

AN EVEN MORE REALISTIC SNIPER!

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(from Footnotes, Moves issue 17)

Sniper! is one of the most innovative games ever designed. It is also one of the best, because of its balance between near perfect realism and acceptable playability. No other game can match its excitement, and thought-provoking killing of a man has a lot more impact than eliminating a division.

Nevertheless, there are a few holes in the game. They aren't serious, but warrant correction.

Under the current rules, every man (except flamethrower men) carries an unlimited number of smoke and fragmentation grenades. This is ludicrous. An infantryman on patrol seldom carried more than six frag grenades and smoke was uncommon. The smoke grenade was usually employed in special operations such as block clearing.

I have found that most games are too short for a soldier to use more than four or five grenades, but a limit is certainly logical. I urge you to insert the following rule after (17.6) QUICK THROW.

[17.7] GRENADE LIMITATIONS

Men may never carry more than six grenades.

[17.71] In the Patrol scenarios, no man may carry more than two smoke grenades.

[17.72] In the Block Clearing scenarios, the Clearer may use any mix of smoke and fragmentation grenades not exceeding six.

The Player in the block follows the rules for the Patrol scenarios.

[17.73] In the Ambush scenarios, the Ambusher uses any mix of smoke and fragmentation not exceeding six. The Ambushed Player can use up to two smoke grenades.

[17.74] In the Cordon scenarios, the Cordoned Player cannot use smoke grenades. The Cordoner may use any mix of smoke and fragmentation grenades not exceeding six.

It also helps to balance uneven Players if you give the superior Player fewer grenades than his opponent. Experiment a little to find the right amount. Another way to balance is to alter the rifle grenade rules.

As they now stand, any rifleman with a panic level of 0, 1, or 2 may use rifle grenades. To balance, assume that only some of the superior Player's riflemen have grenade launchers. This is realistic, as it was quite rare to find more than three or four launchers in a squad.

These are basic rules. I encourage you to experiment with the number of grenades used in each scenario. For example, 1941 Russians and 1945 Germans would be short of grenades and shouldn't be given the usual six.

All the squad members in anyone scenario are expected to have the same skills and experience - a necessary conclusion for the game. However, you might want to fool around with this optional rule:

SQUAD LEADER

One man in the squad is designated the Squad Leader. He is assumed to be more experienced than his squad members, and is superior to them. However, the loss of a squad leader is more damaging than usual because his men depend on him.

PROCEDURE:

The Squad Leader operates in all ways as a normal man except for the following:

- 1) His Panic Level is always one less than the rest of his squad.
- 2) If injured, add "1" to his Preservation Chit result.
- 3) He may not begin a scenario with a Machine Gun or Automatic Rifle.
- 4) He may exchange weapons with a MG or AR equipped man only if the second man has suffered a combat result.
- 5) He may not act as point man in Patrol scenarios.
- 6) The enemy is not told his identity until after the game.

I suggest that tankers who leave their vehicle have a Panic Level one more than the others on their side, for they aren't infantry and aren't used to fighting as such. Another optional rule I suggest is for balancing Players, but it makes the game really complex:

SHARPSHOOTERS

You may allocate one or more men in a squad to be sharpshooters. These are identical to other men in all respects but those listed below:

PROCEDURE:

- 1) The Sharpshooter always subtracts "1" from the die roll when making Direct Fire or Opportunity Fire attacks.
- 2) He must be armed with a Rifle. If the

Sharpshooter exchanges weapons and receives a MG, MP, or AR, he becomes a normal man in all respects. If he exchanges and receives a Rifle, he reverts to Sharpshooter.

4) His Attack Strength is not halved during Sniper Fire if attacking hexes adjacent to the target hex.

-Phil Kosnett