

IRON CROSS



WWII wargaming in miniature

**GREAT
ESCAPE
GAMES**

IRON CROSS

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Command Tokens	2
Morale Markers	2
Unit Composition	3
Scale	3
Gaming Areas	3
Terrain	3

GAME RULES

Command Tokens	4
Initiative	4
Change of Initiative	4
Activating a Unit	5
Passing the Initiative	5
Reacting	6
Changing Target	7
Seizing the Initiative	7
Moving	8
Vehicle Movement	8
Rapid Moves	8
Turret Movement	8
Terrain Types	8
Moving through Terrain	9
Embarking/Disembarking	9
Platoon Movement	9

Firing	10
Morale Markers/Casualty Rolls	10
Cover	10
Morale Markers and Tank Guns	10
Arc of Fire	11
Side/Front Armour	11
Ranges	11
Armour Penetration	12
Hull Down	12
Screech! Vehicle Damaged	12
Kaboom!	12
Smoke	12
Close Combat	12

Company Morale Test	13
Unit Destroyed	13
Fall Back	13

Evolution of a Game Turn	14
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ORDERS OF BATTLE

Orders of Battle Special Rules	18
German Army 1944/45	21
British/Canadian Army 1944/5	22
US Army 1944/5	23
Soviet Army 1944/5	24

SCENARIOS

Multi-Player Games	25
Scenario Rules	26
Victory Conditions	27
Meeting Engagement	28
Escalating Engagement	29
Capture	30
Breakthrough	31
Tactical Advantage Cards	33



INTRODUCTION

Iron Cross is a set of fast play rules for fielding loads of armour with supporting infantry in any scale. The mechanics are remarkably simple and the method of activation presents players with weighty tactical decisions to ponder and a sense of high tension and drama.

It is a game especially suited to large, multi-player games in which each side has a player acting as the overall commander for the battle, developing and co-ordinating an overall plan for the achievement of operational objectives, and entrusting individual players to execute those plans. It is a game in which simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.

Iron Cross is also ideal for two players, whether gaming with small forces on a “standard” sized table, or with much more impressive formations on a greater scale terrain board.

The rules are purposely uncomplicated to allow players to concentrate on the scale of the battle, but the action/reaction system ensures that all players are involved at all times, making tactical decisions affecting their own commands.

Throughout this book, the characters Feldwebel Coburg and Sergeant Denver will appear to give tactical advice. Heed their wise words!

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

The usual requirements for a tabletop miniature wargame – models, dice (d10's for firing, d6's for activation /morale tests), tape measure, scenery, morale markers and command tokens (see below) and an opponent – are needed for Iron Cross. The game is suited for two players with modest forces but also works really well for large games involving multiple players per side. If you are using teams of players, it is necessary to nominate one as the force commander.



The best commanders are able to manage their resources and maintain the momentum of the operation. Any temptation to be gung-ho in attack must be tempered with the ability to react to enemy counter attacks. All combat situations must keep an element of reserve strength in order to mitigate for unforeseen circumstances, whether in defence or in attack.

COMMAND TOKENS

Command tokens are the engine of Iron Cross and are fully explained on pages 4-5. A command token is spent to activate your units or to improve morale. Players will need tokens for each side and a bag or cup to keep them in. Command tokens for various nations are available from the Great Escape Games webstore at www.greatescapegames.co.uk.

MORALE MARKERS

Morale markers are vital to track the effects of suppressive fire on units and are fully covered on page 10. The accumulation of morale markers hampers the ability of a unit to perform actions. Each unit has a morale rating and, if the number of morale markers exceed this rating, the unit is considered to have been dispersed, destroyed or surrendered. Again, any sort of token may be used and the Great Escape Games store has morale markers specifically designed with this game in mind.



Morale markers, command tokens and dice



UNIT COMPOSITION

These rules were created to allow for a fast flowing game. Therefore, all units fall into one of five basic categories:

1. Infantry detachments represent an element of a platoon, such as a squad. The unit is represented by a base of 4 or 5 models in 15mm or 4 or 5 singly based figures in bigger scales. When selecting models for your infantry detachment, it does not matter greatly what the model is equipped with, they are just classed as infantry. This speeds up game play by avoiding the need to check equipment or weapons each time the unit is activated – we assume that the infantry are equipped with whatever they need to do the job e.g. grenades when fighting at close quarters, etc. The one consideration we do address is portable anti-tank weapons, such as bazookas, as infantry detachments have an option (and some have restrictions) whether or not to include them.
2. Support squads, such as mortars, machine gun teams and anti-tank guns. They are modelled as a single piece with 3 or 4 crew and represent two or three weapons.
3. Light vehicles, which includes transports, scout cars, reconnaissance vehicles and light tanks. Transports play an important role in moving infantry around the battlefield, but they are only lightly armoured. Again, we ignore various classifications of armoured vehicle to speed up game play.
4. Medium vehicles. This covers most armoured vehicles within the game.
5. Heavy vehicles. Applies to the most heavily armoured tanks on the battlefield.

Vehicle models usually represent one vehicle, but an infantry detachment represents a squad, perhaps with a support team, so that six or seven units of normal infantrymen indicates a full company of troops, or a mortar unit represents two to three weapons.

The number of figures required to represent infantry detachments and support squads is deliberately not fixed. For infantry squads, we suggest 4 or 5 figures on a single base for 15mm, and 4 or 5 separate models for 20 or 28mm. For support squads, 3 or 4 figures on a single base works for any scale.

SCALE

Iron Cross is not tied to a particular scale of model soldiers. The authors tend to play with 28mm and 15mm; playing with smaller scales allows for bigger battles in smaller spaces. If using 15mm, there are a couple of suggested amendments to ranges but these are clearly noted where required.

GAMING AREAS

The bigger the better is our philosophy when playing WWII encounters. Although Iron Cross is great for any size battlefield, smaller ones will obviously compact the action. Larger gaming tables give greater scope for tactical movement, flanking manoeuvres and the ability to regroup when things don't go so well. In 28mm scale, we play occasional small battles on the standard 6' x 4' tables that are in most wargames clubs, but even these minor encounters feel so much more like a WWII battle on a playing surface of double the size. Games using 15mm miniatures are ideally suited for 6' x 4' tables and upwards.

The larger area begs for a combination of linking roads, settlements, bocage-choked fields and open areas for vehicles to negotiate rapidly before they turn into shooting galleries! The extra effort put into arranging a bigger gaming area, and populating it with plenty of varied terrain features, is returned in more enjoyment than the effort required. Go big! Bigger is better!

TERRAIN

The photographs in this book will give you a flavour of the terrain density that is best for playing Iron Cross. Both areas congested with buildings/vegetation and of open ground will provide players with interesting tactical questions to address and, most importantly, make your gaming area look both attractive and believable. If, after you set up the terrain, you can stand back, take a look and say, "Yeah, that looks awesome, I want to play", then you're on the right track. Of course, if you're just after a quick game on a club night, you may not have the time to lavish on this exercise, so just ensure that you have plenty of terrain placed in a logical and somewhat realistic manner. Even in more sparse theatres, such as North Africa, terrain should go some way to replicate real life tactical issues. Ground is not flat with a little hillock here and a small clump of trees there; it is undulating and deceptive, providing cover and concealment where the viewer might not instantly recognise it. Make the terrain part of the game.



COMMAND TOKENS

At the start of a turn each side takes one command token for each unit on the tabletop, plus two additional tokens for the command unit (as long as it is still active on the tabletop). Play commences as defined in the scenario rules, with one side determined as the one with the initiative – the active player. The active player uses his command tokens to activate a unit and perform an action as described below. The player without the initiative – the reactive player – may react to the active player's actions by declaring he will interrupt the action (see Reacting below).

INITIATIVE

Initiative is determined at the start of each turn with each side rolling a D6. The highest scorer chooses to start as the active player or pass over the initiative. In the event of a tie, roll again until you have a winner.

CHANGE OF INITIATIVE

In short, the turn continues until the active player has spent all of his command tokens, passes over the initiative (saving some tokens to react to his opponent later that turn), or the opposing player seizes the initiative.

A command token may be used to do one of the following:

- 1/ Activate or re-activate a unit
- 2/ Take a Company Morale Test
- 3/ Fall Back

When the player has declared the action, the command token is either placed with the activated unit or in a separate pile if used for a Company Morale Test. Once both sides have spent all of their command tokens a new turn begins by each player drawing one command token for each of his units (plus additional tokens for the command unit) still on the tabletop. Note that certain scenarios may dictate different circumstances in which the turn ends.

ACTIVATING A UNIT

A unit may move and/or shoot (or shoot, then move) when activated. The owning player declares the action before executing it or making any rolls. Units may be activated any number of times during a turn but, if activating a further time beyond the first, must take an activation test by rolling a d6. The player must score higher than the number of activations the unit has already had plus any morale markers it has accumulated.

Example: if a Sherman (with no morale markers) had already activated to move this turn and the player wishes to activate it again, he would need to roll 2+ (greater than the one command token on it) on a d6 to succeed and activate the unit a further time. If the Sherman had two morale markers on it, it would need a 4+ (greater than the one command token plus two morale markers) to activate again. It is essential to place a command token on the unit each time it activates.

Whether the test is passed or failed, the command token is placed with the unit as normal. Regardless of the number of command tokens plus morale markers, a score of 6 always succeeds.



Use your activations to implement your plan of action and engage enemy targets in a coordinated manner. Retaining a tactical reserve allows you to utilise tokens to activate multiple front line units multiple times and maintain the momentum against engaged enemy. This reserve can then be committed at the right time and place.



15mm US Command unit
(Plastic Soldier Company)



MULTIPLE ACTIONS IN AN ACTIVATION

When activating a unit with a command token, you can use that token to perform up to two different actions. Moving at normal speed is a single action; moving at rapid speed counts as two moves. Either embarking or disembarking from a vehicle counts as a single action. Shooting counts as a single action (maximum of one per activation). You can therefore combine these single actions together in an activation. For example, the following are permissible:

- move and shoot;
- embark in a vehicle, then the vehicle can make a normal move; or
- disembark, then shoot.

Examples of non-permissible actions are:

- Shooting twice in the same action;
- Normal move a transport vehicle, troops disembark, then attempt to shoot is 3 actions;
- Rapid move a vehicle then attempt to disembark infantry - again, this is 3 actions (2 for the move and 1 for the disembark); or
- Normal moving a truck containing two units of infantry, then attempting to disembark both infantry is 3 actions. You could move the truck and disembark one unit, but will require a second command token to activate the second unit to disembark them.

A fallback move counts as a rapid move and, therefore, as two actions.



Above: 28mm German infantry (Warlord Games) assault a British held building (Artizan Designs). Scenery by 4Ground, photo courtesy of Wargames Illustrated.

PASSING THE INITIATIVE

Once an active player has passed over the initiative, the reactive player now becomes the active one. He must spend at least one command token before passing the initiative back.

Players may pass the initiative as many times as they like; indeed, it is often the case that this will happen, especially near the end of a turn.



Once you have accomplished what you need to in a turn, pass the initiative over to the enemy. He should have enough morale problems to have to spend command tokens to counter them, and you will still have command tokens left to react to any counter attack.



REACTING

Once per enemy activation a player may attempt to interrupt the other side at any point of the enemy unit's movement, and before any dice are rolled. Once the player with the initiative (the active player) has declared an action (including a Company Morale Test – see page 13), the interrupting player may declare a reaction (e.g. my Panzer IV will fire as your Sherman crosses the road).

EXCEPTION: When a player has the initiative and his first action is a Company Morale Test (see page 13), the opponent may not declare a reaction.

The reacting player spends a command token to attempt to activate a unit of his own or take a company morale test but requires a 3+ (or one higher for each morale marker/command token on it if activating a unit) on a d6 to succeed. Regardless of modifiers, a 6 always succeeds. Whether this attempt succeeds or not, the spent command token is placed next to the unit and counts as an activation.

If he fails, the command token is wasted and the active player continues with his originally declared action. If the reacting player passes the d6 roll, the unit is activated and takes an action before the opponent. Reactive units may declare that they will shoot and move (or vice versa), move, or shoot. In the former case, the reactive unit executes the first half of the declared reaction (e.g. shoot), then the active unit executes its entire action, before the reactive unit completes its reaction (the second half, e.g. move).

Play then proceeds as normal with the active player completing his declared action and continuing to activate units. If the declared action isn't possible (for example, if the target is now out of sight), it may be wasted (see Changing Target below).



15mm Sherman
(Plastic Soldier Company)



28mm Hetzer
(Die Waffenkammer)

Example

A Sherman (with no morale markers) has already activated once this turn. The active German player declares that his Panther will move and fire at the Sherman. Sensing that his number's up, the US player decides to activate the Sherman to move backwards and fire as the Panther advances. He normally needs a 3+ to react but must add the number of morale markers and activation tokens to the score required, for a total of 4+. He rolls a 4, succeeding to react. The Sherman takes the first part of the declared reaction, the move, and then the Panther takes its entire action (move and fire). The Sherman then fires, assuming it survives!

If reacting by firing at a unit that had declared any movement, then the target benefits from the usual -1 modifier to the firer's score to hit for the target moving, in addition to any other modifiers that may apply. Similarly, the active unit completes its action following the reactive one so that any modifiers that arise, such as penalties to hit for fresh morale markers, will apply.

Example

Following on from the scenario presented above, we can look at the modifiers that will apply. The Panther moved (-2 to hit) and the target Sherman moved (-1 to hit) for a total of -3 to hit. The German tank rolls and scores a hit but unusually fails to do anything against the Sherman's armour. The hit inflicts a morale marker. The Sherman now fires. It gets -2 for moving, -1 for moving target, plus a further -1 for the morale marker it has suffered, for a total of -4 to hit.

IMPORTANT NOTE: a vehicle gets a -1 penalty to the d6 roll (i.e. a base score of 4+ required) to react to an action declared by an enemy infantry or support squad, unless the target is mounted in a transport vehicle, with a further -1 penalty if the infantry is on foot and starts its action in cover.





While the opposition holds the initiative, a good commander chooses the right time and place to react to enemy actions in order to avoid casualties or blunt an aggressive attack. Do not be tempted into reacting to every action – this will only waste command resources – but be decisive when the stakes are high or an opportunity arises. Also keep in mind that you may react with a Company Morale Test; this can save a unit under fire from destruction. When you get the initiative, your first consideration should be the morale of your troops in most circumstances. Take a Company Morale Test as your first action as the enemy is not permitted to interrupt and react to this initial action.

CHANGING TARGET

In some instances a target will react to an enemy action and move out of sight before it can be fired upon. In these cases, the firer may target a new enemy as long as it is within 4" (10cm) of the original target's position or if a new target comes into view because of the reacting unit's movement. If there is no new target eligible, the action is wasted.

SEIZING THE INITIATIVE

If the Reaction Roll is a 6, the reactive player has now seized the initiative. His unit reacts as above (and the enemy player also completes his unit's action) but he is now the active player. With players allowed to react continually, this means that the initiative can change hands quickly and often.

Example:

A Churchill declares it will advance and fire at the flank of a Panzer IV. The German player declares he will react with a Tiger. He rolls and gets a 6, seizing the initiative! The Tiger fires, applying a -1 modifier for enemy moving, and misses. The Churchill then completes its declared action. Since he seized the initiative, the German player is now the active player.



MOVING

Units move according to their type as listed below. Units may make a normal move, but not a rapid move, and still fire.

TYPE	NORMAL	RAPID	RAPID ROAD
Infantry and Support Squads	6" (15cm)	9" (25cm)	12" (30cm)
Light Vehicle (light tanks, scout cars and transports)	12" (30cm)	18" (45cm)	24" (60cm)
Medium Vehicles (most tanks)	10" (25cm)	15" (35cm)	20" (50cm)
Heavy Vehicles	8" (20cm)	10" (25cm)	12" (30cm)

Any vehicle starting its move within 12" (30cm) of enemy infantry that it is aware of (i.e. that it can see), without friendly infantry equidistant or closer to the enemy, may only move half of its normal distance, unless it is moving further away from that enemy.

VEHICLE MOVEMENT

Vehicles may make a turn or a series of turns up to 180° at normal rate and may make a turn or turns up to 90° total at rapid. They may move in reverse at any speed.

A vehicle counts as moving if it traverses its turret more than 90°.

RAPID MOVES

Units making a rapid move may not fire. Rapid road moves are permissible as long as the entire move is in one direction (two slight, separate turns no more than 45° are permitted in the case of vehicles) on a road.

TURRET MOVEMENT

A turret doesn't count as moving (i.e. a player could move the turret and fire as one single fire action) if it turns up to 90°.



*28mm German Panzergrenadiers
(Artizan Designs)*

TERRAIN TYPES

Terrain collections will be varied, so a guide is provided as to the classifications of terrain. Players may need to define which classification of terrain particular scenery pieces represent prior to a game. The terms used in Iron Cross are "easy going", "rough", "very rough" and "impassable".

Easy going: roads, fields, light scrub and gentle slopes.

Rough ground: woods, marsh, low walls, hedges, dense foliage, ditches, steep slopes, most rubble, buildings.

Very rough ground: bocage, jungle, stream (chest high), very heavy rubble, wire (for infantry).

Impassable: cliffs, deep lakes/rivers, tank obstacles (for vehicles).



MOVING THROUGH TERRAIN (VEHICLES)

Vehicles may only move at normal rate when negotiating rough or very rough ground. When any vehicle attempts to move through terrain (e.g. a tank driving through bogage or through the rubble of a building) there is a chance that it may become slowed or bogged down.

The player must declare what the unit is attempting to do - e.g. “my tank is going to drive over this hedge and then shoot at your nearest tank” - before taking the terrain test. Roll a d6; if it fails the terrain test, then move the vehicle so that it moves over or past it and its rear touches the terrain. If it is already in terrain, it moves at half its normal rate.

The unit may not complete any further actions this turn, even if it intended to do so, nor may it be reactivated, if it failed the test. The score a particular class of vehicle requires is listed below:

VEHICLE	ROUGH	VERY ROUGH
Wheeled vehicle	6	Impassable
Half-tracked vehicle	3+	4+
Any other fully tracked vehicle/scout car	2+	3+
Heavy tank	no test	2+

MOVING THROUGH TERRAIN (INFANTRY/SUPPORT SQUADS)

Infantry detachments and support squads are unaffected by most terrain. When moving through rough or very rough ground they may not rapid move. When negotiating rough or very rough ground, infantry must test in the same manner as vehicles. The score the unit requires is listed below:

INFANTRY	ROUGH	VERY ROUGH
Infantry Detachment	no test	4+
Support Squad (excluding below)	no test	4+
Anti-tank or Infantry Gun	2+	Impassable

A penalty of -1 is applied to the roll if crossing barbed wire. Anti-tank and infantry guns may not cross wire unless it has already been breached by another unit.

EMBARKING/DISEMBARKING

Troops may make a normal move to embark and then a normal move in the transport. Similarly, a transport may make a normal move and troops may disembark the distance of a normal move for infantry. A unit may not embark/disembark if a rapid move is taken by either the vehicle or infantry. A unit may not embark and disembark in the same activation.



PLATOON MOVEMENT

A grouping of 3 units of the same type may activate as one group as long as they are of the same type (i.e. infantry detachments and support squads; light vehicle; medium vehicle; heavy vehicle), within 12” (30cm) of another unit in the group and they are declaring a normal move with no firing. This is the only activation permitted to the units in the group that turn and they may not react to enemy actions later in the turn.



FIRING

D10's are used for firing. Units roll 2 dice when firing at infantry or support squads up to 12" (30cm) away (1 die otherwise), 1 die when firing at vehicles. Anti-tank guns always just roll one die. Some units' fire is affected as noted in the Order of Battle Special Rules on pages 18-20. The base score of 5+ to hit on a D10 is subject to the cumulative modifiers on the dice roll as shown below. The "firer moved" penalty is only applied if the firer moved in the current activation (not the current turn). It applies whether the unit moves and fires or fires before moving in an activation.

Firer moved in this activation (and is not an infantry detachment)	-2
Target moved at any point this turn	-1
Target obscured by smoke	-1
Close range (up to 12"/30cm)	+1
Enemy infantry or support squad within 12"/30cm of firing vehicle*	-1
Per morale marker on firer	-1

*only if without friendly infantry detachment equidistant or closer to the enemy at the point it shoots

MORALE MARKERS/CASUALTY ROLLS

Any hit or hits inflicts a morale marker. Most units (exceptions are detailed in the Orders of Battle Special Rules, pages 18-20) only inflict a single morale marker, regardless of how many hits they score in an activation.

Against infantry the shooter attempts to cause further damage (i.e. "convert" hits) by rolling a d6 for each hit inflicted; any dice score of a 4+ inflicts a further single morale marker. If rolling two dice, this just gives you two chances to inflict a further single morale marker. Again, most units will inflict just a single extra morale marker. We refer to this as a *casualty roll*.

Example

An infantry detachment fires at close range against an enemy unit. It scores two hits, inflicting a single morale marker. Rolling a d6 for each of the hits, the unit scores 4+ (i.e. "converts") for both hits. This inflicts another single morale marker on the enemy.

COVER

If in cover, a 5+ is required to inflict a further morale marker. If the target is in a bunker or foxholes, a 6 is needed.

In the open	4+
In cover	5+
In fortifications/trenches	6

Against infantry/support squads, mortar fire ignores cover and treats trenches as cover (i.e. they need a 5+ to inflict an additional morale marker against infantry in trenches).



15mm figures by Plastic Soldier Company. Terrain by 4Ground.



MORALE MARKERS AND TANK GUNS

Tanks with a weapon rating of 7 or higher are especially terrifying to infantry, despite their obvious vulnerabilities. Against infantry/support squads at close range (12"/30cm) and in cover (i.e. not in the open or in trenches/fortifications), tank guns of weapon rating of 7+ roll a d6 for each hit inflicted as usual, but both may inflict an additional morale marker meaning that in such circumstances a total of 3 morale markers may be inflicted!

Against infantry/support squads, tank (weapon value 7+) fire treats targets "in cover" as "in the open" (i.e. they need an 4+ instead of 5+ to inflict an additional morale marker against infantry in cover) and treats targets in trenches as in cover (i.e. they need a 5+ instead of 6 to inflict an additional morale marker against infantry in trenches).



Troops in dense, urban terrain can be difficult for you to winkle out. Get the heavy ordnance into position and pour HE fire into them. Keep the infantry support close and finish them off with assault troops.

ARC OF FIRE

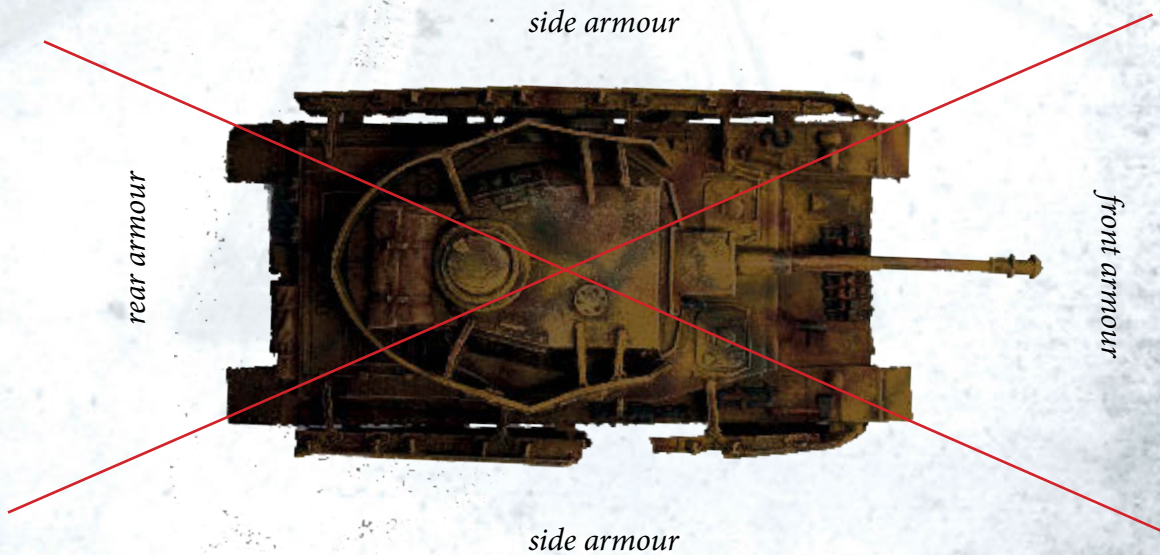
Infantry units/sniper teams have a 360° arc of fire and support squads have a 90° arc of fire to the front. Tank guns only fire directly forwards. This is not a great issue with respect to turreted tanks - a turret doesn't count as moving if it turns up to 90° - but will affect vehicles with hull mounted main guns on a more frequent basis.

RANGES

In the context of our battlefields, there are no weapon ranges. The only exception is infantry with portable anti-tank weapons or grenades. All infantry detachments (but not support squads) are assumed to have some sort of improvised anti-tank capability or grenades, but these have a range of 0 (i.e. the unit must be in contact to effect an attack and are not permitted to contact the front of a vehicle). Portable anti-tank weapons (bazooka, panzerfaust, etc) may only fire up to 8" (20cm) at enemy vehicles; these are noted as an upgrade in the relevant Order of Battle.

SIDE/FRONT ARMOUR

Vehicle armour values are presented as a number (e.g. 10/8) for the front followed by a number for the side, rear and top. The front, side and rear aspects are determined by drawing an imaginary line from each corner of the vehicle model as shown in the diagram below. Whichever aspect of the target the firer's gun is facing determines the aspect that is hit.



ARMOUR PENETRATION

A successful hit inflicts a morale marker, but only if the weapon is capable of exceeding the target's armour value. Against vehicles, roll a d10 and add the unit's weapon value. The weapon's AT value is increased by 1 if the firer is within 6" (15cm).

If it equals the unit's armour, a further morale marker is inflicted. If it exceeds the armour, roll a d6 on the table below. If the d10 roll is a 1 but still results in beating the target armour, then it counts as equalling the armour instead. An infantry detachment that attacks a vehicle by contacting it always penetrates on a roll of 10.

Any hit against a vehicle transporting troops that equals or exceeds the armour will force the transported unit to disembark immediately. The infantry detachment/support squad receives any morale markers accumulated by the transport. If a vehicle is destroyed, any units that were transported suffer morale markers up to its maximum value. If a transport suffers a Kaboom! Result, the unit is destroyed.

SCORE	EFFECT
1	Rattled. Add one additional morale marker (i.e. no further effect)
2	Crew cabin filled with smoke and shrapnel! Add two additional morale markers.
3	Screech! Vehicle damaged (see below).
4-5	Foom! Vehicle destroyed.
6	Kaboom! Each friendly unit within 12 (or 6 if playing on a 6' x 4' table) suffers a morale marker.

HULL DOWN

A vehicle that has terrain coverage over at least 50% of its profile, counts as hull down and penetrating hits deduct one from the damage table. For example, a roll of a 3 would be downgraded to a 2.

SCREECH! VEHICLE DAMAGED

The vehicle damaged result may represent a number of events, such as a thrown track, weapon malfunction or damaged engine. The crew may or may not have to bail out and attempt to patch up the vehicle to get it back into action. This is measured by immediately adding morale markers up to the vehicle's maximum morale rating. If adding 3 morale markers would result in the target being destroyed (e.g. a vehicle already had 4 morale markers then received a "Vehicle damaged" result), it counts as destroyed.

KABOOM!

The spectacular destruction of the vehicle throws nearby friendly troops into confusion. Each unit within 12" (or 6" on a 6' x 4' table) suffers an immediate morale marker. This could result in the elimination of units.

SMOKE

All units are able to utilise smoke to conceal their position. A unit must be eligible to fire smoke (i.e. it must not have used rapid movement). It may be used directly by the unit benefiting, or it may be fired from supporting units (if the supporting unit is capable of anti-tank fire at a range over 12"); whichever the case, the unit benefiting activates and rolls to hit with the smoke. A score of 5+ on a d10 is required for success and no modifiers apply to the roll.

If successful, the target unit is obscured and benefits from cover against enemy fire. Place a marker to indicate the unit affected and the direction from which they are obscured. A unit protected by smoke may not fire for the rest of the turn. The smoke dissipates at the end of the turn. There may be other units that incidentally benefit from the smokescreen due to line of sight; this is fine. It is worth noting that this rule is an abstraction; in reality smoke would be used upon an enemy position in order to hamper their activity.

CLOSE COMBAT

Resolve close combat situations as you would do for infantry shooting at infantry. There is no separate mechanism in Iron Cross for determining the effects of hand-to-hand combat! This is a simplification/abstraction to keep the pace of the game flowing quickly. We can also assume that most infantrymen would not want to get involved in hand to hand fighting and would prefer to shoot and throw grenades anyway!



COMPANY MORALE TEST

The accumulation of morale markers will degrade your force and prevent it from performing effectively; multiple activation will become difficult and offensive capability is hampered. By spending a command token the player may attempt to remove morale markers. Specific units do not need to be nominated before spending tokens and rolling.

Roll a d6: on a score of 1-2 the test fails; on a score of 3-5 the player removes one morale marker from any unit; on a score of 6 the player removes all of the morale markers from a single unit. A player may take as many Company Morale Tests in a turn as they wish, restricted by the availability of command tokens.

UNIT DESTROYED

If a unit accumulates more morale markers than its morale value, it is too badly mauled to continue fighting and immediately counts as destroyed. Whether it is routed, wiped out, damaged beyond use or surrenders is not catered for, what is important is it takes no further part in the battle. Remove any infantry from the table; leave vehicles where they are to act as cover.

At the start of the next turn, remember to remove any command tokens which represented a destroyed/removed unit.

FALL BACK

A unit may choose to Fall Back, which is a special type of movement away from the enemy. If the unit has previously been activated (or attempted to react), then it must be reactivated using the normal reactivation method. Morale markers are ignored for modifiers when rolling to reactivate in order to execute a Fall Back move.



The cumulative effects of incoming fire, even if it doesn't cause many casualties, will have a degrading effect upon troop capabilities. It may be tempting to throw everything into an attack, but a successful commander will save some of his strength in order to bolster wavering troops at the right time. Be prepared to react to enemy moves by using some of this strength when one of your units is under severe pressure.

A unit which executes a Fall Back may move up to rapid rate but may not shoot. A unit that is unable to move further away from enemy units within 12" (30cm) may not fall back. Vehicles may fall back in reverse, but only do so at normal movement rate. Units which execute a Fall Back move may also roll a die to attempt to remove a single morale marker. On rolling a 4+, you may remove a single morale marker from the unit.

Units may only perform a single Fall Back move per turn. Units which have fallen back may be reactivated again in the same turn, but must roll for re-activation in the normal manner (i.e. including modifiers for morale markers/command tokens). The unit must move further away from any enemy units during subsequent reactivations but may fire as it does so.

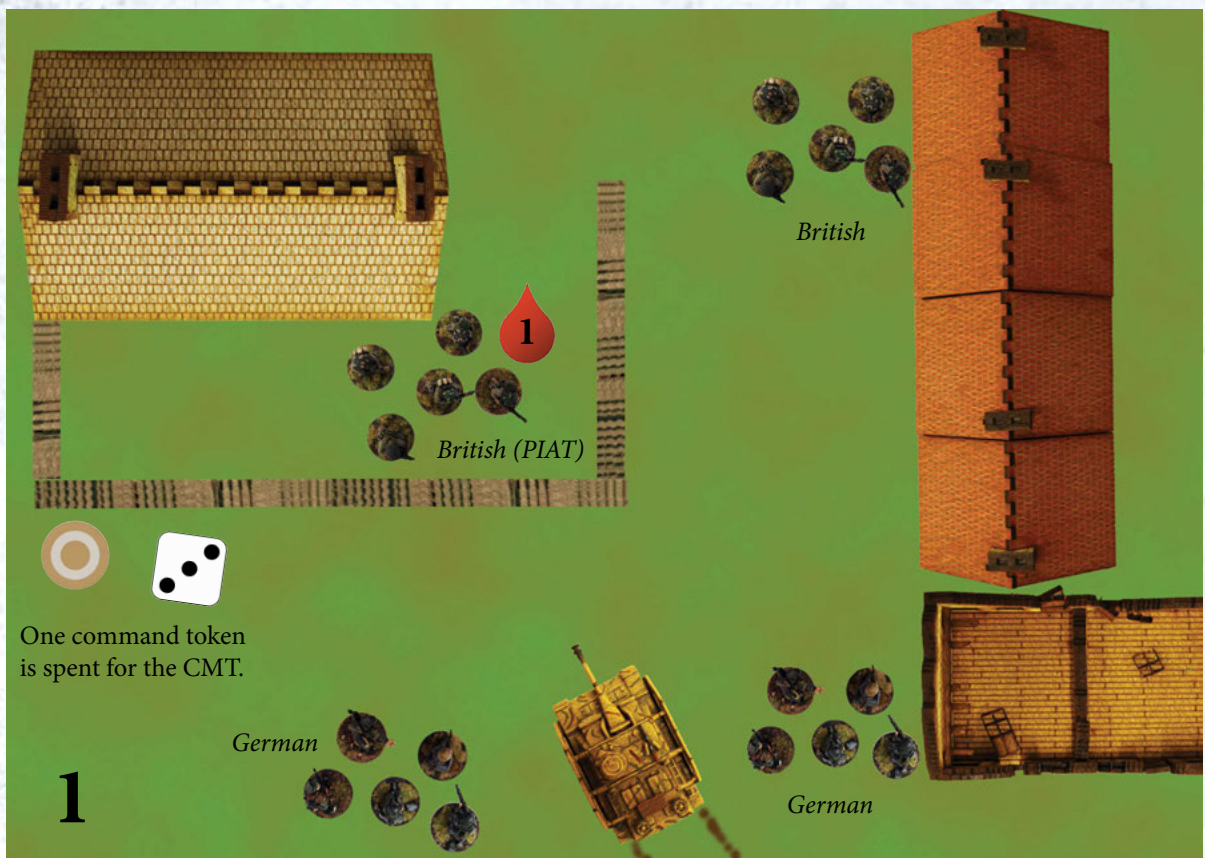
Example

A German MG nest in the top floor of a hotel has already activated once this turn and comes under sustained fire from a mortar and Cromwell, suffering three morale markers. The British player is the active side and declares his mortar will fire again at the MG nest. Realising that a hit might destroy the unit, the German player declares that his unit will react and fall back. The fall back reaction ignores morale markers but not previous activations, so instead of the base 3+ on a d6 to react, the German player will need to score 4+(because of the unit's activation earlier in the turn) to do so and avoid the incoming mortar round.



Falling back is a useful way of extricating a unit from a perilous situation. Not only will it save the unit, but this tactic can also lure enemy troops to overstretch themselves, making them vulnerable to a counter attack from other units.



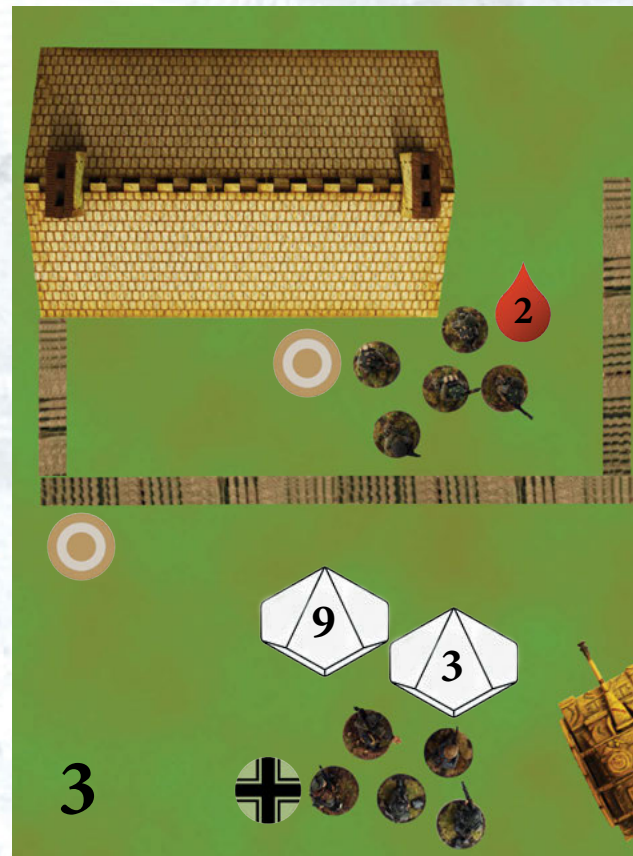


One command token is spent for the CMT.

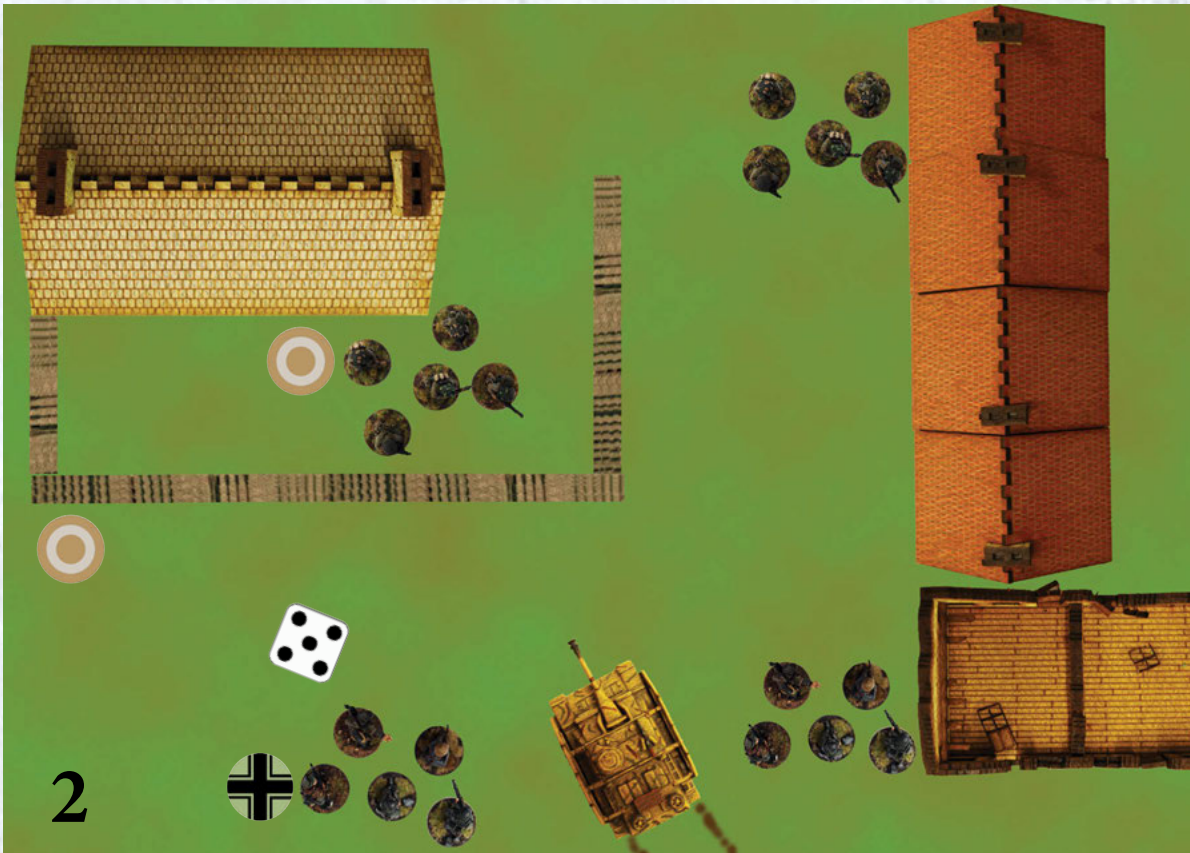
The turn starts with the British winning the initiative but with one unit with one morale marker. The British player starts by taking a CMT (Company Morale Test), a smart move as the enemy cannot react to it as it is the first command token spent in the turn (a reaction would have been allowed if it was a unit action - see Reacting, pg 6). A '3' is rolled, allowing the British player to remove one morale marker from the PIAT-armed infantry unit.



Taking a CMT as an initial action is a good discipline to exercise. A good commander takes stock of the condition of his men and taking that morale test allows you to survey the wider picture before spending your command tokens on unit actions.



A GAME TURN

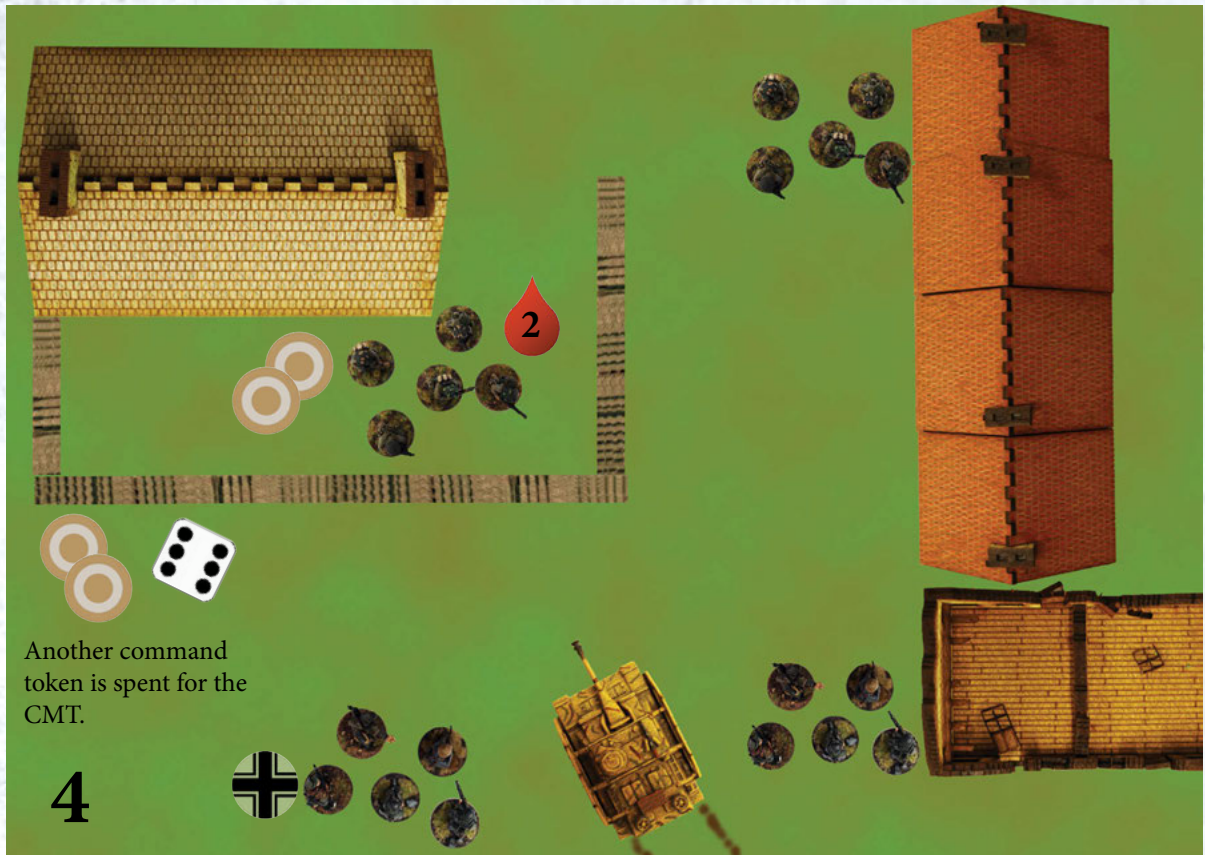


Next he declares the unit will fire on the StuG (placing a command token with the unit) and the German player reacts with his infantry (placing a command token of his own); his intention is to pour enough fire on the British to decisively affect their anti-tank capability! As they have not activated yet this turn and have no morale markers, the German player needs a 3+ to react and succeeds with a '5'.



The German unit rolls two d10's at close range, scores one hit, and converts the hit, inflicting a total of two morale markers on the enemy (see page 10, Morale Markers); the maximum result possible! The British unit has to continue its action and, with the -2 to hit penalty due to the two morale markers (Firing, pg 10), misses the target.



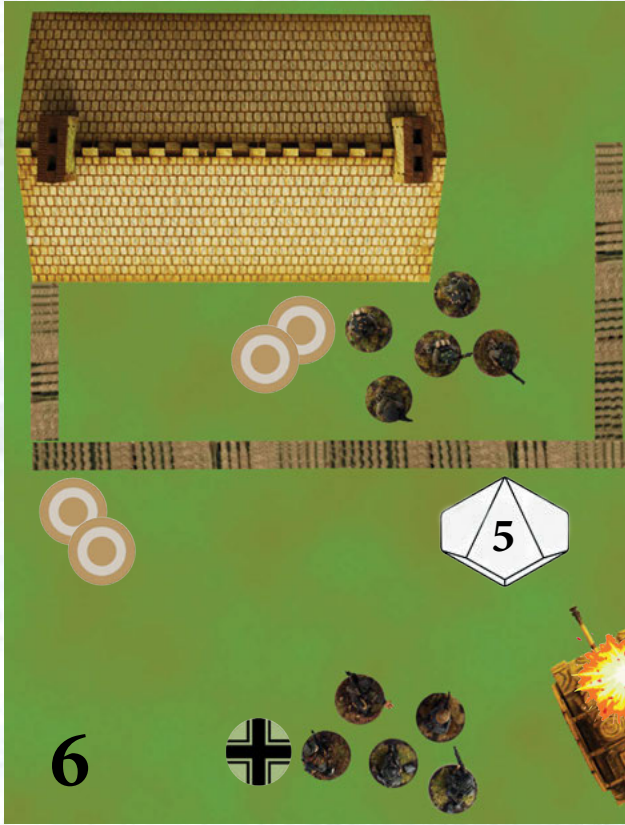


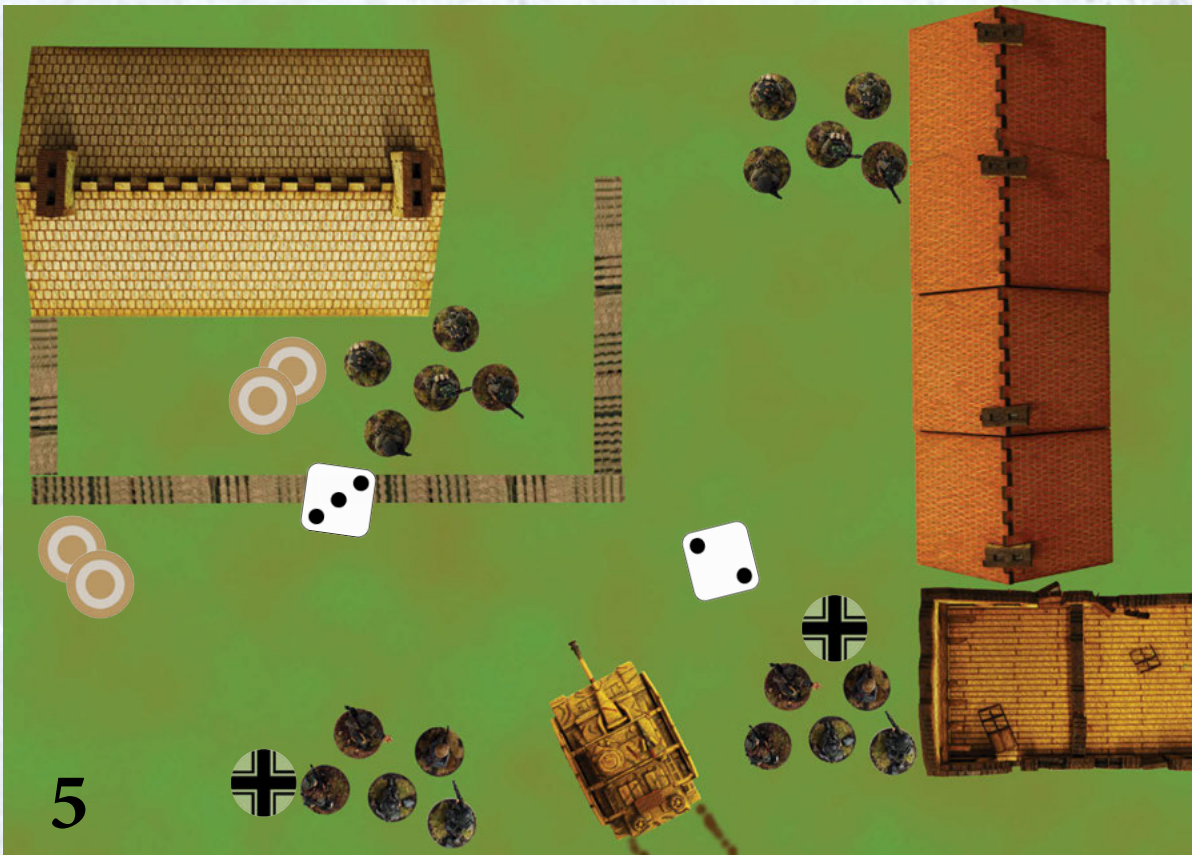
Another command token is spent for the CMT.

Determined to take out the tank, the British player takes a CMT and rolls a '6', allowing him to remove all the morale markers from one unit! The German player chooses not to attempt to react perhaps hoping to absorb a few shots before counterattacking.

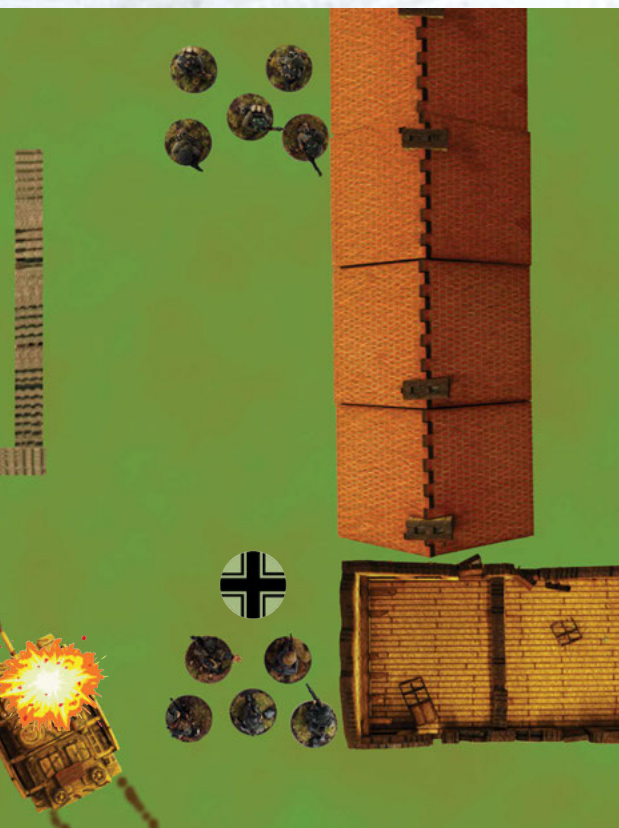
Having weathered a rather piecemeal and ill-organised German attempt to disrupt them, the British infantry take the shot at the StuG.

Scoring a hit, the British player rolls a 9 to penetrate the armour and a 4 on the d6 for damage!





The British player declares another action - fire and then move - with the PIAT-armed unit, needing a 2+ to reactivate. If he'd attempted it with the two morale markers, a 4+ would have been needed (see Activating a Unit, pg 4). The Germans decide to react with the infantry detachment that has not yet activated but only rolls a 2 and fails to react. The British player rolls a 3 to reactivate, and the PIAT man takes careful aim...



In Iron Cross sometimes you regret the actions you take, and sometimes you regret the actions you fail to take...

Please check out the Iron Cross section of the Great Escape Games website for further examples of gameplay, additional orders of battle and further information and products for Iron Cross.



ORDERS OF BATTLE

Following are orders of battle for the main belligerents in Europe in 1944/45. For most games you may wish to forego formal army lists and use historical orders of battle. In fact, we highly recommend this method as Von Runstedt never called Bradley to check how many points he had before their encounter in the Ardennes at the end of 1944! It is also recommended for scenario designers to force restrictions on players' choice of forces – the Orders of Battle do this somewhat – as real life commanders rarely had the luxury of selecting what they wanted from an “army list”.

Nevertheless, a points system is included for players who wish to use a method of providing balance for their games. Still, as many battles pitched a superior attacking against a defending one, most scenarios benefit from an intentional imbalance of relative strengths. A force of around 500 points might give you 15 or so units to control, plenty for a full evening's gaming. 200-250 points per player in big, multi-player games will be compact enough for even novice players to handle. For 28mm forces on small gaming tables (e.g. 6' x 4'), 300-400 points will give you plenty of units for a fast and violent battle!

Each unit also has a Break Point (BP) value. Totalled up, this represents the entire force's Break Point. Once a unit reaches its Break Point, it withdraws from the battle and the game ends.

ORDERS OF BATTLE SPECIAL RULES

ANTI-TANK GUN

Anti-tank guns count as infantry/support squads (i.e. you roll 2 dice against them for shooting) but, if they have a gun shield, always count as though they are in cover against enemy infantry. They only ever get to use 1 die whether shooting at enemy infantry detachments or tanks. In a given activation, AT guns may only fire when stationary.



*15mm PaK40 anti-tank gun
(Battlefront Miniatures)*

COMMAND UNIT

One unit in each force is designated as the command unit. It has the same profile of a unit of its type but, once per turn, one unit within 12"/30cm (or within 6"/15cm if playing on a 6' x 4' table) may reroll a failed activation or reaction roll.

In addition, and most importantly, a command unit bestows two additional activation tokens, whether it is on the gaming area or in reserve. All of these abilities are lost if the command unit is lost.



28mm German command unit (Artizan Designs)

FLAMETHROWER

Flamethrowers may only fire when stationary and have a range of 8"/20cm; against infantry/support squads, they roll 2 dice (and score morale markers with each hit), ignoring all cover. Against enclosed target vehicles, flamethrowers simply inflict morale markers. Open topped and softskin vehicles are penetrated on a roll of 2+ on d6, regardless of armour value.

If a flame tank's armour is penetrated, add 2 to the roll for damage. Flamethrower infantry units suffer additional morale markers from shooting on a 3+ instead of a 4+. Flamethrower units always count as heavy (see below).



HEAVY

These are a bit slow, ponderous and/or subject to mechanical difficulties. A heavy tank that wishes to activate more than once in a turn gets a -1 penalty to the activation test. For example, if a Tiger wishes to take a second activation to move, it will need to roll 3+ to pass its activation test (for other units it would be a 2+).

HOWITZER

Howitzers roll to hit as normal but inflict an additional morale marker against infantry units on a 3+ instead of 4+. Against vehicles, add +1 to the damage roll if the howitzer penetrates the target's armour. Howitzer units always count as heavy (see above) and ignore any cover against targets in any sort of building.

INFANTRY ANTI-TANK WEAPON (IAW)

These are listed as an option for infantry detachments in the relevant Order of Battle. IAW's have a range of 8"/20cm and are listed with a weapon value.

INFANTRY GUN

Infantry guns (if not vehicle mounted) count as infantry/support squads (i.e. you roll 2 dice against them for shooting) but, if they have a gun shield, always count as though they are in cover against enemy infantry. Hits inflict an additional morale marker against infantry units on a 3+ instead of 4+. If stationary, they roll 2 dice against infantry or support squads within 12" (30cm).

SCOUT CAR/TANK

A scout car/tank may react on a 2+ instead of a 3+. Morale markers (but not command tokens) are ignored for this test.

MG TEAM

MG teams count as infantry/support squads (i.e. you roll 2 dice against them for shooting). MG teams roll 2 dice for firing at infantry or support squads at any range when stationary (otherwise 1 die). Each hit scored inflicts a morale marker, meaning that two hits will inflict two morale markers. Only a single extra morale marker is inflicted whether one or both of these hits is converted on the d6 rolls (see Morale Markers, pg 10).



*15mm US .50 cal MG Team
(Plastic Soldier Company)*

They count as having 0 anti-vehicle value and halve the d6 score for damage when penetrating armour, meaning they can only harm the very lightest units of this type.

MORTAR TEAM

Mortar teams count as infantry/support squads (i.e. you roll 2 dice against them for shooting). Mortar teams may only fire when stationary. Mortar teams may fire directly or indirectly at any target that can be seen by it or a friendly unit, as long as the target is no closer than 12"/30cm to the mortar. Mortars ignore the modifier for enemy in cover, unless in a fully enclosed bunker or trench works. A hit inflicts a morale marker and subsequent hits in the same activation against an infantry unit inflict a further morale marker, plus may inflict additional morale markers when rolling to cause damage as normal. They count as having 0 anti-vehicle value and halve the d6 score for damage when penetrating armour, meaning they can only harm the very lightest units of this type.



*15mm US Mortar Team
(Plastic Soldier Company)*

For a first shot, mortars require an 8+ to hit. Further attempts in the same turn against the same target confer a cumulative +1 bonus to hit as long as the target remains in the same position; this is defined as any model of the target remaining within 4"/10cm of any part of the target area. This means that a player cannot activate the target unit, shuffle sideways 5" and then claim that it is not in the target area! Mortars may not fire from within trees or buildings.

RARE

Only one rare unit (of any type) is allowed in the force.



SNIPER TEAM

Snipers ignore all other deployment rules within the scenarios and may be deployed anywhere on the gaming table using the hidden rules at the start of a game. Use two markers on the gaming table (one dummy, one real) to represent the hidden position of your sniper team. The sniper team consists of two models. Only a defending side may include snipers and may only field a single two-man sniper team in its force.

Snipers may only shoot at infantry or open-topped vehicles. They benefit from a bonus of +2 to hit but may only fire when stationary. Against infantry in transports or on foot, snipers inflict additional morale markers on a 5+ instead of 4+.

Each time a sniper team fires it will be spotted if the opposing player rolls a 6 on a d6. Any unit within 4"/10cm will automatically spot the sniper team. Even after shooting, a sniper will remain hidden until spotted by an enemy unit. A sniper team making a rapid move will no longer remain hidden and automatically becomes spotted, assuming it could be seen at all. Once spotted, any unit may shoot at the sniper team.

SUB-COMMANDER

A sub-commander has the same profile of a unit of its type. The range of a unit's ability to reroll a failed activation or reaction roll may be measured from the sub-commander. This is the sub-commander's only effect.

TRANSPORTS

Transports are considered part of the unit they come with and do not generate command tokens. They may not take any actions once they have dropped off troops unless activated with a command token. Armed transports may fire when activated with a command token; alternatively, a transported unit may fire (we may assume they use their own weapons to do so). Transports may carry one unit, unless they are trucks, which may carry two.

It is permissible to move a unit's transport when an infantry or support squad is activated instead of the unit itself, for example to move toward the parent unit. This counts as an activation for the parent unit.



British paratroopers (Artizan Designs) operating in the E.T.O. in 1944.



GERMAN ORBAT 1944/45

One unit may be designated as a command unit at no cost. Command units bestow an additional two command tokens per turn. If infantry, it may upgrade its halftrack to a 251/10 as listed below (it is the only unit that may do so). This effectively gives it a longer ranged anti-tank capability. One additional unit may be designated as a sub-commander.

Infantry units, MG Teams, Mortar Teams and Anti-tank Guns may purchase transports for the points listed below. Any infantry detachment may add IAW's (panzerfausts, panzerschrecks; weapon value of 9) for +8 pts per unit. The number of infantry detachments in the force must exceed the number of support squads.

TYPE	NAME	ARMOUR	WEAPON	MORALE	NOTE	PTS	BP
Heavy Vehicle	Tiger I	17/14	10	6	Heavy	102	13
Heavy Vehicle	Tiger I I	19/15	11	6	Heavy	136	17
Heavy Vehicle	Jagdtiger	19/15	11	6	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	163	21
Heavy Vehicle	Ferdinand/Elefant	20/15	11	6	Heavy, Rare	143	18
Medium Vehicle	Panther	17/13	10	6		100	13
Medium Vehicle	Jagdpanther	17/13	11	6		119	15
Medium Vehicle	Jagdpanzer IV/Hetzer	16/10	10	5		75	10
Medium Vehicle	Panzer IV G (late) to J	14/10	9	5		55	7
Medium Vehicle	StuG IV, StuG III F-H	15/10	9	5		59	8
Medium Vehicle	StuG III A-E	13/10	7	5		39	5
Medium Vehicle	StuH 42	15/10	8	5	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	62	8
Medium Vehicle	Panzer III J (late)/K	12/10	8	5		40	5
Medium Vehicle	Panzer III L-N	13/10	8	5		44	6
Medium Vehicle	Panzer III M (F1)	13/10	n/a	4	Flamethrower, Rare	46	6
Light Vehicle	Marder II	10/9	9	4		34	5
Light Vehicle	Sd.Kfz 123 Luchs	10/9	4	4	Scout tank	17	3
Light Vehicle	Sd.Kfz 234/4 8-Rad	10/9	9	4	Scout car	36	5
Light Vehicle	Sd.Kfz 234/2 8-Rad Puma	11/9	8	4	Scout car	30	4
Light Vehicle	Sd.Kfz 233 8-Rad	10/8	7	4	Scout car	25	4
Light Vehicle	Sd.KFz 222	10/9	4	4	Scout car	16	2
Light Vehicle	251 Halftrack	10/9	n/a	n/a	Transport	6	0
Light Vehicle	251/10 Halftrack	10/9	5	n/a	Transport	9	0
Light Vehicle	Truck/Kubelwagen	7	n/a	n/a	Transport	3	0
Infantry Detachment	Infantry Detachment	n/a	3	5		25	4
Support Squad	Flamethrower Team	n/a	n/a	3	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	30	4
Support Squad	PaK40 Anti-tank Gun	n/a	9	3		30	4
Support Squad	Flakvierling 38	n/a	4	4	Infantry Gun	27	4
Support Squad	MG Team	n/a	0	3		20	3
Support Squad	Mortar Team	n/a	0	3		25	4
Support Squad	Sniper Team	n/a	n/a	3		18	3

Armour is given as the value for the front followed by the value for the side/rear/top; armour values are reduced by 1 if the firer is within 6.

KAMPFGRUPPE

German units may form ad hoc groups for platoon movement (see page 9) comprising any three units, not just those of the same type. The Kampfgruppe may only move at the rate of the slowest unit.



Right: Marder II (28mm Die Waffenkammer) operating on the Eastern Front in the autumn of 1944.



BRITISH/CANADIAN ORBAT 1944/45

One unit may be designated as a command unit at no cost. Command units bestow an additional two command tokens per turn.

Infantry units, MG Teams, Mortar Teams and Anti-tank Guns may purchase transports for the points listed below. Up to half the infantry detachments in the force may add IAW's (PIAT; weapon value of 7) for +5 pts per unit. The number of infantry detachments in the force must exceed the number of support squads.

TYPE	NAME	ARMOUR	WEAPON	MORALE	NOTE	PTS	BP
Heavy Vehicle	Churchill VI	16/13	8	6	Heavy	71	9
Heavy Vehicle	Churchill VII	19/16	8	6	Heavy	96	12
Heavy Vehicle	Churchill Crocodile	19/15	see below	5	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	103	13
Medium Vehicle	Sherman 75mm	13/11	8	5		45	6
Medium Vehicle	Sherman 76mm	15/11	9	5		60	8
Medium Vehicle	Sherman Firefly	13/11	10	5		64	8
Medium Vehicle	Cromwell IV	14/11	8	5		49	7
Medium Vehicle	Centaur Mk IV	14/11	5	5	Howitzer, Rare	44	6
Medium Vehicle	A34 Comet	15/12	10	5	Rare, 1945 only	73	10
Light Vehicle	M5 Stuart	12/9	6	4		31	4
Light Vehicle	Humber Mk IV	9	6	4	Scout car	20	3
Light Vehicle	Staghound Mk I	11/9	6	4	Scout car	22	3
Light Vehicle	Staghound Mk II	11/9	4	4	Infantry gun, Rare, Scout car	23	3
Light Vehicle	Bren Carrier	10/9	n/a	n/a	Transport	6	0
Light Vehicle	Truck/Jeep	7	n/a	n/a	Transport	3	0
Infantry Detachment	Infantry Detachment	n/a	3	5		25	4
Support Squad	Flamethrower Team	n/a	n/a	3	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	30	4
Support Squad	6 Pdr Anti-tank Gun	n/a	9	3		30	4
Support Squad	17 Pdr Anti-tank Gun	n/a	10	4		49	7
Support Squad	MG Team	n/a	0	3		20	3
Support Squad	Mortar Team	n/a	0	3		25	4
Support Squad	Sniper Team	n/a	n/a	3		18	3

Armour is given as the value for the front followed by the value for the side/rear/top; armour values are reduced by 1 if the firer is within 6.

Note that the Churchill Crocodile may either fire with its gun (weapon value 8) or flamethrower (weapon value n/a).

British infantry command units utilise a 2" mortar team which operates in the same way as the support squad, but inflicts an additional morale marker on a 5+ instead of a 4+.

Right: 28mm British mortar team (Artizan Designs).

The ivy effect on the building is achieved by glueing Mininatur foliage purchased from the Great Escape Games website.



US ORBAT 1944/45

One unit may be designated as a command unit at no cost. Command units bestow an additional two command tokens per turn.

Infantry units, MG Teams, Mortar Teams and Anti-tank Guns may purchase transports for the points listed below. Up to half the infantry detachments in the force may add IAW's (bazooka; weapon value of 7) for +5 pts per unit. The number of infantry detachments in the force must exceed the number of support squads.

TYPE	NAME	ARMOUR	WEAPON	MORALE	NOTE	PTS	BP
Heavy Vehicle	M26 Pershing	16/14	10	6	Rare, 1945 only	97	13
Heavy Vehicle	M7 Priest	10	8	5	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	42	6
Medium Vehicle	Sherman 75mm	13/11	8	5		45	6
Medium Vehicle	Sherman 76mm	15/11	9	5		60	8
Medium Vehicle	Sherman 105mm	13/11	8	5	Howitzer, Rare	54	7
Medium Vehicle	Sherman Jumbo	16/12	8	5	From late 1944	58	8
Medium Vehicle	Sherman Crocodile	13/11	n/a	4	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	48	6
Medium Vehicle	M10 Tank Destroyer	12/10	9	5		48	6
Light Vehicle	M18 Tank Destroyer	10/9	9	5		42	6
Light Vehicle	M24 Chaffee	12/10	8	5		40	5
Light Vehicle	M8 HMC	11/9	5	5	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	30	4
Light Vehicle	M5 Stuart	12/9	6	5		31	4
Light Vehicle	M8 Scout Car	9	6	4	Scout car	20	3
Light Vehicle	M20 Scout Car	9	3	4	Scout car	15	2
Light Vehicle	M3 Halftrack/Dodge WC-51	10/9	2	n/a	Transport	7	0
Light Vehicle	Truck/Jeep	7	n/a	n/a	Transport	3	0
Infantry Detachment	Infantry Detachment	n/a	3	5		25	4
Support Squad	Flamethrower Team	n/a	n/a	3	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	30	4
Support Squad	57mm Anti-tank Gun	n/a	8	3		25	4
Support Squad	76mm Anti-tank Gun	n/a	9	4		30	4
Support Squad	MG Team	n/a	0	3		20	3
Support Squad	.50 cal MG Team	n/a	2	3		26	4
Support Squad	Mortar Team	n/a	0	3		25	4
Support Squad	Sniper Team	n/a	n/a	3		18	3

Armour is given as the value for the front followed by the value for the side/rear/top; armour values are reduced by 1 if the firer is within 6.

Halftracks and Dodge WC-51's are equipped with .50cal machine guns.



15mm US infantry unit and halftrack
(Plastic Soldier Company)



SOVIET ORBAT 1944/45

One unit may be designated as a command unit at no cost. Command units bestow an additional two command tokens per turn.

Infantry units, MG Teams, Mortar Teams and Anti-tank Guns may purchase transports for the points listed below. Up to half the infantry detachments in the force may add IAW's (PTRD, PTRS; weapon value of 6) for +3 pts per unit. The number of infantry detachments in the force must exceed the number of support squads.

TYPE	NAME	ARMOUR	WEAPON	MORALE	NOTE	PTS	BP
Heavy Vehicle	IS-II	18/16	10	6	Heavy	135	17
Heavy Vehicle	KV-1	16/14	8	6	Heavy	74	10
Heavy Vehicle	KV-2	15/14	8	6	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	71	9
Heavy Vehicle	SU-152 Assault Gun	13	9	5	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	66	9
Heavy Vehicle	ISU-122 Assault gun	17/14	10	6	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	123	16
Medium Vehicle	T-34/85	14/11	9	5		56	7
Medium Vehicle	T-34/76	13/11	7	4		32	4
Medium Vehicle	OT-34	13/11	n/a	4	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	48	6
Medium Vehicle	KV-1S	15/14	8	5		57	8
Medium Vehicle	KV-85	15/14	9	5		65	9
Medium Vehicle	SU-76 Tank Destroyer	10/9	8	5		34	5
Medium Vehicle	SU-85M Tank Destroyer	12/11	9	5		49	7
Medium Vehicle	SU-122 Assault Gun	12/11	8	5	Heavy, Howitzer, Rare	50	7
Light Vehicle	T-70 Light Tank	11/10	5	4		20	3
Light Vehicle	BA10 Scout Car	9	5	4	Scout car	17	3
Light Vehicle	BA64 Scout Car	9	0	4	Scout car	15	2
Light Vehicle	M5 Halftrack	10/9	n/a	n/a	Transport	6	0
Light Vehicle	Truck/Jeep	7	n/a	n/a	Transport	3	0
Infantry Detachment	Infantry Detachment	n/a	3	5		25	4
Support Squad	Flamethrower Team	n/a	n/a	3	Flamethrower, Heavy, Rare	30	4
Support Squad	85mm Anti-tank Gun	n/a	9	4		40	5
Support Squad	76mm Anti-tank Gun	n/a	8	3		25	4
Support Squad	57mm Anti-tank Gun	n/a	9	3		30	4
Support Squad	MG Team	n/a	0	3		20	3
Support Squad	Mortar Team	n/a	0	3		25	4
Support Squad	Sniper Team	n/a	n/a	3		18	3

Armour is given as the value for the front followed by the value for the side/rear/top; armour values are reduced by 1 if the firer is within 6.

Note that the 85mm anti-tank gun has no gun shield.

LEND LEASE

Soviet forces may take up to one class of vehicle from the US and British orbats from the list below:

Sherman 75mm, Sherman 76mm, M10, M5 Stuart.



28mm T-34 (Bolt Action)



SCENARIOS

The scenarios listed provide good guidelines for designing your own games and provide a great framework for playing what is referred to as “pick-up” games (i.e. games arranged at short or no notice without necessarily knowing who your opponent is beforehand). They assume a playing area of at least 8' x 6' in 28mm scale (or 6' x 4' in 15mm), so be prepared to modify aspects of the scenario for smaller gaming tables. A number of scenario special rules are presented below to provide tactical challenges and a flavour of operations of this nature.

With just a little foresight, games of Iron Cross are turned into real gaming events. There are many, many real life engagements to echo, either with a researched attempt to recreate the conditions and forces or just a nod to the historical battle. Simply setting up an interesting gaming area will give the opportunity to discuss what type of encounter you might play and conditions for establishing victory.

If your gaming group is sizeable, having a game referee plan the scenario and adjudicate adds an extra dimension as the opposing sides might have only an idea of the strength of the enemy or his dispositions. Additional scenario rules may be known to one side and not the other, or only to the referee. Players can be fed limited intelligence prior to the game to use in their battle plans and the belligerents may even have different objectives.

Our scenarios are great for when you're learning to play RoE: Iron Cross, but the ones you develop will be better!

MULTI-PLAYER GAMES

Such games really benefit from the attentions of a referee, a master of the scenario played, and the following is a guideline for these most rewarding of games.

One player per side is nominated as the senior officer commanding the operation. This player does not need to control forces in action; he distributes extra resources and co-ordinates the other players in his group. An infantry unit is used to represent the CO which may be activated in the normal manner and acts as a command unit.

The other players each have a force with a command unit. Each player receives his normal allocation of tokens, and the commanding officer receives an additional four tokens which he distributes as he sees fit at the very start of each turn. If the CO is lost, these bonus tokens are lost. Tokens may only be spent on the units belonging to the player with them.

Reserves are drawn from a pool of troops under the command of the senior officer. Players request reserves from HQ and, if received, the player spends a token or tokens in the normal manner to bring the additional units into the game.

Referees will prepare guidelines for force compositions, terrain, maps, deployments and any special rules or unforeseen circumstances that may befall the troops and commanders involved.



SCENARIO RULES

AGGRESSIVE COMMAND

The commander of the force generates an additional d6 command tokens per turn instead of the normal 2. Roll each turn.

HIDDEN DEPLOYMENT

The defenders are awaiting an attack in a village or town. No defending units are deployed on the tabletop. The defending player receives 1 ½ numbered hidden markers (round up) for each of his actual units. These are deployed anywhere on the gaming table before the attacker deploys. Note that any sniper teams are treated quite differently and should not be included in this calculation.

It is perfectly acceptable for the attacker to go and make tea while the defender deploys his markers. The defender may place markers inside terrain. The attacker is not permitted to examine the insides of buildings or peruse the defender's side of the gaming area prior to deployment! The attacker may ask the defending player to reveal a hidden marker if:

- 1/ it is in the open and an attacking unit has clear line of sight to it, and the hidden marker is a vehicle in the open.
- 2/ it is within 4"/10cm of one of the attacker's infantry units and that attacking unit did not rapid move this turn.

Hidden markers may activate and move at the same rates for infantry without being revealed, unless they meet with the conditions above. A hidden marker that is revealed, or fires, no longer counts as hidden. Units may not subsequently hide later in the game. From the start of the game, the attacker must keep spending command tokens until at least one enemy unit is revealed, or half of his command tokens are spent.

DUG IN AND WAITING

The defending force has had time to prepare its deployments and it is incumbent on the attacker to dictate the coming engagement and maintain forward momentum. Dug in troops count as hidden (see above) until they are activated or spotted.

Dug in units need a 3+ on a d6 to react as normal, but will seize the initiative if they succeed on the very first occasion in the battle. A failed attempt to react does not reveal the hidden unit. Tactically, a defending player may wish not to activate units early in the game so as not to inform the enemy of his unit dispositions.



Attacking a dug-in position is a daunting task for any commander. A well trained enemy will conceal his dispositions until an opportune moment arises, and this is no excuse to be hesitant! Have a plan and see it through and keep going.

A hesitant commander will find that the enemy completely dictates the battle where and when he wants to, forcing the attacker to be reactive. An aggressive one will be able to focus overwhelming firepower on the enemy in order to force him to concede his chosen ground or face destruction.

OBJECTIVES

Some scenarios utilise objectives as defined in the briefing. These may be as simple as a crossroads or a bridge, or more complicated, such as a village split into three separate objectives. Once one side has claimed an objective, it remains his until taken by the enemy (you do not need to leave troops behind to hold it).



15mm US infantry unit
(Plastic Soldier Company)



PRELIMINARY BOMBARDMENT

An artillery barrage precedes the attack. Roll a d10 for each defending unit (not transports); on a 9+ it receives one morale marker. Infantry/support squads may take a casualty as normal. Armoured vehicles that are hit suffer no further penalty.

RANDOM OPERATION LENGTH

The game lasts a number of turns as indicated in the scenario briefing. Following the end of the final turn, roll a d6. On a score of 4+, a further turn is played. The game ends after this additional turn.

RESERVES

Units held in reserve do not contribute to the pool of tokens a player has. At the start of a turn, before any tokens are drawn, a player declares which reserves are entering the battlefield. He rolls a number of d6 for each unit and, for each score of 3+, one of the reserve units (owner's choice) is available. The owning player takes one token for each available unit.

Each reserve unit must be activated by the use of a token to enter the gaming area. If any reserve unit is not activated and fails to enter the gaming area, it is considered lost or broken down and takes no further part in the game. A token is removed as would be for a destroyed unit.

Units which start off the table may only make a movement onto the table and cannot shoot. Use this method during subsequent turns until all units are deployed.



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British tank column (28mm Die Waffenkammer). Photo courtesy of
Wargames Illustrated.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each scenario may have different objectives and/or victory conditions. As a general rule, when a force drops below its Break Point (see page 18), then it is counted as destroyed, beaten or surrendered, or has run out of steam and withdraws from the battle.

At the start of the game, each side must calculate its Break Point according to the victory conditions in the mission briefing. At the end of each turn, each side calculates the total Break Point value of the units it has lost. Then each side rolls a d6 and adds this to the total. If the force commander has been lost, add 2 to this total. If the score exceeds the force's Break Point, then the game ends in defeat. It is possible for both sides to break in the same turn and, in most cases, a draw will result.



MEETING ENGAGEMENT

As one side attempts to secure strategically important features, a counter attack is launched to deny the enemy.

TERRAIN

The gaming area is set up in a mutually agreeable way on any size of gaming area. Each side has a defined deployment area which may be opposite corners, long or short table edges and/or involve roads or preclude certain areas. At least four objectives must be defined at this stage. As a guideline, four is enough for a game of up to 1000 points per side and one should be added per 500 points of troops above 1000. Each objective should be at least 6"/15cm from any table edge but may be next to each other; for example a village may represent two objectives.

ORDER OF BATTLE

Both sides have an equal number of points, but start the game with up to three quarters (number of units, not points or BP value) on the tabletop (with an equivalent number of tokens).

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

- Objectives
- Random Operation Length
- Reserves



DEPLOYMENT

For the initial deployment, the players should take it in turns to place a unit on the tabletop until all units are deployed at which point the game commences. Alternatively, one player may plot his units' deployment on a sketched map.

INITIATIVE

Roll a D6 with the highest scorer choosing whether to start with the initiative or not. All units count as having moved at the start of the game.

RESERVES

Reserves may be activated from turn 3.

LENGTH OF GAME

7 turns plus Random Operation Length.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each forces' Break Point is 2/3 of its total BP value. If both forces are unbroken at the end of the game, count the number of objectives held to determine the victor.



ESCALATING ENGAGEMENT

With an operation in full flow, opposing reconnaissance elements sight each other and further troops are drawn in to destroy enemy forces.

TERRAIN

The gaming area is set up in a mutually agreeable way on any size of gaming area. Each side has a defined deployment area which may be opposite corners, long or short table edges and/or involve roads or preclude certain areas.

ORDER OF BATTLE

Both sides have an equal number of points, but start the game with up to one third (number of units, not points or BP value) on the tabletop (with an equivalent number of tokens).

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

- Random Operation Length
- Reserves

DEPLOYMENT

For the initial deployment, the players should take it in turns to place a unit on the tabletop until all units are deployed at which point the game commences. Units deploy up to one move from the table edge. Alternatively, one player may plot his units' deployment on a sketched map. The Command Unit starts the game in reserve.

INITIATIVE

Roll a D6 with the highest scorer choosing whether to start with the initiative or not. All units count as having moved at the start of the game.

RESERVES

Up to half of the reserves (number of units) may be activated from turn 2. The remainder may enter from turn 3.

LENGTH OF GAME

Until one side is defeated.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each forces' Break Point is 2/3 of its total BP value.



US paratroopers in action (28mm Artizan Designs). Buildings by 4Ground (photo courtesy of Wargames Illustrated).



CAPTURE

The attacker is ordered to engage dug-in enemy forces and destroy them in order to seize a strategic settlement or position as part of a wider offensive. The defender must repel the enemy assault and prevent the loss of his position.

TERRAIN

The gaming area is set up in a mutually agreeable way on any size of gaming area. The terrain should be set up so that the defender has a defined position or positions to defend, such as a village or natural obstacles. Objectives can be of any size; in fact, bigger objectives such as a village or a line of fields make for great games. The attacker has a defined “start line” or “start lines” which may be as uncomplicated as a short or long table edge or may involve additional roads or restrict certain portions of the table edge. The attacker has a rear position defined as a short or long table edge.

ORDER OF BATTLE

The attacker has double the value of the defender. The defender has an additional number of tokens generated at the start of each turn by rolling a D6 for each command token generated (including the two extras for the command unit). Each 5 or 6 rolled generates an additional token.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

- Dug-in and Waiting
- Hidden Deployment
- Objectives
- Random Operation Length
- Reserves

At least one area (should be more in bigger games) of any size is defined as the objective. It must be within 6”/15cm of the centreline of the table.

DEPLOYMENT

The defender deploys all of his hidden markers anywhere on the tabletop that is at least 12”/30cm from the attacker’s start line(s). The attacker deploys up to 2/3 of his units (in number, not points or BP value) within one normal move of his deployment areas.

INITIATIVE

The attacker starts the game as the active player. All units count as having moved at the start of the game.

RESERVES

Reserves may be activated from turn 2.

LENGTH OF GAME

7 turns plus Random Operation Length.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The defender’s Break Point is 2/3 of its total BP value. The attacker’s Break Point is 1/2 of its total BP value. If there are no defending units within 12”/30cm of any objective(s) at the end of a turn, then by the end of the following turn, if there are no defenders within 12”/30cm, the game ends as a victory for the attacker.



British infantry assault a German held village in France, July 1944. Figures by Artizan Designs and Crusader Miniatures.



BREAKTHROUGH

An assault is launched on a portion of the enemy line in order to penetrate into his rear areas and sow panic and confusion. The defender does not occupy prepared defences and is expected to hold the line and repel the attack until reinforcements arrive or the enemy is exhausted.

TERRAIN

The gaming area is set up in a mutually agreeable way on any size of gaming area. The defender chooses a table edge to defend. The attacker has a defined “start line” or “start lines” which may be as uncomplicated as a short or long table edge or may involve additional roads or restrict certain portions of the table edge. The attacker’s area should also be defined as (roughly) one third of the gaming area; the defender may not deploy units in this zone.

ORDER OF BATTLE

Both sides have the same number of points. The defender must spend at least half of his points on infantry units (inc. anti-tank guns, mortars, etc.).

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

- Aggressive Command,
- or,
- Preliminary Bombardment
 - Random Operation Length
 - Unprepared

The attacker may choose to use a preliminary bombardment or to assign an aggressive command to the operation.

DEPLOYMENT

The defender deploys all of his units anywhere on the tabletop that is not within the attacker’s third at least 24”/60cm from the attacker’s start line(s). No defending unit may be within 24”/60cm (this may be reduced to 18”/45cm on a 6’ x 4’ table) of another defending unit. The attacker deploys all of his units within one normal move of his deployment areas.

INITIATIVE

The attacker starts the game as the active player. All attacking units count as having moved at the start of the game.

RESERVES

There are no reserves in this scenario.

LENGTH OF GAME

7 turns plus Random Operation Length.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The third of the gaming area furthest from the attacking player’s start line is defined as the objective. If the attacker has at least one third of his BP value in this zone at the end of the game, he wins. It is assumed he has broken through and elements begin marauding through the rear echelon areas creating mayhem. If this condition is not met, then reinforcements are deemed to have arrived in strength so that the attacker must withdraw.



IRON CROSS

BY
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28mm British infantry (Crusader Miniatures) advance cautiously through a churchyard (church and gravestones by 4Ground)



IRON CROSS TACTICAL ADVANTAGE CARDS

Tactical Advantage Cards are used to add an element of fog and fortune of war. The Iron Cross card deck consists of 18 “generic” cards for use in your games. Additional packs of cards will be available for certain theatres and present specific national cards.

Two cards are removed from the deck at the start of the battle and removed from play; they won't be used in the game. Do not look at them!

Then each player is dealt seven cards which are kept secret from the opponent. Each player may discard one card for one of the remaining cards from the deck.

Cards with one or two abilities may be played to confer one of the advantages to the unit. Unless explicitly stated, use of tactical cards does not count as an action even though it may cost a command token.

The card will state when it is played and what command token cost there is. Unless stated otherwise, a Tactical card is discarded when it is played. Some cards' effects are not necessarily triggered when they are played and may remain in play until a player chooses to trigger them. Such cards may enable a player to place command tokens on them from turn to turn until a given point in the game.

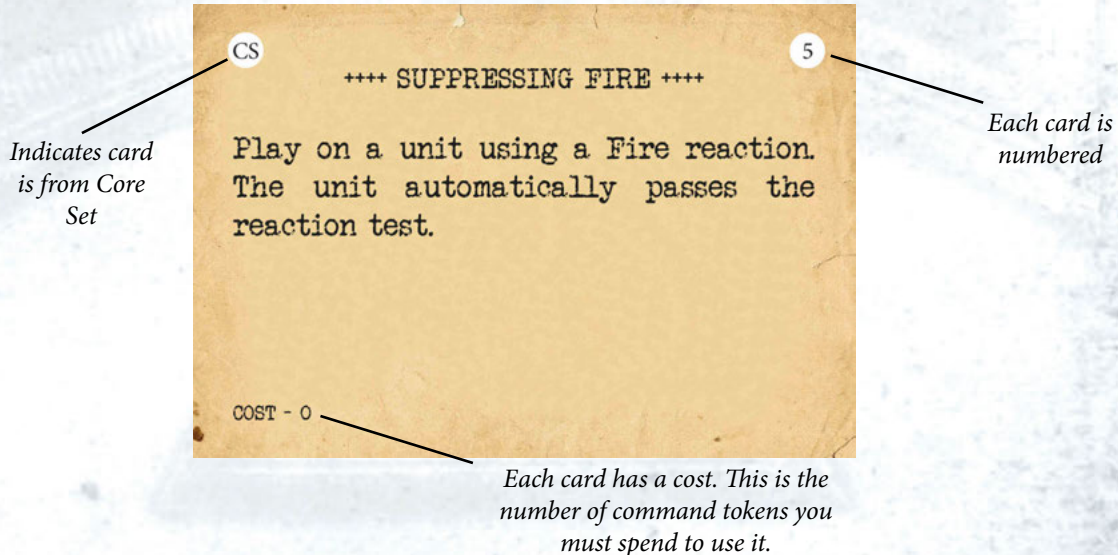
Multi-player games

If you are using a scenario referee, he or she might wish to make TAC cards available to the sides as befits the scenario. Or, a player acting as the overall commander may distribute cards before or during the game.

Scenarios

The size of your force does not dictate the number of TAC cards you receive. Players should feel free to adjust how many cards are used according to scenarios and the number of units; very small games may benefit from less cards. Similarly, large games or multi-player ones may benefit from the use of multiple decks!

Tactical Advantage Card



Please see additional downloads and resources for Iron Cross on our webpage at <http://www.greatescapegames.co.uk/iron-cross>

