

# Footnotes

*S&T Footnotes* presents short articles and especially interesting letters written by the readers and staff of *S&T*.

## TOWN PLANNING IN TANK!

Tactical game maps usually have a town or village to shield the defender, serve as an objective to fight over, or just generally get in the way. At the scale of *PanzerBlitz* a village can be just a clump of undifferentiated hexes constituting a special type of terrain. At the scale of *Sniper* the town is a highly differentiated maze of walls, floors, windows and stairways. *Tank!* has a scale intermediate between these levels, and we may "build" a town, village or hamlet on the *Tank!* mapboard that simulates the characteristics of buildings, or blocks of buildings appropriate to this scale. Take fortification counters from any other SPI game (e.g., *American Civil War*). Arrange them individually, or in clumps, leaving "streets" or "alleys" one hex wide between separate blocks. Blocks of buildings may exist in two states: Intact or destroyed. (Since our borrowed fortification counters will normally come in two colors, i.e., blue and grey, this is easily represented.) Buildings increase the Defense Strength of soft targets deployed "in" them, block the line of sight, and prohibit the entry of vehicles. For spotting, units in buildings are treated as if they were in prepared positions. Because they are highly visible, however, buildings have a lower defense value than prepared positions. The exact value of this Defense Strength depends on the type of construction. The following table is conjectural:

Type of Building	Defense Strength
Stone or Brick	10
Wood Frame	6
Abode or Mud	4
Bamboo, Thatch etc.	2

The material of our village will depend, of course, on the geographic area of the scenario. One building in each village might be of more solid construction (the church, town hall, police station, etc.). Remember that most agrarian villages have a plaza, square or large open market space in the middle.

Whenever a unit in a built-up hex suffers elimination in combat, the building is considered destroyed. This halves the Defense Strength of the hex, but still prevents vehicle entry and still blocks the LOS/LOF.

—Mike Markowitz

## COMBINATION PLAY SYSTEM

Within the past year and a half, SPI has published several games featuring the "simultaneous movement system". When applied to the tactical level games such as *Kampfpanzer* and *Desert War*, this system has been generally well received. We feel, however, that it has added realism and suspense at some cost in playing time. Because this system requires full written plots for all unit activities, it becomes unwieldy whenever there are more than twenty to thirty units per side in play.

When we decided to do replacement games for *Combat Command* and *Red Star/White Star*, we started with the basic *Desert War* Si-Move system and decided to modify this system to eliminate as much written plotting as possible while still retaining the essential simultaneous elements. What follows is the preliminary draft for the optional Combination Sequence of Play. We have retained the simultaneous Fire Combat procedures (of *Desert War*) while making Movement an alternate sequential process. This eliminated most of the paperwork which a pure simultaneous system involves. Yet it retains simultaneity where it is most important, in the combat procedure.

In playtesting this system (which we will call the Combination Play System for the time being) we found that alternating movement did not give a substantial advantage to either Player. However, the simultaneous plotting and then execution of fire was absolutely necessary and well worth the one or two extra minutes of playing time added to every turn. (We experimented briefly with having first one Player and then the other fire freely with the effects being delayed until the second Player had completed his fire but this gave the second Player too large an intrinsic advantage.)

There seems to be no serious objection to retro-fitting this combination play system to *Kampfpanzer*, *Tank* and *Desert War*. The man-to-man level games like *Sniper* and *Patrol*, which rely for some of their flavor on unexpected collisions and resulting hand-to-hand combat, can use the combination system if the Players are willing to sacrifice some realism.

*Bull Run*, on the other hand, is a game which should retain simultaneous movement. It can be played with alternating movement but it loses a lot of realism. Play it instead with alternating combat within the Phase.

This is a "mixed" Sequence of Play which combines elements of simultaneous plotting and execution for activity with sequential execution of movement activity. The game is played in Game-Turns. Each Game-Turn is structured into successive Phases and sub-Phases (called Segments). This structure (called the Sequence of Play) provides a systematic method to plan and then

execute combat and movement. This Sequence of Play is repeated Game-Turn after Game-Turn until the termination of the Scenario.

During a Game-Turn a Player is free to use his units as he sees fit. He may move some, all or none of his units. But no unit may both move and attack in the same Game-Turn.

## SEQUENCE OF PLAY OUTLINE

[Modified Sequential and Simultaneous System]

### A. Mutual Plot Phase (simultaneous)

Both Players plot Direct Fire and Opportunity Fire for their units. Plot should note the firing unit, method of fire, and Target hex number. Players designate which units shall move during the Movement Phase, but do *not* indicate the actual paths of movement for their units.

### B. Panic Determination Phase (simultaneous)

Both Players execute Panic Procedure and determine which of their units are subject to Panic. Panic markers are placed on Panicked units.

### C. Direct Fire Phase (simultaneous application of results)

1. The first Player executes Direct Fire according to his plot.
2. The second Player executes Direct Fire according to his plot. Both Players place indirect fire H markers.
3. Disruption markers are placed according to the results of both Players' Direct Fire.

### D. Movement Phase (sequential)

1. The first Player moves all of his units which he had designated to move. He may move these units as he sees fit. Panicked units which were plotted to move must be moved according to the Panicked Movement Procedure.

(During the first Player's movement the second Player may announce and execute Opportunity Fire triggered by the movement of the first Player's unit. Application of results is *immediate*.)

2. The second Player now moves all of his units which he had designated to move, reversing roles with the first Player who executes triggered Opportunity Fire.

### E. Disruption Removal Phase

Remove all face-up "Pinned" markers and roll for removal of face-up "Disruption" markers.

### F. Indirect Fire Application Phase (simultaneous application of results)

Both Players execute and apply the results of Indirect Fire as plotted in the Plot Phase. Note that this Phase is deliberately placed after the Disruption Removal Phase so that any results of this Phase shall be in effect on the following Game-Turn.

### G. Mine Effects Application Phase

All "Pinned" and "Disruption" markers (placed on units as result of exiting from mined hexes) are turned face-up.