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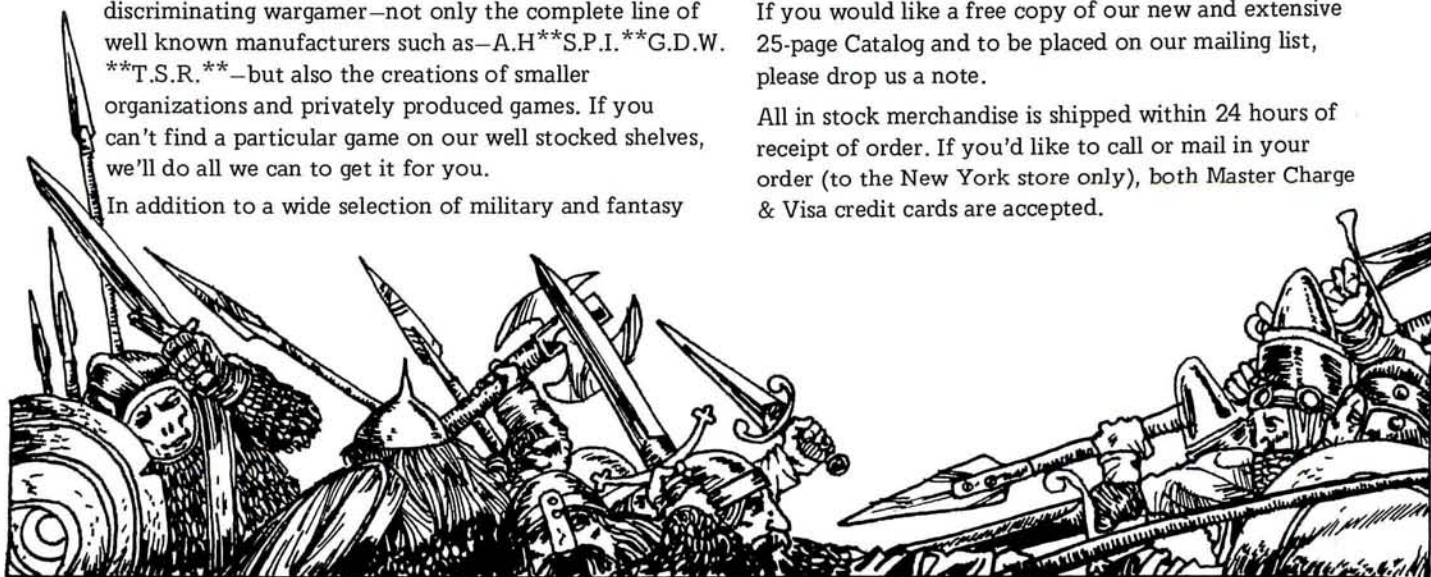
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The Courier

NORTH AMERICA'S FOREMOST MINIATURE GAMING MAGAZINE

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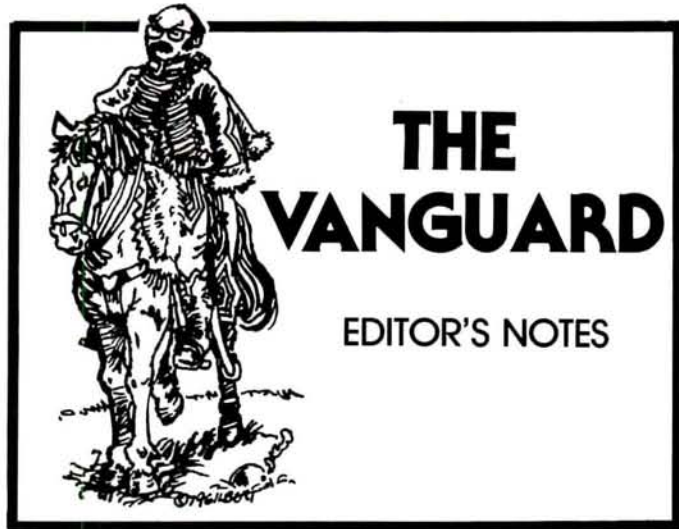
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INFLATION!

THE COURIER has done, and will continue to do, its share to hold down the cost of the hobby - witness the inflation fighter discounts! We have been hit in the last month with several increases in the cost of doing business:

1. Cost of 3rd class mail will increase in 1981 by 18%.
2. Cost of printing (labor & paper costs) - new contract with our printer - has increased 10%.
3. And worse of all the cost of typesetting has increased 100%!!

The first is required by law, the second is economics and the third is because our low cost - high quality typesetter is no longer available.

We can, perhaps, keep the magazine going at "break-even" but in no way can we continue at a loss! Therefore starting January 1, 1981 and this issue, the cost of THE COURIER is increased to \$2.25/copy; (\$2.75 as a back issue), \$10.50 for a U.S. subscription; \$12 for a Canadian or foreign surface mail subscription; Europe and South America Air Mail 3rd class is \$18.50; all other countries are \$21.00 for Airmail 3rd class.

To soften the blow, we are adding 4 to 8 pages each issue depending on article mix and offering prizes to those who subscribe or renew at the new rates (see advertisement elsewhere in this issue).

Finally we continue to add to our inflation fighter line. Through volley-fire responses you have asked for books to be included - in this issue you will find a 5 for the price of 4 offer on the Men-at-Arms series of books. Similar offers will be made in each issue on books published by Hippocrene Books Inc. Watch our advertisements for more great bargains! ☐

THE SEVEN YEARS WAR IN MINIATURE

A RULES REVIEW BY LARRY IRON



Newcomers to the Seven Years' War period always wonder which is the set of rules to use? All four rule sets, which I have played capture different facets of the Seven Years' War which the authors thought to be important. Each rule set varies in the amount of detail and playability. As each individual player has his own opinion as to the right balance of these two characteristics, I hope this review will help you choose the one that is right for you.

TRICORNE (2nd edition) was authored by Ken Bunker. It is published by Z & M Publishing Enterprises, Inc. Ken is an old hat at wargaming and the Seven Years' War is his first love. The first edition of TRICORNE was a big step in wargame rule systems. The first edition was the first to have casualties in terms of real men. The roster system was also a first.

TRICORNE uses a figure scale of 1:25, ground scale of 1 inch to 15 yards. The standard base size is 2" X 2". Six foot figures in two ranks are mounted on the standard base. Also, two horses or one artillery section are mounted on this base. Light troops are mounted in pairs on a 1-1/2" X 1" base in one rank. A Battalion of foot is standardized at 24 figures or 4 stands. A squadron of horse



consists of 4 figures or 2 stands. The only dice needed for TRICORNE are two six-sided dice of contrasting colors.

The rules emphasize the importance of maintaining proper formations. Diagrams showing the various formations are presented within the rules as well as a chart summarizing these by troop type. Three types of orders are defined - close order, unformed, and skirmish order. Several types of formations are defined - column, line, square, and column of march. Each of these is illustrated.

Troops have various training classes, firing factors, melee factors, and morale factors. Examples for the training and morale classes are given. A detailed point system based on the various factors is presented.

Prior to set up each makes a map of their deployment. Then simultaneously each side deploys. After deployment both sides write grand tactical orders for each unit. These spell out the general course of movement for the unit and overall tactical disposition. At the beginning of each turn, a unit must be given instructions on how it will perform for the upcoming turn.

Each turn is governed by a sequence of play. The movement phase is simultaneous. Movement and terrain effects are well defined and a movement chart is presented which summarizes the text.

Fire is divided into small arms and artillery. Small arms fire stresses the importance of good order and range. Also important is the first volley, which doubles the amount of casualties inflicted. Losses are given in terms of real men. There is also a table which determines fire effect when being charged.

Artillery fire is very detailed. Cannister fire is very precise, based on the number of figures within the kill zone. There is no luck involved and it is very deadly. Shot is very complicated. It resembles COLUMN, LINE AND SQUARE in some respects, but is more precise. TRICORNE has shot path charts given for various inclinations of the gun barrel. Shell fire effects are easily computed using the fire casualty table.



Melee calculations are similar to those for small arms fire. A unit routs from a melee if it loses 1/3 more casualties than its opponents. Cavalry versus cavalry in melee can be very deadly to both participants.

The morale system involves the use of two six-sided dice of different colors. One die is designated as the "tens" die. This dice system is a base six numerical system. However, TRICORNE only allows the numbers which appear on the dice. This becomes complicated when trying to add and subtract modifiers. If one rolled a 26 and added a modifier of +1, then the testing unit would have a 31, because 31 is the next dice throw higher than 26. This is a downfall within the morale system. A better method could have been designed. The morale system is harsh, and it can be difficult to get a unit to charge into contact. It is sometimes too easy to rout, especially for SYW troops. Also, one must check morale for each cause, this makes it even easier to rout.

Special rules are given for buildings, fires, prisoners, pontoons, and engineering activities.



WARGAME RULES 1685 - 1845 (2nd edition) by the War-games Research Group in England are very different from the first edition. The original set was based on a figure ratio of 1:15 and a ground scale of 1"=10 paces. The newer 2nd edition has a figure ratio of 1:50 for infantry and 1:40 for cavalry. The ground scale is 1"=25 paces. The only dice needed are normal six-sided.

The base sizes are generally 60mm wide except for skirmishes which use 30mm wide bases and unlimbered artillery which is mounted on 40mm wide bases. Each base accommodates the number of figures which comprise one combat element. A regular infantry element has 4 figures, an irregular infantry one and a regular cavalry element has 3 figures. Several elements make up an infantry battalion or cavalry regiment. Several battalions make up a brigade.

Troops are divided into regular and irregular. Regulars are further divided into elite, veteran, trained, and raw. Irregulars are divided into fanatics, soldiers, warriors, and levies. Generals are classed as cautious, bold, or rash, depending on nationality and the die roll. The above classifications plus weapons and armor determine the

point value of each figure, each side being allowed an equal number of points for their army.

Prior to the battle, terrain is selected from a detailed system in the rules. Then each side discloses the number of scouting points it possesses based on the number of irregular cavalry, regular light cavalry, American rangers or frontiersmen, or Red Indian irregular skirmishing infantry. If one side has 50% more scouting points, then that side has outscouted the other. An outscouted player must deploy all of his troops first, and state if any flank marches are taking place. A non-outscouted player makes a sketch map. If neither player is outscouted then both deploy simultaneously after completing their sketch maps. The allowing of flank marches and off table reserves is very interesting. Players can attempt the same tactics used by Frederick the Great.

No orders are written before the game nor after commencement as this is a move/counter-move system. It can get rather involved but is fully explained and actually works very well, but game time is doubled, since you don't move, fire, and melee simultaneously. The system is better suited to a one-on-one and not to a multi-commander situation. The non-moving player can get rather bored, watching his opponent. Each move begins with the response phase (morale), then shooting, hand-to-hand, and finally movement. One complete sequence is called a bound, both sides bounds are called a turn.

The morale system (called reaction test) is simple, detailed, and very fast. This is the strong point of the rules. There is a separate chart for each type of reaction test. This facilitates speed, since you go directly to the table which covers your morale situation. The average number of modifiers is six per table. A unit must test morale, by finding the appropriate modifiers, and a number, usually between 1 and 6, is obtained. The player rolls one die and if the die score is less than the morale table score then the unit has failed morale. The reaction taken by the unit is spelled out with each different morale table. I wish they had a similar system for their ancient and pike and shot period rules.

The terms used in the reaction tests are fully defined in the rules. The morale system was designed for Napoleonic, and when used for the 18th century, it allows the troops to break too easily. A modifier for the 18th century is suggested.

Movement is given in paces, 1mm=1 pace. The movement rates do not make sense to me. Skirmishers are virtually immobile if they fire. In fact a line of close order troops can shoot and move twice as fast as a skirmish line doing the same! Also, artillery cannot prolong and fire in the same move. An interesting concept is the feint charge. A cavalry unit can make a feint charge in order to pin infantry in square or clear skirmishers away. Another interesting concept is the movement debt. If a unit crosses an obstacle but does not have enough movement left to completely clear it, the unit may make an IOU and deduct the debt from its next move.

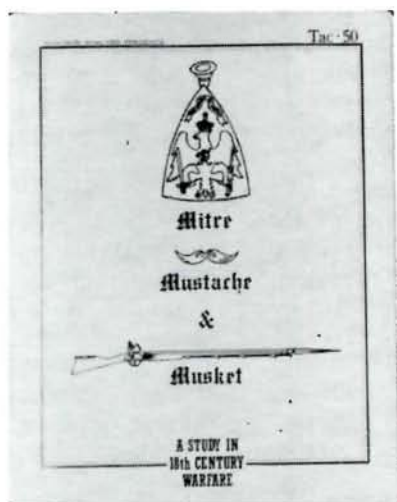
Shooting is based on the individual combat element firing. If an element is full strength or one figure short, it counts as a full element, otherwise it does not count for

firing. The fire table is fairly detailed. There are seven classes of targets. One needs only the weapon, range, and target class. Go to the correct column and row, and one or more numbers are given. These are the numbers needed on a six-sided die to obtain a casualty of one figure. Sometimes a die roll will give a double hit causing two casualties. A die roll is made for each firing element.

Cannister seems to be relatively ineffective as do rifles. There is a 400 yard range and a 100 yard range. The 100-yard should probably be extended to 100 yards. Rifles fire as two-figure elements when skirmishing, and as four-figure elements when in close order. Therefore, rifle fire is 1/2-effectiveness when in close order. This seems unrealistic.

Melee is also based on individual elements fighting each other. It is fast and simple. One determines which element is at advantage, disadvantage, or equal terms (based on tactical circumstances). Then roll one die to determine if one or more figures are casualties.

The appendix gives suggested units for the Marlburian and Seven Years' Wars (no Russians though). Also one reference card is provided. This card is very complete. One last thing, the rules allow any amount of measurement at any time during the same. So there is no argument about if you can measure or not.



MITRE, MUSTACHE, & MUSKET was written by Ben King and published by Systems Analysis. This is one of their series of Tac-50 miniature rules. They have a pike and shot set, 18th century, Napoleonic, and a 19th century. All are the same figure ratio, 1:50. They use about the same rules in each set and to learn one is almost like learning all of them. The individual periods have their own unique rules, though. The ground scale is one inch equals 25 yards. One turn equals approximately 20 minutes of real time. One needs two normal six-sided dice to play. Base sizes are determined by the number of figures in a company. The frontage per figure depends on the troop type - line infantry is 5/8", light infantry, artillery crewmen and cavalry have a frontage of 7/8" per figure. Unlimbered artillery has a front of 3".

Prior to the game a battle plan must be devised. Each unit must be given battle orders. No additional orders

need be written during the game unless changes of formation are involved.

The rules cover terrain and weather effects. There is an illustration of formations and definitions. Organization of the major powers is given, including the North American conflict. A simple sequence of play is also presented.

Melee is simple but deadly. Each troop type has a melee value. The value of each unit's troops is totalled. Two dice are thrown and their difference is cross referenced with the total melee value of the unit. This gives the number of melee points lost by the opposition. Enough figures are removed to satisfy the melee point loss. The dice difference is determined by subtracting the larger die value from the smaller, always resulting in a positive value. A zero result is rerolled. Melee occurs between total units regardless of relative positions, except those melees involving squares. Only troops in whole or partial contact can melee a square. Troops which are prone can suffer fewer casualties from cavalry in melee (except against lancers).

Fire casualties are determined similar to melee, except the number of figures firing is used rather than the number of melee points. The first turn of fire allows line infantry and grenadiers to fire two volleys. When two units are eligible to fire at the same time, each side throws two dice and the higher score fires first. Ties fire simultaneously.

Artillery fire is simple also. When firing shell or ball the player must select his target and estimate the range to the target. If the target is within 6" of the estimated range a ball hit is scored. If within 3", a shell hit is scored. An estimated range which falls short is a miss. If a hit is scored then the casualty table is consulted to determine the number of figures removed. Cannister needs no range estimation. It automatically hits the target and casualties are determined from the casualty table. Counterbattery fire demands an estimated range within 1", and a dice difference of 4 or 5. Three hits silence a gun model. One die is thrown and a 'one' indicates an artillerist figure is lost.

Though simple as well, morale is the most complicated part of the rules. Two dice are thrown using the values 2 through 12. Modifiers are made according to losses and the tactical situation. Then the result is compared to the morale class of the unit. There are only three morale classes - militia and landwehr, line infantry, and grenadiers, cavalry and light infantry. Morale results are

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