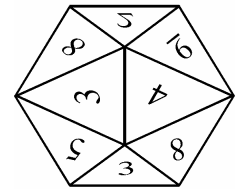


The NUGGET



Number 192
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2005

The Journal of Wargame Developments

EDITORIAL

End of my first year, and it's been great fun - except not for Bob who has had to put up with my terminal inability to stick to the deadlines.

This issue has some stimulating stuff in my opinion. Reports and comments on what was an excellent COW - thanks to Bob and Tim Gow for pulling it off in style once again.

Graham Evans' musings on the matrix game tie in particularly with Stephen Aguilar-Millan's thoughts on his America 2025 game.

A new set of rules for the Colonial era from Rudi Guedens - some innovative mechanisms there.

My apologies to those of you who rushed to send me COW reports if they are not in this number. This does not mean that I am not extremely grateful for the response. I have many excellent reports in the bag for subsequent COW follow ups.

However, as ever, please don't get complacent. If you haven't written COW up yet, start thinking about it. We are on track for a record number of reports - I'd like to achieve that this year.

Please note Tim Gow's suggestion about photographs (Page 34). Similar thoughts had been occurring to me given the ease with which photos can be duplicated now and the fact that the Nugget format does not lend itself to great reproduction. I think they work as pleasant filler, and occasionally add some perspective to the articles, but they are really only filler - which is why I mainly use them to fill gaps rather than to take up space in their own right.

Use your holidays to think about articles for the Nugget.

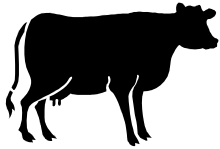
Jonathan Crowe

VERY ROUGH DEADLINES

NUGGET 193 = 03 Sep 2005
NUGGET 194 = 15 Oct 2005

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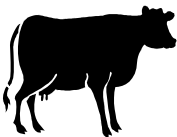
COW 2006 ALREADY

COW 2006 will take place at Knuston again from the 7th to the 9th of July.

If you want to join in and be a part of what is probably the best weekend of wargaming available anywhere, all you have to do is to send a deposit of £20.00 to Bob Cordery. His address is:

84 Eglinton Hill
Shooters Hill
Plumstead
London
SE18 3DY

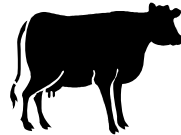
The full cost of COW2006 will be in the region of £155.00 (including the cost of WD membership for the 2006/2007 subscription year), and cheques must be made payable to Wargame Developments.



EDITOR'S NOTE by Jonathan Crowe

2005 was an excellent COW in my opinion. It had a cardboard simulator game (It's a Riot). It had a very silly plenary game (SWAG). It offered a wide range of matrix, role play, toy soldier, and board gaming, as well as old favourites like the Ideas Exchange and drinking beer in the bar.

It is heartily recommended to all, as are offshoots such as the West of England Calves which seem to be happening regularly, and other combined activities by WD members.



2005 COW PASTRAMI by Ian Mitchell

Thin strips of COW (slightly spiced) – “first impressions”

It was a great relief to arrive at Knuston after the horrendous detour from Silverstone caused by the closure of the A43. There is a game there – Rat running Down Memory Lane is proposed as a working title – perhaps on the lines of players acting as authorities moving the problem of a traffic jam and surge in accidents to someone else's area. (Potential black game mechanics loom on how to move 'antisocial' elements to other administrative areas for “special treatment” including “delousing”....)

I ran my first session since 1999 as an ADG. This was Special Delivery, a quick game intended for the Ambassadors for Schools programme. Ambassadors for Schools seeks to interest the youth of today in science by exciting demonstrations such as the use of dry ice to shatter bananas. Special Delivery shows Operational Research (OR), the Science of Better, in action. The session is reported elsewhere in detail. It was everything which I had hoped for — well supported, with innovations suggested by the players. I had brought the game expecting that if there was a way to break it that would be found. The structure seemed to work. Useful suggestions will improve the game for which many thanks.

Duty done I turned to broadening the brain with browsing the books in the hall. Several inches were added to the to-be-read pile. The impromptu hall sale with an honour based payment system has become a tradition. That it works so well says much about the members of WD.

Saturday kicked off with Mike Young's How to defeat terrorism ... very much a sequel to last year's presentation. Much of OR deals with nasty aspects so the “unthinkable” tends to be thought about. I believe that these efforts offer immense benefit by finding ways to

mitigate or avoid the problems driven by intolerance. The first step in dealing with any problem is to recognise it and discuss it. Not thinking about it or talking about it seems only likely to let it grow, whatever it is.

Pay Any Price 2 was John Bassett's matrix game about careerists in the CIA in the early Sixties. Tracking the random assignments was educational, as they were all real, with only one temporal translation. I played a woman and found that this turned out to be my greatest weakness. It all seemed entirely credible as the Senator's son made off with the promotion that should have been my character's, after a suitably deniable but laudable chain of assignments, unlike SOME I could mention cavorting with criminals, messing with Cubans, snaffling radioactive herring ... but I'm not vindictive..... (Possibly a Tammy Wynette style number here – suggestions for lyrics welcome).

After lunch it was off to the lounge for the 1950s view of the 1940s with the battle of Tractor Farm in North Africa 1943. I commanded the left flank of the British for what turned out to be if not Operation CERTAIN DEATH then Operation STATISTICALLY LIKELY DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY. As German mortars minced my company I remembered accounts of well-hidden indirect fire which matched this experience. The parity enjoyed by wimpy anti tank guns and tanks was to be echoed early on Sunday with the ideologically interesting MANNER GEGEN PANZER video.

Following cake break the building of empires in ancient SUMER was the next activity. This was the second playtest for this during the conference. Selection of key technologies to enable your ability to develop a community of villages and cities or tear somebody else's down was an interesting mechanic. There are often emergent themes at conferences – COW is particularly prone to these. Last year the emergent theme was modelling madness. This year it seemed to be skills. The Sumerians gave us the skill of writing that is a mechanism to preserve knowledge

After dinner was Another Footfall situation. Footfall has become a tradition (we've done it more than once). The role playing game uses simple representations to follow the progress of a Special Forces unit into the unknown and probably bizarre, anchored to real details. Psycho killer chimps in the Channel tunnel appeared last year, and following an unearthly child in a bunker was the story for the first game, where my character earned his nickname 'Collateral' as the sole survivor. This year saw innovations to the toys the team carried using a matrix argument. There seemed almost glee from the umpire when the videophone-connected micro-bug ploughed into a wall. The scenario followed the ALIENS pattern of a slow build up, false alarms and lots of machinery to wander through before utter mayhem, puddles of puke and mishaps with grenades...but we won... although I spent most of the last battle unconscious. Skills had had their influence especially with the grenades.

IT'S A RIOT - It certainly was. Skills as a policeman covered included in moving in close proximity allied to the fine art of balancing personal safety from a mob with applying minimum force.

CARCASSONNE - This was a commercial and clever tile based game about wealth production. It seemed a good demonstration of the mechanisms using geomorphic representations. From the large stack of upgrades available it was apparent how the foundation was extendable.

Boing – Time for Bed.

MEN AGAINST TANKS AND ENGINEERS FORWARD

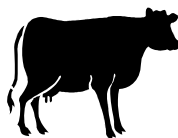
This session was a review of 1943 and 1942 German training films on how to fend off evil Bolshevik T-34s and conduct offensive bridging operations. The mix of real veterans, live ammo usage and high production values made for interesting viewing. The subtexts to the tactics, techniques and procedures shown were also apparent. 'How our boys are gallantly keeping

the world safe for fascism” was a major theme. The help provided to a local farm by the troops was deeply creepy. There were no mentions of Einsatzgruppen. In addition to being ruthless and murderous the Nazis were effective marketeers. That is what made them and makes their like so dangerous.

SKELF HUNTING was another star turn, reviewing the practical phase of a course in simulation with a project using simulation as the focus. The skills angle here was the original purpose of the distributed software as a training aid, so reducing high travel costs of getting participants for command at the formation level. Switching this distributed training

DARK GUEST was a discussion of gaming concepts looking at information technology security. Dark Guest is the Japanese term for hacker. The use of COW as a workshop differed from many playtests and play throughs. This stage of development is the foundation for the later phases.

That led to the AGM and the return to the roads, rat or perhaps vole-running through the hamlets and fields of Oxfordshire to evade the Silverstone snarl-up.



COW 2005 OVERVIEW

by John Curry

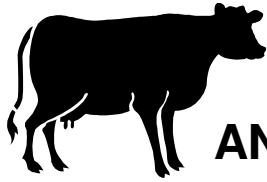
This conference was the best for quite a few years. It most certainly had some heavy weight sessions in it as well as the traditional toy soldier games. It had a good range from matrix, to role-play, to a hall game, to several lecturers. I am not quite sure why it was so good, but several said there was certainly a buzz at this years conference.

There were many interesting and original ideas. For example, John Basset's said that COW may or may not teach us things, but 'COW develops us as wargamers'.

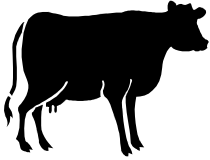
As usual there were many memorable quotes of the conference. Bob gave away his age, with his statement, 'I remember the dinosaurs'. I will not name the person who proposed that 'JR' (from the TV series) was shot in Dallas in November 1962. Nor will I shame the person who said of recent casualties in a contract game, 'were they dead because they were killed?'

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly - clockwise from bottom left, Jerry Elsmore, Alex Kleanthous, Bob Cordery, Graham Evans, and Julio Aquilar-Millan.





COW 2005 REPORTS AND RESPONSES



IDEAS EXCHANGE by Bob Cordery

Before this session started I had some concerns that it would be rather a damp squib. As it turned out the ideas that were exchanged were excellent, and proved that we can all learn something new.

Small playing cards: These are being used by lots of WD members, and the smallest size of playing cards – made by Piatnik [<http://www.piatnik.com/>] and sold as No. 2041 Mini Patience – can be bought from a variety of sources (e.g. Harrods, and the games shop in Museum Street).

World War I poster playing cards: These show a range of posters from all the major participants. They are made by British Heritage Limited (Freepost, Waltham Cross, Herts., EN8 8BR, UK) and can be bought from Playing Cards Only (<http://www.playingcardsonly.co.uk/cgi-bin/showpage.cgi?index.html>).

Aircraft Recognition playing cards: These are made by US Games Systems Inc. (Stamford, CT 06902, USA) and can also be bought from Playing Cards Only (<http://www.playingcardsonly.co.uk/cgi-bin/showpage.cgi?index.html>). They show a range of individual aircraft recognition charts. Each suit covers a different nation's aircraft:

Hearts – British

Clubs – Japanese

Diamonds – German

Spades – USA

Battle Mats: These are made by Chessex (<http://www.chessex.com/>) and are marked in

squares and/or hexagons. They come in several different sizes and colours, and can be drawn on with non-permanent water-based marker pens. They are ideal for role-play as well as for DBA-style games.

Plastic Terrain: Del Prado has recently started to release a part work about the Battle of Waterloo. Each part comes with several 25mm figures, and several issues have included plastic terrain. Each part of the terrain comes with terrain features printed on to it, and they will fit together to form the battlefield of Waterloo. Although the pieces supplied by Del Prado are only suitable for one battlefield, the idea can be copied. Large stationery suppliers (such as Staples) and computer shops stock A4 sheets of plastic that can be fed through an inkjet printer. The design can then be 'fixed' to the plastic in the oven.

Floor tiles: Westco make a variety of different floor tiles that have a small stone effect finish that looks like flag stoned floors. They also make cork floor tiles that can be used to create desert terrain.

Unit Markers: Games often require small unit markers. EM4 Miniatures (<http://www.em4miniatures.com/>) sell a variety of plastic stands that can hold cardboard unit markers. They also produce a range of other products (including dice) that can be used in games.

Disposable razors: Unit marker stands can also be made from disposable razors.

Making short figures taller: When mixing model soldiers from different manufacturers on group bases smaller figures can be made taller by gently squeezing the figure's leg with a pair of pliers. Any dents can be filled in with filler such as Milliput.

Magic Dip: Ronseal Quick Drying Wood Varnish (Antique Pine) can be used to both shade and varnish a figure in one operation. The varnish can be applied using an ordinary brush and will be touch dry in less than thirty

minutes. It comes in Matt, Satin, and Gloss finish, but the Gloss finish seems to give a better-looking end result.

Matchpots: Most of the major paint manufacturers produce acrylic emulsion paints in sample-sized Matchpots. These have a wide range of uses (including painting figures) and are cheaper than 'commercial' model paints. Dulux will also mix paints to match samples that can be scanned into their computerised paint mixing system.

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Additional information about Matchpots and Magic Dip from Graham Evans

Dulux offer a paint mixing service in most big DIY chains. The emulsion paint is perfectly suitable for painting figures, bases & terrain.

The small tester tins containing 250ml are inexpensive – usually £1.99 per tin. (As a side note GW pots contain 12ml, and Tamiya 10ml – compare the price!).

The colours are mixed by code, so once you have the code of a colour you use they're always available to you, even if the colour isn't on the mixing chart.

After a bit of experimentation I came up with four colours that I use for base painting. My wargames table and hill-type terrain pieces are also painted in it.

Green - Code 10GY12225

European grass-type bases. It is the colour of my main wargames table as well

Earth - Code 20YY20193

Sand/desert-type bases – my Sudan stuff and all of my AK47 armies' bases are painted with it. I also use it to dry brush the green bases where I've used Polyfilla or sand on them. I also use it for road sections.

Beige-white - Code 20YY74055

I use this to highlight/dry brush the brown on desert bases. I also use it to paint figures in

linen/dusty white uniforms.

Blue - Code 90BG37162

For the inevitably blue painted ship bases, sea backgrounds and river sections. I know we all know that water isn't blue most of the time, but you have to go with tradition, don't you?

The other DIY product I use a lot is Ronseal Quick Drying Varnish in Antique Pine colour. It has the effect of ink washing figures whilst also varnishing them. This isn't an original idea – it is known on some groups as "magic dip", but it does work really well if your painting skills aren't the best. It is virtually odourless and dries in 20 minutes.

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And back to Bob Cordery

'Suede' paints: Crown manufactures a range of 'Suede' finish emulsion paints that make excellent road surfaces. They are not cheap, but you will not need a large pot of the paint unless you intend producing an entire motorway system!

Masonry paint: Masonry paint has many different uses, particularly when mixed with sand. This can be used as a basing material, to texture terrain, or to paint homemade adobe-style buildings.

Plasticote: Plasticote produce a spray-on stone finish paint that can also be used to paint homemade buildings.

Cote d'Arms/Colour Party paints: Both these manufacturers produce a range of paints for horses.

'Pound' shops: Pound shops are an Aladdin's Cave for wargamers. They sell a wide variety of items that can be used including:

TT scale model train sets (priced between £1.00 and £1.50). These include an American-style locomotive, various pieces of rolling stock, and several feet of track. Dry brushing the sleepers with brown paint and

the rails with gunmetal paint can enhance the appearance of the latter.

Resin 'country cottages' often appear near Christmas (for the 'present for Granny' market). These are painted and will fit in with 15mm figures.

Cheap vehicles (particularly trucks) for AK47 and Megablitz.

Liquid Nails: Liquid Nails will stick just about anything to anything, including foam rubber to fibreglass mesh.

Doormat hedges: Doormats can be cut into strips to make hedges.

Plastic sheet water: An American company manufactures 15" x 10" sheets of plastic that has a wave pattern suitable for rivers, coastlines, and naval wargames. Triang Minic also used to produce a similar product, and this can sometimes be bought at collectors' meets and from specialist websites.

Woodchip hedges: Very cheap and very effective hedges can be made by mixing green paint, PVA/White glue, and wood chippings (free from the wood cutting section in Homebase DIY stores) together. A rough sausage of the mixture is rolled out on to a flat plastic surface and allowed to dry out. The resulting shape can be dry brushed with a lighter shade of yellow green. The final hedge is light, sturdy, very realistic, and costs almost nothing to make!

Small plastic cups: Small plastic cups of the sort used to dispense medicines or pills in hospital or as disposable guest tooth mugs in hotels make excellent dice cups.

OHP transparencies: The plastic sheets used for OHPs can be painted on one side and cut into river shapes. The painted surface is placed face down on the tabletop and shiny surface is placed face up.

Junior Generals website: This website has free paper soldiers for a wide variety of periods as well as rules and other resources.

Its URL is <http://www.juniorgeneral.org/>.

Thick and thin bases: When mixing model soldiers and vehicles from different manufacturers in units, thicker bases on the smaller scale soldiers and vehicles will help to disguise the differences in sizes.

Flocking desert figure stands: Fine sawdust makes an excellent flocking material for desert figure stands.

Totalmodel.com: This website (<http://www.totalmodel.com/>) contains a wide variety of modelling tips.

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Sue Laflin-Barker remembers

At the ideas exchange, I mentioned a discount bookshop which also had cheap painting supplies. At the time I couldn't remember its name and thought it might be "County Books". This was incorrect - it's "The Works" and has branches in Birmingham, Telford, Shrewsbury and probably many other cities.

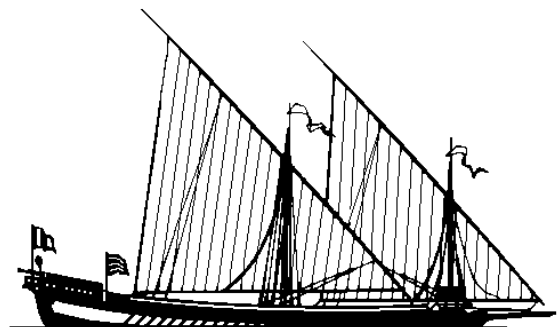
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Tony Hawkins was also there

Here is the web link to the site that sells the stands that I showed:

<http://www.em4miniatures.com/>

The site sells spinners and timers in assorted time slots - which I forgot to mention, and other gaming aids. Well worth a visit by the discerning WD'er.





AMERICA 2025

Onside report
by Stephen Aguilar-Millan

A CONVERSATION WITH MY WIFE

'Hiya, how's it going?'

'I'm well, how did your session go?'

'Ah, ... that was something of a disaster.'

'Oh no, you spent so much time preparing for the session. You must be pretty devastated.'

'Not really. In fact, I am quite pleased about the way in which things went. The whole point of taking the game to CoW was to test the game structure before taking the game on the road. I wanted to find the problem areas while I still have time to put them right. The great thing about the guys at CoW is that they will rapidly find the weakness in a game and that their feedback is both swift and brutal. Given the amount of time that I have before we go on the road, this is exactly what I needed.'

'OK, what was wrong with the game?'

'Well, the Technology Time Line Game didn't really work. We became so tied up in inter-technology dependencies and technology feasibility that it rather over-shadowed the main point of the game. To be quite honest, it shed more darkness than light, and I can't honestly say that it improved the game in any great way. I think that we may have to change the way in which we handle technology within the game.'

'How would you change it then?'

'Well, I think that we can drop the trading card game. It causes confusion and really adds very little. As an idea, it has some merit. But it ought to be developed as a separate game in its own right. For the America 2025 game, perhaps we ought to simply give the players a technology time-line card, take it as axiomatic that those technologies will come on stream within a given time frame, and let them argue, within the structure of the game, for something different.'

'That sounds like a plan. How did the other parts of the game go?'

'I'm not sure about separating the economic development game from the geo-political game. In theory it is a good idea, but in practice it can become quite muddled. I am thinking about just fusing the two together. Julio made a comment that is worth following. He suggested that we had a sharper distinction between the event and the outcome. Something along the lines of – "This thing happens to cause that thing to result". I also think that we can point the players to using economic arguments to support geo-political outcomes.'

'How can you do this?'

'OK, take an example. We could say that, in the time frame of 2001-04 (i.e. the move just before the opening move), the US player argues that there is a successful invasion of Iraq by the US (this is the thing that happens) that leads to a greater security of energy supplies to the US (this is the thing that results). It happens because (these are the supporting arguments):

- a. As the sole superpower, nobody is really in a position to prevent a successful US invasion.
- b. The US has the political will to devote sufficient financial and material resources to make it happen.
- c. The security of energy supplies is a long term aim of the US government that would be enhanced by a compliant Iraq.

In the context of the America 2025 game, the event would happen with a consequent result. The unforeseen consequence imposed by the umpire would be that the US government seriously underestimated the financial and material cost of the venture, and can no longer afford (in material and financial terms) any other solo foreign military adventures.

'Wouldn't it be helpful to the players to provide one or two examples of well formed arguments to show what the game involves?'

'Yes. Julio also made this point and it is something that we will produce before we take the game on the road.'

'Was Julio the only player?'

'No. Julio played Russia, Phil Barker played the US, John Curry played the EU, Richard Lee played China, Peter Crawshaw played Japan, and Mike Young played India. Victoria took a lot of notes for me during the game.'

'There are some names there that I don't recognise. Did everyone understand the game?'

'I'm afraid that the answer is probably "Yes and No". I think that we probably made the mistake of trying to fit too much complexity into the game. It needs to be simplified greatly. I agree with the feedback that we have received about the briefings – they need to be extended to include more background detail of the issues involved and to set the scene for the game a bit better. However, I'm not too despondent about that, as we have a good 80% of the finished product. The briefings need just a little bit of tinkering.'

'So, the issues were widely understood?'

'Once again, the answer is "Yes and No". As a presenter I had assumed a certain degree of prior knowledge that wasn't necessarily shared by the players. For example, we managed to get ourselves into a bit of a tangle about the issue of the US Twin Deficits.'

'What are they?'

'Sorry, the Twin Deficits are the unprecedented levels of debt owed by the US Public Sector (particularly the Federal Government) and the US Private Household Sector. Most of this debt is being funded by the governments of China, Japan, and South Korea. The US would have a strategic vulnerability if these nations were to want their money back sooner than anticipated. Anyway, we are missing the point. The point I am making is that I simply assumed that the players were aware of this type of issue, but that this assumption was wrong.'

'Well, what can you do about it?'

'To start with, I can improve the briefings. That should go some way to set the scene. However, John Curry made a point that I think is worth following. John suggested that I might be better served personally if I did a bit less research and supervision and a bit more lecturing. John felt that one dimension to the tangles might be the way in which I conveyed my authority as the umpire. I feel that John has a really good point here. I am so accustomed to my authority being unquestioned that my ability to deal with the awkward squad isn't as good as it was when I did lecture.'

'Isn't that a backwards step?'

'No, not at all, I am rediscovering a skill that I used to have.'

'Was the map useful to you?'

'Not really in its present format. It wasn't until much later that I realised that the areas that we marked on the map simply copied the areas pre-printed on the map. There is, however, one use to which the map might be put. During the Russian turn, it was helpful to map out the oil and gas pipelines that Russia is currently constructing. What we might do for the future is to take the map along without any prior markings and to add those points of interest in the game as they arise. To that extent, the map could actually become part of the game.'

'I see. Were there any more comments that you want to take on board?'

'Yes. Mike Young had reservations about the ability of all arguments to succeed. Mike being Mike, he stretched the comment into absurdity – the Zambian invasion of the US – but the basis of the comment is valid. I think that we will have to include in the game structure the possibility the umpire over-ruling an absurd event.'

'That sounds dangerous.'

'Yes, I know. As futurists we like to retain the possibility of the remotely possible situations as Wild Card Events. However, Mike does

have a point. I guess that we will simply have to use this power very judiciously. It will rest upon the skill of the umpire to maintain control of proceedings and to rule what is in and what is out.'

'How would you make those decisions?'

'With great care. For example, I would be inclined to rule in a meteor strike as reasonably possible. However, the Zambian invasion of the US, unless very well argued and supported, would be ruled out as just plain silly. Mike is right to point out that the umpire needs this power in reserve, and I think that I will include it in the game, if only to prevent it from becoming nonsensical at times.'

'Right. Did you enjoy the session?'

'Well, I found it hard work. The CoW method of sign-up invariably makes a session something of a contestant in a beauty parade. I would have liked more participants because I think that this game does really suit an environment where one set of teams plays another set of teams. However, the timetable slot, which was of my choice, was one where there were a number of strong alternative sessions. Admittedly, we could have changed to other time slots, but the nature of the beast is such that we would never have an exclusive slot. I really do feel for those people who take so much time to put a session together, only to then have it cancelled because there isn't enough support to play the game.'

'So, did you enjoy the session?'

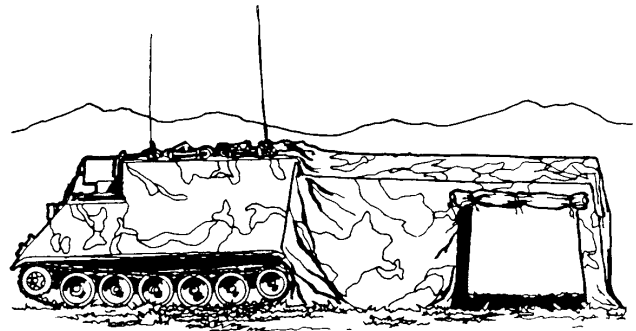
'Yes. I enjoyed gaining the input from those who attended the game, and I am very grateful for the useful comments that I received. It was great to come into contact with mindsets that I normally do not encounter and this served as a useful antidote to the groupthink that can arise when you deal with the same people all of the time. I also enjoyed the interaction with the players, who are fun people anyway.'

'I'm glad that you enjoyed the session. When are you planning to come home?'

'I want to stay for the AGM as it is one of the few ways that the group has to thank Bob Cordery and Tim Gow for arranging such a great weekend. It's also important to thank Jonathan Crowe for editing The Nugget. These guys do a huge amount of work for us and it is only right that we thank them properly at the AGM. So, I guess that I'll be back between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm.'

'OK. I'll look forward to seeing you then.'

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Offside report by Michael Young

I must strongly disagree with Steven's initial statement in the above report ("a conversation with my wife"). There is no way he should describe the session as "something of a disaster". Nothing could be further from the truth. The game showed some excellent promise, I enjoyed my time and would not have wished to attend any other session. Sure the game mechanisms got criticised, but if people don't want their game mechanisms criticised then they should not take them to COW.

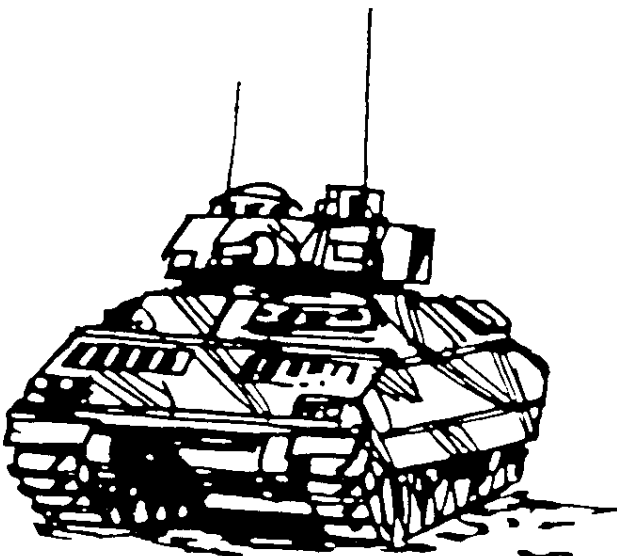
Steven's game was ambitious and well researched, and it was evident that that a lot of time and thought had gone into the game. This is one of the first games I have seen with an accompanying intellectual web site (www.eufo.org). I had time to read most of it up before hand, but I don't know if the other players did.

So yes there were lots of ideas and some worked well and others didn't. But that's what we want - a game full of ideas that we can improve on or plagiarise.

The most nickable idea from this game is the idea of the unforeseen consequence. Steven had the idea that everything anyone argued for happened, but that there were negative side effects and the worse the argument, the worse the unforeseen consequence. This is an excellent germ of an idea and one that should be taken up by all matrix game players. However I felt the idea was taken to an unnecessary extreme, in that all a player's arguments succeeded, with just worse consequences. I don't think every proposed action should succeed: This is because Matrix arguments are usually about why the action occurs. If you can't put up robust arguments to justify why something occurs then it shouldn't occur. Matrix games are plausible if they move along an audit trail of good arguments as to why things have gone the way they have. With every argument succeeding the game will soon move into the territory of the seriously weird.

On the other hand, if you want to explore a situation than thinking about unforeseen consequences is an excellent learning experience.

The Americans have spent too much time working out if it was physically possible to deploy an army in Iraq, which it was, and not enough time thinking about unforeseen adverse consequences. Operation Iraqi Freedom should have been planned as a Matrix game with Stephen as the Umpire.



A way to include adverse consequences may be for a victim of a move in a Matrix game to be allowed a "free" Matrix argument about the adverse consequences, after something nasty has been dumped on him. Of course not every matrix turn will have a victim, but the referee should feel free to use this rule at his discretion (or whim). Let's give this idea a go.

Whether the three games should be split up or not depends on your audience. If you have a specific target audience in mind then you should do what interests them. (e.g. economic for financiers, geopolitical for the military and science for the scientists). Wargamers such as us should be allowed complete freedom. The best way to do this is to develop a game that can be played in any mode or all. It may be an idea for the referee to fling a couple of geopolitical events into a "Technology" game or vice versa. I did like the technology timeline, but only as an aide-memoire and inspiration for the way things can go, rather than as a strict guide, and Yes I agree the technology trading cards added little in terms of learning to the game.

The science game should also have different players from the other games. Whilst geopolitical and economic decisions are made by power blocks, scientific ones are much less so. Different players in the scientific game could be:

- The military industrial complex
- Big Pharma Expensive Drugs that keep you addicted to them for life are the best type
- The Tree Huggers: Green, clean, and favouring dissemination of low tech solutions
- Computing and Electronic Companies: Sony more than Microsoft.
- The Eurocrats: Regulate everything, ensure safety.

Steve's game is a learning experience and a scenario development and examination tool, as such it succeeded, it was not intended as

a closed game with unambiguous rules, so it is not surprising that it didn't succeed in that

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Offside report by John Curry

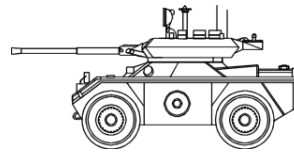
This was a heavy weight commercial session because tried out before delivery to an international set of very serious 'players'. Players who might have a significant influence on the world we all live in.

Rather than thrash through the game, I will highlight a few issues that emerged.

It's hard, but important to play a few rounds of any game, then start to comment on the game. I am often tempted to launch into a barrage of questions instead of just waiting 30 minutes to get an overview. As the referee, how do you restrain the players enthusiasm to question at the start without dampening their interest?

Phil Barker asked what papers the referee read, then Michael Young picked up on the response and proposed that the referee had an American bias and therefore the whole game was fatally flawed (as an American view of the world must be wrong?) Stephen fell into a trap that those unused to open scrutiny sometimes hit. Within their world, they are seen as an expert. Other experts might think that they are talking rubbish, but they would acknowledge it is rubbish based on a great deal of expertise. However, when you step out in to the light of scrutiny to the less expert, the gloves are off and they can raise questions that threaten to demolish the unprepared. Therefore, referees need strategies to limit such assaults. e.g. acknowledge the points, raised but say you must carry on with the session and perhaps they could see you at the end to discuss if the rationale for the game is 'off the wall'.

Stephen added a novel twist to the matrix saga. He added a consequence for each successful argument. You might get what you want, but there are always consequences for it. This idea bears further scrutiny.



CYPRUS 2006

Onside report by Michael Young

As a result of how well the "middle east in 3 turns" game went last year, and the enthusiastic reviews of it, I decided to hold another "Political Cards" game this year, this time on the problems between Cyprus and Turkey.

Brief History

Cyprus became independent of Britain in 1960, after an insurgency. The British attempted to divide the power between Turkish and Greek population, with power shared between the Turks and Greeks in a strictly organised way. Unfortunately this proved unworkable, and there was continual low-level fighting between the Greeks and the Turks. There was a move among the Greek Cypriots to unite the country to Greece, culminating in a Greek backed coup in 1974. To protect the Turkish Cypriots, in reaction to this, the Turks then invaded Cyprus and captured the north of the Island calling it the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC), a state that was not recognised by any country apart from Turkey. The Greeks living in the North of the Island were "ethnically cleansed" and sent south. Many Turks living in the South moved north. Turkey has subsequently brought a large number of settlers in from Mainland Turkey (about 100,000) who are now living in the north of the island, thus making any problem that involves the restoration of the status quo much more intractable. . Because it is not internationally recognised, Northern Cyprus has become a good place for international fugitives and criminals to hide, as no country has extradition treaties against them.

Recently the Republic of Cyprus has joined the EU. This means that (technically) it will have a veto over Turkey joining.

Game Structure and Political Cards used

The game looked at whether some deal could

be made whereby the Cyprus problem was solved, in exchange for Turkey's joining the EU.

The game had four players:

The Greek Cypriots (the Republic of Cyprus)

The EU. Representing the rest of the EU apart from the Republic of Cyprus

Turkey

The New Turkish Settlers in Northern Cyprus

For administrative convenience the Turkish settlers were called the "TRNC" (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus), but in practice they did not represent the government of the North (a puppet of Turkey), but the Turkish settlers who have been moved to Northern Cyprus from the mainland since 1974.

The initial situation was represented by the following cards. Each of the cards has a value on it, representing the relative desire of each of the parties for the card to be played. A player must play a card which gives him a positive score and must not play a card that gives him a negative score. Only if the score is zero may the player choose if he wants to play it or not. Cards that are not played have a score of 0 for all the players. Players may also make "deals" whereby cards with negative scores are turned over in exchange for another player turning over a card that gives a bigger positive score. (I will play a -1 card in exchange for another player playing a card that is +2 to me)

Refer to the Turkish cards on Page 15. Because all of the cards have negative scores none of these things will be done by the Turkish player. However matrix arguments may alter the scores on the cards, or deals may be done whereby the Turkish player does turn some cards over. It can be seen that the biggest threat the Turks have is to turn into an Islamist state.

Similarly the EU has three cards.

The EU wants Turkey to join (just about). It does not want to recognise the TRNC or to

allow it to join the EU. However although it wants to play the "Allow Turkey to Join the EU card, it can't because Cyprus can block it.

The cards of the Greek Cypriots are special cards. What they can do is stop the EU from playing some of their cards. Since joining the EU, Cyprus (theoretically) has the ability to stop the EU from letting Turkey join. The power of Cyprus can be represented by two "veto" cards - see Page 15

The TRNC has three cards.

(The "civil war" card cannot be played until Cyprus is reunited).

So at the moment nothing is happening, No cards are being played (apart from cards that stop other cards being played). Could the players find a way of improving the situation?

Course of the Game

The aim of the game was for each player to try to maximise his score on the cards by the use of Matrix arguments. This involved getting some cards played. I think we succeeded in this. The results that arrived were interesting in that the players recognised it as a co-operative game and tried several strategies that involved co-operative play, or the invention of new cards.

The players were keen on putting forward arguments to change the values on the cards, or to invent new beneficial cards. I liked this, as it encouraged the players to look for positive solutions, rather than compensation. For example a series of hotels were built in Cyprus, compensation was made available for the Anatolian Turks in return for the Greeks being able to move back to their old homes.

The major event of the game was a big deal where in exchange for Turkey joining the EU the Greeks got back their property in northern Cyprus in exchange. This pleased the EU, the Greeks and the Turks, but this success came at the expense of the TRNC party, who lost their homes in the deal and did not get enough compensation (although they got some). In desperation the Anatolian Turks were moved to specialised camps in

“Economic Benefit zones” organised by the EU. There was much discussion about if the zones were more like Hong Kong to the Chinese or like the Gaza Strip to Israel.

In the game the situation changed very much in the way that the Greek Cypriots wanted, in that they achieved some of their more ambitious objectives, but it did show to me the unrealism of their position. If the Greeks do achieve their objectives (as they did in the Game), they will cause a large problem with the Turks in the Island, who have been living there for up to 30 years.

The Political Cards Game mechanisms in perspective.

The game mechanisms worked well, (in fact better than for any other political cards game I had played). So what went right, and what lessons did I learn from previous less successful games?

Firstly the Political Cards must physically dominate the Game. The players must be shown the Political Cards only and must talk using them as an aid. This means sit the players around a table and place the cards on the table. Make the cards out of A4 size laminated card. Don't put big maps, or any other distracting paraphernalia on the table. The aim is for the players to think “What should I do next?” whilst looking at the cards, and to fit what they are going to do into the card format.

This contrasts strongly with a previous game I did, where the cards were more of a sideline, being bluetacked (unwisely) onto a wall. The players lost interest in the cards and started thinking about the many other visual aids I had thoughtfully provided (such as share ownership charts). As a result almost every move consisted of inventing a new card, and the game went less well. With Political cards, it really is a case of “Less is better”.

I think the Matrix arguments were better for being structured in terms of cards as well. Without cards, players tend to create arguments about more fanciful things

happening than they would in real life. Using cards also kept the arguments on track, and stopped players going on about trivialities. Arguments about public opinion turning to or from Turkish Membership of the EU seemed to feature heavily, as the players noticed that cards represented potential deals in the offing that would swing things rapidly in favour of one player or another.

The only thing that went slightly wrong was there was a tendency for players to assume that non-players (such as the USA) would act magnanimously and generously towards them. This became known as the “money from God” problem. Players continually argued that the US would stump up money to fix any problems or compensate victims. Hard refereeing is needed to prevent this being a problem, another potential solution is to make the EU pay some of the penalty for “money from God” solutions, it being argued that the EU would also represent the interests of the USA.

But all in all this was a good game, illustrating well the difficulties of the problem, and producing a plausible scenario and keeping the players in character.

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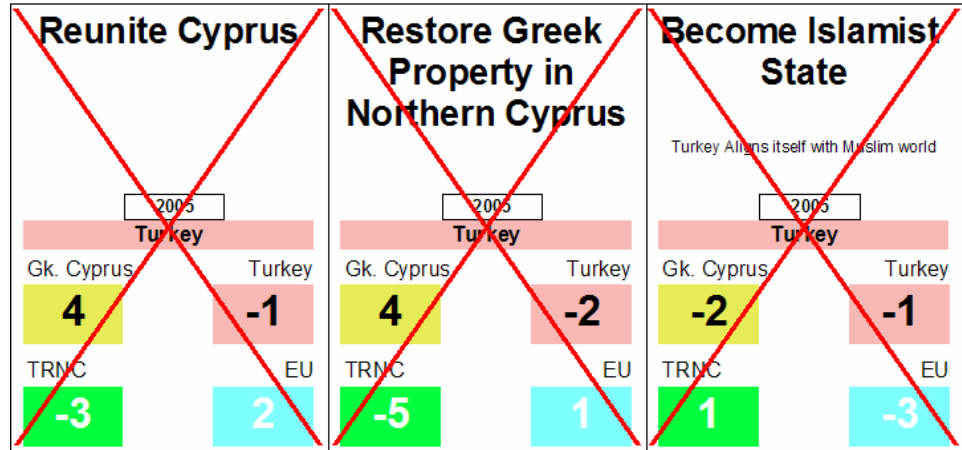
Offside report by John Curry

This was another test of an award winning card system devised by Michael Young. Each action can be played by only the people who can take that action in real life. Each side involved then gets a points score of between -5 and +5 depending whether it demolishes your side or is the best thing since sliced bread. Further cards may be added by matrix arguments or you can alter the scores on cards already played.

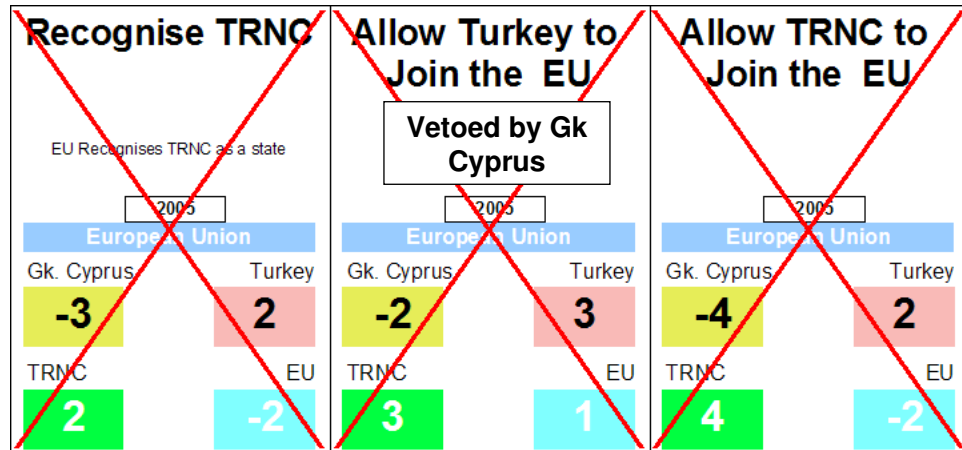
Between Alex Kleanthous, John Bassett, Michael Young, Stephen Aguilar-Millan (plus Julio plus Victoria, how come Stephen had *three* people on his side!) it was a heavy session.

The problem was merely to solve the Cyprus question of a split country, while satisfying the

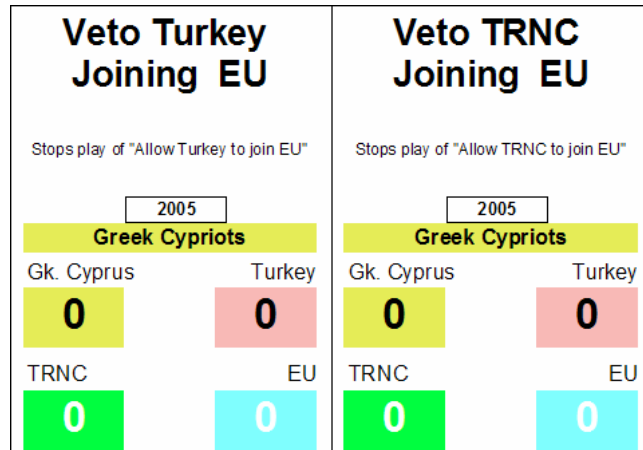
Turkish cards



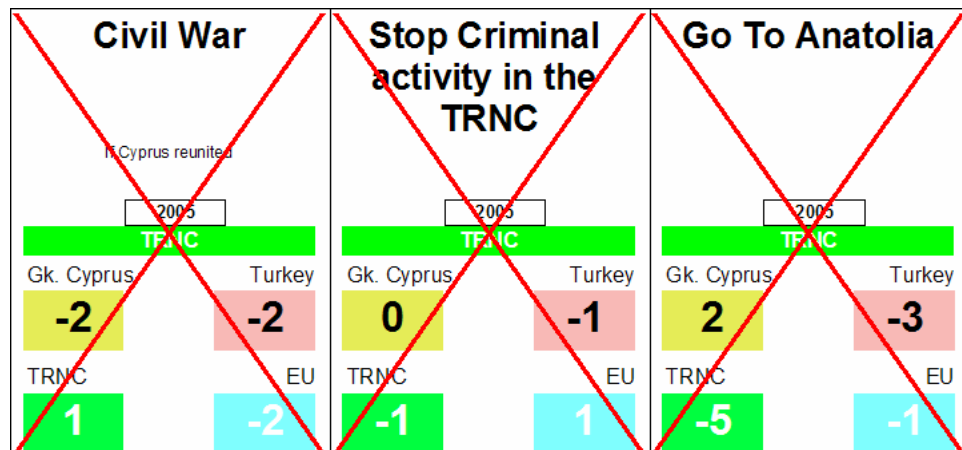
EU cards



Greek Cypriot veto cards



TRNC cards



needs of the two communities on the island, Turkey, Greece and the EU. We all had cards we could play, but then the negotiations opened up (I will play this if you play that as my total score will be more). Most turns consisted of hard negotiations to decide who played what.

The end of the game was the most interesting. The referee and the player for Northern Cyprus did not accept the compromise that the EU, Turkey and the Greek part of Cyprus imposed. We decided to make the Northern part of Cyprus a tax free haven for 25 years within the EU, with minimal red tape. So many investors would arrive, we thought, such that everyone would be so rich that wealth generation would solve the problem. Turkey would also be able to join the EU. In the end we almost shouted down the Turkish Cypriots, on the grounds that their last resort was to switch to terrorism, and the referee as the rest of us thought it was the right thing to do...



MINI EXTERNAL

Onside report
by Wayne Thomas

The background to this game was set out in the preview article in Nugget 191. On the day, the South African combat teams were commanded by Alex Kleanthous and Tony Hawkins. Jerry Elsmore had two UNITA regular battalions and Tim Gow manfully took on the unenviable task of controlling the FAPLA mechanised brigade, which was there to provide suitable targets.

Alex's Combat Group Charlie got off to a rather slow start, not helped by Tim arguing for mines along the road. Jerry got stuck in, but 16 Bde FAPLA were doing quite well, putting in a left hook attack with the BTR mounted battalion. The FAPLA support group of recce, tanks and BMPs appeared when the Bridge Score Card was drawn and the infantry even managed to shoot down an Impala ground attack aircraft with a SAM 7.



This all changed, however, when Tony's Combat Group Alpha put in its flank attack as a result of a successful argument. They proceeded to stomp all over the FAPLA troops, at one point completely obliterating a square kilometre with fire from a battery of Valkiri multiple rocket launchers (Tony's delight at throwing three sixes was a joy to behold) and showing a blatant disregard for economy by shooting up sundry supply trucks. Such untrammelled violence was just too much for Tim to bear and he finally threw in the towel.

The single test for movement, and/or either observation or engaging the enemy seemed to be a success. The massive amount of Soviet equipment on display is reason enough to game the period, which has the advantage of historical reality over the usual 1980s North German plain hypothetical scenarios, which always seemed unlikely to me, even when they were still a possibility.

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Onside report by David Brock

This game covers the South African Defence Forces "External" operations in Angola during 1987-88. Following a description of the rules and the background to the campaign the battle began with UNITA cautiously probing the FAPLA front line while waiting for SADF group "Charlie" and the supporting Olifants to join them. FAPLA's support group arrived and boosted their active defence against UNITA, causing some casualties to one of the eager SADF companies. To start with both sides air cover was effective at driving off the occasional ground attack. Later on some got through. After being delayed by some bad luck the SADF Combat Group "Alpha" arrived on FAPLA's right flank and started to roll it up. The SADF Bosbok aircraft did an excellent job of spotting the FAPLA gun line for the South African artillery. The SA Valkiri MRL also did sterling service with, on one occasion, Tony Hawkins rolling a triple six to totally destroy a FAPLA unit. While El Coronel Carlos added to the FAPLA performance, poor Van Der Merve's company

never really got in to action so was unable to show his worth. All present seemed to enjoy the game and some were already thinking of adapting the mechanisms to other modern periods.

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Offside report by Tim Gow

This was yet another well researched and beautifully presented toy soldier game by Wayne Thomas ably assisted by David Brock. It built on last year's Ovambo game, which featured a South African battalion rooting insurgents on the Angolan border. An External was the South African Defence Force (SADF) term for an operation into Angola itself, in order to strike at the Cuban sponsored FAPLA forces. As ever, play was card driven, and also involved a 3 dice mechanism for movement, combat and special events (basically a double on the 2 red dice made interesting things happen).

In the game, I was the Cuban officer commanding the FAPLA forces (basically a Warpact-style Motor Rifle Regiment), while Alex 'Call in an Airstrike' Kleanthous and Tony 'Kaffir-Killer' Hawkins represented the forces of capitalist imperialist reaction, assisted by their UNITA running dog lackeys led by Jerry Elsmore.

The game system included all sorts of chrome, leading to support from helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, artillery and salvo rocket launchers and SADF casevac helicopters (no such effete Western nonsense for us tough Commies).

In summary, definitely a game I want to play again, so as with Ovambo, I'll be dusting off my SADF toys to give it an outing in Sheffield. I feel too that the game system will work for other environments - watch this space!





AFRIBORIA

by Rudi Guedens

Introduction by Bob Cordery

As will be obvious from the sessions I have run at the last few COWs and the articles I have written for THE NUGGET, one of my main areas of interest is 19th century colonial wargames. Although I dabble in other periods from time to time, it is the one thing that I always return to.

I am constantly on the lookout for new ideas and new concepts, and over the past few years I have been drawn more and more to the use of cards – both standard playing cards and home-made Heroic Leadership Cards – as a means of introducing an element of uncertainty into the game mechanisms used in my wargames. I have borrowed heavily from other people – in particular from Ian Drury and Richard Brooks – and have also tried to incorporate some aspects of Matrix Games.

In addition, I have sought to have the least complex games mechanisms possible – particularly for movement and fire combat – as these make it easier for me to find opponents given the many people who are unwilling and/or unable to pick up wargames rules quickly and ensure that my games do not last for hours! I have experimented with squared and hexed boards in my attempts to achieve this end, and have finally, with my most recent rules REDCOATS AND DERVISHES, got close to perfecting my rules (for now!).

While I have been doing this, Rudi Guedens has been working along similar lines in Belgium. Rudi deserves to be better known in the UK, as he is one of the leading lights amongst Belgium's wargamers. He used to run a wargames shop in Belgium (The Tin Soldier Shop) and produced a range of resin wargames buildings (Gedemco) that were sold throughout Europe, North America, and Australia. He is a very active wargamer and has his own website – The Universal General

(<http://www.rudi-geudens.be/>) – as well as acting as webmaster for Tin Soldiers of Amsterdam:

(<http://users.skynet.be/tinsoldiers/index.html>)

This is the wargames club that runs CRISIS, Belgium's premier wargames convention. He also acts as webmaster for the Antwerp Fusiliers website:

(<http://www.tsoa.be/html/fuseliers.html>)

This began as a spoof rival to the Tin Soldiers of Antwerp and which has several different sets of free downloadable wargames rules online, including the complete version of the Afriboria colonial wargames rules.

Although Rudi is not a member of WD (he should be!) he has given permission for his rules to be published in THE NUGGET. I strongly urge you to read them as they contain several very interesting ideas that deserve a wider audience. He would appreciate any feedback you might have. His email address is rudi.geudens@edpnet.be



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AFRIBORIA

Miniature battles in a colonial setting

by

Rudi Guedens

FASTPLAY VARIANT

In order to shorten the game time, saving throws (and defence throws) can be omitted:

this results in a faster and bloodier game, ideal for an introduction, demo or participation game, enabling the players to field about 20 units each and still finish the game in 60-90 minutes.

COMMAND CARDS

The mechanism of these rules is largely based on dividing the opposing armies in 3 "colour-coded" types of units (red, blue & green), whereby units are activated by means of *command cards*.

Units can only be *moved*, *battle* or execute a special action according to the *orders* written on these cards. Therefore the players have to be aware that they must be able to adapt their tactics at all times to new situations arising due to orders.

There are three types of *command cards* in the game:

STANDARD COMMAND CARDS: these activate units for *movement* and in *battle*. They indicate to which units (red, blue or green) the *orders* refer and how many units can be activated.

SPECIAL COMMAND CARDS: allow a specific (or special) action as mentioned on the card in question.

EVENT CARDS: these cards activate a specific (special) event as mentioned on the card. These event cards bring an exotic and adventurous flavour to the game and are therefore optional and should probably not be used in historical scenarios.

The STANDARD & SPECIAL COMMAND CARDS are combined & shuffled into one deck for the game; the EVENT CARDS are a separate deck.

The cards in the game can be supplemented by cards designed by whoever wishes to create a new scenario (take care to keep in mind the balance and spirit of the original game!).

At the beginning of each game, the players take the number of standard/special *command cards* as per scenario. The

information on the cards is only revealed when they are played.

OBJECTIVE OF THE GAME

Is to eliminate a number of enemy units (1 victory point per unit destroyed/commander) as per scenario and/or reaching and holding certain objectives (1 or more victory points apiece).

The first player to gain his quota is the victor.

GAME TURN

The player listed in the staffing notes goes first. If no mention is made of this, a die is thrown; highest score chooses who goes first.

Play a standard/special *command card*.

Order units.

If your standard/special commands card mentions so, take (blind) an *event card* (in case event cards are used in the game).

Accept the *event card* (without viewing it!) or pass it on to the opponent who MUST activate this card in his next turn.

Move the ordered units.

Battle.

Draw a new *command card*.

1. Play a command card

Command cards are normally used to order *movement* and/or an *attack*. At the start of your turn, play one card from your hand. The card will tell you what colour of units (and how many) you may issue what orders to. Some cards allow you to take special actions (as explained on the card).

If none of the *command cards* you hold allow you to *order* any of your units, discard 1 card and draw a replacement from the command card draw pile. This ends your turn.

2. Order units

After playing a *command card*, announce which of your units you will *order*. Only those units that are given an *order* may *move*, *battle* or take a special action. You may not

give more than one *order* to each unit.

Note: officers/ tribal overlords may participate in battles even if they have not been given an *order*. See *commanders in battle* section for details. In case you have accepted an *event card* (or have been forced to accept it), the content of this card is now made public and activated.

3. Move

You may *move* units you've *ordered* in any sequence you wish. However, you must complete each *move* before beginning another. Each unit may *move* only once, except under the "*breakthrough*"-rule. All *moves* must be completed on a turn before you may *battle* (battling is explained in the next section of the rules).

The following goes for all unit types: a unit can only fire in so far as it is equipped with firearms or bows. If this is not the case, the unit is restricted to "close combat" (hex adjacent to the unit it attacks). In case only part of a unit is equipped with firearms, the number of casualties inflicted can never be higher than the number of firearms in the unit and 1 die less is cast.

A-class infantry: imperialistic armed, trained & commanded regular units with the most modern firearms available for the period. This infantry may move 2 hexes without doing battle, move one hex and battle or not move and fire twice (except in close combat). In this game, infantry is called "unit" or "units". A-class infantry units count up to 6 figures.

Pack animals, carts and wagons count as infantry for movement purposes.

B-class infantry: irregular (imperialistic or other) units with slightly less modern firearms or well organized natives (e.g. Zulus). This type of infantry may move 2 hexes without doing battle or move one hex and battle. In this game, infantry is called "unit" or "units". B-class infantry units count up to 8 figures.

C-class infantry: irregular units of lesser quality with outdated firearms, bows or

spears etc. This type of infantry may move 2 hexes without doing battle or move one hex and battle. In this game, infantry is called "unit" or "units". C-class infantry units count up to 8 figures.

A-class cavalry ("mounted units/troops"): imperialistic armed, trained & commanded regular units with the most modern firearms available for the period. This cavalry may move 3 hexes and battle, dismount and battle, battle and mount or (when dismounted) not move and fire twice (except in close combat). A-class lancers fighting on horseback get an extra die when in close combat. In this game, cavalry is called "unit" or "units". A-class cavalry units count up to 5 figures.

Motor vehicles count as cavalry for movement purposes. Motor vehicles fire as armed, but cannot move and battle in the same turn.

B-class cavalry ("mounted units/troops"): irregular mounted troops. This cavalry may move 3 hexes and battle, dismount and battle or battle and mount. In this game, cavalry is called "unit" or "units". B-class cavalry units count up to 5 figures.

Field artillery (including MG): may move 1 hex and not battle or not move and battle. In this game, artillery is called "unit" or "units". Artillery units count up to 4 figures and a gun or MG model.

Horse artillery (including MG): may move 2 hexes and not battle or move 1 hex and battle. In this game, mounted artillery is called "unit" or "units". Mounted artillery units count up to 4 figures, a gun or MG model and a limber.

Commanders: may move according to their means of transport, when ordered to do so (with or without units under their command). A commander is represented by 1 figure. There are 2 types of commanders:

Officers/tribal overlords

NCOs/tribal chieftains

Moving units

Units cannot *move* onto or through a hexagon that already contains two friendly (or any number of enemy) units. A friendly commander (in this case) does not count as a unit, an enemy commander does. When a unit enters a hexagon already occupied by a friendly unit or commander, movement ends there.

You may never split a unit. The individual figures within a unit must stay together and *move* as a group. Units that have been reduced through casualties may not combine with other units, except commanders.

Some terrain features affect movement and may prevent a unit from moving its full distance or battling (see order sheet).

Note: “*retreating*” is a different type of movement with slightly different rules. See *retreating section* for details.

Moving commanders

You may *move* a commander onto a hex occupied by one or two friendly units, as long as there is no other friendly commander in the same hex. If a commander enters a hex occupied by one or two friendly units, he must end his movement for that turn. A commander may never *move* onto or through a hex occupied by an enemy commander or unit.

PLATOONS: commanders “*commanding*” one or two units.

As soon as a commander enters a hex already occupied by one or two friendly units, the commander takes *command* over these units.

A commander *commanding* one or two units may (when ordered through a *command card*) be relieved of his *command*, move away and take *command* over another unit or units.

As long as an officer/tribal overlord commands two units in the same hex, these units are counted as ONE in relation to

command cards.

Example: you play a *command card* with the order “*activate 2 red units or individual commanders*”. In case you have two units (of which at least one red) under *command* of an officer/tribal overlord (in one hex), you can activate both units (*move & battle*), as well as another red unit (or two, should you have another officer/tribal overlord commanding 2 units of which at least one red).

If a unit commanded by a commander is given an *order*, the commander may move with the unit, or he may stay in place. This counts as one *order*. A commander who moves with his unit must *move* to the same hex. Exception: you may not *move* a commander *commanding* unit or units if he has already moved on this turn.

As long as an NCO/tribal chieftain commands two units of the same colour in the same hex, these units are counted as ONE in relation to *command cards*.

Example: you play a *command card* with the order “*activate 2 red units or individual commanders*”. In case you have two red units under *command* of an NCO/tribal chieftain (in one hex), you can activate both units (*move & battle*), as well as another red unit (or two, should you have another NCO/tribal chieftain commanding 2 red units). If only one of the units is a red unit, the other unit may also move with the NCO/tribal chieftain, but may not battle.

If a unit commanded by a commander is given an *order*, the commander may move with the unit, or he may stay in place. This counts as one *order*. A commander who moves with his unit must *move* to the same hex. Exception: you may not *move* a commander *commanding* unit or units if he has already moved on this turn.

COMPANIES

At the start of the game the players are allowed to form one or more “*companies*” (each *commanded* by an officer/tribal overlord).

The other players are informed about the composition and location of these *companies*. You can never form more *companies* than the number of officers/tribal overlords present.

A *company* is composed of one officer/tribal overlord and (max) 4 units (any mix of units is possible) in one or two colours. To be able to act as a *company*, these units must remain in the ZOC (“zone of control”) of their officer/tribal overlord. The ZOC is formed by the hex containing the officer/tribal overlord and the 6 adjacent hexes.

A *company* is regarded as one unit for *movement* purposes (but NOT for *battling!*). The *company* moves at the speed of its slowest component. The units composing the *company* are never allowed to voluntarily leave the ZOC of their officer/tribal overlord, except under the “*breakthrough*”-rule (whereby it is understood that, on the next turn the player is allowed to activate units of the given colour, the *company* must be reunited).



NCOs/tribal chieftains can never be part of a *company* (the presence of an officer/tribal overlord symbolises also the NCOs/tribal chieftains in the *company*).

When – for whatever reason – one or more units belonging to a *company* end up outside the ZOC of their officer/tribal overlord (due to a *forced retreat*), it is their first priority to rejoin the *company* as soon as possible. As

long as these units remain outside the ZOC of their officer/tribal overlord, they are treated as separate units.

An officer/tribal overlord *commanding* a *company* may only leave his *company* when giving up his *command*. Thus the *company* ceases to exist and the components are treated as separate units. This action is an *order* and takes one turn whereby the units of the *company* cannot take any other action (except to *defend* themselves). The inverse process is used to create a new *company*, whereby the components must be in the officer's/tribal overlord's ZOC when the new *company* is formed. When forming a *company* the units of the new *company* cannot take any other action (except to *defend* themselves)

When an officer/tribal overlord is forced to leave his *company* (due to a *forced retreat*), the *company* continues to exist, but the components have to be moved separately until the officer/tribal overlord takes control once more by moving the whole *company* in his ZOC.

Forcing a *breakthrough*

When an infantry unit engages in “*close combat*” (*battling* an enemy in a adjacent hex) and succeeds in either destroying the enemy unit or forcing it to *retreat* (and thus emptying the hex), the unit can force a “*breakthrough*” by entering the now free hex.

Artillery can never force a *breakthrough*. When forcing a *breakthrough*, terrain restrictions are taken into account as normal.

When a mounted unit forces a *breakthrough*, it can engage the retreating unit in *battle* once more (but not follow up again).

4. *Battle*

After completing all moves, the ordered unit(s) must be close enough to the enemy (and in a position to “see” the enemy) in order to *battle*. (see “*range*” and “*line of sight*”).

Each *battle* must be resolved before the next is started. A unit may *battle* another unit only

once per turn (exception: mounted troops in a “breakthrough”). A unit may never split its battle dice between several enemy targets. Units in close combat cannot fire at more distant units, nor can they be fired upon. If a target hex contains 2 different types of units (e.g. infantry/cavalry), the defender has the option of choosing which unit will take casualties when attacked; if not the attacker may choose. To *battle*, do following:

Determine the *range* (distance to the enemy target);

Determine the *line of sight*;

Determine the *terrain* within the *line of sight*;

Roll the battle dice. The type of battling unit, battlefield terrain and the distance to the enemy target determine the number of dice rolled.



Range

A-class infantry: up to 4 hexes. Dice: 4-3-2-1.

B-class infantry: up to 4 hexes. Dice: 4-3-2-1.

C-class infantry: up to 3 hexes. Dice: 3-2-1.

Mounted troops: 1 hex. Dice: 3 (A-class lancers: +1).

Dismounted cavalry (carbines): up to 4 hexes. Dice: 3-3-2-1.

Machineguns: up to 5 hexes. Dice: 4-4-3-3-2.

When the majority of the symbols rolled are shields, the MG jams and no casualties are inflicted this turn.

Field artillery: up to 6 hexes. Dice: 4-3-3-2-1-1

Horse artillery: up to 5 hexes. Dice: 4-3-3-2-1.

When a unit has suffered casualties, the number of dice thrown is not reduced, but a unit can never inflict more casualties than the number of figures remaining in its own ranks. For artillery units, only the figures count, not guns or limbers. An artillery unit is destroyed when all figures are killed.



Commanders in *battle*

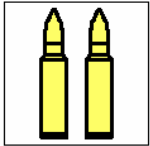
An officer/tribal overlord *commanding* one or two infantry- or cavalry units in his own hex may always support either one of these units by adding one die to the number of dice eligible for the unit. An officer/tribal overlord not attached to (a) unit(s) cannot *battle*.

Characters in *battle*

In some games or campaigns “characters” might be included, who – for the story’s sake – better not die... These characters are treated as “commanders” (possibly non combatants with no + influence on units) and are only “wounded” instead of “killed”. If they are wounded and alone in a hex, they can be taken prisoner and may be counted as victory points.

Line of sight

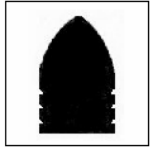
A unit must be able to “see” the enemy unit it wants to *battle*. This is known as having a “*line of sight*”. Imagine a line drawn from the centre of the hex containing the battling unit



A "hit" for A-class infantry, A-class cavalry, MG and artillery.

1

imaginary line runs along the edge of one or more hexes that contain obstructions, *line of sight* is not blocked unless the obstructions are on both sides of the line.

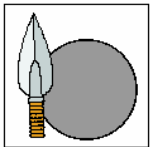


A "hit" for A & B-class infantry, A & B-class cavalry, MG and artillery.

.2

Terrain effects

As per the order sheet.



A "hit" for A, B & C-class infantry, A & B class cavalry, MG and artillery

3

5. Resolve battle

Losses are calculated before a unit (voluntarily or forced) *retreats*.

Dice-symbols:

NOTE: If you do not want to make the special dice, you can always use a normal D6 instead (as shown on Page 24).



Only in close combat: a "hit" for B & C-class infantry.

4

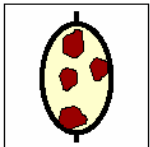
"Kills" are calculated and figures removed before units (have to) *retreat*.

(For bearers and unarmed villagers this is the only way to score a "hit").

In case the dice throw results in more than 1 "hit" (but not including crossed sabres), the first *hit* is an automatic *kill* and a figure is removed. In all other cases, the defender may cast one *saving throw* (1 die) per *hit* scored. In "*close combat*", a *saving throw* of crossed sabres means a *miss*. When battling a unit that is not in an adjacent hex, a figure is saved when either a shield or crossed sabres are thrown. When the last remaining figure of a unit is killed, the attacker scores a victory point. Should the attacker score more *hits* than the number of figures in the defending unit, these additional hits are wasted.

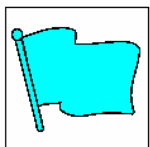
A "miss" for all.

5



A possible retreat (1 hex/flag).

6



to the centre of the hex containing the target. This *line of sight* is blocked only if a hex (of part of a hex) between the battling unit and the target hex contains an obstruction. Obstructions include a unit or commander (regardless if friend or foe), woods, hills, fields or buildings. The terrain in the target hex does not block *line of sight*. If the

Defence: when the defender decides to *make a stand* (= not make a *voluntary retreat*) he may roll one *defence die* per defending unit per turn (if in *range* according to the general rules). A hit is scored when the defender throws the crossed sabres or the "hit"-symbol of the enemy or higher. Terrain restrictions

A-CLASS:

Infantry: 4 figs

Mounted troops: 4 figs

Artillery/MG: 3 figs

B-CLASS:

Infantry: 6 figs

Mounted troops: 5 figs

C-CLASS:

Infantry: 8 figs.

RETREAT TABLE

have to be taken into account. A hit scored with the *defence die* automatically results in a *kill*. A-class troops may roll two defence dice instead of one.

Hitting a commander

A commander can only be attacked by infantry or mounted troops and only when he is not together with a unit in the same hex. When attacking a commander, calculate the number of dice as usual. The attacking player must then roll a crossed sabres to *hit*. Unless the defender makes a successful *saving throw*, the commander is eliminated and the attacker gains a victory point.

Retreat

After all *hits* have been resolved and casualties removed, *retreats* must be resolved.

Forced retreat: for each flag symbol rolled during the *battle*, the defending unit must *retreat* 1 hex towards its own side of the battlefield (even if this means that it has to leave the *ZOC* of its commander when being part of a *company*). The defender has the option to make a *saving throw* with one die (flag saves). If the attacker throws 2 flags, the first is an automatic *retreat* (no *saving throw* allowed). *Terrain* has no effect on *retreat* moves.

As long as a unit does not fall below the numbers of figures in the chart below, all flags may be ignored by the defender.

Units in the same hex as a commander may deduct 1 further figure from the above numbers (except artillery).

Voluntary retreat: prior to being attacked, the defender has the option to make a *voluntary retreat* (1 hex). However, in doing so, the units may not leave its commander's *ZOC* when it is part of a *company*. The attacker battles against the unit before it is allowed to *retreat* (and casualties are inflicted). A unit making a *voluntary retreat* is allowed to *saving throws*, but not a *defence throw*.

Retreat rules:

A unit cannot *retreat* in a hex already occupied by two friendly or any number of enemy units.

If a unit *retreats* in a hex occupied by a friendly commander, it is rallied and all remaining flags are ignored.

A unit *commanded* by a commander forced to *retreat* must take the commander with it, unless the hex contains a second unit that is not retreating.

If a unit cannot *retreat*, 1 figure in the losing unit must be eliminated for each *retreat* move that cannot be completed. Such losses may include the commander, unless a second unit (not forced to retreat) is present in the same hex.

If a unit (and/or commander) is forced to *retreat* off the battlefield, the unit (and/or commander) is eliminated.

6. Draw a command card

After resolving all hits and retreats, discard the *command card* played and draw another card from the deck. Your turn is now over.

Enjoy the game!

Appendix 1: "MAGNIFICENT MEN AND ARMoured MACHINES"

AIRCRAFT

Aircraft are more the exception than the rule in Afriboria, but some might appear in the skies over the jungle...

Aircraft take off from within the *ZOC* of fixed airbases or mobile supply points (e.g. a truck with fuel to re-supply the plane) but can only do so from unoccupied flat hexes with no buildings, hills, woods, crops etc. The same applies for landing. Aircraft can fly over all units, terrain etc.

An aircraft can stay airborne for 7 game turns (7 = 4 player's turns & 3 opponent's turns). To indicate its status a small D6 is placed next to the plane after its take off, and - at the beginning of each turn - the die is turned

down one number (6-5-4-3-2-1) regardless whether the plane is activated that turn or not. On 1 the plane must land or will crash.

Taking off is regarded as activating 1 unit, but unless several planes are in the game, the plane is not "colour-coded" and may be launched and operated under all applicable standard command cards (red-blue-green).

An aircraft can either fly 6 hexes with no special action or fly 2 hexes and undertake a special action.

There are 3 types of special actions:

Take off
Fight
Land

Each take off, fight, landing or flight of 6 hexes is regarded as a unit activation. If the player does not want to activate a plane, it will remain circling in its hex but will continue to consume fuel.

For special command cards, planes are regarded as "mounted troops" and/or "artillery".

An aircraft can fire at ground targets (as an MG: 4-4) within a range of 2 hexes, but not into its own hex.

An aircraft can bomb ground targets (only in its own hex) bombing as A-Class infantry fire (4 dice, with saving throws), but only once each flight/mission.

An aircraft can engage in aerial combat (as an MG: 4-4) within a range of 2 hexes (2 crossed sabres bring down the enemy – saving throw = 2 crossed sabres).

An aircraft can be fired upon by an MG within a range of 2 hexes (2 crossed sabres bring down the plane – saving throw = 2 crossed sabres).

(ARMOURED) CARS, TRUCKS & VEHICLES

Motor vehicles count as cavalry for movement purposes. Motor vehicles fire as armed, but cannot move and battle in the same turn.

Infantry & cavalry can only eliminate non armoured (motor) vehicles in close combat. In case the target vehicle is posted alone in a hex, simply moving an attacking unit in its ZOC suffices. In case the target vehicle is accompanied by another unit, the accompanying unit must first be destroyed or forced to retreat before the vehicle can be attacked.

Infantry & cavalry can only eliminate armoured (motor) vehicles in close combat.

2x crossed swords are required to score a hit (same for saving throws). If not saved, the target is destroyed. In case the target vehicle is accompanied by another unit, the accompanying unit must first be destroyed or forced to retreat before the vehicle can be attacked.

Artillery, MGs and aircraft bombing can eliminate non armoured (motor) vehicles when within firing range by casting the eligible number of dice (and saving throws). If not saved, the target is destroyed.

Bombing = A class infantry fire (4 dice).

Artillery, MGs and aircraft bombing can eliminate armoured (motor) vehicles when within firing range by casting the eligible number of dice. 2x crossed swords are required to score a hit (same for saving throws). If not saved, the target is destroyed

Appendix 2: USING COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE 10 CM HEXAGONS

These rules were initially developed for being played on an imitation grass carpet with 15cm (6") flat to flat hexagons. However, it is also possible to use commercially available hexagons such as the 10cm flat to flat ready flocked hexagons system as offered by Kallistra (<http://www.kallistra.co.uk/>). For figures up to 15-20mm it would still be practical to fit two 8 figure infantry units in one 10cm hex as described in the rules, but for 25-28mm this would pose a problem. In order to accommodate gamers who would opt for 10cm hexes with 25-28mm figures, a few minor adaptations to the rules will have to be made:

A hexagon may contain maximum 1 unit and a commander. Any mentioning in the rules of 2 units in one hexagon is therefore disregarded. Since a 10cm hexagon board will contain far more hexes than a 15cm one, tactically this will not make much of a difference, except in the case of "platoons". Therefore, the platoon rule for 25-28mm figures with 10cm hexes should go as follows:

PLATOONS: commanders "*commanding*" one or two units

As soon as a commander enters a hex already occupied by a friendly unit, the commander takes *command* over this unit and up to one other unit in an adjacent hex.

A commander *commanding* one or two units may (when ordered through a *command card*) be relieved of his *command*, move away and take *command* over another unit or units.

As long as an officer/tribal overlord commands two units in adjacent hexes, these units are counted as ONE in relation to *command cards*.

Example: you play a *command card* with the order "*activate 2 red units or individual commanders*". In case you have two units (of which at least one red) under *command* of an officer/tribal overlord (in 2 adjacent hexes), you can activate both units (*move & battle*), as well as another red unit (or two, should you have another officer/tribal overlord commanding 2 units of which at least one red).

If a unit commanded by a commander is given an *order*, the commander may move with the unit, or he may stay in place. This counts as one *order*. A commander who moves with his unit must *move* to the same hex. Exception: you may not *move* a commander *commanding* unit or units if he has already moved on this turn.

As long as an NCO/tribal chieftain commands two units of the same colour in adjacent hexes, these units are counted as ONE in

relation to *command cards*.

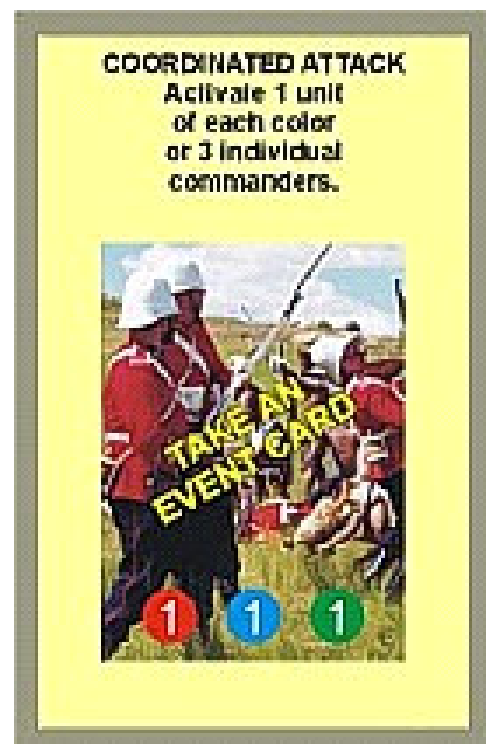
Example: you play a *command card* with the order "*activate 2 red units or individual commanders*". In case you have two red units under *command* of an NCO/tribal chieftain (in adjacent hexes), you can activate both units (*move & battle*), as well as another red unit (or two, should you have another NCO/tribal chieftain commanding 2 red units). If only one of the units is a red unit, the other unit may also move with the NCO/tribal chieftain, but may not battle.

If a unit commanded by a commander is given an *order*, the commander may move with the unit, or he may stay in place. This counts as one *order*. A commander who moves with his unit must *move* to the same hex. Exception: you may not *move* a commander *commanding* unit or units if he has already moved on this turn.

Game turn:

Play a command card. If applicable: draw (blind) an event card.

Announce the units to be activated (according to command card). If applicable: read event card.



Unit	Move		Dice & Range	Terrain	Move	+/- Dice	Line of sight
Mounted troops	3	&	3 Lancers A: +1	Wood	Stop & not battle	-1 attacker	Blocked
Dismounted cavalry	Mount or dismount	&	3-3-2-1 A can possibly fire 2x	Orchard		-1 attacker	
Infantry A-class	0	&	4-3-2-1 A can possibly fire 2X	Hill		-1 attacker	Blocked
	1	&	4-3-2-1	Building	Stop & not battle	-2 attacker	Blocked
	2	&	0				
Infantry B-class	1	&	4-3-2-1	River	Stop if no ford	-1 defender	
	2	&	0				
Infantry C-class	1	&	3-2-1	Marches	Stop	-1 attacker	
	2	&	0				
MG (foot)	0	&	4-4-3-3-2	Depressions	Only infantry	Can only be attacked in adjacent hex Artillery: no restrictions	
	1	&	0				
MG (horse)	0	&	4-4-3-3-2	Debris	Stop and takes vehicle 1 turn		Blocked
	2	&	0				
Field artillery	0	&	4-3-3-2-1-1	Sandbags		Attacker: -1 infantry -1 mounted troops	Defender: May ignore first flag
	1	&	0	Barbed wire	Stop	-1 defender	
Horse artillery	1	&	4-3-3-2-1-1	Bridge			
	2	&	0				
Artillery on hilltop			+1 D6 if deployed on hilltop	Field (crops)		-1 attacker	Blocked
NCO or tribal chieftain	3 or 2	&	Can command 2 units of 1 colour in 1 hex	Rough terrain	Stop & not battle	-1 attacker	
				Fence		-1 attacker	
Officer or tribal overlord	3 or 2	&	Can command 2 units of 2 colours in 1 hex	Fieldwork		-2 attacker	

Game turn:

Play a **command card**. If applicable: draw (blind) an **event card**.

Announce the units to be **activated** (according to **command card**). If applicable: read **event card**.

Move all activated units.

Battle:

Options defender: choice to be made before attacker engages in battle)

Voluntary retreat (1 hex) (no defence throw – breakthrough by attacker not possible)

Make a stand (with defence throw)

Attacker battles: (if applicable: **event card** is activated)

Casts the eligible number of dice per unit before defender makes a voluntary retreat (if he has chosen to)

Hits on defender's unit are calculated

Defender makes saving throws, kills are eliminated.

Defender throws defence die (if eligible).

Resolve **retreats**:

Flags can be ignored if unit strength higher than:

Units in the same hex as a general may deduct 1 further figure from the above numbers (except artillery).

Attacker draws **command card**.

A-CLASS:

Infantry: 4 figs

Mounted troops: 4 figs

Artillery/MG: 3 figs

B-CLASS:

Infantry: 6 figs

Mounted troops: 5 figs

C-CLASS:

Infantry: 8 figs.

RETREAT TABLE





KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

by Nick Drage

True Information Warfare

A brief idea for a combat resolution system

As those of you kind enough to attend my "Dark Guest" session at COW will have realised, I'm beginning to see just how difficult it is to create a decent combat system. Thinking around this problem a little while before COW I came up with the following idea. I'm not sure that it's useable in anything I'm planning, but I'd be interested to hear if its been used before, or whether anyone thinks they could use it.

Further to my "The Geek Shall Inherit The Earth" idea that in Information Security vulnerabilities and exploits, the weapons of war, are just knowledge, I was considering introducing a combat system whereby knowledge is the key to success. When the players' computers were attacked by a particular program or method, they would be told the name of that method... and then pointed at a whole pile of I.T. Security reference books. They would then need to read up on the attack within a specified period of time, and at the end of that period, explain the attack and suitable defences to it, to the umpire. The umpire would then judge how well they understood the type of attack they had suffered and they would make a combat roll heavily influenced by the depth of their understanding and their ability to communicate it.

I've decided this is rather deep for technical players, let alone non-technical players, but that it may be applicable in other fields as an extension of the matrix wargaming genre.

Anyway, as I gather some of you are teachers and trainers I thought I'd pass on the concept. As always, any feedback is welcome.



LOGISTICS IN GULF WAR II

by John Curry

To support 1 (UK) Armoured Division and 16 Air Assault Brigade of 26,000 took 31,000 men.

To move 1(UK) Armoured Division to theatre took a tremendous effort. Sailing from Emden in Germany to Kuwait were 1,029 armoured vehicles, including 120 Challenger 2 MBTs, 150 Warriors, 36 AS90 (self propelled guns), 2,926 B-vehicles (soft skinned vehicles that run B or the supply echelon of an army), 18 light guns, 215 engineer vehicles (some tracked, armoured and B-vehicles).

A total of 23 trains carried the equipment to the port for the convoy of 19 ships. The RAF and civilian aircraft took 900 soldiers from Hanover to Kuwait per day.

From the UK, 4,350 vehicles were sent in support (B vehicles, land rovers, light ARVs [Armoured Reconnaissance Vehicles), APCs, 2,400 trailers, 1,700 ISO containers, 4,800 heavy kit (e.g. bridges, helos), 3,000 tons of ammunition, 55,000 other tons of equipment/stores. This took 40 ships to move to Kuwait.

Ammunition Expenditure

120 MBTs fired 1.9 tonnes of Depleted Uranium shells, 540 HE shells.

The AS90 artillery of 36 guns, fired 9,000 assorted rounds.

16 105mm light guns fired 11,000 rounds

2,000 bomblet shells were used.

Lessons: The UK armoured division is dependent on reinforcement from Britain to support field operations.

It takes 7,276 vehicles to support 120 tanks and 150 warriors i.e. 27 per armoured vehicle in the front line.

Never loot destroyed enemy tanks if you want to start a family.



FAILURE OF MATRIX ARGUMENTS

by Graham Evans

I'm a big fan of Matrix Games, and love to run them and play in them. The subtle interplay of argument is enticing, and to see a player construct forceful arguments from nearly nothing to turn round a losing position is always a source of joy, even when I'm on the receiving end of it.

In one of his early pieces about Matrix Games Tom Mouat made the comment that most matrix arguments should succeed, otherwise the game goes no-where. I don't think this was a plea for anything goes, just an acceptance that if you play a game based on arguments, having them all fail is a bit of a downer.

In "De Matrica Bellae" my usual lowest success roll is 7 on 2D6. I'm less concerned in this game to have all arguments succeed as the figures on the table top provide another dimension to the game. Even so, if a player repeatedly rolls very poorly (step forward Wayne "Snake Eyes" Thomas) then they can find that everything is not just a bit of an uphill struggle for them, it is a vertical ice covered rock face.

I had a bad run of luck in John Bassett's "I lost my heart too..." Matrix Game at COW 2005. Partly the arguments weren't strong, but I had three attempts at 7 or 8 in the first three rounds of the game, and failed all of them with dice rolls of 5 or less. Fortunately as the game had an element of role play as well I was able to pull myself out of the fire a bit as I've reported elsewhere. It wasn't clear half way through that I was going to make any sort of fist of the game as the other players rolled another 10 or 11 however.

I accept that luck does influence most games. Martin Goddard's tactical advice at the first AK47 Day of "Roll lots of sixes" is generally sound, but in most games if you manage to get there with more troops than your opponent you will prevail as the luck tends to go on the sides of the big battalions.

The difference with the Matrix Game is that the argument is the nexus of the game. It is often the one chance you have as a player to influence what is going on. Furthermore, if your argument fails it puts you further behind the other players, thus often meaning that your next argument is likely to have a lower chance of success and so on. However, making every argument an automatic success isn't the answer as ludicrous arguments will make it spin out of control

It occurred to me part way through the Sambre refight at COW, as Wayne just sat there failing to move (again), that a player who misses out on a perfectly reasonable argument deserves some form of compensation. I'm thinking about introducing "Fail" chips. Every time you fail, you get given a "Fail" chip. These can be cashed in throughout the game. Perhaps for every two you cash in you get to re-roll your success dice, or for every three you get another Matrix Card. At least then the player has a chance to pull something back and not get drowned in a continuing spiral of failure.

What do you think?



WHERE NEXT WITH TABLE TOP MATRIX GAMES

by Graham Evans

With the publication of "De Matrica Bellae" by the Society of Ancients I felt that I'd really come to the end of a particular strand of wargaming. I'd got a set of rules that gave me a type of game I wanted, and were flexible enough to cover most of what I wanted to do. To a certain extent it was a case of there really wasn't anything else I could do for Matrix Gaming. I'd trawled the system round shows on and off for the last 3 or 4 years. I'd written several articles for Slingshot. I'd had it delivered through the letter boxes of 1500 mostly mainstream wargamers. What else could I do?

Well, there's always the opportunity for development, or as it happens slavishly following fashion.

There are a few problems with DMB. The random movement distance system seems to work, but it does provide some irritants. It often happens that a player argues successfully for extra movement (e.g. 2D6 instead of 1), and having made a successful argument then rolls a derisory number for movement.

The weapon ranges work quite well, - the 1" melee range means that figures on 20mm deep bases (such as my pike men and legionaries) get to fight with twice as many bases as warbands and cavalry. However, sometimes it does all seem a bit slow. I think I need a mechanism for allowing more bases to be involved in combat.

And finally, even with a really simple combat and movement system I'm still not getting as much tabletop gaming as I'd like when compared to the amount of arguing that is going on.

So, as they're flavour of the month, I'm turning my thoughts towards using squares.

Why? Well, they simplify certain parts of the game by making it completely clear exactly where everything is. There isn't any argument about what's in range, and what isn't. By giving this level of precision without complexity they speed up the game, and when you're mostly modelling battle-lines clashing you don't lose a lot of definition.

My main problem when thinking through this idea has been what size of squares to use. It is obvious, to me at least, that really large formations such as the Macedonian phalanx should spread across more than one square, or else squares will need to be very large (or units very small). My ancient armies are based on DBx size elements (i.e. 60mm for 20/25mm figures and 40mm for 15mm). My initial thoughts are that squares should be no more than two bases wide, - this means that for the 60mm bases I'm looking at 5" squares and for 40mm bases 3 1/2" (yes, I know I've just mixed metric & imperial units). This means the squares are slightly larger than the two base widths, but that gives a bit of "wiggle" room when putting stuff down. I think

the areas have to be squares. I've thought about oblongs (e.g. 5" x 2 1/2") but that is going to get messy when a flank gets turned. This means:

Rule 1 – Size of Squares

Squares are 2 bases widths square. There is no stacking limit within a square, but bases must NOT overhang the edges or overlap each other. If they don't fit that is tough.

Movement distances are the next consideration. My feeling again is to keep it simple. I think that I'll go for one movement speed for foot and one for mounted units. I know that it is generally accepted that light versions of the two arms move faster and are better in uneven terrain, but I think that generally men move at the same speed in a battle until it really matters. Then an argument to move quicker or evade can be deployed. The ratio between foot and horse movement has given me some cause for thought. My usual table is 8ft x 5 ft, although sometimes we play on a 6ft x 4ft area. Taking the bigger area this means that with the 5" squares I have a 12 square table depth. For deployment I think you have to have at least two squares depth, if not three. Assuming two squares, that means front lines are going to be eight squares apart. How soon do I want infantry lines to clash? We don't want it to take too long or we'll all die of boredom or all the argument cards will have been all used up before anyone starts hitting anybody. Taking those items into consideration, I end up with:

Rule 2 – Movement Rates

Movement restrictions. Turning costs 1 square movement (except for about face). Terrain effects are argued for.

I think I want to consider hand to hand combat next. I'm not going to change the 6 on a d6 to hit rule. I'm tempted to say that hand to hand only occurs when opposing sides occupy the same square, but as I've given a stacking limit of as much as you can cram in this means that you could deny combat by just stacking up a square. On the

other hand I don't want an odd element in a square forced to fight a full square if it doesn't want to. In which case, I think it goes like this:

Rule 3 – Hand to Hand Combat

Hand to hand combat occurs either:

When opposing units are in the same square or...

Across a square boundary if both units offer battle

Eligible bases

Bases can only fight to their front

When fighting in a square all the units in the square fight, plus up to half of a square's worth from an rear square (e.g. a 60mm x 20mm based unit can form up 2 wide and 6 deep in a square. This is 12 bases. In supporting a square in an attack 6 could fight)

When fighting across a square boundary, all bases in the square can fight.

Now for shooting. Getting the balance between shot and melee right in pre-modern periods is key. How many game systems have you heard it said "Archery is too powerful" or the converse? Generally speaking I'm ambivalent about the power of archers. I look at Darius' army and I see it crammed full with bows. Every troop type is dual armed. Lot of good it did them. Then we have Carrhae, - although in that case the archery was over a prolonged period. I don't think I want units to endure too much shooting whilst trying to get to grips, so I go for:

Rule 4 – Shooting

Ranges:

Bows : These can shoot over a square, or into an adjacent square

Slings/javelins: Can only shoot into an adjacent square

When shooting into an adjacent square this doesn't mean the unit is hand to hand contact as well. Shooting into an adjacent square is not the same as fighting across a boundary.

Eligible bases

Shooting arc is the square to front, and one square either side.

Up to half a square's worth of bases can shoot.

That's about it. All other rules, - use of arguments, initiative cards etc are as in DMB. Alternatively bolt them on to however you do matrix battles on the tabletop and see what happens.

So far the ideas are untested, so give me feedback.



S.O.T.C.W

SOTCW Northern Gathering
will be held at the Garrison Hotel,
Hillsborough, Sheffield
on Sunday 6th November 2005
WD Display Team (North) will be
there with "The Bells of Hell"





WAYNE'S BIRTHDAY BASH

by Wayne Thomas

Time marches on and, God willing, I will be 50 on 26th November. To mark the occasion, which conveniently falls on a Saturday, I intend to organise a day's wargaming at a local watering hole, not far from the M5 just south of Bristol.

The plan is to start around 10.00 hrs with 'Good Morning Vietnam' followed by a jolly good carvery lunch, and then a choice of smaller games - 'Sands of the Sahara', 'Afghanistan', 'Peninsular Progress', etc. - time permitting - ending the day at a reasonable time with '55 Days in Peking'. The idea is to have a fun day, without troubling too many of the little grey cells.

Cost will be limited to the lunch (large carvery and mineral water for £10 including tip) and drinks etc. through the day.

Will those of you that are interested in spending a day in Somerset please drop me a line.

D.W. Thomas
28 Firleaze
Nailsea
Bristol
BS48 4DH

Or give me a ring at home on 01275 856377 (evenings and weekends).



COW PHOTOGRAPHS

A suggestion
by Tim Gow

What follows is either bleeding obvious or brilliantly innovative - I'll let others decide: Given the profusion of digital cameras now appearing at Knuston (I took 100 photos this year) and the subsequent swapping of photos that goes on informally, it occurred to me that we could perhaps be doing this in a more systematic way.

What if everyone who took photos burned

them onto CDs and one person then collated them all (or a selection) onto a further CD (yes, I guess I am volunteering!) and made copies of this for distribution? The result would be like a pictorial only version of the old COW annual. Costs would be about £2 for the CD, reduced for those who contributed. Taking this idea a stage further, it could be included in the (suitably increased) WD membership cost. I look forward to some feedback on this...



FROM THE HALLS OF MONTEZUMA, NORFOLK

by Tony Hawkins

A Marine stationed in Iraq recently received a "Dear John" letter from his girlfriend back home. It read as follows:

Dear Ricky,

I can no longer continue our relationship. The distance between us is just too great. I must admit that I have cheated on you twice since you've been gone, and it's not fair to either of us. I'm sorry. Please return the picture of me that I sent to you.

Love, Becky

The Marine, with hurt feelings, asked his fellow Marines for any snapshots they could spare of their girlfriends, sisters, ex-girlfriends, aunts, cousins etc. In addition to the picture of Becky, Ricky included all the other pictures of the pretty gals he had collected from his buddies.

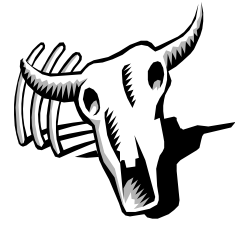
There were 57 photos in that envelope.... along with his note:

Dear Becky,

I'm so sorry, but I can't quite remember who you are. Please take your picture from the pile, and send the rest back to me.

Take Care, Ricky.

Session	Onside	Offside
18 Platoon		x
1950s Wargaming	x	(192)x
A Brief History of the 21st Century		
A Peninsular Progress	x	
A Revolutionary Quadrille		x
A Ridge Too Many		x
Aces High		x
America 2025	192	192
Another Footfall Situation	x	(192)
Bloody Barons		x
Byzantium		x
Carcassonne		(192)
Commando (PBI II)		x
Contract		
Cyprus 2006	192	192
Dark Guest		(192)x
Fletcher Pratt Naval Wargame		x
How to Defeat Terrorism II	x	(192)
I Lost My Heart Too		x
Ideas Exchange	192	192
It's a Riot		(192)x
It's not a Riot, We're the SPG	Cancelled	
Manner Gegen Panzer		(192)x
Mini External	192	192
Pay Any Price		(192)x
Redcoats and Dervishes	x	x
Redcoats and Rebels	x	x
Sambre 57BC	x	x
SKELF Hunting		(192)
Special Delivery	(192)	
Sumer		(192)x
SWAG (Silly Wargames Acronym Game)	x	x
The Bells of Hell	x	x
The Five Fs	x	
The Guns of Toblerone	x	x
The Oxygen of Publicity	Cancelled	



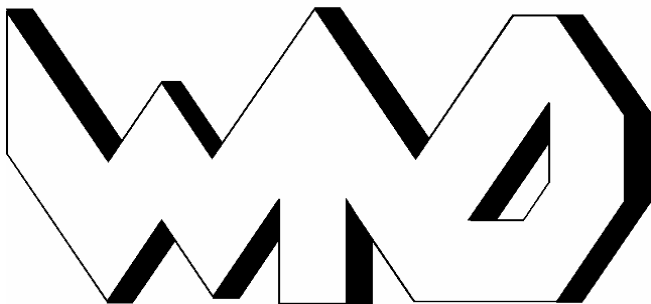
**COW
2005
REPORTS**

The number shows which Nugget reports appeared in. If bracketed this means it appears as part of a composite report on COW rather than as a standalone on or offside. An "x" indicates that a report has been received for the Nugget but not yet published.

A really excellent start. My thanks to those who have responded so quickly. But do not sit back, make your mark, write up those reports if you have not already done so.

Please advise me if I have missed any sessions here, or if you have sent reports in and they are not featured here.

Jonathan Crowe.



WARGAME NEWS

COW 2006, Knuston 07-09 Jul 06

WD Display Team (North)

SOTCW, Sheffield 6 Nov 05

Triples, Sheffield 1-2 Apr 06

Other Events

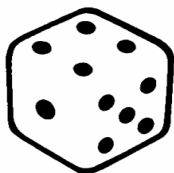
Firepower, Woolwich 14 Aug 05

Britcon, Manchester 19-20 Aug 05

Society of Ancients AGM and Games Day, Harpenden 10 Sep 05

While we always try to get it right, we cannot be held responsible for any details that are wrong. You must check first!

If you know of any events worthy of inclusion in this column please drop the Editor a line

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Wargame Developments is a loose association of like-minded wargamers dedicated to the continued development of wargames of any type whatsoever. Wargame Developments does not make a profit.

CONFERENCE OF WARGAMERS

The annual Conference of Wargamers will take place at Knuston Hall, Northamptonshire on 07 - 09 July 2006. The conference is open to both members and non-members at an estimated cost of £165 for full board. For further details please contact the Conference Organisers whose details are published above.

SUBMISSIONS TO THE NUGGET.

We will accept any submissions, in any format provided we can actually read what you have written. Contributions sent as e-mail attachments should be in MS Word, .txt or .rtf format. Typed or printed articles should ideally be on white A4 paper, in plain (not italic or underlined) black, single column monospaced text, 12 point or larger. Contributions are welcome, however, in whatever format you can muster.

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