

SCENARIOS AND VARIANTS

FIREFIGHT-CITY

Looting Cityfight for Chrome

by Gary C. Morgan

Just so that you know, when we did *Firefight*, the mission was "keep it simple" because a lot of non-gamers (in the Army) were going to use it to train on. Interestingly enough, the game maintained a lot of flavor even though it was designed under a lot of constraints (not the least of which was some army bird colonel telling me how to design counters). Mr. Morgan now allows us to build something more complex using this past Origins Best Modern Game winner, *Cityfight*. —RAS

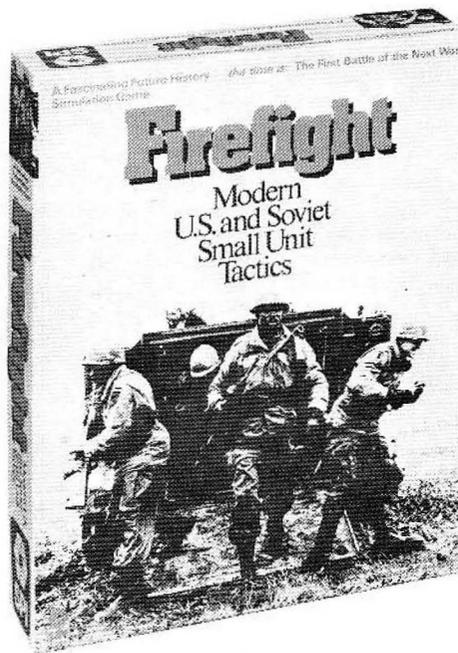
Winning a Charles Roberts award at Origins 80 is an outstanding tribute to a superior game and the people who produced it. *Cityfight* is truly a gem, both in realism and playability. It is a combination of all the good innovations to come out of SPI in the past few years, without the muddle of over-complexity. The game *can* become very involved, but only at the players' option, without contaminating the basic game mechanics.

This article is not written on *Cityfight*, but about its country cousin: *Firefight*. I will attempt to incorporate a few of *Cityfight's* advances into *Firefight*, plus some other points for realism. The ultimate realization of these suggestions would be a *Firefight* expansion kit consisting of some extra counters and a rules addenda brochure. If you are a gamer involved in post-World War II, tactical level games, *Firefight* is your baby. You will enjoy the individuality of the game pieces, the dynamics of weapon ranges, and the desperate lethality of combat (no "retreat" result on the CRT). *Firefight's* greatest strong point is its playability (a consideration often abandoned in tactical games). It is an ideal game to teach a person who is not a wargamer, and have him playing immediately.

The new gamer is presented with the basic game mechanics in a concise, layered format. The average game can be played out in thirty minutes to two hours; which will fit into almost anyone's timetable. This is why *Firefight* earns its keep while an "elephant" like *Mech War 2* lies in the closet collecting dust (it's a great source of extra counters).

Let's assume, as a reader of *MOVES*, that you have played *Firefight* often, and are ready for a bit more realism (with the necessary additional complexity). Let's also assume that you are familiar with *Cityfight*, and if you don't own it, you will in the near

future (both games are outstanding buys; you certainly get your money's worth). Some of the proposed counters mentioned in this article are handily available in *Cityfight* or *Mech War 2*. Players familiar with the *Cityfight* system may wish to use the complete *Cityfight* command control rather than the one I have listed in this article (my system is a simplified version which eliminates a lot of bookkeeping). *Firefight* fans are also encouraged to use the additional vehicles and scenarios found in *MOVES* #30 and 31.



[30.0] FIREFIGHT IV

COMMENTARY:

These additional modifications can be incorporated back into any level of *Firefight* to extensively simulate limitations of weapons, and capabilities of units due to equipment, training, and command control.

[31.0] SOVIET DEFILADE LIMITS

COMMENTARY:

Nearly all Soviet AFV's are designed to meet the needs of their offensive doctrine. A prime consideration is their low-height silhouette which makes them hard to acquire and hit, especially in the open. The low profile turret limits the upward travel of the gun breech (which is required if the gun is to be depressed). For a tank to gain benefit

from a defilade position, the longitudinal axis of the hull is usually elevated, requiring the gun to depress well below level. Soviet tanks (and the BMP) are unable to depress their main guns below level, while US tanks are built with high silhouettes which allow significant negative main gun depression capability.

GENERAL RULE:

While all Soviet armor may enjoy a *defensive* advantage from a defilade position, Soviet tank and BMP may *not* fire main guns over a defilade hex-side position at targets of equal or lower elevation. Defilade positions do not prohibit ATGM attacks by Sagger-capable Soviet vehicles. In a defensive scenario, Soviet AFV's may begin the game in a dug-in, defilade-type improved position which allows them to fire main guns as well as derive defensive defilade advantage. New improved positions can not be created once play begins. (Amendment to 23.0 and 23.1).

[32.0] ATGM LIMITS

COMMENTARY:

The wire-guided missile has made a major impact on mechanized combat. It also has many limitations which must be considered for it to be truly effective. Generally, ATGM's are many times slower than anti-tank ballistic ammunition, with flight times approaching 30-60 seconds at maximum range. Trained gunners must track the target and, possibly, manually control the missile for the time-of-flight, and can be distracted by suppressive direct or indirect fire, making the missile miss the target. Armor crewmen can often see missiles coming toward them in time to move their vehicle to cover, or shoot suppressive fire at the launch unit to defeat the missile. Many new tanks such as the XM-1 and T-72 are equipped with titanium-ceramic laminate armor which is impervious to frontal-aspect ATGM impacts.

CASES:

[32.1] ATGM (Sagger, TOW, Shillelagh)

These missiles may travel only 20 hexes per turn. The missile must travel in a direct path toward its intended target and upon reaching the 20th hex it will "freeze" in mid-air and resume movement during *same phase* of the *next turn*. The launch unit must not move while guiding the ATGM. The missile will be a "no effect" (miss) if: The launch units moves; or receives any combat result from direct or indirect fire; or the line of sight to the target unit is lost. The ATGM attacking player must designate the mid-air limit hex of the missile with a special counter (a blank) indicating the missile's heading (and noting the launch unit if many such attacks are in progress). Upon subsequent resumption of movement, the missile may make a one-hex-side facing change to either side and travel in a direct path toward its intended target to a limit of 20 more hexes for that turn.

[32.2] Any vehicle equipped with "Chobham" type armor (XM-1, XMBT) will always be moved with an indicated frontal aspect. Players may desire to use the top edge of the counter (or the left edge which shows the front pictorially), but must clarify the front to the other player in a mutually agreed manner. If one of these vehicles receives an ATGM attack, trace a line from the center of the launch unit to the center of the target vehicle. If the line passes through the hexside which touches the counter's frontal aspect edge, the attack is a "no effect" and misses. (An addition to Cases 27.32 and 27.42.)

[33.0] SOVIET DOCTRINE

COMMENTARY:

Due to the Soviet policy of limiting initiative and creativity in tactics among its junior officers, the Soviet army plans to conduct tactical operations in planned, rehearsed doctrine. This bypasses the need for complex communications, command, and control required by the U.S., but sacrifices flexibility and coordination. Soviet platoons stay very close together and direct fire is *by platoon* at a single target. When a platoon operates with the company, it stays close to the "guide" platoon and the company commander. Only when a platoon is ordered on advance recon (point) or column flank security is it out of visual contact with the company commander.

While all three platoon tanks or APC's have radio receivers, only the platoon leader has a transmitter. The platoon leader leads in column formation and is the center vehicle in line abreast formation. Number two is second in column and right of the platoon leader in the line abreast. The number three vehicle is commanded by the experienced platoon sergeant and follows number two in column and is on leader's left in line abreast.

In company operations each platoon deploys as its platoon counterpart vehicle would, second platoon right of the first platoon, and third to the left of the first. When contact is not expected, the company travels in a single column — first, second, and third platoon in that order. The tank company commander leads in front of first platoon. The APC company commander will sandwich between first and second platoon. An APC company is usually escorted by a reinforce tank platoon of four tanks which lead the company. When approaching contact, the company splits off into three parallel columns: first platoon in the center; second on the right; and third on the left. When contact is imminent or when attacking a known enemy, each platoon column wheels into line abreast (as described before).

The APC company's four tanks break out into close line abreast when the company moves to platoon columns, and spreads out when the company goes to line abreast. The platoons may all be exactly abreast each other (called three-up) or may be echeloned back in a two-up "Vic," or Arrowhead (one-up), or Echelon left or right (two-up). The company commander is usually near the center either forward (tank company) or back (APC company), of first platoon.

[33.1] All Soviet vehicular units will attempt at all times to follow all doctrine as set forth in 33.0 in their operations.

[33.2] Each platoon will designate a platoon leader and a platoon sergeant. In the first and third vehicles, respectively. These designations will assist in fulfilling 33.1.

[33.3] Each company will follow 33.2 for each platoon and will also designate a company com-

mander in a tenth vehicle. These designations will also assist in fulfilling 33.1.

[33.4] Each platoon vehicle will not exceed a radius of 5 hexes from the platoon leader. If a vehicle exceeds 5 hexes from platoon leader, it is suppressed until it regains position.

[33.5] If the platoon leader is killed, the platoon is stopped and suppressed until the following game-turn. After that game-turn, the platoon sergeant is the new platoon leader and [33.4] applies to him.

[33.6] If both platoon leader and platoon sergeant are killed, the number two vehicle is suppressed indefinitely unless it comes within 5 hexes of company commander vehicle.

[33.7] Whenever possible, *all* platoon vehicles will fire at the *same* target. All platoon vehicles will move together, in a turn.

[33.8] Each platoon leader's vehicle will not exceed a radius of 20 hexes from the company commander's vehicle.

[33.9] Platoon leaders 2 and 3 will not exceed more than 10 hexes distance from any vehicle of their platoon to any vehicle of platoon one. Platoon two will always deploy to platoon one's right and platoon three will always deploy to one's left.

[33.10] Any platoon which does not meet criteria of 33.8 and 33.9 is suppressed until position is regained.

[33.11] If the company commander is killed, platoons 2 and 3 are suppressed on the following game-turn, after which platoon leader 1 is the new company commander and 33.9 is measured from him.

[33.12] If platoon leader 1 is killed, command passes to platoon leader 2 then to platoon leader 3, for purposes of 33.8. If company commander and platoon leader 1 are both killed disregard 33.9.

[33.13] If a battalion size force is to be used, battalion headquarters will be designated from Data Appendix E. The 3 company commanders will follow same guidance as the three platoon leaders in 33.8 and 33.12, regarding the battalion. Headquarters contains the battalion commander in one vehicle and his chief of staff in another (who takes command if the commander is killed — a modification of 33.11). If both battalion commander and chief of staff are killed, 33.11 is in effect, substituting company commanders for platoon leaders.

Note: Players may wish to use leader counters (with name and rank) from *Cityfight* to facilitate tracking command figures. An alternate method is to write the three digit numbers of all vehicles and group them by unit, annotating leaders in their respective vehicles.

[33.14] Mortar units, ATGM sections, and anti-tank platoons are exempt from all 33.0 Soviet Doctrine.

[34.0] US DOCTRINE

COMMENTARY:

US Army Tactical Doctrine is infinitely more flexible than the above described Soviet Doctrine. Very little formal doctrine is mandatory, allowing each unit's leader to utilize his resources as he sees fit.

The tank platoon, composed of five tanks is informally subdivided into a heavy section of three tanks, led by the platoon leader; and a light section of two tanks, led by the platoon sergeant. Both sections move during "Travelling." When contact is possible or imminent, "Bounding" is in effect. This mode requires one section to move while the

other halts; when the moving section attains its immediate destination, it halts and the stopped section begins moving, usually past the first section, to a new immediate destination. When the stopped section is loaded and prepared to cover the moving section, ready to fire suppressive or return fire at revealed enemy position, this technique is called "Bounding Overwatch." Usually all the vehicles in the moving section move, and the vehicles in the halted section are stopped and all shoot when required, though not necessarily at the same target.

The mechanized infantry platoon with its four APC's may possible divide into two parts, with the platoon leader in one and the platoon sergeant in the other. Another possibility is for the platoon leader and APC's 2 and 3 to form a heavy section and the platoon sergeant's APC (number 4) to be the light section. When in the "Travelling" mode, the whole platoon of four moves simultaneously. During "Bounding" or "Bounding Overwatch," the platoon may split into the two-pair formation or the three/one formation.

In company operations, each platoon is given an area of responsibility and each is basically autonomous. Each platoon can provide mutual support for another (Bounding Overwatch by platoon instead of section), if required. In company teams, the tank and mech infantry platoon do what each does best. The company commander provides the basic plan and objective and by staying in radio contact with the platoons, he can orchestrate the operation by redirection if the situation warrants.

CASES:

[34.1] US units will attempt to use the guidelines set forth in 34.0 as a foundation for fire and maneuver.

[34.2] Tank platoons will subdivide into a 3-tank heavy section, led by the platoon leader, and light section of 2 tanks led by the platoon sergeant.

[34.3] Each vehicle will remain within 10 hexes of its leader or will be suppressed until re-entering this 10 hex radius.

[34.4] If a leader (platoon leader or platoon sergeant) is killed, the other vehicle(s) in the section are suppressed until the platoon regroups into a single entity, under the surviving leader.

[34.5] If both the platoon leader and platoon sergeant are killed, the remaining vehicles in the platoon are suppressed indefinitely. Presence of the company commander will cancel a morale suppression due to killed leaders for each vehicle in the 10-hex radius from the commander's vehicle.

[34.6] A mech infantry platoon is not required to subdivide, but if it does so, the divisions described in 34.0 are recommended. Case 34.3 does not apply to mech units, except in Case 34.7.

[34.7] Mech units do not suffer morale suppression if either the platoon leader or platoon sergeant is alive. If *both* are killed, *all* surviving units in the platoon are suppressed indefinitely. Suppression will be cancelled for every vehicle within 10 hexes from a company commander's vehicle.

[34.8] TOW and mortar units are not bound by the restrictions of 34.0.

[34.9] If units begin play in an understrength or incomplete condition (simulating previous combat attrition or subdivision of another unit), players may find restrictions of 34.0 to be unrealistic or inappropriate. If any deviations are planned, players should mutually agree on those in effect and those to be deleted.

[35.0] NIGHT/LIMITED VISIBILITY COMBAT

COMMENTARY:

Soviet doctrine calls for operations around the clock, gaining a defensive advantage from the limited visibility at night to allow vehicular combat. Both Soviet and US tanks, and the BMP, are equipped with night vision devices. Both sides rely on Starshell — artillery delivered, parachute suspended flares, to illuminate areas of the battlefield. The damp European climate often produces thick ground fog, especially at sunrise and sunset, which can severely reduce visibility, and can also limit range.

CASES:

[35.1] During night combat, units may not be spotted unless they move, shoot, or are illuminated. To preserve secrecy, players may wish to use dummy counters or track units on a note pad until they are revealed.

[35.2] All fireteam, MG units, and the M113 fire at suppressed strength. They are limited to a two-hex range unless the target unit is illuminated, or has fired in the last game-turn and has not moved since (in which case ranges are normal).

[35.3] All tanks, the BMP, BRDM, and MICV are equipped with night vision devices. They cannot detect units in woods/town hexes who have not moved or fired. These vehicles subtract one from their attack rating at night. Maximum range is 15 hexes with night vision aids.

[35.4] Any indirect fire unit may fire Starshell (ST) fire missions to provide illumination. Targeting and persistence procedures are identical to those used for smoke in Section 14.0. Starshell will illuminate all hexes up to four hexes from the impact hex. Any illuminated unit may be fired upon by any unit with a clear LOS to the target, using the firing unit's full attack strength. Players may use a blank counter (or a Starshell counter from *Cityfight*) to indicate the position of the various flares.

[35.5] Limited visibility due to ground fog should be determined at the beginning of the game. Both players should roll one die and multiply the combined result by five hexes, so the product will indicate the maximum limit of visibility in the game, from 10 hexes to 60. No direct fire weapon may fire at targets beyond this range.

[36.0] SOVIET SP GUNS

COMMENTARY:

Current Soviet tactical doctrine and deployment reveal numerous appearances of the M1974 122mm self-propelled gun on the frontlines with first echelon tank and BMP units. These guns act in a direct fire support role to suppress and demolish defensive strong points. A battalion of three batteries (18 guns) will reinforce a tank or BMP battalion when it acts as a Regimental Advanced Guard. One of the three batteries is up with the maneuver battalion's forward company, while the other two stay back in an indirect fire role with the battalion's main body. This forward battery divides into three pairs of SP74 guns. Each pair moves together and both guns fire at the same target.

CASES:

[36.1] A counter should represent each SP74 gun (again, available from *Cityfight* or *Mech War 2*). Each SP74 gun have a movement allowance of

three. SP74 guns fire during the Direct Fire Phase, subject to all LOS restrictions of direct fire weapons. When an SP74 fires, it targets one hex. The attack rating is 9 on the impact hex, 5 on adjacent hexes, and 2 on surrounding hexes. (The attacking player should reference the appropriate CRT, either anti-personnel or anti-vehicle, to determine the impact hex using an attack rating of 9.) If the target is in clear terrain, the target hex is always the impact hex. If the terrain modifiers would convert the attack to "no effect," the fire hits one hex closer to the firing unit, and this hex is the adjusted impact hex.

[36.2] Each SP74 gun is considered a vehicular target if attacked. Attacking player should retreat the unit as an APC for purposes of determining this attack rating.

[36.3] If an SP74 gun receives a K or Kf result, it will then detonate its ammunition. The owning player will calculate an attack of the SP74 on itself, primarily affecting any surrounding units.

[36.4] The Soviet player should receive no more than 6 SP74 guns (a battery) within the limits of *Firefight*, for direct fire use.

References

FM 30-102 Opposing Forces, Europe

FM71-1 Tank and Mech Infantry Company Team

TRADOC Bulletin 7: The BMP

TRADOC Bulletin 10: The Main Battle Tank



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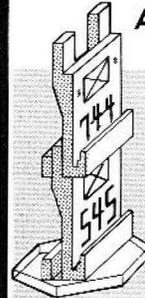
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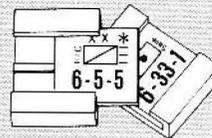
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