

The tactical air games (**Flying Circus**, **Richthofen's War**, **Spitfire**, **Foxbat & Phantom**) suffer a different problem; e.g., they are mostly short tactical scenarios and as such are little more than suicide missions. Losses be damned—it only matters that you fulfill your assignment.

However, I would like to point out that Randy Reed's Campaign Game for **Richthofen's War** goes a long way toward solving this problem for all tactical air war games. I have played this campaign game many times with a couple of friends—we play a three-man game; one German, one Allied fighter command, one Allied bomber/recon command (who is Allied boss)—and are absolutely delighted with the results. When you have to plan for seven days of operations, five operations a day, you become very sensitive about damage to your aircraft. How many planes you have in the shop, and how many will be available for operations next day, is extremely crucial. Many a commander with an ulcerated stomach finds himself laying down the law: any fighter approaching 50% damage should immediately break off contact and head for home. That becomes critical. An aircraft actually getting shot down is a catastrophe of such proportions it rarely happens in a campaign game—and when it does, it's usually due to a Critical Hit (i.e., lucky shot). Unfortunately, like **Luftwaffe**, even the Campaign Game starts breaking down when you get to the last day. Losses no longer matter, and the "suicide syndrome" reasserts itself. Nonetheless, you can have a good, realistic operational/tactical study up until then.

Moreover, this **RW** Campaign Game system can be adapted to most other tactical air games, as **Spitfire** and **Flying Circus**. **Foxbat & Phantom** is an all-or-nothing affair—no damage, you simply survive or you don't survive. Still, even here, you may give each side an "on paper" force, and a number of missions they must carry out with that force. Losses are permanent, reflecting declining control of the skies; and, of course, as time progresses, losses will also make it increasingly difficult to carry out each new mission. Unless, of course, you've put a few dents in your opponent also, or have racked up enough Victory Points on successful bombing runs to offset this. Another interesting scenario might be to have intruding bombers striking at enemy airfields, meaning a successful strike reduces the interceptor forces from turn to turn.

In short, **RW's** campaign game rules set a nice pattern for imposing operational realities on tactical air games and in turn converting insane "suicide" battles into startlingly realistic tactical aerial encounters. Those who are interested may wish to dust off some of their air games and try it. I suggest you begin with an **RW** Campaign Game, to get the feel of the system.

—Mark Saha

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## SPECIAL FORCES WEAPONS FOR PATROL

The game **Patrol** presents an opportunity to see what front line combat is like. With additions, it can also be made to represent Special Forces operations using improvised weapons and tactics. The following are based on field manuals TM 31-201-1 **Incendiaries**; TM 31-210 **Improvised Munitions Handbook**; FM 31-20 **Special Forces Operational Techniques**; and FM 21-75 **Combat Training of the Individual Soldier and Patrolling**.

**Match Rifle**: Symbol: MR, range 8 hexes. Attack Strength: 1-5:10, 6-8:4. Made of a piece of pipe mounted on wood, it uses matches as propellant to shoot screws as bullets. It becomes unloaded after every firing.

**Image Metascope**: Symbol: IMT. Using this in the dark an observer can see the enemy up to 50 meters (or 10 hexes) away.

**Sniperscope Mounted on Carbine**: Symbol: SRSN. When using this, an observer can see the enemy up to 115 meters (or 21 hexes). Use the night spotting table and add "1" to the number result. Change all N results to 1 up to the range indicated of the image metascope also (10 hexes).

**Improvised Carbine**: Symbol: IC. Range same as BR (RF), except 'one' is subtracted from the die roll and it automatically becomes unloaded every turn.

**Nail Grenade**: Symbol: GRN. A block of TNT or similar explosive is wrapped with a layer of nails and thrown. This should always be subject to scatter, since the thrower is in a hurry to get rid of it.

**Pipe Pistol for .45 Ammo**: Symbol: PP; range 20 hexes. Attack Strength: 1-5:15, 6-18:8, 11-20:4. When using this weapon it becomes unloaded after every turn and 'one' is subtracted from the die roll.

**Machete**: Symbol: MC. A long bladed knife used for brush clearing. For purposes of hand to hand combat it is the same as RF (BR/SR) and '1' is added to the die roll.

**Metal Grenade Launcher**: Symbol: MGL; range 660 yards (so this is offboard firepower). This is a piece of pipe in which powder is used to blast the grenades out. They are launched during the artillery impact and detonation segment. Each grenade is subject to scatter and attacks with normal strength.

**Firebottle Launcher**: Symbol: FBL. A standard shotgun is used to launch a bottle of napalm-like material 16 hexes. Normal scatter procedures are followed and the attack is like a flamethrower, except '1' is subtracted from the die roll.

**Chemical Firebottle**: Symbol: CFB. This bottle contains a mixture of ingredients that will not ignite until the bottle is detonated by dropping it. It is subject to grenade limitations and produces a flame upon impact.

**Napalm Foucasse**: Symbol: NFG. A drum of napalm is buried in the ground, detonated by a boobytrap trip wire. Like the claymore, the direction of the attack must be designated. The result is like a Flame Attack, except '1' is added to the die roll.

When using Special Forces, rules modifications are necessary:

Case 22.1 is changed to allow them to exchange weapons because of technical knowledge of enemy weapons. Scenarios using the above weapons: **Hungary 1980**. In general uprising by Warsaw Pact countries against communist domination, special forces are sent in to help the underground. Terrain mode: Mixed. Map Set-Up: variable. **Underground Panic**: 30; preservation: 30; 2MR, 1FBL, 1 SC, 2 NFG, 1 MP, 12 CFB, 4 1C, 1 PP, 2 MC, 12 GRN, 1 SG, 1 MGL. **Russians Panic**: 10; preservation: 25; 1 APC, 7 AW, 1 MG, 1 RL, 2 MP. (Optional, see **MOVES 19**, one helicopter).

**Mission Type**: Ambush.

**Special Rules**: For the underground, the SC, CFB, MC, GRN, and MP must be divided up among his nine men on the sheet. The MGL takes three turns to reload. Two MP must precede the APC on motorcycles until it is ambushed, then the rest of the men are free to disembark, if desired.

**Comments**: The underground must hit the Russians hard, in order to reduce the odds. When the helicopter is used, they either have the option of trying to get hold of some Russian weapons and shooting it down if it comes low enough, or fleeing. The Russians are vulnerable, however, because the underground has 1 SC and the Flame Attack will up the preservation effort (rule 28.13).

—Tom Hawkins

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## CREATING MECH WAR SCENARIOS

The procedure described below allows players to design a large variety of balanced playable scenarios for **Mech War '77**. I have used U.S. and Soviet units and map regions for the example given below; any opponents from the counters supplied and/or geographic regions can be chosen. All **Mech War '77** rules are in effect.

**A.** The U.S. Player secretly selects an objective hex for the Soviet Player on the western third of the map (hexrows 0200-2000 inclusive). The Soviet Player secretly selects an objective hex for the U.S. Player on the eastern third of the map (hexrows 4200-6000 inclusive). Any objective hex, which is neither on the map edge nor completely surrounded by woods, hilltops, and/or wooded-hilltops may be chosen.

**B.** Each Player has a total of 600 points to expend for the sum of his objective hex, units, OFBDA, CAS, mines, improved positions, and his opponent's panic level. This process is carried out secretly.

1. A value between 50 and 300 points inclusive is assigned by each Player to his own objective.

2. Units are selected from each Player's counter mix. Unit values equal attack + defense + movement. Note that dual units may be selected without their G weapons at their lower values. For example, U.S. infantry without DRAGON are  $7 + 6 + 1 = 14$  points. A minimum of 100 points must be allocated to units.

3. Select OFBDA valued as follows: Each Soviet 6H at 12 points; each Soviet 8H at 16 points; Each U.S. 7H at 14 points. The U.S. can purchase OFBDA multipliers by expending 15 points for the first, 3 points for the second; each **additional** multiplier costs double the previous. For example, three multipliers cost  $15 + 30 + 60 = 105$  points.

4. Each 5H CAS costs 20 points.

5. Mines are valued as follows: Each hasty at 10 points; each preventive at 20 points; each defensive at 50 points. The hex chosen as ones opponent's objective may not be mined. Also there must be an unmined hex adjacent to the objective hex which is not a woods, hilltop or wooded-hilltop hex.

6. Select improved positions at 5 points each.

7. Select opponent's panic level. The first 10% costs 20 points, and each added 10% costs double the previous 10%. Thus, 40% panic costs 150 points.

Note that a Player need not utilize his full 600 points, but that it is to his advantage to do so.

C. The US and Soviet Players set-up face-down on their respective thirds of the board. Any number of dummy units can be used in the set-up. No units or mines can be set-up in hexrows 2100-4100, inclusive. Both Players then exchange their lists, thus revealing their selections, their opponent's objective hex and their own objective value as described in B1. All unit counters (not mines) are displayed and dummy units are removed. The first turn plot phase begins. The player who has assigned himself the lower objective value in B1 moves first. If both objective values are identical let chance decide.

D. The maximum game length varies between 9 and 14 turns, depending on a die roll at the beginning of turn 8. However, the game ends at the conclusion of the turn on which either or both players occupy their respective objective hexes with any unit except a truck or helicopter. Helicopters are not allowed to land on either objective hex. The occupying unit **may** be pinned, panicked or disrupted.

E. Each player receives victory points for the sum of:

1. Destroyed enemy units.
2. Destroyed or abandoned enemy entrenchments.
3. One half the value assigned to his own objective in B1 whether or not occupied (retain half point).
4. The full objective value from B1 if occupied at game's end.
5. If a player achieves his objective and therefore obtains victory points as in E4 above he **also** obtains 15 points for each turn the game ends before its maximum of 8 plus

the die roll. The die should be rolled for game length even if it ends before turn 8.

F. Discussion. The reason for adding one half the objective value to the victory total is to encourage higher objective values rather than larger collections of units. It also serves to balance the scenarios when opponents choose widely differing objective values. The scenarios are obviously well balanced if both players assign approximately equal objective values and use moderately good judgment in choosing their units, OFBDA, etc. An example with differing objective values, which is useful in illustrating the rules is given below.

G. Example: The US Player secretly chooses 0407 as the Soviet objective. The Soviet Player secretly chooses 5931 as the US objective. The US player lists:

1. 50 points for his objective (minimum value).
  2. He selects:  
3 Inf. at 21 points=63; 5 M60 at 39 points=195; 2 M150 at 31 points=62; 2 Cmbt at 29 points=58; 5 M113 at 17 points=85. Total=463 points.
  3. OFBDA 3(7H) at 14 points=42; 1 multiplier=15. Total=57 points.
  4. CAS 1(5H) at 20 points=20 points.
  5. No mines
  6. No entrenchments.
  7. 10% Soviet panic level at 10 points.
- Grand Total=600 points.**

The Soviet Player lists:

1. 300 points for his objective (maximum value).
2. He selects:  
1 Spat at 22 points=22; 1 Rcp at 22 points=22; 2 Bmp at 32 points=64; 2 T62 at 36 points=72; 2 122f at 8 points=16; 2 100a at 17 points=34. Total=230 points.
3. No OFBDA.
4. No CAS.
5. 1 hasty mine at 10 points; 1 preventive mine at 20 points. Total=30 points.
6. 2 entrenchments at 5 points=10.
7. 20% US panic level at  $10 + 20 = 30$  points.

**Grand Total=600 points.**

In the game, the U.S. Player destroyed 1 Spat+1 Rcp+1 T62+1 100a+1 entrenchment. He occupied hex 5931 on turn 7. The die roll for game length was "3" so that the game would have lasted  $8 + 3 = 11$  turns. He receives 129 points for units destroyed+5 points for entrenchments destroyed+25 ( $\frac{1}{2}$  objective value)+60 points for occupying 5931 on turn 7 ( $15 \times 4$ ) for a total of 269 points. The Soviet Player made no attempt to occupy his objective hex 0407. He destroyed 1 Inf+1 M113+1 Cmbt+1 M60 for a total of 106 points in units. In addition he scores 150 points ( $\frac{1}{2}$  objective value) for a total of 256 points. The U.S. Player is the victor.

—William Streifer

## INVASION: AMERICA

On close examination of the terrain represented on the **Invasion: America** map, there were several hexes in which I believe the wrong kind of terrain is depicted.

I have travelled through or lived in most parts of the continental United States. I have hunted, fished and travelled in much of Southern California.

(a) Hex 3012 is the San Gabriel Mountains. I have hunted in this area and I do not consider this area to be a forest, equivalent to the woods and farmlands of Virginia and North Carolina, where I have also lived for a number of years. This area is covered by a mass of steep, rugged, razorback ridges and deep, rocky ravines and gorges. The scrub brush in this area is so thick in many places as to require machetes to clear a path. I estimate that one could hike about 5 miles a day through such terrain. If it wasn't for all the fire roads in this area, this hex would probably be a broken hex. The fire department having bulldozed many roads in this area (in order to fight the notorious brushfires of this area) this area may be the equivalent of a wilderness area (although I don't think that a hovercraft could negotiate such terrain).

(b) Hex 3013 in part consists of the high and rugged San Bernardino Mountains. The rest of the hex consists of lower, but still rugged mountains and ridges. It is, however, a well roaded and well settled area. It should be at least a wilderness area and possibly a broken hex, depending on your interpretation of terrain.

(c) Hexes 3011, 2912, 2914, 2813 are rugged mountain areas, but are more settled and well roaded than hexes 3012 and 3013. They should rate at least as forest hexes and more likely as wilderness hexes. These hexes are much more rugged than the forest areas of Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Texas and the upper California coast.

—Francis K. Irizawa

