

BAND OF BROTHERS

Screaming Eagles

PART 1 - INFANTRY

Band of Brothers is a game that simply, yet realistically, depicts squad level combat during World War II. This first part of the rules will introduce you to all the rules that you need to know to play the first several scenarios. Vehicles, Guns, and Artillery are added in Part 2.

1.0 GAME TURNS

The game is played in a series of turns, each of which represents about two minutes of time. Each turn of the game contains the following four phases:

1. Operations Phase

Players take turns moving and firing units.

2. Rout Phase

Certain Suppressed units must check to see if they rout.

3. Melee Phase

Units in the same hex have melee combat.

4. Recovery Phase

Units recover from Suppression and game markers are removed or advanced.

2.0 COMPONENTS

Map – The game maps portray terrain typical to the theater of war found in Europe during World War II. A hex grid has been overlaid on the game map to regulate movement and combat. The maps included in the game are geomorphic. They can be combined in a number of different ways as required by the scenario. Half-hexes are fully playable.

Die – The die in this game is ten sided (d10) and is used for all die rolls in this game. A “0” equals a “10” on this die so a roll will yield a result between “1” and “10”.

Game Counters – Most of the game units have two sides. The front is the full strength side and the back is the reduced strength side of the unit.

The units used in part 1 are infantry units. There are two types of infantry units in part 1. They are:

1. Squads

Most of the infantry counters represent infantry Squads of 10 to 15 men. They have 5 Movement Points.



2. Weapon Teams (WTs)

These are a small group of individuals that are trained to operate one or more heavy weapons. They are marked with a “WT”.



Mortar Unit

Machine Gun Unit

They are treated just like Squads, except:

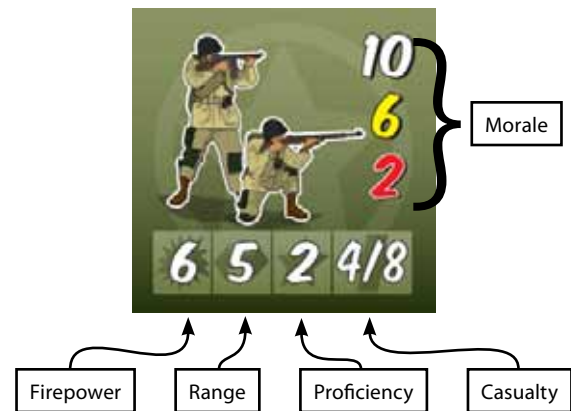
- Because of the heavy nature of their equipment, they only have 4 Movement Points instead of 5.
- In Melee, an un-reduced WT has Firepower of 2 and a Reduced WT has Firepower of 1.
- In Melee a WT is eliminated if it suffers casualties.
- WTs may not perform assault fire.

Reduced Units - Squads or WTs that have taken casualties are Reduced. The counters are flipped over to their back side with a red stripe. The capabilities of a Reduced unit are often lower.

Stacking – No more than two Squads, WTs, or combination of those two may be in any one hex at the end of a unit’s move.

Players may not examine stacks of the enemy player.

INFANTRY UNIT ATTRIBUTES ON THE COUNTERS



On the bottom from left to right:

Firepower (1st number – explosion) – This represents the unit’s ability to inflict damage on other units. WTs also have a smaller number next to their Firepower which is their (lower) Melee strength.

Range (2nd number – arrow) – This is the number of hexes over which a unit can use its full Firepower.

Proficiency (3rd number – star) – This number is a modifier that is added to a Morale Check when a unit attempts a difficult action. This represents a unit’s training and skill in combat. Lower numbers are better, with zero being the best (no modifier added). Units with better Proficiency are more likely to fire

effectively after moving or to fire at a moving target. When a unit takes a Morale Check that is modified by Proficiency, it is called a *Proficiency Check (Prof Check)*.

It is possible that, because of Suppression and a high Proficiency that a unit may not even be able to pass a Prof Check.

Casualty (4th number – cross) – This consists of two numbers for a fresh unit and one number for a Reduced unit. It represents another aspect of a unit’s training, and its cohesion. Units with high casualty ratings are less likely to take casualties.

3.0 COMMAND POINTS (CPs)

Each side receives a number of Command Points (CPs) *per turn* in each scenario. They abstractly represent the overall leadership abilities of each army in that battle. Each player takes the appropriate number of CP counters. CPs may be used for the following functions:

- May be used to re-roll any Morale or Prof Check die roll **made by that player**.
- May be used by the player normally moving second to perform one action with 1 unit at the start of a turn. The only limit on the number of units that can be used this way is the number of CPs the player has.
- May be used to conduct Final Op Fire on a unit that is further than 1 hex away but not more than normal range. The unit would still have to pass a Prof Check after the CP was used.
- May be used to re-roll a Melee combat die roll (only one CP per side may be spent in this way per Melee) **made by that player**.

For example: If a unit fails a Morale Check, the owning player may expend a CP to re-roll that Morale Check.

Expending a CP does not guarantee success. The unit in the above example may again fail the Morale Check. In this case, the CP would have been expended with no benefit.

Once a side’s CPs have been expended, it may no longer conduct any of the above actions that turn.

Only 1 CP can be used on a unit each turn. As each CP is used, one of that player’s CP counters is placed on the unit to show which units have used CPs and to track how many CPs a player has used that turn. These counters are returned to each player during the recovery phase. Each turn a player will begin with the same number of CP counters. CPs may **not** be accumulated for use in future turns.

CPs may only be used on Squads and WTs. They may not be used on Guns, Vehicles, or Artillery.

4.0 OPERATIONS PHASE

This phase is the heart of the turn and is where units move and fire. The player listed as going first on the scenario card begins using units first (exception – see CPs).

That player **MUST** Use (either move or fire or mark as Op Fire) a number of units within the limits of his Operations Range.

OPERATIONS RANGE

This abstractly represents the command and control capabilities of an army, as well as its flexibility and leadership. It is given on the scenario card and is a number range.

For example: An army that had an operations range of 3-6 in a scenario, would have to Use a minimum of three units and a maximum of six units before the other side would be allowed to Use units (exception – see Opportunity Fire).

A player chooses one unit at a time and Uses them. The player does NOT have to “pre-select” all the units that he will be using. All units (including decoys) Used count against the Operations Range.

A unit that fails a Morale Check and is marked with a Used counter, counts against the operations range.

Players alternate using their units (either moving or firing) within the limits of their operations range until all units have been Used on both sides. Once one side has Used all of its units, the other side may continue to Use the rest of his units.

USED

As each unit is Used, it should be marked with a Used marker.

A unit is marked as Used whenever it performs an action, or **attempts** to perform an action.

For example: if two units in the same hex both attempt to move and one passes the Morale Check (and moves) while the other does not (and remains in place), they are both marked as Used.

Any unit may be marked as Used (even in Melee or a decoy).

Units that are marked Used may only perform limited actions in the Operations Phase (such as Final Opportunity Fire).

DECLARING OPPORTUNITY FIRE (OP FIRE)

Instead of moving or firing a unit, a player may decide to mark a unit as Op Fire. This counts as Using a unit for purposes of the Operations Range. This “saves” a unit for use later and gives it a greater chance to successfully shoot at a moving enemy. A unit so marked may only Op Fire that turn and may not be moved or fired normally.

A unit that is marked as Op Fire, which subsequently attempts Op Fire at an enemy unit, is then marked as Used. Note that it is possible for a unit that is marked as Op Fire to end the turn that way and not fire or move that turn.

Decoys may be marked as Op Fire.

5.0 MOVEMENT

Each unit has a set Movement Point allowance as given with the unit type. When using units as part of the operations phase, units may be moved up to the limit of their Movement Points. Movement is from hex to adjacent connected hex. Movement Points may not be saved for another turn, or transferred to other units.

A unit must pass a Morale Check before moving (even if the unit is entering from off board). Obviously, if the unit's current Morale is "10" (normal for fresh units), it is automatically successful and no roll is needed.

Different terrain on the game boards have different Movement Point cost that are deducted from a unit's Movement Point allowance as that unit moves.

See the player aid card for movement costs.

A unit cannot enter a hex unless it has Movement Points to do so.

For example: an infantry Squad that has traversed 4 clear hexes (cost 1MP each) has only one Movement Point remaining and could NOT enter an adjacent building (cost 2MP) at the end of that move.

Moving units may be paused to receive Op Fire. A moving unit that receives Op Fire that results in Suppression must pass an immediate Morale Check (even if it passed one at the start of the move) or its move ends and it is immediately marked as Used. If the unit receives fire from multiple sources, it must take a Morale Check for each source it is receiving fire.

If a unit failing a Morale Check during a move would cause a hex to be over stacked, then the unit is instead retreated back to its previous hex – regardless of Movement Points remaining.

A unit may move into a hex containing an enemy Squad if it has enough Movement Points to enter the terrain of that hex. Upon entering that hex, it must stop all movement.

Units not marked as Used, that start in the same hex as an enemy unit may move out of it if otherwise able, but must first pass a Prof Check to do so. If successful, they may move normally, but may not move into a hex with another enemy unit in that move.

Units that move, or **attempt to move**, are marked as Used.

5.1 Declared Retreat: If, before rolling a Morale Check, the player declares that the unit is retreating, the unit gets a -4 die roll modifier to its check. This makes it easier to pass the Morale Check, but the unit then must follow all the restrictions of a routing unit (see 11). Units starting in the same hex as an enemy unit can **not** get this -4 die roll modifier.

5.2 Assault Fire: A unit may attempt to Assault Fire **after it has completed its move**. This is considered part of the move and occurs before marking the unit as Used.

The unit must pass a Prof Check. If the unit fails, it does not get to Fire and is marked as Used.

If the unit passes, it executes a fire attack normally, but there is a +1 modifier (it is slightly less effective).

Weapons Teams (WTs) may NOT Assault Fire.

6.0 FIRE

The act of fire is a unit using its offensive capability to attempt to inflict Suppression or casualties to an enemy unit. Units may be selected to fire, Assault Fire after a move, and Op Fire while the opponent is moving units.

Range - A range number (except in the case of mortars) refers to the maximum range of a unit.

- A unit firing at a target within its range does so at full Firepower.
- A unit may fire at a target at up to twice its range, but does so at half of its Firepower (rounded down).
- In the case of mortars, the range number refers to the minimum range (there is no maximum). LOS does not always apply to mortar units (See 15).

FIRE RESTRICTIONS AND EFFECTS

- A unit must pass a Morale Check before firing.
- Units may NOT fire if in the same hex as an enemy unit.
- Units may not fire into a hex containing friendly units, but may fire through a hex containing enemy or friendly units (or both).
- Each unit must execute its fire attack individually. No units may combine fire attacks.
- Regardless of modifiers, a roll of a 10 on a fire attack is always no effect.
- Fire at a hex always affects all infantry and Guns in the hex (you are firing at the hex, not the individual units in the hex).
- Target hexes must be within range and Line of Sight of the firing unit.

EXECUTING A FIRE ATTACK

Roll a single d10 and add any appropriate modifiers given on the Player Aid Sheet. Defensive terrain adds to the die roll and being close to the target or firing at a moving target will subtract from it. This one die roll is used individually against each unit in the hex. Using this die roll check for Suppression and casualties against the units in the target hex as follows:

1. If the modified roll is less than or equal to the firepower of the firing unit, the target is suppressed by one step. Add a yellow suppressed marker to the Squad. If the unit is already marked with a yellow suppressed marker, flip it to the red fully suppressed side.
2. If it is possible to add the **first** number of the **target's** Casualty rating to the modified die roll, and the result is still less than or equal to the firepower of the firing unit, then the target is casualty reduced (see 7) **and** suffers two steps of Suppression (mark it with a red, fully Suppressed marker).
3. If it is possible to add the **second** number of the **target's** casualty rating to the modified die roll, and the result is still less than or equal to the firepower of the firing unit, then the target is eliminated and removed from the board.

A unit already marked with a red, fully suppressed marker does not receive any additional effects from a Suppression result. It remains at its lowest Morale value. However, if that unit was moving when it received a Suppression result, even though its Morale can not be decreased, it still must take an immediate Morale Check or have its move end and be marked as used.

Units do NOT take Morale Checks from fire. They receive Suppression which lowers their effective Morale (of course, they can also take casualties). **Morale Checks are taken when a unit attempts to do something.**

Units that fire, or attempt to fire, are marked as Used.

7.0 SUPPRESSION & MORALE CHECKS

Suppression is a measure of the stress of combat and the effectiveness of fire a unit has received. As a unit takes Suppression from enemy fire, its Morale decreases, reducing the possibility of that unit being able to perform operations within the game.

An unsuppressed unit uses its highest (white) Morale value. A unit marked with a yellow Suppressed marker uses its middle (yellow) Morale value. A unit marked with a red fully Suppressed marker uses its lowest (red) Morale value.

Suppression wears off over time (during the recovery phase).

To resolve a Morale Check, roll a d10. If it is less than or equal to the unit's Morale, it passes the Morale Check and may be moved or fired normally.

If it fails the die roll, the unit may not perform the operation it was attempting to perform and its operations phase is over. That unit is marked with a Used marker.

Un-reduced units usually have Morale of 10, meaning that a Morale Check is automatically successful and no roll is needed.

8.0 CASUALTIES

When a unit is casualty reduced, the unit is flipped to its (back) Reduced side. A Reduced unit that suffers casualties is eliminated. Once a unit is casualty reduced it may not be flipped back to its non-Reduced side.

If a unit suffers casualties it is marked with a red, fully Suppressed marker.

9.0 OPPORTUNITY FIRE (OP FIRE)

When a player is moving a unit, the other player may have an opportunity to fire at that moving unit. This is called Op Fire. Op Fire must be conducted as an enemy unit is moving. The non-moving player may not "back up" a unit to a previous hex in order to fire at it. The moving player should give the non-moving player an opportunity to say they are firing.

This can only be conducted by units that are **NOT marked as Used.**

Op Fire (or Final Op Fire – see 9.) MAY be conducted at a moving unit in the hex in which it began the turn **if** the first hex it would enter is that of an enemy unit (it is attempting to enter into a

Melee). It is subject to all the modifiers that it normally would be, including moving in the open if that hex is an open ground hex.

A unit must pass a Prof Check (a Morale Check with the unit's Proficiency added to the roll) in order to Op Fire.

When firing at a moving unit, the same die roll also affects non-moving units in the target hex of the moving unit, although modifiers to the die roll may be different for the different units

For example: -4 for moving in the open for the moving unit and no modifier for a stationary unit in that same open ground hex.

A Squad's or WT's Proficiency (Penalty) is reduced by one in each of the following three cases (remember, lower is better for Proficiency since it is a modifier that is added to the Morale Check):

- If the target unit is in the open.
- If the target unit is adjacent.
- If the firing unit has been previously marked as Op Fire.

These three modifiers are cumulative, although a unit's Proficiency can never be reduced to less than zero.

If the unit fails to pass the Prof Check, the unit may not Op Fire at that unit **in that hex**, but it is NOT marked Used. Failing an Op Fire Prof Check is the ONLY time a unit failing a Prof Check or Morale Check is NOT marked as Used. The unit failing this Prof Check can attempt to Op Fire at the same unit again if it moves into a new hex or can attempt to perform another action later in the turn.

Any number of units may attempt to Op Fire at the same moving unit in the same hex.

Op Fire that results in Suppression requires the moving unit to pass an immediate Morale Check (even if it passed one at the start of the move) or its move immediately ends and it is marked as Used (it obviously does NOT get an opportunity to Assault Fire). Units that were declared as retreating at the start of their move continue to get -4 to their check.

If a unit receives fire from multiple sources in a hex, it may end up taking several Morale Checks.

10.0 FINAL OPPORTUNITY FIRE (FINAL OP FIRE)

This is similar to regular Op Fire except that it is conducted by units that have been marked as Used.

Units that are marked Used can not normally perform operations during the Operations Phase, but may attempt Final Op Fire.

Just like regular Op Fire, the firing unit must pass a Prof Check. The same modifiers apply to these checks as with Op Fire.

Unlike Op Fire, Final Op Fire may only be conducted against moving units **that are adjacent.**

Exception: A CP may be expended to allow a unit to attempt Final Op Fire at a target greater than one hex away, but within the **normal** (not long) range of the firing unit. All other requirements for Final Op Fire still apply. This CP does not guarantee

that the unit will pass the necessary Prof Check. It merely allows a Used unit to attempt fire at a target within range, but greater than one hex away.

A unit may attempt Final Op Fire any number of times during a turn, based on the number of adjacent enemy units attempting to move.

There is a +2 modifier to the fire attack for Final Op Fire (it is slightly less effective).

A unit that attempted Op Fire or Final Op Fire may attempt Final Op Fire at the same unit during the same move, but **ONLY** if the moving unit enters a different hex. (This allows you to fire Final Op Fire at the same unit multiple times.)

11.0 ROUT PHASE

Units that are in difficult situations on the battlefield may sometimes flee or surrender. This is represented by the Rout Phase.

The player that moves first in the scenario must complete his entire Rout Phase first.

Units that meet **any** of the following conditions **at the start of their Rout Phase** are subject to Rout:

- They are in the same hex as an enemy unit.
- They are adjacent to an enemy unit that is not in Melee.
- They are in an open ground hex (not in fox holes or any other positive terrain modifiers) and within 5 hexes and Line of Sight of an enemy unit that is not in Melee. A unit behind a hedgerow is not considered in open ground as long it would receive a positive terrain modifier if fired upon by any unit within 5 hexes.

All units subject to rout must take a Morale Check. **If a unit meets more than one of the above criteria, it still only takes one Morale Check.** A unit that passes this Morale Check is unaffected.

All units that fail this Morale Check must rout.

If the unit fails the Morale Check by an amount equal to or more than the **second** number of its casualty rating, the unit is also Reduced. Units that are already Reduced and only have one casualty rating use the second number of its "un-reduced" casualty rating for this purpose.

Units in the same hex as an enemy unit or adjacent to an enemy unit not in Melee, must use the **first** number of the casualty rating when determining whether they are Reduced.

To rout, a unit must use (up to) all of its Movement Points moving toward cover (something that will give it a positive terrain modifier). In doing so, it can not move adjacent to an enemy unit, nor move closer (in hexes) to an enemy unit **in its Line of Sight**. If it cannot move without moving closer to or adjacent to an enemy unit not in Melee, it is eliminated.

Note: This means that units that fail a Rout Phase Morale Check while in Melee will be eliminated unless another unit remains in Melee (because they would be moving adjacent to an enemy unit not

in Melee as soon as they left the hex). If more than one unit from one side in a Melee fails its Morale Check, they must rout simultaneously.

If possible, units that rout must end the rout in a hex that gives them positive terrain modifiers against all enemy units.

A unit that would be forced to rout off the board is eliminated.

12.0 MELEE PHASE

This is hand to hand or close range combat and **ONLY** occurs between opposing units in the same hex.

Melee combat is simultaneous.

Each Squad or WT in Melee rolls two d10 with no modifiers. Count each d10 separately. For each result that is less than or equal to its firepower, one enemy unit in that hex is Reduced (owner's choice). If a CP is spent on a unit in Melee, **both** dice must be rolled again. If an un-reduced Squad is Reduced twice, it is obviously eliminated.

A full strength WT is considered to have a firepower of 2 in Melee combat. A Reduced WT is considered to have a firepower of 1 in Melee combat. This is shown by the subscript of 2 or 1 next to its firepower.

WTs are eliminated (not Reduced), if they are chosen as a casualty in Melee.

Morale does NOT affect Melee combat (its effect is felt in the rout phase).

For example: An American airborne Squad (Firepower of 6) is in the same hex a German first line Squad (Firepower of 5). Both of them roll two dice. The American rolls a 3 and a 6, causing two casualty reductions (eliminating the German). The German rolls a 1 and a 6, casualty reducing the Airborne unit.

13.0 RECOVERY PHASE

In this phase, units recover from Suppression and game markers are removed or advanced.

During recovery, all units marked with Suppression markers, of both sides (except those still in Melee), recover one step of Suppression (red to yellow, yellow to full Morale).

All Used, Op Fire, CP, and Artillery Fire Mission markers are removed.

Move markers are NOT removed (see 17).

The turn marker is advanced to the next turn. If this was the last turn on the turn track, then the scenario is over and victory is determined.

14.0 TERRAIN & LINE OF SIGHT

The terrain of a hex for movement (and other purposes) is defined by the terrain that is at the center hex dot.

LINE OF SIGHT (LOS)

Units can only fire at targets that they can see (obviously). This is determined by laying a thread between the center dot of the firing unit's hex and the center dot of the target unit's hex.

- Objects in the firing hex and the target hex do not impact LOS in any way.
- Roads, rivers, bridges, and canals do not impact LOS in anyway, except by special rule.
- Shadows do not block LOS.
- If trees, buildings, or hedgerows in any of the intervening hexes can be seen on both sides of the string, then the Line of Sight (LOS) is blocked (except as noted below).
- Trees/bushes that are in open ground hexes do **not** block LOS.

For example: On Board 1 hex H8, trees overhang into hex H7. These do not block LOS as H7 is an open ground hex. Also on Board 1, between hex D4 and E4, there are bushes. Since both D4 and E4 are open ground hexes, they do not block LOS.

- Hedgerows impact LOS as described under hedgerows (see below).

Units that check to see if they can fire are marked as Used if the LOS is blocked.

FOXHOLES

A certain number of Foxhole counters may be given to a side at the start of a scenario. They can be placed in any **non-building hex** anywhere within that side's set up area. Units in the same hex as a Foxhole counter get a +2 terrain modifier against normal fire and a +4 modifier against Artillery and Mortars. Units in Foxholes get only the benefit of the Foxhole and do not get a benefit from woods or hedgerows.

When moving into and out of a hex with a Foxhole, you do not get the benefit of the Foxhole and may be considered moving in the open. Use the other terrain in the hex.

If units in Melee in a Foxhole marked hex are subjected to an artillery attack, only the original occupants get the benefit of the Foxhole marker.

BUILDINGS

On the game boards, stone buildings are grey, wooden buildings are brown.

HEDGEROWS

Hedgerows are large, thick hedges that were planted on top of earthen mounds.

Hedgerows block LOS unless the firer and/or target is adjacent to the hedgerow. LOS directly along a hedgerow hex spine is blocked.

Target units get terrain benefits from a hedgerow only if they are in a hex adjacent to the hedgerow and the fire attack passes

through that hedgerow. If fired at through the hedgerow while moving behind the hedgerow, they get the benefit and are also not considered moving in the open.

However, target units do NOT get the benefit of the hedgerow when they move into or out of a hex on the opposite side of a hedgerow from a firing unit. They may also be considered moving in the open in that case. As long as two units on opposite sides of the same hedgerow are not moving, they BOTH get the terrain benefit of the hedgerow. A unit moving into or out of that situation loses that benefit.

Units behind a hedgerow do NOT get a positive terrain modifier against artillery or mortars.

RIVER OR CANAL

Units may not enter River or Canal hexes, except at bridge hexes. Bridges are considered a road in all respects.

ORCHARDS

Orchards are in play only through special rule. Orchards do not block LOS, but do provide a positive terrain modifier. For every 2 hexes of orchards, counting the target hex, but not the firing hex, there is a +1 terrain modifier (rounded up). This is in addition to other terrain modifiers. If a hex has been made an Orchard hex, ignore the original terrain in the hex.

For Example: A unit is in a woods hex with three hexes of orchards between the target and the firer. The fire attack would receive a +3 (+2 for 3 hexes of orchards and +1 for the woods).

ROAD

Roads do not impact combat in any way. Units moving along a road from one road hex to the next expend fewer MPs than in open ground (see player aid card).

DIKE ROAD

If a road is designated in a scenario as a Dike Road, it represents an elevated road. Units in a hex with a Dike Road must be placed within the hex so it is clear on what side of the road they are on. All non-mortar/non-artillery fire traced across the Dike Road at a unit in the same hex as the Dike Road is subject to a +2 modifier. LOS is not blocked by the Dike Road. Fire across a Dike Road at a unit not in the same hex as the Dike Road is subject to a +1 modifier.

There are no extra Movement Points required for crossing a Dike Road. It acts as a road for movement in all respects.

15.0 CONCEAL MARKERS & DECOYS

The same marker is used to represent both Decoys and Concealment. At the start of a scenario, any unit may be covered with a Conceal counter if it is in terrain that would entitle it to a positive terrain modifier from fire attacks.

A concealed unit receives an additional +1 modifier versus fire.

PART 2 – GUNS & VEHICLES

A certain number of Decoys may be given to a side at the start of a scenario. These Decoys may be covered with a Conceal marker like any other unit. That means that if four Decoys are given in a scenario, all four may be covered with an additional Conceal marker.

Decoys can be moved or may be marked as Used like any other unit. Using a Decoy counts against Operations Range. As long as they are on the board, they are treated like regular units, including forcing enemy units to take a Rout check if in the open. Decoys and Conceal counters are removed if:

- They take a Suppression result from a fire attack.
- An enemy unit moves adjacent (& survives fire in that hex).
- They are in open ground and the LOS of an enemy unit. If the LOS is questionable, it may be checked.
- A Concealed unit passes its Morale or Prof. Check & fires.

A unit that is not concealed may gain a Conceal marker by ending its move outside of the LOS of all enemy units.

16.0 MORTARS

Mortars are WT's and suffer the normal WT penalties. However, Mortars have a **minimum range** because of their high trajectory (they can not fire at a hex closer than the shown range number).

Mortars firing at units in a woods hex receive an additional -1 modifier to their fire due to airbursts (shells exploding in the tree tops and raining shrapnel downward).

Units in Foxholes receive a +4 terrain modifier (instead of the normal +2) when fired on by Mortars.

Under some circumstances, Mortars may be able to fire at units that they cannot see. This is called Directed Fire. If the Mortar team can trace a Line of Sight from the target to a hex that is **adjacent** to the mortar team then the Mortar may fire by Directed Fire. This represents a spotter that is detached from the unit to direct the Mortar team's fire.

All Directed Fire receives an additional +1 to its roll for the attack (it is less accurate).

Mortars may Op Fire like any other unit (even using Directed Fire), but, since they may not fire adjacent, they are limited in their use of Final Op Fire.



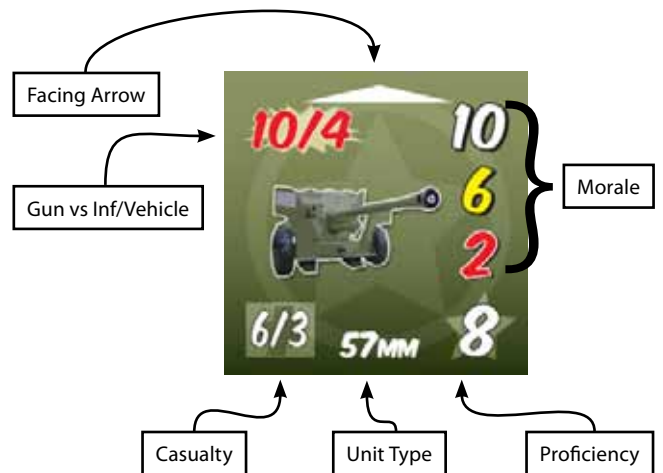
*This is the end of **Part 1** of the rules. This will allow you to play the first several scenarios. It is recommended that you play these first before continuing to **Part 2**.*

Vehicles and Guns may be covered with a Conceal marker and have the marker removed in the same way as an infantry unit. In addition, a Vehicle has its Conceal marker removed as soon as it is in the LOS of an enemy unit, even if it is in concealment terrain. Conceal markers are not removed until both sides have completed set up.

A Gun or a Vehicle counts as **THREE** units Used against a player's Operations Range.

CPs may **not** be used to re-roll an attack or a Prof Check by a Gun or a Vehicle.

GUN TRAITS



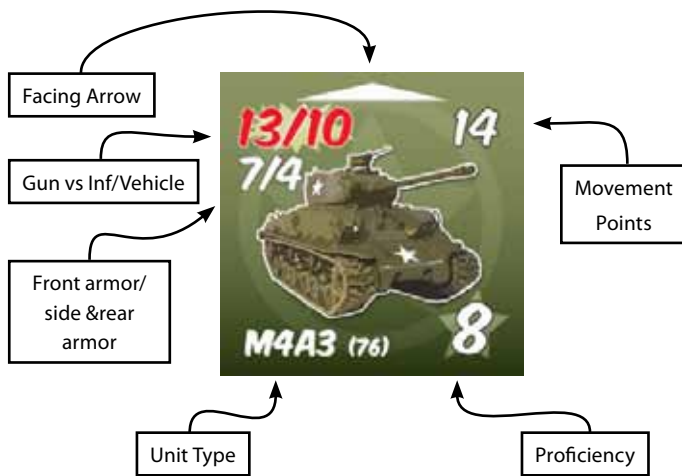
Guns are large caliber weapons and include anti-tank guns, artillery pieces, anti-aircraft guns, etc. The counter represents both the Gun and its crew.

Morale: The Morale of the Gun is the same as on an infantry unit. Guns (their crew) take Suppression and must pass Morale Checks just like infantry. Guns are also subject to Rout. A Gun that fails a Morale Check during the Rout phase is **eliminated** – remove it.

Casualty: If it is possible to add the Gun's Casualty rating to an attack, and the result is still less than or equal to the Firepower of the firing unit, then the Gun is **eliminated** (not Reduced). **The number before the slash is used when the Gun is attacked by infantry or artillery. The number after the slash (three lower) is used when fired upon by another Gun, Vehicle, or by a Squad armed with a Bazooka (within 4 hexes).**

Movement: Within the scope of a scenario, a Gun may not move to a new hex, but may (if not in a building) turn within a hex to Fire or Op Fire.

VEHICLE TRAITS



Morale & Casualty: Unlike Guns, Vehicles do not suffer Suppression, take Morale Checks or have a Casualty rating.

Armor: This represents the thickness of the armor on the Vehicle. The first number is the protection in front. The second number is the protection in the side and rear.

Movement: A Vehicle may move into either of the front two hexes in which it would normally be able to fire (**see Placement, below**). It may also turn within its current hex to change its facing. Movement costs for Vehicles are given on the player aid sheet.

Vehicles cannot enter woods or building hexes, although they may start a scenario in one. If they do, they may leave and turn within the hex normally.

A Vehicle's move may be paused to receive Op Fire. When the move is completed, it may attempt to fire before being marked as Used. This is similar to assault fire except it is done at full Firepower.

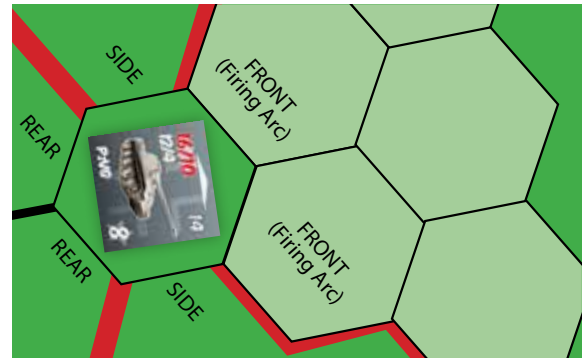
If a Vehicle uses $\frac{1}{3}$ or less (rounded down) of its Movement Points and does not attempt to fire any of its weapons, it may end the move marked with an Op Fire counter instead of a Used counter. If this Vehicle later used Op Fire, it would **NOT** get the +4 modifier for moving to a new hex.

Move Marker: After a Vehicle completes its movement and is marked as Used (not if it is marked Op Fire), it is also marked with a Move marker. This represents that the vehicle recently changed positions and is harder to hit (see Vehicle and Gun Proficiency below). This Move marker is **not** removed in the recovery phase. It is removed when the Vehicle is chosen for an action the following turn. The Vehicle executes its action normally (there is no penalty). Of course, it is possible for that Vehicle to again earn a Move counter.

TRAITS FOR BOTH VEHICLES AND GUNS

Firepower: The first number (before the slash) is used when firing against infantry or Guns. The second number (after the slash) is used when firing at Vehicles.

Placement: The placement of a Gun or a Vehicle within a hex is very important and indicates its firing direction. The facing arrow should be placed to line up with a hex spine. It may fire at any target within the cone made up of the two hexes on either side of the hex spine, extending outward with the firing arc up to its range and line of sight.



Vehicle and Gun Proficiency: This is slightly different for Guns and Vehicles than it is for infantry. When a Gun or a Vehicle takes a Prof Check, it must roll equal to or less than its Proficiency. This is a separate check. A Gun **NEVER** adds its Proficiency to a die roll when checking Morale.

Guns and Vehicles must take a Prof Check under the following circumstances. If more than one case applies, only one check is required, but all modifiers are cumulative.

- If firing at a target greater than 5 hexes away:
 - ◆ +0 to the Prof Check if over 5 hexes (but still must take a Prof Check)
 - ◆ +1 to the Prof Check if over 10 hexes
 - ◆ +1 to the Prof Check if over 20 hexes
 - ◆ +1 to the Prof Check if over 30 hexes
- If using Op Fire: +2 to the Prof Check
- If firing at a Vehicle with a "Move" marker: +1 to the Prof Check
- If marked as Op Fire: -1 to the Prof Check
- If firing after turning within its hex: +1 to the Prof Check
- If Vehicle firing after moving to a new hex: +4 to the Prof Check
- The infantry Proficiency modifiers of being in the open or being adjacent do **NOT** apply.

A special case occurs when a Vehicle attempts to Op Fire against a moving Vehicle. If the firing Vehicle must turn within its hex in order to fire and it fails its Prof Check, then it is returned to its previous placement within the hex (it is not allowed to turn to face the target). This special case applies only to Op Fire. A Vehicle turning within its hex other than Op Fire still must take a Prof Check before firing, but will retain its new facing even if it fails that Prof Check.

A Gun or a Vehicle that fails a Prof Check **during Op Fire** will **NOT** be marked as Used the **first** time it fails against a target. If it fails another Prof Check (after the target has moved to another hex) while attempting Op Fire at the same target, it will be marked as Used.

A Gun or Vehicle failing a Prof Check during its turn is always marked as Used.

GUNS & VEHICLES VS INFANTRY OR GUNS

To fire at infantry or a Gun, the Gun or Vehicle **may** (see above) have to pass a Prof Check. If Suppressed, the Gun must also pass a separate Morale Check before firing (obviously this does not apply to Vehicles). If the necessary checks are passed, roll using the appropriate Firepower, just like an attack by a Squad. For a Gun or a Vehicle, only the modifiers listed under Terrain apply. They do **not** use Fire Modifiers other on the Infantry Player Aid Card (except for the Conceal/Decoy modifier).

Guns and Vehicles may not fire at infantry in their hex.

Guns and Vehicles may **NOT** use Final Op Fire.

When firing at a unit with a Conceal marker on it, it is always treated as if it was infantry or a Gun because a Vehicle would have been revealed already.

GUNS & VEHICLES VS VEHICLES

To fire at a Vehicle, the Gun or Vehicle **may** (see above) have to pass a Prof Check. If it passes or does not need to take this check, the attack uses the attacking unit's Firepower against Vehicles. From this is subtracted the Armor rating of the target unit.

A thread or straight edge is stretched from the center of the firing hex to the center of the target hex to determine which armor value to use for a particular shot. If the shot would pass along a hex spine that is the border between front/side or side/rear, the armor that is most favorable to the target is used.

Modifiers for range and elevation are given on the Vehicle Player Aid Card. None of the modifiers on the Infantry Player Aid Card apply.

The attack number is determined by subtracting the target's Armor value from the attacking unit's Firepower and adding in the appropriate modifiers from the player aid card. If the die roll is less than or equal to this number, the target has been both hit and destroyed. Remove the Vehicle counter. A roll of a 10 is always no effect.

INFANTRY VS GUNS

Infantry fire at Guns as if they were infantry. Suppression or Casualties may result in the same way.

If a Gun turns in order to fire, it is **NOT** considered movement for the purpose of triggering opposing Op Fire.

In Melee, Guns and their crew are treated as a full strength WT in **all** respects.

INFANTRY VS VEHICLES

There are two ways in which infantry can attack Vehicles – Close Assault and Special Weapons.

Close Assault: This represents infantry attacking the Vehicle using mines, grenade bundles, etc.

To Close Assault, a Squad or WT must move into the same hex as a Vehicle. It must survive all fire in that hex, including passing any resulting Morale Checks. If the unit then rolls equal to or less than its Melee Firepower, the Vehicle is destroyed and removed. This attempt ends the unit's move.

When Close Assaulting a Vehicle that has armor and is not open topped, +1 is added to the die roll.

If the unit fails a Morale Check in the Vehicle's hex, it is returned to the last hex it was in before entering the Vehicle's hex.

Regardless of the success or failure of the Close Assault, the unit is also returned to the previous hex and it is marked as Used. Under no circumstances will a unit attempting Close Assault end its move in the Vehicle's Hex.

The Close Assault is resolved immediately and not during the Melee phase.

A unit may not enter a hex containing both an enemy Vehicle and enemy infantry. This means that a Vehicle in that situation may not be Close Assaulted and infantry in that situation may not be attacked via Melee.

Special Anti-Tank Weapons (SATW): These include both Bazookas (U.S.) and Panzerfausts (Germans).



Bazookas are not part of a WT, but are considered additional equipment carried by Squads. A Squad that is armed with a bazooka functions as a normal Squad in all respects. A Squad armed with a SATW must choose whether to use its Firepower **or** its SATW.

When firing the bazooka, its infantry firepower is increased by 1 when firing at a known Gun or WT. A Bazooka's range is 4 hexes when firing with the bazooka. The unit retains its normal range when not firing the bazooka.

Panzerfausts were a one shot weapon that were commonly carried by most German Squads by this stage of the war. As such, every German Squad may use them. Unlike Bazookas, they may only be used verses Vehicles. A Panzerfaust's range is 2 hexes in 1944 and 3 hexes in 1945.

A Squad must always take a Prof Check before using a SATW **against a Vehicle** even if a Prof Check would not normally have been required. For this Prof Check, the following modifiers are used:

- The Squad's Proficiency

- +2 if the Vehicle is moving (being marked with a Move marker has no effect)
- -1 if the firer was marked as Op Fire
- Add one for each hex of range (at range 2, add 2)

For this check the other infantry proficiency modifiers (-1 in the open, -1 adjacent) do **NOT** apply.

If a Squad passes its prof check, use the SATW firepower against the appropriate armor of the target to determine if the Vehicle is eliminated. The firepower for a Bazooka is 11 and the Firepower of a Panzerfaust is 22. As with Vehicles, a roll of a 10 is always no effect.

SATWs may **not** be used as part of Final Op Fire.

SATWs may not be fired from inside a building.

SATWs have no effect on Melee.

VEHICLE AND GUN STACKING

For purposes of stacking, a Gun counts as a Squad, but no more than one Gun may be in a hex. If both a Gun and infantry are in a hex that receives fire, then they both suffer Suppression and possible casualty results.

If a Vehicle or Gun is shooting at a hex that contains both Vehicles and infantry, the firing player must declare which enemy unit is the target and only that target is affected by the fire.

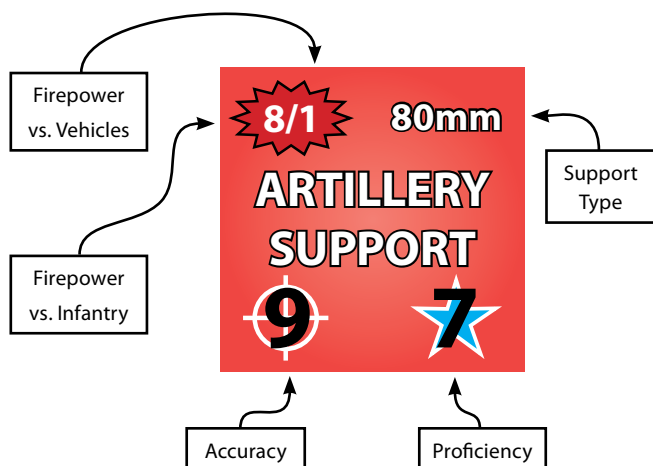
Only one Vehicle may end a turn in a hex. A Vehicle may enter the hex of a **friendly** Vehicle, but only if it has Movement Points to continue out of the hex.

A Vehicle may not enter a hex with **enemy** infantry unless it also has Movement Points to leave. A Vehicle may not end the turn in the same hex as enemy infantry.

Vehicles do not contribute to or count against infantry stacking.

17.0 ARTILLERY SUPPORT

It was quite common for units to receive support from Artillery pieces that were a significant distance away – off the game board. The fire usually came from a battery of Guns all firing at the same target coordinates. This is represented in the game by Artillery Support and is listed on the scenario card.



In addition to Firepower, each Artillery Support has two numbers – Proficiency and Accuracy.

To use the Artillery Support, the player must declare the hex that is to receive the fire. Similar to Guns, the player must roll less than the Proficiency of the Artillery Support. If used as Op Fire, there is a +1 to the Prof Check die roll of the Battery. This is the only possible modifier to this Prof Check.

1. If the Prof Check is failed, mark the Artillery Support on the scenario card as Used. It can not be fired this turn.
2. If the Prof Check is passed, place an Artillery Fire Mission counter in the hex selected. Continue with the sequence below:

Regardless of success or failure, the Artillery Support is marked as Used and counts as **THREE** units against the player's Operations Range. CPs may NOT be used on Artillery. Each Artillery Support on the scenario card can only be used once per turn.

If this was done during Op Fire, the counter must be placed so that the area of effect includes the moving unit. The player then must make an Accuracy Check.

- If he rolls equal to or less than the Accuracy of the Artillery Support, the Artillery Fire Mission is executed in that hex.
- If he rolls above the battery's Accuracy, the fire mission has drifted from the selected location by one hex for each number above the Accuracy. The direction of the move is randomly determined by the roll of a 6 sided die. This is the new hex where the Artillery Fire Mission **must** be executed – even if it is on the player's own troops. An artillery Fire Mission counter that is adjusted off board is removed and not executed this turn.

For example: If the Battery's Accuracy was 7 and a 9 was rolled, then the Fire Mission would be moved 2 hexes.

In either case continue with the sequence below:

To execute the Fire Mission, the Battery's Firepower is used against the hex containing the Fire Mission counter **and** against **each** of the surrounding six hexes. It affects **ALL** units in those hexes – both infantry and Vehicles.

- Against infantry and Guns, the attack is executed like any infantry attack and normal modifiers apply such as +1 for a wooden building and -4 for moving in the open. Similar to mortars there is a -1 modifier when firing at infantry and Guns in woods hexes.
- Against Vehicles, use the Firepower shown on the Artillery Support, but do not subtract the Vehicle's armor. Instead, subtract 1 from the die roll if the Vehicle is open topped or unarmored or add 1 to the die roll if the Vehicle's lowest armor factor is greater than 3. A roll equal to or less than the Firepower eliminates the Vehicle.

Continue:

The Artillery Fire Mission marker remains in its hex until the end of the Operations Phase and will be executed against any unit that **enters** any of the seven affected hexes. If a unit enters more than one of the hexes, it will be executed against it in each hex

it enters. Stationary units that were already attacked by the Fire Mission are not attacked again.

18.0 SCENARIO CARDS

The scenario cards tell you all of the information needed to know to play a game of Band of Brothers. There are 18 scenarios in the game. The scenarios run in historical order with scenario 1 beginning on June 6, 1944, continuing until the end of the war.

On each card is shown the map setup and orientation in the top right or left corner, below which may be special rules for terrain, who sets up and moves first, and scenario special rules, and victory conditions.

A turn track is given for each scenario with a German or American sign showing which turns reinforcements arrive. A brief historical background is given to give players a sense of what was happening historically in this battle.

At the bottom of the page is unit setup for each side showing what types of units, the number of units is below the unit type. The setup locations are given above or to the side of the units shown. If units enter as reinforcements, it tells what turn the units enter as well as where. In this area the Operations range and command points are given.

DESIGNER NOTES ON PART 1

This section is meant to highlight some of the key design decisions, especially when they contrast with other tactical games. Hopefully it also adds some more color to the game.

FOG-OF-WAR

This is an important element in Band of Brothers. Decoys and Conceal markers are perfect for limiting the information an enemy battlefield commander would have in a battle like this. **Frankly, even with them, both commanders still have too much information.**

OTHER SQUAD LEVEL GAMES

I love other squad level games. I started playing them in 1979 and have had many great hours of enjoyment. Yet, I have done some things very differently in this game. With that in mind, these designer notes are not meant as criticism of other games, but are meant to explain why certain things are done differently. If anything, this game is meant as homage to those that have gone before.

BUT WHAT ABOUT...?

This game is not a perfect simulation. Some games are great at getting the details right. You can find exactly what is required for a squad to climb a cliff or occupy a rooftop. While this game will not have all those details, hopefully it will approximate **the feel and decisions** of squad level combat in WW2. I also hope that you will find it very playable and extremely fun to play!

MORALE AND PROFICIENCY

The difference between Proficiency and Morale is important and sheds a lot of light on WW2 combat. For example, the Russian soldier seems to have been just as brave as his German counterpart. They should, by and large, have a similar morale rating. However, the Proficiency difference between them, especially at the start of Barbarossa, was as vast as Russia itself. The Germans at that time were a highly trained army that was seasoned by successful campaigns while the Russian army had been decimated by purges.

Both the Russians and the Germans are just as likely to duck under enemy fire, but the Proficiency advantage of the Germans is critical. They are more likely to be positioned properly to repel an attack, they are far more likely to use the proper technique when attacking an enemy position (and thus avoid casualties), they are far more likely to be able to effectively fire on a target as they approach it, etc.

Similarly, this difference is seen on the western front. The 101st was an elite and exceptionally trained unit while many of the German units employed against them were second line.

REDUCED SQUADS

The firepower (and other) values of Reduced Squads often are lower than fresh squads, including its best morale rating. This means that, even though the unit completely recovers from Suppression, the combat fatigue on the unit is such that it will always have to take a Morale Check. This approximates how troops can become less responsive in a tough fight and how a prolonged attack can lose momentum.

WHERE ARE THE LEADERS?

In understanding why there are no leaders in this game, it really is important to remember that **every squad** contains leadership, usually at least a corporal and a sergeant. Every platoon has a lieutenant and a sergeant, etc. Those leaders are “baked” into the squads themselves.

In that light it does not make sense to have separate leaders that give extra movement to squads or who can miraculously “rally” troops as they pass by. The leaders that are with the troops at all times are far more important. Book after book on the 101st stressed the non-commissioned officers in each squad and how they were the backbone of the unit.

It is hard to break from the concept of separate leaders. Indeed, this game originally had them. However they added many, many special cases to the rules and were easy to pick out on the battlefield. The benefits of excellent leadership beyond the squad level are better and more elegantly represented by the CPs in this game.

Of course the ultimate impact of platoon and company level leadership is how they directed the attack and the defense. This is in your hands. You are the leader.

OPERATIONS RANGE

The Operations Range which forces players to alternate using units symbolizes the chaotic nature of squad combat where each turn represents only a few minutes of time. It simply is not possible to coordinate attacks perfectly using all your units to that level of time precision. As one American commander commented in WW2 when an attack came off really well coordinated, *"The last time we had seen an attack like this was in the training films back in the States."* This was the exception and not the norm.

This also limits the twice in a row firing of static, phased combat. In some games, for example, when the combat situation on the board is static, one side will fire defensive fire and then prep fire and then the other side will do the same (getting two shots in a row).

Operations range also promotes "shooting from the hip." I detest opponents staring at the board for fifteen minutes to plan out what actually only represents 2-3 minutes of real time. In BOB, rarely do you stare because you only have to figure out what to do with 4 or 5 units. You make the call as you go and you are very naturally thinking about the next units while the other guy is moving. This gives a more accurate "feel" to the game.

AMERICAN OPERATIONS RANGE

The Operations Range for American units is almost always larger than their opponent. This is due to their excellent (by comparison) communications. Within a company, the German army was completely dependent on runners to relay information. In contrast, every American platoon had a radio (in theory). This is why the Americans have a greater flexibility in their command range (normally). An interesting comment on this was offered up by one German soldier:

"German radio sets were generally cumbersome and heavy; the German forces were lacking the sort of 'walkie-talkie' equipment possessed by many American units. In Germany, the development of two-way portable radio technology had been significantly retarded during the 1930's, perhaps partly due to the ban on amateur radio communications."

THE KILL STACK

There is no kill stack in this game... It just doesn't make sense for a player to pack 50 men into 40 yards (a WW1 density) with all the support weapons that can be found.

The fact that units can not combine fire and that Suppression can easily accumulate on units in the same hex, all encourage you to realistically spread out your forces.

NOT COMBINING UNITS

Units can not combine their fire because doing so ignores terrain modifiers. If a 5 FP unit shoots at a target in a stone building, it suffers the +2 terrain modifier (so that it is effectively only a 3 FP unit). If another 5 FP unit does the same, it should also

be reduced in effectiveness. Combing forces is a loophole that ignores that.

Simply by eliminating this loophole, players are again encouraged to realistically spread out their forces.

SPREADING OUT UNITS

The importance of spreading out units has been brought up a couple of times. It is something that is **fundamental** to WW2 tactical combat. Both defensive and offensive positions at this scale should resemble an evenly spread line, taking advantage of terrain, with some units in depth positions. They should not be large stacks of troops located in isolated hexes with a hundred or more yards in between stacks.

This is critical. If the general deployment of troops in a game is fundamentally wrong, then how can the tactics or game play represent WW2 combat? How can the combat system be right if it rewards such an unrealistic deployment?

NON-BLOODY COMBAT?

As you read the combat system, it may seem that casualties do not happen as often as you think they should. In that regard, it is important to remember that an estimated 5 to 10 thousand rounds (depending on the historical source) of ammunition were fired for every battlefield casualty in WW2.

"Suppression Fire" was the norm in WW2 – fire at a position just to keep their heads down and make it less likely that they will be able to fire effectively at you. Certainly individuals shot to kill when they had the opportunity, but, the majority of the time, an exchange of fire at distance was the **equivalent** of "Suppression Fire."

"Suppression Fire" or "Marching Fire" (as it was called by the Americans) was also the common tactic used to take positions. Some groups would fire to keep heads down while others would advance. Very few casualties would be inflicted until close range was achieved.

Units that kept firing at each other with small arms from a distance very rarely did any permanent damage. If you read combat reports from WW2 you will find only a handful of casualties even after 20 minutes of fighting at long range (unless artillery was involved). In this game, Squads in foxholes exchanging fire at normal range at good troops will not inflict casualty reductions. This is as it should be. If this game did that, it would be **extremely** unrealistic.

SUPPRESSION

Suppression symbolizes the stress of coming under effective enemy fire. It means that, because of that fire, the unit will less likely be able to respond. As such, Suppression wears off naturally over time.

Suppression eliminates the "two discrete states" of performance that is often seen in tactical wargames. Usually a combat unit is either perfectly obedient, or a mass of humanity that will not

even defend itself. What's worse, **both** commanders automatically know the state of each unit (in reality, not even the owner of the unit should know).

In that vein, Suppression gives you only the information that a commander in the field might have. A commander may order fire on a particular point in preparation for an attack. He may even have a good idea of how effective the fire was, but it is unlikely that he will definitively know that a position has been reduced to a bunch of defenseless squads and it is now safe to move. In other games, with a perfect bird's eye view of the battlefield, completely knowing the state of every unit, it is therefore possible to find the exact route for units to take to avoid all fire. My friend used to say, "I hate it when you move with impunity." In this system, while both commanders may have an idea of the state of the troops, they often will not know how a unit will respond until it is actually asked to do something.

In some games, once a unit is "broke" that unit often becomes the target for all your attacks. At long range you can get a "double-break" and cause permanent damage. As already mentioned, that is unrealistic. In this game, once a unit is heavily Suppressed, your incentive is to fire at other units to slow the attack or to pin down other sources of fire. This is as it should be.

CASUALTIES

Just because a unit has suffered Suppression but was not casualty reduced, it does not mean that ZERO casualties have been taken. It is quite possible that the Suppression suffered may not only be the result of the fire on the hex, but could be the affect of individual casualties on the unit's cohesion (even though the casualties were not numerous enough to reduce the unit).

It is also important to remember that, when a unit is eliminated after failing a casualty check, it normally does not mean that all of the men in that unit are killed. It means that the unit is no longer an effective fighting force for the duration of the scenario. In reality, the combat in this game is actually less bloody than it appears because removing a unit does not necessarily mean the squad was wiped out.

CHARGING THROUGH THE OPEN

In contrast to how hard it is to inflict casualties on units in prepared positions, charging through the open into an enemy hex is a good way to get killed. Good troops that were not Suppressed would very easily kill units running through the open. Put some effective Suppression on those troops, however, and it becomes a lot easier to get to them. Suppress units before you charge them!

OP FIRE

A Prof Check (not a Morale Check) is required before conducting Op Fire because responding to a moving target should by no means be a guarantee. This check abstractly represents a number of things including:

- Whether the target unit was spotted in time, or at all.

- Whether the firing unit is properly positioned to deal with the threat.
- Whether or not the firing unit is distracted by other threats.

Failure of this Prof Check does not mean that no one from that unit fired, but that, in the confusion of the battlefield, **effective** fire did not have a chance of being achieved.

Something should also be said about marking a unit as Op Fire. This fits well in the operations range and the modifier it gives nicely represents the benefit of a commander pointing out possible targets. At times a player may find that he has marked many units as Op Fire and that, because of that, his opponent refuses to move units in the open. That player may feel as though he somehow "wasted" his units because they did not fire that turn, but it is actually highly realistic. Unlike most games, there were times on the defense when commanders held their fire and marking units as Op Fire helps represent that.

CP AND FINAL OP FIRE

Spending a CP in order to conduct Final Op Fire at a target that is not adjacent is meant to limit gamey tactics. Without this rule, it would be tempting to move a unit into a vulnerable position two hexes away because you knew that the enemy unit had already fired. Tying this to CPs makes a lot of sense because Final Op Fire, by its definition, means that a unit is attempting to respond to multiple threats. This is inherent to the command capabilities of a force.

ROUT

Casualties during the Rout phase are abstract. These casualties could come from some soldiers of the routing unit surrendering, or from taking fire as the unit abandons its position, or they might not be casualties at all and instead could represent a loss of unit cohesion. The members of the unit could all have survived, but the unit will not be an effective fighting force for the remainder of the game. All of these possible losses are simply represented by what happens in the Rout phase.

Rout comes before melee to represent how vulnerable Suppressed units are to close assault. Units in that position could more easily be eliminated. **When a unit in melee is eliminated for failure to Rout, the elimination should be thought of as being caused by the melee.** It was just very one-sided and the eliminated units did not have an opportunity to cause casualties. In fact, a heavily Suppressed unit would often surrender when assaulted.

NO ADVANCE PHASE

In some games, the key to taking tough enemy positions (in a city fight for example) is sometimes to use the advance phase to move all of your units adjacent – thereby bringing a lot of force to bear and yet not suffering penalties for movement in the open. This seems counter-intuitive. Troops are not going to want to "hang out" in the open (in the street) at close range when enemy units are in cover. In this game, unless you have

DESIGNER NOTES ON PART 2

This section is meant to highlight some of the key design decisions, especially when they contrast with other tactical games. Hopefully it also adds some more color to the game.

good cover, you are far more likely to move directly into the hex with an enemy unit.

FOXHOLES

Foxholes are prevalent in this game. If the defense was to be found in any kind of prepared position, it would be dug in. As one trooper put it – “Dig a hole. That was the first thing we always did, whether taking a long break during a march or moving into a position.”

FOXHOLES BETTER THAN BUILDINGS?

Wooden buildings provide only minimal protection from enemy fire. While this may seem counter intuitive, it must be remembered that the bullets being used in this conflict would pass through the walls of the average wooden building encountered. Their benefit was in providing some concealment, fragmentation protection, protection from the elements, and some freedom of movement. Well dug and concealed foxholes were far superior against fire (but a unit is very vulnerable entering or leaving them if they are located in the open).

CONCEAL COUNTERS

The Conceal Counters are an important part of this game as a +1 modifier on top of their normal terrain modifier is very helpful. This abstractly represents the difficulty of firing against an unknown target. “Was the target even spotted at all?” is a question which was more important in combat than we might think. This is accounted for in the +1 for being concealed.

MACHINE GUNS

Machine Guns are very powerful in this game. This is as it should be. They were greatly feared and they could cause a lot of casualties. In BOB, like real life, they draw a lot of fire in an effort to silence them.

GERMAN AND AMERICAN MORTARS

Mortar WTs in this game represent two mortars of that type. American mortars are better than German ones. They were a larger caliber and they were far more prevalent.

HEDGEROWS

Hedgerows (or bocage) should not be thought of as “hedges.” A hedge is really not comparable to a hedgerow. Dense foliage planted on top of thick and high earthen mounds formed formidable barriers to vision and movement. While some mounds might only be a few feet tall, some were as tall as a man with the hedge planted on top of that.

ARTILLERY

This is not a game about artillery and so it is very much abstracted in this game. Apparently, all the major powers had different methods for calling in artillery. To summarize the benefits of these systems without going into the detail of them: the Americans were fast and accurate, the British were fast and inaccurate, the Germans were slow and accurate, and the Russians were very poor at impromptu fire missions.

A distinction should be made between artillery used in a well-prepared situation (defensive or offensive) and artillery used in an impromptu fashion. As a general rule, all well prepared artillery will have high Proficiency and accuracy numbers regardless of nationality (with some modification based on the specific situation).

Another distinction should be made between large caliber mortars (~80mm) and field pieces. Mortars were much closer to the front and used different methods to bring fire to the target than the larger, far away field pieces. As a general rule the Proficiency and accuracy numbers of these pieces for impromptu fire will be greatly dependent on the situation in the scenario.

Impromptu fire (in an unprepared situation) made by the larger caliber field pieces will be rare for the Germans (because of the time required) in this game. It will be almost non-existent for the Russians, inaccurate for the British, and respectable for the Americans.

A lot could go wrong when calling in artillery support. A much more complicated process could have been used in this game. Different systems could be used for each of the nationalities, for impromptu and planned, and for mortars and field pieces. However, it was much easier and quicker to just roll up all of that uncertainty into a Proficiency die roll.

The Proficiency of American Artillery is almost always higher. This is due to the superiority of their system, the availability of ammo, the radio sets mentioned earlier, the fact that almost anyone could be an observer, and other reasons as well. The Proficiency and Accuracy numbers of each nationality can be adjusted based on the conditions of the scenario and one system can simply be used to represent all of them.

With the accuracy die roll, the game also represents the all too common occurrence of dropping artillery on your own troops when in close quarters.

BAZOOKA

The Bazooka was a useful weapon. Although it could have been improved by having greater armor penetration (which is what the Germans did when they copied it and developed the

Panzerschreck), Eisenhower later described it as one of the “four tools of victory” in WW2. It was certainly used against all targets, but in this game it can only be used against Vehicles, Guns, and WTs. This is due to a limited amount of ammunition. While most troopers (in a squad with the weapon) would carry a bazooka round, the number of rounds available were still limited. An interesting quote about the Bazooka can be found in the book Company Commander:

“A pre-WW2 comedian named Bob Burns used an odd pipe and funnel musical instrument called a “bazooka” as a prop in his act. When the US Army introduced its antitank rocket launcher in 1942, its similarity to Burns’s prop was immediately noticed. Also very effective against pillboxes and machine gun and mortar nests.”

NO HIT AND KILL?

Instead of a Tank or Gun rolling first to hit the target and then to kill the target, BoB combines this into one die roll that represents both hitting and killing the target. With that in mind, this one roll includes a number of factors that would otherwise require special rules. For example: The possibility for use special ammunition (like APCR) is accounted for in a Tank or Gun’s Firepower. Whether or not a Tank was struck in the hull or the turret (where there was often different armor) is averaged into the Tank’s armor rating.

In considering the validity of this system, it is important to remember that even a system that uses separate hit and kill rolls is an abstraction. In a turn that represents two or three minutes of time, a Tank or Gun will likely fire numerous times. How many of them hit the target? Did multiple hits strike the target in different spots? In other games, these factors and others are averaged into one hit and one kill roll. In this game they are all averaged into one roll. Doing so allowed us to remove many tables, charts, and rules from the game.

PROFICIENCY FOR TANKS AND GUNS

Obviously, with only having one die roll represent what is a hit and kill roll in other games, something else was needed to account for more difficult shots (like at a moving target). This need is filled by the Prof Check. It works well not only because the need for a Prof Check is similar to the infantry system, but because it allows the game to simulate more than what is in a normal hit die roll. The crew quality (a bigger issue at some times in the war), whether the tank had a radio (to be warned of a threat outside its Firing Arc), factors that contributed to its rate of fire, etc. – All these things can be simply (if abstractly) accounted for in the Tank’s Proficiency.

Self Propelled Guns (non-turreted) have a lower Proficiency than Tanks of the same nationality because they could less quickly respond to threats outside of its Firing Arc.

MOVING TANKS MARKED OP FIRE

Allowing vehicles to move only a small portion of their movement allowance and then be marked as Op Fire, eliminated some gamey situations. Without that rule, on the defense it was possible to sometimes hide your vehicles behind cover. With no targets available, the attacking player would move his tanks forward. If they were marked as Used, they were now unable to respond to any threats. If that situation occurred during the war, the attacking vehicles would often have moved forward slowly while looking for emerging targets. This is exactly what the rule allows.

THE “MOVE” MARKER

This marker (along with the necessary Prof Check when a tank so marked is fired upon) is an important part of the rules in encouraging realistic tank strategy. Unless one side had overwhelming superiority or had superior position, vehicles moved around a lot when engaging each other, especially if the crew was experienced. On the Eastern Front, especially, (where there was a greater disparity in the Proficiency level on the tanks), the combination of the Move Marker and Prof Checks allow the game to recreate some of the tank battles similar to how they happened.

BALLET TANKS

A very frustrating (and highly unrealistic) thing encountered in some games is a tank spinning around like a top, almost always able to present its frontal armor to a threat, and sometimes even using its machine guns to accomplish this. The Prof Check rules for Tanks insure that this will not happen.

NO TANK OVERRUNS?

Tanks did at times overrun infantry and try to crush their entrenchments (and them), etc. This is represented in the game by a tank stopping in an adjacent hex and firing. This allows for devastating fire and also allows the infantry to attempt to take out the tank in turn using the existing rules of the game. By representing it this way, it saves a whole host of special rules, not only for the overrun, but for the corresponding infantry action, for infantry remaining in the same hex as the enemy tank, for infantry accompanying the tank and fighting with attacking infantry, etc. All of this can be represented just as well without all the special cases by having the tank stop one hex away and fire. In terms of realism, do not think that vehicles can not do overruns, but that it could possibly be happening when the tank is one hex away. In practice, against an entire squad or more, it was far more likely for vehicles to stop a short distance away and fire than it was for them to try to crush an entrenchment (or suffocate them with their engine fumes). Getting that close to infantry was a dangerous thing.

A Vehicle does not get overrun capability when passing through a hex with enemy infantry because that represents them driving by without engaging. An overrun attempt would require the

tank to be in the vicinity for a lengthy period of time and is better represented by the tank stopping and firing.

INFANTRY VERSES TANKS

Infantry really did destroy tanks by putting grenades or satchel charges in hatches or on engine grates or in the turret ring. An unsupported tank was a sitting duck many times. One American soldier said, "A tank unaccompanied by infantry is rather vulnerable." Of course this is one reason why an overrun would be attempted against a few isolated guys, but rarely against a dug in squad. As mentioned already, it was far more likely for a tank to keep infantry at arm's length.

Infantry don't attack the vehicles in melee, but during the operations phase because they rarely hung around the tank during the destruction attempt. If the attack happened during the melee phase, a squad would end up always occupying the tank's hex. In contrast, the destruction attempt likely represented a few men from the squad making the attempt and then sprinting back to cover.

NO WRECKS

In BoB there are no Tank wrecks and no positive terrain modifier given for being in the same hex as a Tank (or a wreck). While there is no doubt that a tank would provide cover, it is a question of "how much?" In a hex that is 40 yards across and containing 1 full strength squads, how many of those 15 men are hiding behind the Tank? Keep in mind that open ground in this game rarely (if ever) represents a perfectly graded and mowed ball field that has no cover. Depressions, rocks, high grass, etc. in what we call open ground all provide some cover. Considering that a positive terrain modifier is a powerful thing in BOB, the slightly better cover for a handful of men did not rate the same terrain benefit as a woods hex.

NO GUN SHIELDS

In a similar vein to the above, Guns do not receive a gun shield bonus. While a gun shield would provide increased protection, this is offset by the very fixed location of the Gun. Unlike a squad which would be spread out within a hex and could change locations within the hex, once a gun's location was known, it was very vulnerable. The benefit from the gun shield is offset by this in game terms.

WHY SOME FIRE MODIFIERS DO NOT APPLY TO TANKS AND GUNS

"Fire Modifiers Other" do not apply when Tanks and Guns fire at infantry. While firing at a unit running in the open would provide some benefit, it would also be a bit of a negative in that they would be harder to hit because it was a moving target. Remember that these are large caliber guns with a low rate of fire. In the same vein, firing at an adjacent target was not significantly more deadly than firing at a target 80 yards away. In

fact, especially if the target was moving, it could be argued that it was more difficult because of firing arc issues.

Machine guns, however, would be far deadlier in both of those situations. Hence, the distinction.

TIGER PROFICIENCY

German Tiger tanks all have a very high Proficiency because they were considered the best of the best. They were all taken from the best veteran crews and were given special training.

TANK AND GUN ACCURACY

The gunnery in WW2 was surprisingly accurate. One Tiger commander described a 200 yard shot at a stationary tank as a "can't miss shot". That is one of the reasons why a Prof Check is not required for range until it is over 5 hexes.

TANK MACHINE GUNS

Where are the tank machine guns? They are baked into the firepower (verses infantry) of the tank. While I am sure there were times during the war that a tank engaged infantry with its machine guns at the same time it engaged another tank with its main gun, those times were relatively rare. In a tank duel, it was far more common for everyone in the tanks to be concentrating on the vehicular target. The driver changing position of the vehicle, the loader, gunner, and commander all focusing on the enemy vehicle.

In BoB, vehicles originally had a separate machine gun rating that they could use against infantry. Unfortunately, they added many rule complications and were consistently used in an unrealistic fashion by the playtesters. I could not stand watching a tank fighting for its life against a nearby vehicular target while the tank's machine guns also calmly laid some suppression fire against a squad a couple of hundred yards away in a building. Attempts to fix that only added more rules. The current rule set is far more realistic, if slightly more abstract.

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