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Fire and Maneuver

The Second World War saw many new innovations to combat: new weapons from jets to atomic bombs, new tactics and doctrine, and innovations which replaced many old traditions. But through it all, the infantryman remained the one indispensable item on the battlefield. Even with all the invention and innovation, without the individual doughboy, war still could not be won.

Fire and Maneuver is a 1 to 1 scale game recreating the ground combat of the War. No mass tank battles, no ship to ship combat on the high seas, no dog fights at 20,000 feet. Just men clawing their way through no-mans land to get to the enemy. Each figure represents one soldier, one tank, one gun. The Scale is small, one inch = 2 yards. The combat is fierce, even hand to hand. Each tactical move turn lasts only six to thirty seconds, but those few seconds can mean the difference between life and death, victory or defeat.

The game scale works best with 20mm figures (1/72 scale), but will work equally well with 15mm or 25mm. The included scenarios utilize from squads to full platoons. Larger games could be played, but a surface larger than 5x8 feet would be needed. The average table size for play is 5x8 feet, about the size of a ping pong table, however a 4x8 table can be used.

Materials needed are:

Playing surface

Terrain (trees, hills, buildings, etc)

Figures (axis and allied troops)

Dice (2 six sided, 1 ten sided, 1 four sided)

Paper, pens, pencils

The maps and charts in this game may be reproduced; in fact you should make copies to preserve the originals.



Game Setup

Before each game, the sponsoring player sets up the scenario, or the parameters of the game. This will include setting up the game table with terrain. A 4x4 foot table works well for small engagements, a 4x8 is better for platoon size engagements, or if there is armor.

Terrain can include buildings, roads, fields, streams, hills...whatever you have available. Be sure to arrange the terrain based on a map, so that both sides can have a copy of one, especially if there is to be hidden movement.

Next, choose the sides. The easiest way is to pit historical units against one another, either based on actual battles, or something you've seen in the movies or have always wanted to do. Construct units based on historical equivalents. For example, a September 1944 France game could involve a squad of American GIs (12 men) versus a German Panzer Grenadier squad (9 men by this point in time). Select miniatures based on your squads, making sure you have weapons representative of the time (The Americans would have 10 riflemen, 1 BAR gunner, and one NCO with either a rifle or SMG).

When setting up your squads, another important parameter to decide right off, is the level of their experience and training. These will affect their performance during the game compared to their enemies. The basic levels in ascending order are:

Experience:

Green
Average
Veteran

Training:

Basic
Average
Elite

Green troops are fresh out of training, and have not yet "seen the elephant" (been under fire). Average troops have been around some, and Veterans have seen it all. Veterans generally perform better in combat, although Green troops tend to ignore times when they should be diving for cover.

Basic troops are poorly or minimally trained, and are usually from countries that did not spend much time preparing for war, or their methods were faulty. Average, well, they are the common troops from most of the larger combatants, especially after the war has been going on for a while. And Elites, these are your Paratroopers, Commandos, Panzer Grenadiers, and Storm Troopers. They usually kick butt wherever they go.

Next step, is to set the conditions of the Scenario. Who starts where, what the victory conditions are, terrain values, move hinderances, etc. Just make sure it is possible for either side to meet its victory condition, no matter how bad the odds are, if the player makes the right decisions for his troops.

Lastly, set up the table, assign the figures, and have fun!

Turn Sequence

Players alternate moving and attacking, with the opponents able to react somewhat to attackers moves and fire at moving units or those firing on them. After one side completes its actions, the other side does the same.

The phases for each player during the turn are described as follows:

Morale Phase

Suppressive Fire Phase

Move / Spot Phase

Defensive Fire Phase

Combat Phase

Morale

Base to pass – 8 or less on 2d6

Morale is taken every time a unit or individual comes under fire. Initially, a unit's morale will be sufficiently high that the chance of failing morale is nil.

Morale is rolled before each movement phase for each unit, or each related group of individuals that are within 3 inches of each other. Armor crews act as a single unit.

Modifiers from the Tables are tabulated onto the Base, and die rolls made. If the number rolled is higher than the final modified number, consult the results below. There are six modifiers that effect morale that are based on troop quality. Three of them, Basic, Advanced, and Elite, refer to the persons or units training. Did they get through basic and ship out for the front, or did they get more advanced training (Elite is generally paratroops, rangers, etc)? The other three are Green, Average, and Veteran. This refers to the actual time in the field learning on the job. Both Training and Grade are recorded for each unit/group of figures. It is possible to have Elite trained troops who are Green (the 101st Airborne in Normandy). When troops are assembled in a unit (max 3" spacing between figures) the group rolls as one unit, with results applying to all figures in the unit.

If morale roll is failed by 1, unit holds position, can only move to cover or retire, can fire under orders.

If morale roll is failed by 2, unit holds position, can only retire, can only fire in defense.

If morale roll is failed by 3, unit falls back to nearest COVER. No firing.

If morale roll is failed by 4 or more, unit breaks. Vehicle Crews bail out.

*Unit applies to lone individuals when separated by 6 inches or more from his squad.

Suppressing Fire

Before a unit moves out, either part of the unit or supporting units may fire on enemy positions to attempt to suppress them, making it easier for the attacking units to achieve their goals.

Suppressing Fire is accomplished by either full auto fire, explosives such as grenades or artillery, or massed semi-auto fire (more than 6 figures firing at once). Suppressing fire from one machine gunner or 6 riflemen is directed at a 5 inch square area around a specific position. Included in the

rules is a 5" square template that marks out the area being suppressed. Any figures inside that 5" square takes a morale check as a group. Modify the Morale Base of 8 with modifiers on the chart that apply. If the unit fails, it is considered to be suppressed. All movement is halved, and fire takes the Suppressed modifier. Suppressed units must activate before moving or firing.

Suppression lasts the entire turn. If the Suppression Fire continues the next turn, the suppression continues. If the fire lifts, the unit no longer has the negative modifiers and rolls to break the suppression.

Suppressed Unit Activation

Base to Activate – 8 or less on 2d6

Units that are suppressed must first pass an activation roll to perform any action for the turn in which they were suppressed. Use morale modifiers from modifier chart. Roll during Morale Phase. If roll fails, unit does not activate. It cannot move, initiate attacks, or defensive fires. If attacked, the unit immediately rolls for morale.

*Suppressed means any unit under full auto or grenade/mortar fire. Units or figures within 1" of a grenade blast, or 3" of an HE explosion are stunned. A unit must be free from auto/grenade fire for a full turn to remove the suppressed chit. Stuns last for 2 turns after HE fire stops.

As an Optional Rule, it is possible to assign leaders a Leader Rating that applies toward the Unit Morale Roll, instead of using the general one on the Modifier Tables. This way, you could have a particularly good officer with say, a +3 rating, or a particularly bad officer with a -3 rating. A good idea if you wish to used this option is to assign leader ratings to all officers, NCOs, and senior enlisted; anyone who may be taking command. Otherwise, just use the standard rating.

Command Radius

For a unit to maintain its cohesiveness, the individual figures must remain within a specific distance of each other. For instance, for a squad to act as a unit, each figure must be within 3 inches of another figure. A 12 man squad could be strung out as much as 45 inches, with each figure 3 inches away from the other. If the distance exceeds 3 inches, then the figure is out of command radius, and acts independently for purposes of morale.

Movement

Figures are normally moved during the Movement Phase. The only exception to this is for units that fail Morale. Moral based movement takes place during the Morale Phase.

The move distances below are total distances for the Turn. If a figure is fired on during his move (Defensive Fire), it stops where the shot is declared by the opposing player. The defensive fire results are determined as per the Defensive Fire section. If the shot misses, the moving player may elect to finish his move up to the remaining move distance, but may also change his move direction and posture. The figure may take cover, run back the way it came, whatever the player wishes to do to use up any remaining movement.

Distances and Modifiers

Scale: 1 inch = 2 yards

Man Crawling	2 inches per turn
Man on foot stalking	3 inches per turn
Man on foot walking	5 inches per turn
Man on foot running	10 inches per turn
Standing to prone	-1 inch from total move distance
Prone to standing	-3 inches from total move distance
Cross waist high obj.	-3 inches from total move distance
Cross head high obj.	-5 inches from total move distance
Climb 10 feet	-10 inches from total move distance
Rough terrain	-1/2 movement from total move distance
Wade thigh deep	-2 inches per turn from total move distance
Wade chest deep	-3 inches per turn from total move distance
Climb thru opening	-4 inches per turn from total move distance
Moving uphill/downhill	-1/4 / +1/4 total distance

Using the move chits

In order to speed the game along, yet allow for accurate recording of how a player wishes to move his troops, chits are used to indicate a figure's stature, or move speed. Which ever is needed is placed face up down to the figure or group of figures, with the appropriate posture/speed facing the figures. The chits are placed before the start of the turn, and do not change until the next turn. The chits are flipped at the beginning of the Movement Phase. Figures must correspond to the placement of their chits. Figures are moved during the Movement Phase based on the chits. If a group of figures are making the same move, one chit may be used for the group.

Below is a sample. The two figures on the left are considered to be crouched by the tree due to the position of the chit next to them. The three figures to the right are running per the chit next to them.

