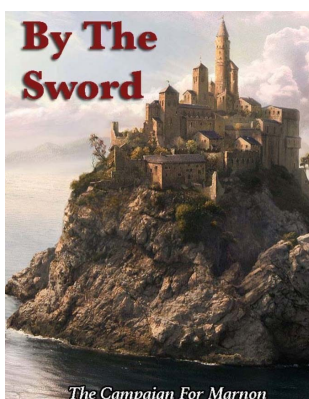
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I saw the announcement for a new range of figures clearly based off the AMC series "The Terror". First off, this is about as esoteric as esoteric gets! At the same time there was a post with a gamer asking for suggestions on figures and rules to game the Antifa riots against ICE in Portland, Oregon. On top of all of that I had been bombarded all week with ads from Warlord Games hyping their renewed campaign for Konflikt '47. At a quick glance it seemed to be a lot of effort into what would surely be fringe topics in miniatures gaming. We've all seen over the years pictures of dinosaurs vs. cavemen, the aborted Warlord Games Mythic Americas series, and many more miniatures lines that cause you to think, "Who would play that?"

The answer is that a lot of gamers play these kinds of games and the hobby is a big tent, so who is to say what someone can and can't play? The interesting thing (at least to me) is how many times are these things played? My experience in the hobby is that gamers don't sit still for very long and after a while they tend to move on to other things. In some cases that might be after the first game in a new period! In terms of Konflikt '47, didn't we already have this with Dust Tactics? That game came out of nowhere, was very popular for a time, but now you rarely see it being played. My guess is that is what will happen with Konflikt '47 as well. New rules, revamped minis, and the concept sounds cool plus it is part of the Bolt Action family. However, after a few games of it my guess is that gamers will start to look elsewhere.

Two of the reasons why these types of periods don't have longevity is that first, they can become money pits, with new supplements, figs, updates, etc., which are all designed to drain your wallet while the playability begins to suffer. The second is that once you get tired of it, what can you use the figures for? The answer is not much else. It's not like if you paint up a few hundred hoplites then don't like your current set of rules. Those hoplites can be used in a lot of other armies and many, many different rules.

I remember our group got into Warmachine when it first came out. An interesting premise, cool factions, and great minis. However, they kept coming out with more and more, then started to go off into other areas with the rules until it became a "gimmick of the month" type game. While the first few games were fun, after a while every game was the same and we sold all of it off as you really couldn't use the figures for anything else. Definitely a lesson learned.

