FM 7-10

FIELDS OF FIRE FIELD MANUAL

RIFLE COMPANY, INFANTRY AND AIRBORNE BATTLE GROUPS

PART 2 • ADVANCED OPERATIONS

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Light machine gun firing across a clearing from under the cover of low-hanging trees. Near Vire, France. August, 1944.

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A German soldier awaits our tanks with the new improved Raketenpanzerbüchse 54 with blast shield, commonly known as the 'Panzerschreck'.

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US soldier aims the .30-caliber M1919A4 MG on tripod.

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Medevac helicopter departing from the LZ.

Introduction

The Basic Training Field Manual has hopefully given you a clear idea of how the game works mechanically. Let us take a moment to examine some of the concepts behind *Fields of Fire*'s various mechanisms and some basic tactics.

The Game Engine

Fields of Fire is a resource management and decision making game. The resource is the Command. Commands are exchanged for *actions* that are performed by units on the map, which are the decisions you make. There are limitations to how many Commands are available to spend, meaning you have to manage supply and demand. For the game to be challenging, there must be more actions available to you than there is a supply of Commands, like real life.

Abstraction & Problem Solving

Understanding the level of abstraction is important to gain insight into how the game's activities depict actual activities. A Command is an abstraction of all activity to be undertaken within a variable amount of time. A game turn is not a precise period and the amount of time each activity takes within that is also variable.

A Command may represent the literal transmission of a command from the officer to the troops, or it represents the sergeants and corporals performing the task under the general influence of the headquarters. General Initiative also depicts the activities of those same sergeants and corporals doing actions that help the player, without being specifically ordered to do so.

Some activities in the game require a Command, and others are automatic. The automatic activities are a way to create command challenges based on real world problems.

For example, the way units automatically open fire (6.1). This creates a command and control problem for the player to solve. Actual combat can rapidly devolve into an extended firefight that would prevent the company from advancing, so you must attempt to control fire and maneuver to accomplish the mission.

The game integrates this concept into its Higher Headquarters Events, Combat Effects and Limited Action Team restrictions. All these create problems for you to prioritize and solve adequately enough to enable you to accomplish or even just survive the mission.

It is also worth noting that in modern infantry warfare, situational awareness for the individual soldiers or marines is generally very limited. The Primary Direction of Fire (PDF) game mechanic (6.3) is a real world problem, called in professional circles "target fixation." Targets are hard to identify so everyone tends to shoot in the same general direction even when they do not see a clear target. It takes effort to get troops to stop shooting or shift the direction of their fire. This is indicative of lots of activity that the player, just like an actual company commander, has no control over.

Time Management

The amount of time a turn covers is abstract. However, the scope of a turn is based around the ability to initiate and complete a task in one turn. The Call for Fire action in the real world can take as little as four or five minutes from call to rounds on target, but for a new target location it can take as much as 15 minutes to make contact, adjust fire, and fire for effect.

The turn limit is a simple way to capture the cumulative effects of fatigue. Once you have played several missions, you will notice that the company in the attack typically runs out of steam with healthy units by the eighth or ninth turn. When this happens, your thinking will shift to preserving combat power for the next mission.

If a mission has reattempts available, you have a different decision calculus. Reattempts are based on the historical time covered, so some missions have them and others do not. You are playing against the historical performance. You can approach this in three possible ways: go all out to try to complete the mission in one go; go hard until turn seven or eight and assess if you should consolidate and use the reattempt; or go slow and steady whilst planning to use the reattempt all along. There is no right or wrong answer. It is not cheating to take it slow, nor does taking it slow provide the opportunity for any more experience points. It may reduce casualties, but that is mathematically debatable. The middle ground is the most common historical choice, that is to go hard and have a preplanned criterion for holding up, consolidating your gains and using the reattempt.

Some missions are almost impossible to complete without using a reattempt. When using a reattempt, the mission objectives may be Secured in the first couple of turns, based on how far you got in the previous attempt. You still have to play out the remaining turns, even if no enemies are present. An Enemy Higher Headquarters Event may trigger a counterattack for example.

Chaos

The chaos of battle is a key part of the economy of *Fields of Fire*. At the company level, the great movements of armies lose the crisp arrows on large maps and disappear into deadly ground where soldiers try to stay alive and junior officers, sergeants, and corporals push, prod, and cajole them into accomplishing their piece of the larger puzzle. The chaos of battle is built into how the enemy placement, enemy activity and combat resolution works. These game mechanics impact Units and activities on the Map providing the player with more demand for Commands, which adds stress to the Command-to-Action equation.

Planning for Mission

"A plan is nothing, planning is everything"
– Dwight D. Eisenhower

"If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail"
– Benjamin Franklin

There is always the temptation when getting a new game to open the box, shuffle the cards, punch the counters and jump right into a mission. In *Fields of Fire* you are strongly encouraged to resist that urge and take some time to plan for a mission.

Every professional army has planning processes for leaders to follow to ensure they have their act together before they cross the line of departure. A player can use them as a general guide to prepare for a mission. The one used by the US Marine Corps is the mnemonic 'BAMCIS'.

Troop Leading Steps		
Action	**Real World Action**	*Fields of Fire* **Actions**
B – begin planning	Give warning order to subordinates, conduct mission analysis	Setup needed components for Mission and study the mission instructions
A – arrange for reconnaissance	Determine what information is needed and how to get it	N/A
M – make reconnaissance	Conduct leader's recon and collect what information is possible. Complete your estimate	Study the map and objectives. Look at the enemy force packages to see what you might come up against. Come up with a rough plan.
C – complete the plan	Finalize plan and write order	Finalize your plan. You may write an order or make notes.
I – issue the order	Issue order	Arrange command display and units in staging area according to your plan
S – supervise	Supervise execution of order	Play the game

You should aim to understand the general situation provided from the historical notes, the characteristics of the terrain cards, the experience of your units, and potential enemy contacts. Each enemy force in each campaign has unique characteristics of their equipment and tactics that can shape how you plan to organize and move your troops. These elements form your Commander's Estimate. Officers formalize their estimates with another acrostic, METT, for mission, enemy, terrain, troops (example from the Normandy Campaign).

Commander's Estimate	
Estimate Component	**Example**
M – mission	Secure Primary and Secondary Objectives on Row 4, in 10 turns
E – enemy	Veteran German paratroopers, will likely be entrenched and covered by mines and mortars. Deliberate Defense tactics meaning they will probably stay and fight
T – terrain and weather	Daylight, low hills, small wooded areas, compartmentalized by hedgerows—makes long range supporting fires difficult and enemy will be encountered at close range
T – troops and support available	Full strength company, with artillery and battalion mortars. Two Line experience platoon HQs, one Green.

Note that modern versions of METT add some components. While this has changed over time, the basic core of the estimate has not. The Commander's Estimate is then used to finalize your plan.

Sketching out a basic plan with a scheme of maneuver might prove helpful:
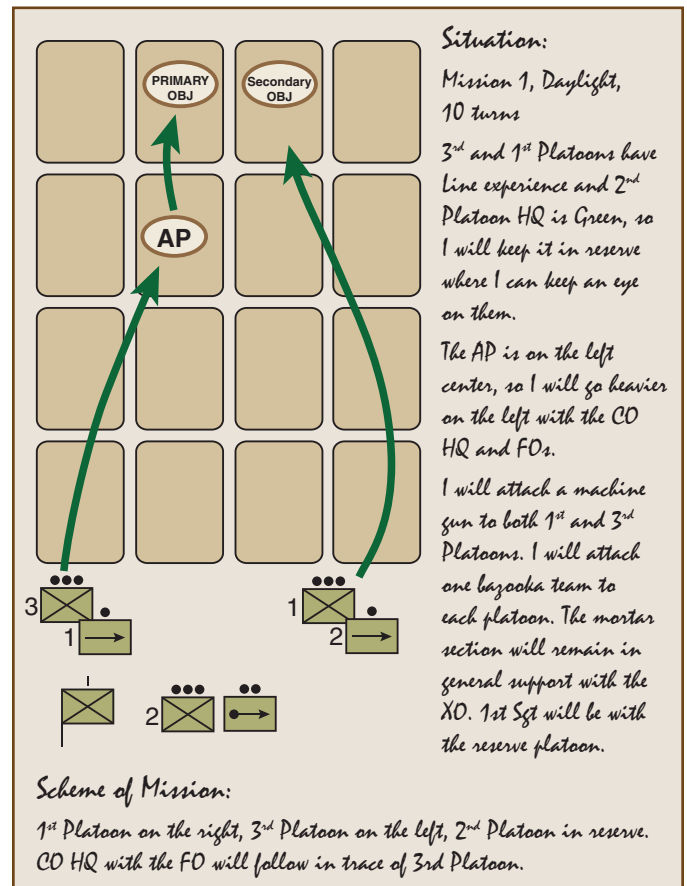

Situation:

Mission 1, Daylight, 10 turns

3rd and 1st Platoons have Line experience and 2nd Platoon HQ is Green, so I will keep it in reserve where I can keep an eye on them.

The AP is on the left center, so I will go heavier on the left with the CO HQ and FOs.

I will attach a machine gun to both 1st and 3rd Platoons. I will attach one bazooka team to each platoon. The mortar section will remain in general support with the XO. 1st Sgt will be with the reserve platoon.

Scheme of Mission:

1st Platoon on the right, 3rd Platoon on the left, 2nd Platoon in reserve. CO HQ with the FO will follow in trace of 3rd Platoon.

Figure 1. Example Plan

"No plan survives first contact with the enemy"
– Helmuth von Moltke (paraphrased)

Your initial plan may not be feasible after the first turn or two, but it gives a framework to adjust from. Do not get too attached to your original plan, as it is a common error to try to make the plan work and reinforce failure; adjusting to a new path of least resistance can be the key to success.

Formations

Infantry units use tactical formations for ease of movement control and to reduce exposure to enemy fire. There are formations for squads, platoons, and companies. Squad formations are below the level of abstraction of the game, but all levels follow a similar pattern. The *Fields of Fire* base rules do not specifically cover formations, as they are not required, but they are presented here to serve as guidelines for commanders to control their troops.

To implement formations in *Fields of Fire*, you must start with basic dispersion. Dispersion, the space between individuals, is vitally important in modern combat where indirect fire from mortars and artillery is the biggest threat. A mortar or artillery burst can kill or seriously injure a standing man within 35-50m. The space between individuals should be 3 to 5 meters.

There is a constant tension however between dispersion and bunching up as it is easier to communicate when they are close at hand. Psychologically men draw comfort under stress from the proximity of their comrades.

In game terms this means your normal dispersion should be no more than 1 squad, 1 weapons team, and/or 1 HQ (or around 5-6 steps) in a given terrain card that has the potential to come under enemy fire. The game allows you to place more, but good judgment should guide you on when to place too many steps in one card.

You will often be tempted to bunch up for ease of control with Platoon Commands. The easiest way to learn otherwise is to move an entire platoon into a mortar fire mission and lose the whole platoon in a single combat phase. As a solitaire game, you can learn without the pressure of face to face competition.

Summary of Tactical Formations		
Formation	**Description**	**Purpose**
Skirmisher or Line	All three elements abreast	Frontal attack, sweeping a large area, all firepower needed to the front, flanks are not a concern
Wedge, Inverted Vee, or Arrowhead	One up, two back	Enemy contact is expected, but enemy disposition is not known. Provides flexibility and flank protection
Vee	Two up, one back (Most common battle formation)	Primary attack formation with a reserve to reinforce, exploit, or guard a flank
Column	One after the other	Enemy contact is not expected and facilitates movement

Formations do not have to be duplicated, nor should they be between company and platoons. A company can be in a Vee formation with each platoon in a different formation based on their terrain and enemy situation. A company looking to traverse an area relatively quickly could have their lead platoon in a Wedge formation, with the reserve platoons following along behind in column.

In practice, a commander does not normally specify the formation for the lower unit commander, it is expected that the local commander would adjust to the formation needed. However, with inexperienced subordinate leaders or for specific purposes, the lower unit's formation can be specified in the order; e.g., a platoon could be ordered to move in a column to protect an open flank.

Example of Play

In this example, CO HQ will lead Green 2nd PLT HQ on an offensive into enemy territory with support from Veteran 1st Sgt. An Arty FO is also attached to the company. The units set up in the Staging Area and prepare to advance into the 4x3 map. This example uses Normandy terrain but is not based on any of the actual missions in this volume. It uses its own enemy package list (introduced when needed during the EoP). Our task is to Secure a Farm on Row 3 of the map. In order to convey how a game generally plays out, all of the rules will be used; including radio communications, ammo tracking and experience levels.

Attachments

All units are Attached to 2nd Platoon. This means they can be given orders by 2nd Platoon HQ as well as CO HQ and 1st Sgt.

Command Display and Assets

We place one Command Counter on the Command Display for every HQ in play. We'll use these to track each HQ's Command Points.

CO HQ is equipped with two radios, one for communicating with the BN HQ off-map (the SCR300), and the other for communicating with Platoon HQs (the SCR536). The CO HQ also has a smoke grenade asset for emergencies. Finally they have a Red Star Parachute Pyrotechnic which we have keyed to Phase Line 2 (4.4.1). This will be handy to get units moving if time is running low. We record it as "XPL2" ("Upon seeing the signal, cross Phase Line No. 2") on the log sheet.

CO 1st Sgt is given a smoke grenade.

2nd PLT HQ has an SCR536 radio (to receive orders from the CO HQ). We also assign smoke grenades and WP to 1/2, 2/2 and 3/2 squads. We'll place counters for these on the command display for convenience.

Finally 1/2 squad is equipped with a Rifle Grenade (just one shot). We'll put that on the map under 1/2 so we can remember that we have it in the heat of combat.

The Arty FO is given a radio, the SCR610 manpack, to communicate with off-site artillery and mortar agencies. We'll also place this with the unit on the map.

Map at Start

See map diagram opposite. Our primary objective is the Farm on Row 3. The hilly terrain means very limited LOS in this mission. Phase Line 2 is set between Rows 2 and 3. When CO HQ fires the Red Star Parachute, all units on Row 2 will cross over to Row 3. A somewhat dangerous maneuver, but might come in handy in an emergency.

All of our units start in the Staging Area (represented here by four cards from the Naktong River campaign). The sequence of play on the back page of the rulebook and separate player aid must be followed strictly. This example will step through each Phase, Segment and Impulse in turn. Note that none of what follows is necessarily tactically sound advice.

CURRENT ACTIVITY NO CONTACT

Limit of Advance

+0 Daylight

+2 No ⚡-1 WOODS
POTENTIAL CONTACT **C**
3 | 4

+2 Slow HEDGEROW/BOCAGE
POTENTIAL CONTACT **C**
2 | 4

+2 Slow FARM
PRIMARY OBJ 1 OBJECTIVE
POTENTIAL CONTACT **C**
1 | 3

+1 No ⚡+1 MARSH
POTENTIAL CONTACT **C**
1 | 2

Phase Line 2

+0 ⚡+1 HILL

+0 ⚡+1 HILL

+1 No ⚡+1 MARSH
POTENTIAL CONTACT **B**
1 | 2

+1 Slow CEMETERY
POTENTIAL CONTACT **B**
1 | 3

+2 +1 No GULLY/DI
ATTACK AP POSITION
POTENTIAL CONTACT **B**
1 | 3

+2 No ⚡-1 WOODS
POTENTIAL CONTACT **B**
3 | 4

LEFT BOUNDARY

RIGHT BOUNDARY

Phase Line 1

+3 Slow OR CHURCH
POTENTIAL CONTACT **A**
1 | 3

+2 Slow MULTI STORY FARM
POTENTIAL CONTACT **A**
1 | 3

+1 ⚡-1 ORCHARD/GROVE
POTENTIAL CONTACT **A**
2 | 3

+2 +1 Slow HEDGEROW/BOCAGE
POTENTIAL CONTACT **A**
2 | 4

Line of Departure

Naktong River 1950 — FIELDS OF FIRE — GMT GAMES

Naktong River 1950 — FIELDS OF FIRE
CO HQ | CO 1 SGT
2/2 PLT | 2/AT
ARTY FD Net | ARTY FO
SCR610 Radio

Naktong River 1950 — FIELDS OF FIRE
2 PLT HQ
Rifle Grenade | 3/2 PLT
1/2 PLT
1/LMG | 1/AT
A L

Naktong River 1950 — FIELDS OF FIRE — GMT GAMES

Turn 1

FRIENDLY HIGHER HQ EVENT PHASE

On Turn 1 of the game no HQ events occur, so we do not draw a card.

This is an offensive Mission, so the player will act first, then the enemy.

FRIENDLY COMMAND PHASE

In this phase Higher HQs give orders to subordinate HQs. Those HQs gain Command Points and use them to order their units to take Action.

- First the BN HQ will give orders to the CO HQ
- Then the CO HQ will give orders to Platoon HQs and CO Staff.
- Platoon HQs will then give orders to their own units and CO Staff will give orders to any units (including Platoon HQs and lower ranking Staff).

Although any of the actions in the Action menus can be given as orders, Activate is the most common order for a higher HQ to give to a subordinate HQ. Being Activated by a higher HQ makes that HQ eligible to draw for their own command points in the Activation Segment.

Activation Segment

BN HQ Impulse

Except in some rare cases due to Events, the BN HQ is always off-map. BN HQ can communicate with the CO HQ over the BN TAC radio network. First we check to see if the CO HQ has a BN TAC radio (they do, the SCR300), then we have the BN HQ Activate the CO HQ (while off-map, Activate is the only order available to the BN HQ). On the Command Display, we flip the CO HQ's Command marker to its Commands Available side.

> **Gameplay Notes:** Losing the BN HQ radio can be somewhat disastrous for a mission. With no way to Activate the CO HQ, they are left with only initiative commands; having to rely on Runners to Activate the Platoon HQs or Staff every other turn. The radio is not easy to lose, but may happen if the CO HQ becomes a casualty (See 4.3.5 Combat Damage to Radios). In this case you'll need to find another SCR300 radio to replace it. Often a Mtr FO will be equipped with an SCR300 that you can requisition. Simply carry out a Switch Network (4.2.1j) action to replace the Mtr FD Net radio with the BN TAC Net radio. Unfortunately our Mtr FO was not available for this trip, so we'll have to be careful.

CO HQ Impulse

We draw an Action card and check the large number in the top left—it's a 5.

This number is mainly modified by three factors:

- Experience Level of the CO HQ (our CO HQ is Line experience so no modifier)
- Activity Level (we get a +1 modifier because Activity is No Contact)
- VOF on the card (but that does not apply right now as the CO HQ is not under fire)

A full list of command modifiers can be found on the Command Draw Modifiers Chart.

That's a total of 6 points. We increase the CO HQs Command Points by 6 on the Command track.

These points can be used or saved until the next turn. The Command Display indicates that our Line Level CO HQ can save up to 6 points during a Daytime mission.

CO HQ spends 3 points:

- 1 to Activate 1st Sgt. 1st Sgt is on the same card as the CO HQ so they can communicate directly without the use of radios. 1st Sgt's Command marker is flipped to Commands Available.
- 1 to Activate 2nd PLT HQ. 2nd Plt HQ is not on the same card as the CO HQ, but they are in communication on the CO TAC radio network (using the SCR536 radios). 2nd PLT HQ Command marker is flipped to Command Available.
- 1 to order 2/2 squad to Move to the Church. It's not normally efficient for the CO HQ to give direct orders to units, however in this case there are very few HQs in play and the CO HQ has lots of commands to spare. 2/2 squad immediately Moves to the Church. An Exposed marker is placed on the unit.

CO HQ has finished, 3 command points are saved and the CO HQ Command marker is flipped to its Activation Complete side. We slide it down to the bottom half of the command track to remind ourselves that the CO HQ has completed its Activation Impulse and is not awaiting the Initiative segment.

PLT HQ/CO Staff Impulse

2nd Platoon and 1st Sgt have been Activated so they can draw for commands in this Impulse. It doesn't matter who we carry out commands for first, but once we have completed one HQ's commands, we cannot go back. We decide that it's best to see what 1st Sgt manages to do before deciding 2nd Platoon's orders.

An Action card is drawn, we check the large number in the top left; it's a 4. We modify by +1 because Activity Level is at No Contact and another +1 because our 1st Sgt is a Veteran. 6 Commands to Spend or Save.

As a veteran unit, 1st Sgt can save up to 9 commands in a turn. However, the maximum any unit can use in a single turn of a Daylight mission is 6 (as indicated on the Command display).

1st Sgt ends up spending all 6 Command Points:

- 1 to Move himself to the Church (he moves and is marked Exposed).
- 1 to order 2/2 squad to seek cover:
  - 3 Action Cards are drawn (as indicated by the number at the bottom center of the terrain card). We are

looking for one which says "Cover" at the top. We don't get it. The men of 2/2 squad are happy with their current positions in front of the sturdy stained glass windows

- 1 point is spent to Exhort. Any failed attempt can gain one more card draw with this order. We draw and fail again.

- 1st Sgt (somewhat frustrated now), spends a point to look for cover himself (something he likely should have done in the first place). He draws 4 cards (3 base, +1 since he's a veteran). First card comes up: "Cover". We draw on the Urban Cover Probability Table (Charts & Tables Play Aid) for WWII and get a 2 - "Strong Building". 1st Sgt has located a much better position in the Church in which to take cover. We place a Strong Building marker on the card, and a Church Tower (a high elevation area with a stacking limit of 1 step).

Having spent 4 command points, 1st Sgt now has only 2 left. Each cover marker represents an entirely separate location, which means he is no longer in communication with 2/2 squad.

1st Sgt spends 2 more points. One to get out of the cover and back to 2/2 squad. And one final command to order 2/2 to Move to the new cover. 2/2 are safely in cover, 1st Sgt just has enough time to duck beneath a bench before the enemy shows up (he's Exposed and not in cover). 1st Sgt Command marker is flipped to Activation Completed. No commands are saved this turn so his command marker goes back to the top of the display.

Next up is 2nd PLT HQ.

We draw an Action Card, it's a 6. 2nd PLT HQ is a Green experience unit, so we –1 to that number. Then +1 because we're still at No Contact for a total of 6 Command Points. Although they can still spend 6 during a Day turn, a Green HQ can only save 3 commands in a turn, so any unused command points beyond 3 will be lost.

2nd PLT HQ can order any of the units under his command which are in Visual-Verbal communication (on the same card, in the same area of that card). One option would be to order a Platoon Move for two command points and move everyone out of the Staging Area and into play.

However, let's be a little more cautious. Outside of the built up areas like the Farm and the Church, basic Cover & Concealment ratings are quite low.

2nd PLT HQ spends 3 Command Points:

- 1 point to order 1/LMG to the Farm. This is a fairly safe spot to set up. Although units cannot be ordered any more after moving out of communication, 2nd PLT HQ trusts that the LMG Team are able to find a relatively secure spot (the Cover & Concealment number represents the cover which units will automatically make use of when entering a card, they are not standing around in the open).

- 1 point is used to detach an Assault Team from 3/2 squad. 3/2 is reduced from 3 steps to 2 and an Assault Team is placed on the card.

- 1 point is used to order the Assault Team forwards into the Orchard. 2nd PLT HQ saves the remaining 3 command points.

The PLT HQ/CO Staff Impulse is now over. To summarize, Command points were used to give the following orders:

Activate (4.2.1a)	Allows an HQ to draw for commands in the Activation Segment
Move (4.2.2a)	Moves a unit to an adjacent card. This order marks a unit Exposed.
Seek cover (4.2.2e)	Attempts to find more secure locations within a terrain card (automatically moves units carrying out the action to that new cover).
Move Within a Card (4.2.2f)	Moves between areas of a single card. Each cover marker on a terrain card represents a separate area. HQs will often find themselves moving about different areas to give orders to their units. Some campaigns will feature complex terrain with separate areas printed directly on the card.
Detach Team (4.2.3g)	Removes one step from a 3 or 4 step unit and creates an Assault Team or a Fire Team. Assault Teams can be handy for scouting, although they can only engage at Point Blank range.

* Besides Move Within a Card (4.2.2f), a unit cannot perform the same action twice in an impulse.

Initiative Segment

In this phase all HQs and Staff who were not Activated in the Activation Segment may draw for Initiative Commands. Finally, some units may be able to use General Initiative command points to take actions without the need for an order from an HQ.

CO HQ Initiative Impulse

CO HQ was Activated this turn, so does not draw for Initiative Points

PLT HQ Initiative Impulse

2nd PLT HQ was Activated this turn, so does not draw for Initiative Points

CO Staff Initiative Impulse

1st Sgt was Activated this turn, so does not get an initiative point. (For Initiative, CO Staff do not draw for commands, they receive 1 single point, unmodified.)

General Initiative Impulse

We draw an Action Card and check the smaller number, underneath the helmet icon. It's a 4. We can use these Command Points for any unit (HQs, Staff and regular units) to take Actions with. Since this is a single platoon mission, we halve the result to make 2 general initiative points.

First we'll use one point to Move 1st Sgt into better cover. He has a choice of the main Church building where 2/2 is located, or the Church Tower. Stacking more than 3 steps in a single area of cover is dangerous (it induces penalties if hit by Incoming artillery, mortars or Grenade Attacks). On the other hand, 1st Sgt won't be in communication with 2/2 squad from the Tower.

The Church Tower is also somewhat dangerous as it can draw fire from a long distance if anyone notices 1st Sgt up there.

He heads into the building to join 2/2. +6 total cover is good enough to risk a stacking penalty.

With the 2nd General Initiative Point we have 1/LMG seek cover. They draw 3 cards (unmodified as 1/LMG is a Line experience unit). We fail to find cover.

Enemy Activity Phase

In this phase, enemy units check for actions. There are no enemy units on the map right now though.

Enemy Higher HQ Event Segment

In Turn 1, no Higher HQ events are drawn

Enemy Activity Check Segment

There are no Enemy units on the map, so nothing to do in this Segment

Mutual Capture & Retreat Phase

We check to see if any Paralyzed Teams or Litter Teams on either side are under fire (with a VOF marker on their card affecting them) and see if they retreat. There are none right now. Prisoners might also be taken in this phase but there are none this turn.

AT Combat & Vehicle Movement Phase

There are no vehicles on the map, so nothing to do here

Mutual Combat Phase

In this phase, first Fire Missions are updated, then new enemy units may be placed on the map. Units on either side with opposing units in LOS open fire on them automatically, this often happens in this phase but needs to be checked whenever something happens on the map in any of the previous phases too.

Fire Mission Update Segment

There are no Fire Missions to update

Potential Contact Evaluation Segment

Finally something to do in this turn!

Every card with a PC marker and a Friendly unit is checked for Potential Contact. We have three occupied cards, all of which have PC A markers. We choose the order to resolve these Potential Contacts randomly.

Card 1: We draw an Action card and check the 3-column, the result is a 3. That's the Orchard with our Assault Team.

The Current Activity Level is No Contact, checking the Potential Contact Draw Chart (Charts & Table Play Aid) we look for the number of cards to draw. The table says "Auto". Oh well, no draw, our Assault Team is definitely under attack.

We draw an Action card and check the result against the German Contact Packages Table for the Mission. It's a 4: Package 11: *Strong Point (Squad under Trenches / Squad + HMG Team under Bunker)*. The "/" indicates that the squad in a Trench will be placed on a separate card to the other units. The "+" indicates that the squad and HMG will be placed on the same card (both in a Bunker). We choose a German squad at random from all those available, and draw the two Fallschirmjäger MG42 armed units Gp1 and Gp2.

German Contact Packages

R#	PC A Package	PC B & C Package
1/5	7 (LMG Nest)	2 (Incoming)
2/5	8 (HMG Nest)	3 (Incoming)
3/5	9 (Defensive Position)	7 (LMG Nest)
4/5	11 (Strong Point)	7 (LMG Nest)
5/5	14 (Patrol)	8 (HMG Nest)

Unit Placement	
R#	Location
1-4/8	Front
5-6/8	Left Front
7-8/8	Right Front

Next we draw to see which direction each squad will be firing from. We draw a 5 (Left Front) and a 4 (Front). (Any duplicate directions or directions which already have enemy units would be redrawn.) Enemy units are waiting for us in the hills and things are about to get dangerous.

Placement instructions on the package list state that the package should be placed "At Close range on R#1-2/10 otherwise at Max LOS/Range". We draw one more card, it's a 1. So both squads are placed at Close Range (adjacent card) regardless of the range of the weapons available and LOS on the map. We'll track each unit's ammo with ammo markers, although this can be recorded on your log sheet instead to prevent counter clutter.

Note: The presence of the Hills means that, even if we had drawn "Max LOS", both Front and Left Front would be placed on the Hills as that's the furthest LOS possible in this situation.

The package list states that the enemy units will open fire immediately and they are Unspotted, so our units do not return fire.

PDF (Primary Direction of Fire) markers are placed indicating the direction which the enemy units are firing in. An Automatic Weapons VOF (Volume of Fire) is placed on the orchard. Fire is coming from two different directions, so a Crossfire marker is also placed.

The Activity Level marker is increased to Contact (one occupied card has a VOF marker). This will decrease the chance of further contact.

Card 2: We draw a random number, it's a 2, the Farm.

The Activity Level is Contact, the Potential Contact Draw Chart says we must draw 7 cards to see if we make contact. If the word "Contact" appears at the top of any of them, we've found more enemies.

A very lucky draw brings up no contact. The PC marker is removed from the map. Oh, and a reshuffle card. We shuffle the deck.

Card 3: The Church

Seven cards again. Thanks to some skillful shuffling technique, we draw no Contact cards again.

Pinned Recovery Segment

We check to see if any Pinned units can recover, there are none right now.

Combat Effects Segment

Combat effects are determined, one card at a time, by calculating the Net Combat Modifier (NCM) for each unit . All Combat effects occurring in this segment are considered simultaneous, so PDF and VOF markers are not adjusted until the following Segment (Clean-up).

The cards can be checked in any order as the results of one check will not affect the results of another. We're going to start from the top of the map, checking each card in turn. If you are using ammo counters on the map this is a good time to adjust the ammo levels.

First, each of the German units uses one ammo.

Next, we calculate the NCM (see 6.4 for the formula) on the Assault Team thus:

Most powerful VOF affecting the Assault Team: Automatic Fire (–1)

VOF Modifiers: Crossfire (–1)

Unit Status: Exposed (–2)

Cover & Concealment of Terrain card (+1)

For a total of –3. (Note how the actual number of units firing at a target has very little effect on the NCM.)

We draw an Action card and check the left column for –3: The result is HIT.

We draw another card and check the HIT EFFECT section to find out the result, this depends on the experience level of the unit. Assault Teams are all considered to be Line experience.

The result is CF.

Two letters means 2 Steps of a unit are affected. In this case the Assault Team is a single step unit, so the second letter is ignored. The result is C: Casualty.

Our Assault Team scout has been incapacitated and needs to be pulled out and evacuated (once the Germans have been dealt with). A casualty is no longer considered a unit, it cannot be Rallied and takes no further part in the game (except to be picked up by someone and taken to a Casualty Collection Point when the opportunity arises).

Clean Up Phase

In the Clean Up Phase we remove Exposed markers from all units, and update any PDFs and VOFs.

Any enemy units that are firing into a card with no valid targets (a casualty is not a valid target) will automatically shift fire now. We check the priorities in 6.1.1 and note that, given multiple choices, enemy units will engage the card in LOS with most steps.

The German squad in the Cemetery on the Hill has two cards in LOS, the Church with 1st Sgt and 2/2 squad has the most steps, so it shifts fire there.

The HMG and the squad in the Bunker have LOS to the Farm, however a Bunker can only fire in one direction. The units cease fire and wait for someone else to enter the orchard.

Turn 1 is over, the Game Turn marker moves to Turn 2 and we go back to the top of the sequence of play.

Turn 2

We have two German positions to Spot and knock out. The HMG in the Bunker could be quite dangerous, but since it can only fire in one direction, it's easily outflanked. No units can fire into or out of the Staging Area.

Friendly Higher HQ Event Phase

We draw an Action card and check for the HQ Radio icon. It is not present, so no random event occurs this turn.

Friendly Command Phase

Activation Segment

BN HQ Impulse

BN HQ Activates CO HQ using the BN TAC radio. The CO HQ Command counter is flipped to its Commands Available side.

CO HQ Impulse

We draw an Action card and check the big number in the helmet. It's a 3. This is added to 3 points saved from last turn to make 6. We are no longer at No Contact, so no bonus is applied.

CO HQ uses 6 points.

- 1 to Activate 2nd Platoon HQ over the CO TAC radio. 2nd PLT HQ Command Counter is Flipped to Commands Available.
- 1 to order the Arty FO forwards to the Farm. He moves and is marked Exposed.
- 1 to order 2/AT bazooka team forwards. They move and are marked Exposed.
- 1 to move forwards to the Farm. CO HQ moves forwards, is marked Exposed.
- 1 to Attempt to Spot the German squad ahead in the Cemetery.

To Spot we draw 2 cards adjusted by the factors on the Spotting Attempt Draws Modifiers Chart (Charts & Tables Play Aid). This card draw is modified by –1 for the German squad being under cover and +1 because the German squad is an A-rated squad. We draw 2 Action cards and look for the Crosshairs icon. It's a Success! The Germans are now spotted.

The moment the German squad becomes spotted, all US units with LOS open fire. We place a PDF from the Church and from the Farm. The most powerful VOF of all units firing is placed on the Cemetery (Automatic Fire from our LMG). In addition a Crossfire marker is placed. The current Activity Level increases to Engaged (more than one occupied card is under a VOF).

It's important to remember that all units are firing at the Cemetery; both S VOF from 2/2 squad and A VOF from the LMG are being exerted onto the enemy card. The reason we only place the Automatic Fire VOF is to remind us that only the most powerful VOF is used in the NCM calculation in the Combat Effects Segment later.

Finally the CO HQ orders the Arty FO to call for an artillery strike on the Cemetery. We check the number of card draws for the Arty FO to call an artillery mission in the mission instructions. It says 2.

We draw 2 Action cards and look for the Burst Icon - it's another Success!

A Pending Artillery Strike marker is placed on the Cemetery Card and an Artillery Concentration marker is also placed (making subsequent artillery strikes on the same location easier). One Fire Mission is deducted (from a total of 4 for this mission, according to the mission instructions).

Quite a successful turn for the CO HQ. It's worth noting that in a regular company the CO HQ would be dealing with three or four Platoon HQs and one or two more CO Staff, so this kind of direct control is not very common.

PLT HQ/CO Staff Impulse

2nd Platoon HQ was Activated by the CO HQ, so we can draw for commands. We draw an Action card, it's a 4. As a Green HQ, 2nd PLT HQ suffers from a -1 penalty. This is then added to the 3 commands saved from last turn for a total of 6.

Moving straight ahead into the firing arc of the German Bunker would not be a good idea, so 2nd PLT HQ orders 1/2 to Move to the Bocage at Front Right. 1/2 moves and is marked Exposed.

2nd Platoon doesn't want to do anything else this turn. However, as a Green HQ they can only save 3 Commands (as indicated on the Command Display) so two commands are lost. The Command marker is placed in the Saved Zone of the 3 box on the command track.

Initiative Segment

CO HQ Initiative Impulse

CO HQ was Activated this turn, so does not draw for Initiative Points

PLT HQ Initiative Impulse

2nd PLT HQ was Activated this turn, so does not draw for Initiative Points

CO Staff Initiative Impulse

1st Sgt was not Activated this Turn. 1 point is added, unmodified for a total of 1 (none were saved last turn).

1st Sgt feels pretty comfortable in the most secure spot in the Church so doesn't consider retreating despite the incoming fire. He spends 1 point to order 2/2 to Concentrate Fire on the enemy Trench.

2/2 draws 2 cards and looks for the crosshairs symbol. It doesn't appear.

General Initiative Impulse

We draw an Action card and check the small number, it's a 4. Halved makes two points.

1 point is spent to have 1/2 attempt to spot the German units in the Bunker. We draw 2 cards (Base 2, –1 under cover, +1 A-rated enemy unit) and look for the Crosshairs marker: Success!

The German units in the Bunker are now Spotted. 1/2 opens fire on them, placing a Small Arms Fire VOF marker on their card. The US units in the Farm also have LOS to the Bunker, but they are already engaging the German squad in the Cemetery so ignore them for now. Despite being under fire, the German units in the Bunker stick to their post. Surely there are other units out there who will protect their flanks?

The 2nd point is spent by 1/2 to fire their Rifle Grenade at the Bunker. Two cards are drawn, and we look for the Grenade symbol. It does not come up. We place a Grenade Miss marker on the Hill with the Bunker. This will affect all units on the card with a –1 modifier to the NCM in the Combat Effects Segment (as opposed to a successful strike which would have hit only the Bunker with a –4 VOF). The Rifle Grenade Asset is a one-off, so it is removed from play.

The Friendly Command Phase is now over. To summarize, Command points were used to give the following orders:

Activate (4.2.1a)	Allows an HQ to draw for commands in the Activation Segment
Move (4.2.2a)	Moves a unit to an adjacent card. This order marks a unit Exposed.
Spot (4.2.4a)	Attempts to Spot hidden enemy units in LOS. The base draw of 2 cards is modified by various factors as noted on the Spotting Attempt Draw Modifier Chart.
Call for Fire (4.2.4i)	Attempts to call for fire from an off-map firing agency. Mission instructions give the base draw for this attempt. It will depend on the unit calling for fire and the type of mission.
Concentrate Fire (4.2.4c)	Attempts to concentrate fire on a specific cover marker or one random unit out of cover on the card where a unit's VOF is placed. Gives a -1 modifier to the NCM if successful
Grenade Attack (4.2.4d)	Attempts to make a "Grenade Attack". At range this is used for Rocket and Grenade Launchers, at Point Blank it represents a close assault with hand grenades and all other weapons available to the unit.

* Besides Move within card (4.2.2f), a unit cannot perform the same action twice in an impulse.

ENEMY ACTIVITY PHASE

Enemy Higher HQ Event Segment

We draw a card and look for the HQ radio icon. It doesn't appear, so no Enemy random event occurs this turn.

Enemy Activity Check Segment

Every enemy on the map makes an Activity Check using the Enemy Activity Check Hierarchy Player Aid.

Enemy occupied cards are selected in a random order and all units on those cards make an Activity check.

The Enemy Activity depends on the tactics they are using for this mission. Our mission instructions indicate that they are using "Deliberate Defense" tactics.

There are two enemy occupied cards, we draw an Action Card and check the 2 column:

It's a 1, which is the Cemetery Hill. We check the Enemy Defensive Activity Hierarchy from top to bottom and look for a clause which applies to this unit. The 7th clause "Under fire from a different direction than its own PDF" applies.

The column on the right is for Deliberate tactics, we draw an Action Card and get a 3: Shift Fire. The squad shifts fire to the Farm where our CO HQ is located. The PDF is moved and the Automatic Fire VOF marker is moved from the Church to the Farm.

The next enemy card is the Bunker. Two units are present here, we check for an Action from each one.

However in this case, the 7th clause would apply again (assume "LOS" even though they can't actually fire in that direction). The units in the Bunker are not capable of either Concentrating fire or Shifting Fire, and they will not fall back under the current tactics. So neither unit does anything.

Under Deliberate tactics, units in Bunkers will generally stay where they are until you are at Point Blank Range, at which point they will either run away or confront you with a full on grenade wielding assault.

Mutual Capture & Retreat Phase

No Paralyzed Teams or Litter Teams are on the map, so nothing happens in this Phase.

AT Combat & Vehicle Movement Phase

There are no vehicles on the map, so nothing to do here

Mutual Combat Phase

Fire Mission Update Segment

The Pending Incoming marker on the Cemetery Hill is flipped to Activated as artillery rains down on the units there. The German unit's LOS is lost immediately. Its PDF and the Automatic Fire VOF on the Farm is removed. US units continue to shoot into the card.

Potential Contact Evaluation Segment

One unit (2/2 over on the right of the map) is on a card with a Potential Contact marker. There are two cards under VOF (the two german cards), so our Activity Level is "Engaged". The Potential Contact Draws Chart indicates that we should draw 5 cards for a PC A marker at Engaged.

We draw, and the word "Contact" does not come up. Very lucky draws so far!

Pinned Recovery Segment

There are no Pinned units on the map, so nothing to do here.

Combat Effects Segment

We work our way along the rows from top to bottom to determine the combat effects.

Card 1: Cemetery Hill

German units are no longer firing (they're trying to take cover as artillery explodes around them) so use no ammo. The NCM for the squad is –3 (+1 Cover & Concealment value of terrain, +2 Trench cover value, –5 Artillery Strike VOF, –1 Crossfire). Note how the Incoming VOF takes precedence over Automatic Fire in the NCM calculation as it is more powerful.

We draw an action card. –3 is a PIN result. The German squad is marked Pinned. This will reduce its firepower, but also make it harder to hit. Time to close in and finish the job.

Card 2: Bunker Hill

The units in the Bunker are not firing, so use no ammo. NCM for each unit is +4 (+2 Cover & Concealment value of terrain, +3 Bunker cover, +0 Small Arms Fire VOF, –1 Grenade Miss marker).

We draw once for the 3-step squad: PIN (squad is marked pinned) and once for the HMG: PIN (HMG is pinned).

A Bunker cannot fire at point blank range, now would be the perfect time to close in and finish it off. There are no demolition teams in this mission, but a few good grenades should do the trick.

Card 3: Farm house

We reduce our LMG ammo from 4 to 3.

Clean Up Phase

Finally we remove all the Exposed markers, Grenade markers (Hit and Miss) and any Concentrate Fire markers. The Activated Incoming marker will last until the Combat Phase next turn, continuing to block the LOS of the units on the Hill. PDF and VOF markers can now be updated based on the results of combat and clean up (in this case there are none to be updated).

The turn marker is moved from 2 to 3 and back to the beginning of the sequence of play we go.

This concludes the example of play. With just one platoon we've managed to turn around a nasty ambush from the hills into something a lot more manageable. In the following turns, we'll close in on the enemy to finish them off, set up a Casualty Collection Point to evacuate our casualties and slowly but surely make our way to our objective.

Carrying on the mission

This mission is intended as an example to demonstrate the sequence of play in progress. If you want to carry on the mission by yourself follow the guidelines below for drawing the enemy packages

Drawing for Enemies

Draw for enemy units on the Enemy Package List for Normandy mission 1 using the table at the beginning of this section. The number of enemies on the map is limited only by the German counter mix. Any eliminated units are returned to the counter mix and can be redrawn as part of later packages.

Special rules

If there are not enough enemy counters to place the drawn package, do not redraw. Simply discard the PC marker as if there were no contact.

Once you have a good grasp of the sequence of play, you are ready to move on to the next section where you will be in charge of an entire company.

Vehicles and AT Combat

Vehicle movement and "AT combat" (meaning any fire against vehicles, not just tanks), can seem complicated at first as it takes place outside of the general sequence of play. This training mission focuses on vehicle movement and AT combat and can be quickly set up and practised with variations until you get used to the sequence of play.

Mission 1: Offensive vs Enemy AT weapons

A US tank platoon with limited infantry support is attempting to move through terrain guarded by a variety of German AT-capable units.

- **Aim:** Secure the terrain card at Row 3, Column 2 within 5 turns.
- **Units** involved:
  German: 88mm AT Gun, 75mm AT Gun, 75mm Infantry Gun, Panzerschreck team.
  US: CO HQ, 1st PLT HQ, 1/1 PLT, 1/LMG, Sherman tank platoon (four regular tanks plus one Tank HQ).

- **Setup:** Make a 3x3 map using the Normandy deck. Ensure that there is a path for vehicles to move to at least Row 2 (not blocked by NO trafficability terrain).
  Place the command markers for the three HQ units on the Command track with their Activation Completed side face up (to indicate that they have not been Activated yet). Place the German AT guns on Row 3 (one on each card) and the Panzerschreck team Unspotted on Row 2 in a Trench. Place the US units in a Staging Area in front of Row 1.
- **Ammo:** Each German AT gun has 6 ammo. The Panzerschreck team has 3 ammo.
  Each US tank has 3 ammo. 1/LMG has 6 ammo.
- **Assets:** The CO HQ is equipped with a BN TAC SCR300 radio and an EE8 Field Phone. 1st PLT HQ is equipped with an EE8 Field Phone and one Phone Line.

- **Mission Special Rules:**
  - **Anti-Tank Ambush (10.8.3):** Anti-tank ambush rules apply to all of the Sherman tanks.
  - **Activation:** All German AT Guns and the Panzerschreck team will Activate for AT combat every turn so long as they remain Unpinned (including after a successful Rally attempt).
  - **AT gun ammo:** The 88mm gun places a basic Heavy Weapons VOF, this will use up ammo every turn. The two 75mm guns place a basic Small Arms VOF (representing the small arms of the crew defending the gun). They do not use up ammo except when firing in AT combat or, in the case of the 75mm Infantry Gun, using its ranged G! capability on infantry targets.
  - The range of an AT Gun's Small Arms fire is Close (adjacent card). The V range of the 75mm Infantry Gun refers to its ranged G! capability.
  - All enemy units will ignore an Action result of "Remove unit; place PC marker".
  - All terrain discovered on urban cover cards is a Strong Building
  - There are no events for either side in this mission
  - The enemy are using Deliberate Defensive tactics
  - Since there are Spotted enemies on the map, the Activation Level begins at Contact.
  - Due to the reduced size of the company, all General Initiative draws are halved, rounding down (as if playing a single platoon mission).

Let's take a closer look at the German AT Guns. These have a few special rules that need to be taken into account. The first thing to note is that all of the AT units except the Panzerschreck team are Immobile (as noted by the crossed arrow on the counter). While on their good order side, Immobile units cannot move, either to other cards, or within their own card. When reduced to a Fire Team, the unit can move about freely like other units.

 The 88mm is a powerful 2-step gun. It places a Heavy Weapons VOF on infantry targets and will use AT Fire against vehicles. It will use up one point of ammo for every turn the VOF is on the map, plus a further point for each AT shot it takes.

 The 75mm Infantry Gun places a Small Arms VOF (representing the small arms of the crew defending the gun). This is placed up to Close range (adjacent card). It can also make ranged Grenade Attacks up to Very Long range against infantry targets and AT Fire against vehicles. The Small Arms VOF does not use up ammo, but each Grenade Attack and AT fire will use one ammo.

 Finally the 75mm AT Gun places a Small Arms VOF at Close range. This does not use up ammo. It does not have a Grenade Attack capability, as its operators have decided to save its main gun for firing on vehicles. Each AT fire uses one ammo.
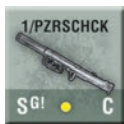
The Panzerschreck team is a regular infantry unit that places a Small Arms VOF (does not track ammo), can make a Grenade Attack against infantry units, and AT Fire against vehicles.

Example of Play

This example will follow the complete Sequence of Play so you can see when the various actions take place. Most of the detail will be during the AT Combat and Vehicle Movement Phase. Set up and follow the example through its two turns, then try to complete the mission. After completing the mission, try playing it again with new terrain, or the enemy set up in different positions and also experiment with different US vehicles.

Finally, see the end of the chapter for some instructions on adding an enemy tank or two to the mix.

Studying the terrain, I think our first priority will be to knock out the Panzerschreck, then we can hopefully pin down the AT guns with firepower from our Shermans on Row 2, as our two infantry units make their way into the forest to finish them off and secure the objective.

Turn 1

FRIENDLY HIGHER HQ EVENT PHASE

This is always skipped on Turn 1. Besides there are no events in this mission

FRIENDLY COMMAND PHASE

Activation Segment

BN HQ Impulse

BN HQ Activates the CO HQ. CO HQ command counter is flipped to its Command Available side.

CO HQ Impulse

CO HQ has been Activated so draws for commands. We get five. The command marker is moved to the five box on the command track.

We spend two command points:

1. Activate 1st PLT HQ (visual verbal communication)
2. Activate Tank HQ (over the BN TAC Net with the SCR300)

Note: In WWII, vehicles use the BN TAC Network to communicate with your company. The tanks in the platoon can also communicate with each other on their own vehicle network; see rulebook 10.1.1.

We decide to save three command points, so flip the Command marker to its Activations Complete side and slide it down into the the Saved zone.

PLT HQ/Staff Impulse

1st PLT HQ has been Activated so draws for commands. We get six. The command marker is moved to the six box on the command track.

We spend all six command points:

1. 1/LMG is ordered to Move to the Village (Column 3)
   Immediately the Panzerschreck team on the hill opens fire. A PDF and Small Arms VOF is placed on the village.
   1/LMG is marked Exposed.
2. 1st PLT HQ Attempts to Infiltrate to the Village. Two cards are drawn for the attempt. It is successful! 1st PLT HQ moves without being marked Exposed.
3. 1/LMG is now in visual/verbal communication again, so is ordered to seek cover. Four cards are drawn for the attempt—it is successful. 1/LMG is placed in a Strong Building (as per the mission special rules, cover discovered in villages is always a Strong Building).
4. 1st PLT HQ Moves into the Strong Building and is marked Exposed.
5. 1/LMG is ordered to Attempt to Spot the Panzerschreck - one card is drawn (Base 2 cards, -1 card as Panzerschreck is under cover). The attempt fails.
6. 1st PLT HQ uses Exhort to make 1/LMG try again. Another card is drawn. The attempt fails again.

1st PLT HQ has no more Command Points. Its Command marker is flipped to its Activation Completed side and moved into the Saved Commands zone.

Tank HQ was also Activated so draws for Commands. We get five. The Command marker is moved to the five box. Tank HQ spends four commands:

1. Activate Sherman 12 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement
2. Activate Sherman 13 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement
3. Activate Sherman 14 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement
4. Activate Sherman 15 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement

One command point is saved, the Command marker is flipped over and slid down into the saved zone.

> **Note:** During the COMMAND PHASE, there are a limited selection of actions available to vehicles such as Shift Fire, Cease Fire and so on. The most common one you'll use is Activate for AT Combat and Vehicle Movement. This allows vehicles and AT-capable infantry units to take actions in the **AT COMBAT & VEHICLE MOVEMENT PHASE**. See rulebook 10.1.2.

Initiative Segment

All three HQs were Activated, so the **CO HQ Initiative Impulse** and **PLT HQ Initiative Impulse** are skipped. There are no Staff in this mission, so the **Staff Impulse** is skipped too.

General Initiative Impulse

We draw four points for General Initiative. Halved makes two. We spend both of them:

1. 1/LMG attempts to spot the German Panzerschreck. They draw one card, it's a success! 1/LMG immediately opens fire on the Panzerschreck's card. The PDF in between the cards is flipped to its double sided arrow and an Automatic Weapons VOF is placed on the Hill. Activity level increases to Engaged.
2. 1/1 squad moves forwards into the Orchard. They are marked Exposed. 1/1 automatically open fire on the spotted Panzerschreck unit. A PDF is placed and a Crossfire VOF modifier is placed on the Hill.

ENEMY ACTIVITY PHASE

Since there are no enemy events in this mission, the Enemy Higher HQ Event Segment is skipped (and since this is Turn 1, it would be skipped anyway).

Enemy Activity Check Segment

The three AT Guns on Row 3 have no LOS to any US units, and by special rule they will not be removed should the Activity Hierarchy indicate so. This leaves no possible actions for them to perform. All three guns Activate in preparation for AT Combat (as per the mission special rules).

The Panzerschreck team are under fire from a different direction to their own PDF, and draw a 1, indicating No Action on the enemy activity hierarchy chart. They Activate for AT combat (which they would do in addition to any action drawn on the Activity chart).

Under fire from a different direction to its own PDF			
1/5	1/5	1/4	No Action
2/5	2/5	2/4	Grenade Attack (or Concentrate Fire)
3/5	3-4/5	3-4/4	Shift PDF to direction of incoming fire
4-5/5	5/5	NA	Fall Back

MUTUAL CAPTURE & RETREAT PHASE

This Phase is skipped as no-one is in a position to be captured or retreat.

AT COMBAT & VEHICLE MOVEMENT PHASE

All units that have been Activated for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement take actions in this phase. In addition, all AT-capable units, whether Activated or not, can Reaction Fire in response to vehicles moving in their LOS. This is optional, but the enemy always Reaction Fires when given the opportunity.

> **Note:** Consult the Vehicle and Anti-Tank Weapons Chart to see if a unit is AT-capable. All units listed on this chart that have figures in the Range columns (including zero) are considered "AT-capable".

Beginning with the attacking side (in this case the US), one unit takes actions, then a unit on the opposing side takes actions (select which enemy unit takes action randomly). Play alternates between sides until all activated units have completed their actions.

Some missions will dictate an order that vehicles and AT-capable infantry of specific types must be selected for actions (e.g., all tanks on both sides must take their turn before any trucks etc). It does not apply in this exercise though.

Unit 1: The player selects M4 Sherman 15

From the list of possible vehicle actions (rulebook 10.5.2) we select Move. With a single action, a vehicle can move between any number of terrain cards, however they cannot enter terrain marked "NO" for trafficability and must stop when they enter a box marked "SLOW". The following sequence applies:

- Declare a unit is going to Move
- Resolve any Basic VOF affecting the unit on its current card
- Move to an adjacent card (marking any passengers Exposed)
- Resolve any Basic VOF affecting the unit on this new card
- Carry out Reaction Fire AT attacks from opposing units in LOS
- Repeat as necessary to move to further cards

We move Sherman 15 into the village straight ahead. It immediately opens fire on the spotted Panzerschreck, so we replace the Automatic VOF on the Hill with a Heavy Weapons VOF.

> **Note:** Vehicles engage infantry targets (including AT Guns) with their Basic VOF in the same way as any other unit, and engage Vehicle Targets with AT Fire.

Because this card has a Basic VOF on it from the Panzerschreck team's small arms fire, we resolve an attack on the vehicle immediately. We carry out the attack on the Sherman with the following modifiers (beginning with a base of zero):

> Basic Small Arms VOF: +3
> Moving Target: +1
> Terrain cover: +3
> Sherman Defensive Value: +0
> AT Value on an Action card drawn from the deck: +7
> **The total is +14:** a result of Missed.

> **Note:** With the village terrain modifier of +3, it is impossible for Small Arms fire to affect an M4 Sherman Tank here unless it's already Pinned (–1 bonus) and stationary (no Moving Target penalty).

Next we carry out **Reaction Fire**. The Panzershreck team fires a rocket at our tank. To attack a vehicle, G!-rated units (such as rocket launchers) must first draw a successful Grenade Attack. We draw two cards and look for the Grenade icon—it's a success! Next we carry out the attack according to the AT Combat sequence (10.6). We look up the Gunnery Value of the Panzerschreck at Close range and resolve the attack:

> Gunnery Value: –2 (as per the Anti-Tank Weapons chart)
> Moving Target: +1
> Terrain cover: +3
> Sherman Defensive Value: +0
> Anti-Tank Ambush Modifier: +0
> Random card from the deck: +0
> **The total is +2:** a result of Retreat. The Sherman is damaged and immediately retreats from the battlefield. It is removed from play.

> **Note:** Tanks without infantry support are extremely vulnerable to ambush from rocket launchers like the Panzerschreck, and AT Guns. In this case the presence of our LMG team (as a good order infantry unit) prevented an ambush from occurring. Even so, as shown here, one lucky hit can knock out a valuable tank.

The Panzerschreck uses up one rocket ammo and is marked Moved/Fired (it may no longer Reaction Fire or take a regular AT fire turn). The Heavy Weapons VOF on the Hill is replaced with an Automatic Weapons VOF.

Unit 2: There are no units in LOS of the German AT Guns, and the Panzerschreck is already marked Moved/Fired, so there are no German units that can take actions.

Unit 3: The player selects M4 Sherman 14
- The Sherman moves straight forwards into the Village and opens fire automatically on the Spotted Panzerschreck. Automatic Weapons VOF is replaced with Heavy Weapons VOF.
- As established earlier, Small Arms cannot affect the Sherman in the village so we don't need to make a VOF resolution check.
- There are no enemy units capable of Reaction Fire in LOS (since the Panzerschreck is marked Moved/Fired).

Unit 4: The player decides not to take any actions with his remaining two Activated tanks.

The final stage of the **AT COMBAT & VEHICLES PHASE** is to resolve any VOF on vehicles that took no actions that turn. There are none of those so the phase is over.

MUTUAL COMBAT PHASE

The first three Segments are skipped as there are no Fire Missions, Pinned units or Potential Contact markers to deal with.

Combat Effects Segment

The Panzerschreck on the Hill has an NCM of +0, we draw an Action Card with a result of PIN. A Pinned marker is placed on the Panzerschreck team.

1/LMG and 1st PLT HQ in the Village have an NCM of +4. We draw a PIN result for 1/LMG and a MISS for 1st PLT HQ.

Ammo is reduced by one for 1/LMG and Sherman 15.
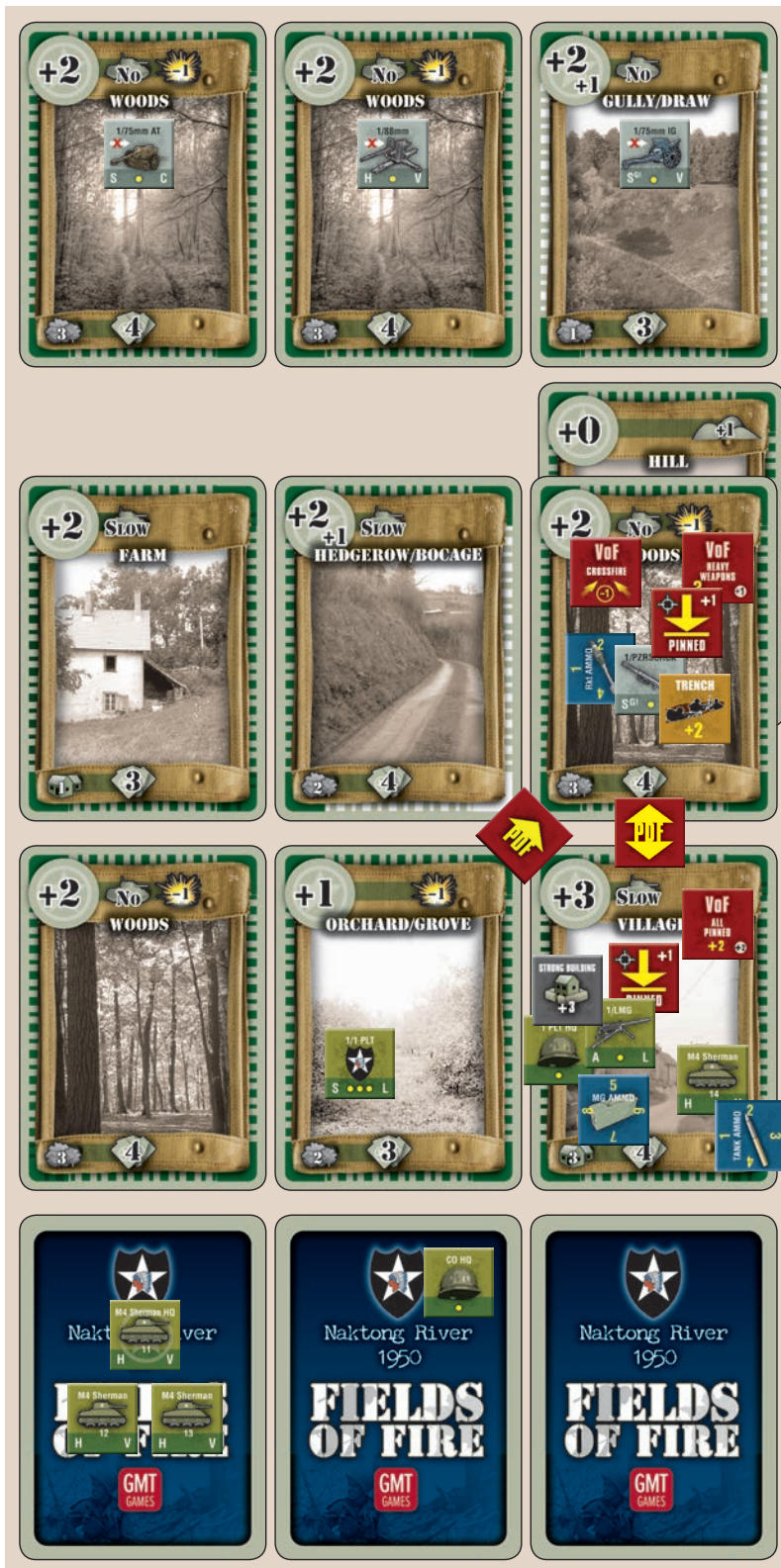
With 1/LMG pinned, our Sherman tank is now vulnerable to Anti-Tank Ambush penalties. The Panzerschreck is Pinned, but it may potentially Rally before the next round of AT Combat, so this is a precarious situation and we're already one tank down.

Note: So long as it is possible, all the German AT Guns will Activate for AT Combat during the Enemy Activity Phase, including after a successful Attempt to remove a Pinned marker.

Turn 2

The Friendly Higher HQ Event draw is skipped as per the mission special rules.

FRIENDLY COMMAND PHASE

Activation Segment

BN HQ Impulse

BN HQ Activates the CO HQ. CO HQ command counter is flipped to its Command Available side.

CO HQ Impulse

CO HQ has been Activated so draws for commands. We get four. Added to three saved from last turn makes seven. The command marker is moved to the seven box on the command track.

We spend two command points:

1. Activate 1st PLT HQ (using the EE8 Field Phone)
2. Activate Tank HQ (over the BN TAC Net with the SCR300)

Note: So long as the line remains intact, Field Phones are more reliable than the SCR536 radios, so units under cover can use them. The phone asset carried by 1st PLT HQ is also treated like a phone line so it is connected to the adjacent CO HQ; see rulebook 4.3.4.

We save the remaining command points, so flip the Command marker to its Activation Completed side and slide it into the Saved Zone of the five box on the Command Track.

PLT HQ/Staff Impulse

1st PLT HQ has been Activated so draws for commands. We get six. The command marker is moved to the six box on the command track.

We spend five command points:

1. We attempt to Rally 1/LMG. Two cards are drawn for the attempt, but we fail.
2. We exhort 1/LMG and draw another card. But the Rally fails again.
3. 1st PLT HQ moves to the Orchard and is marked Exposed.

CLEAN UP PHASE

Moved/Fired and Activated markers are removed, Exposed markers are removed. The VOF on the village is replaced with an All Pinned VOF.

4. We order 1/1 to move to the Farm House on Row 2. It moves and is marked Exposed. Immediately the AT Guns on Row 3, Columns 1 and 2 open fire on the Farm. PDF markers, a Heavy Weapons VOF and a Crossfire VOF Modifier are placed. 1/1 returns fire against the AT guns as they are already spotted. With two targets in sight, we refer to the target priorities table in 6.1.1. Friendly units (meaning those controlled by the player) will prioritise the units with the best VOF. In this case the 88mm. We place a Small Arms VOF on the Forest in Column 2 and flip the PDF between the farm and forest to its double arrow side.

5. 1st PLT HQ attempt to seek cover in the Orchard. We draw three cards for the attempt and it is successful. We place a Basic +1 Cover marker on 1st PLT HQ.

We save the remaining point flip 1st PLT HQ's Command marker is flipped to its Activation Complete side in the one box on the Command Track and slide it into the Saved Zone.

Tank HQ was also Activated so draws for Commands. We get four. Added to one saved from the last turn makes five. The Command marker is moved to the five box. Tank HQ spends four commands:

1. Activate Sherman 12 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement
2. Activate Sherman 13 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement
3. Activate Sherman 14 for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement
4. Activate itself for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement

One command point is saved, the Command marker is flipped over.

Note: Except in certain campaign specific circumstances, vehicle platoons are always in contact with each other over their own radio network.

Initiative Segment

All three HQs were Activated, so the **CO HQ Initiative Impulse** and **PLT HQ Initiative Impulse** are skipped. There are no Staff in this mission, so the **Staff Initiative Impulse** is skipped too.

General Initiative Impulse

We draw four points for General Initiative. Halved makes two. We spend both points:

1. 1/1 attempts to seek cover. We draw three cards and are successful. They are placed under a Strong Building.
2. 1/1 attempts to Concentrate Fire on the 88mm AT Gun. We draw two cards for the attempt but fail.

Enemy Activity Phase

There are three enemy units who could take actions this turn (the 75mm Infantry Gun in Column 3 has no LOS to any US units, and since they will ignore the result on the enemy hierarchy chart as per the mission special rules, there is no need to check them). We select each enemy unit randomly.

Unit 1: 88mm AT Gun

On the Enemy Activity Hierarchy, the first situation that applies is "Under fire but not under cover". With deliberate tactics, there are two possible actions. However since an AT Gun is Immobile (as indicated on the Vehicle & Anti-Tank Weapons chart, and also by the Immobile marker on its counter), the only option is for it to attempt to Concentrate Fire.

We draw two cards for the attempt, but neither come up with the Crosshairs icon, so the attempt is failed.

Unit 2: 1/75mm AT Gun

In this case the first applicable situation is "Not under fire but has valid target along PDF".

We draw two cards for an attempt to concentrate fire, and again no crosshairs icon appeared. We've been lucky this time!

Unit 3: Pinned Panzerschreck Team

We consult the LAT/Pinned Hierarchy. The first applicable situation is "Pinned under cover". We draw a 4, which indicates "Fall Back".

The Panzershreck Team prioritise a card out of LOS of US units first, so fall back along Column 3, and are marked Exposed. We remove the All Pinned VOF from Row 1, Column 3 and flip the PDF between the Village and the Hill to its single arrow side.

Note: Although the Panzerschreck has ceased firing in order to move away, our units don't know this yet and continue to fire at the hill.

Mutual Capture & Retreat Phase

No-one is eligible to retreat or be captured yet so we skip this whole phase.

AT Combat & Vehicles Phase

We choose M4 Sherman 14 and decide that they will Move.

First we move them left into the Orchard, there is no VOF to resolve on the starting or destination card, and no enemy AT-capable units are in LOS so there is no Reaction Fire. Then we move the Sherman again, up to the Farm where 1/1 squad is located. They automatically open fire on the 88mm AT Gun (being the enemy in LOS with the strongest VOF).

Note: You can continue moving from card to card with a single Move action until you reach one with a "SLOW" trafficability label. Remember to carry out Basic VOF resolution and Reaction Fire on every card you move through.

Basic VOF Resolution

This card is being fired upon by the 88mm AT Gun (with an H VOF) and by the 75mm AT Gun crew with Small Arms.

The Heavy Weapons VOF is not resolved against the Sherman as it is coming from an AT-capable unit (see rulebook 10.5.3).

The Small Arms fire is also not resolved as it is not capable of affecting the Sherman right now.

Note: In the next turn there will be no +1 Moving Target bonus, so there will be a small chance of a Pin result from Small Arms fire. You might find it useful to place a Small Arms VOF on the Sherman to remind yourself that it's there.

Reaction Fire

The two AT Guns are capable of Reaction Fire. Since the results of one fire may affect what the other AT Gun does, we select which one to resolve first randomly. It's the 88mm.

We reduce the 88mm ammo by one and carry out AT Combat Fire as follows:

> Gunnery Value (close range): –5
> Sherman Defence: +0
> Moving Target: +1
> Terrain: +2
> Anti-Tank Ambush: 0
> Card from Action deck: +2
> **Result:** +0 - Knocked Out!

We replace the M4 Sherman tank with a Wreck counter.

Checking the Vehicles and Anti-Tank Weapons chart, we note that there were 2 crew on board. They are both placed under the Wreck marker as a Fire Team, then immediately Hit. We draw and check the Green column of the Hit Effect table, the first is an L so we replace the fire team with a Litter Team and mark it Pinned. The second step becomes a casualty.

Checking the Vehicles chart, we note that the 88mm Gun is Quick Shot capable. A result of +0 means it can continue firing. Right now there are no targets in LOS, so the 88mm AT Gun's turn ends, however we do not mark it Moved/Fired.

Note: Successful Quick Shot results (a result of –4, –2, 0, +2 or +4) could allow an AT Gun to Reaction Fire several times in a single Vehicle Phase while ammo lasts.

It's the enemy's turn to pick a unit, the AT Guns have no-one in sight, so cannot carry out any actions right now.

We select Sherman 12. Move it through the Orchard where it draws no Reaction fire, and on to the Farm (placing a Heavy Weapons VOF on the German 88mm). Checking for Reaction Fire we see that both the 75mm AT Gun and the 88mm (thanks to its Quick Shot capability) are eligible.

We choose randomly, the 75mm AT Gun goes first. At close range it has a gunnery value of –3. We get a result of Missed after drawing a 7 for our random

card, so there is no effect. 75mm ammo is reduced by 1 and it is marked Moved/Fired.

Now the 88mm takes a shot. Its Close range gunnery value is –5. This time we draw a 9 for another miss. The result does not allow a further Quick Shot, so we mark the 88mm Moved/Fired and reduce its ammo by 1.

Finally we move Sherman 13 and the HQ up to Row 2 Orchard.
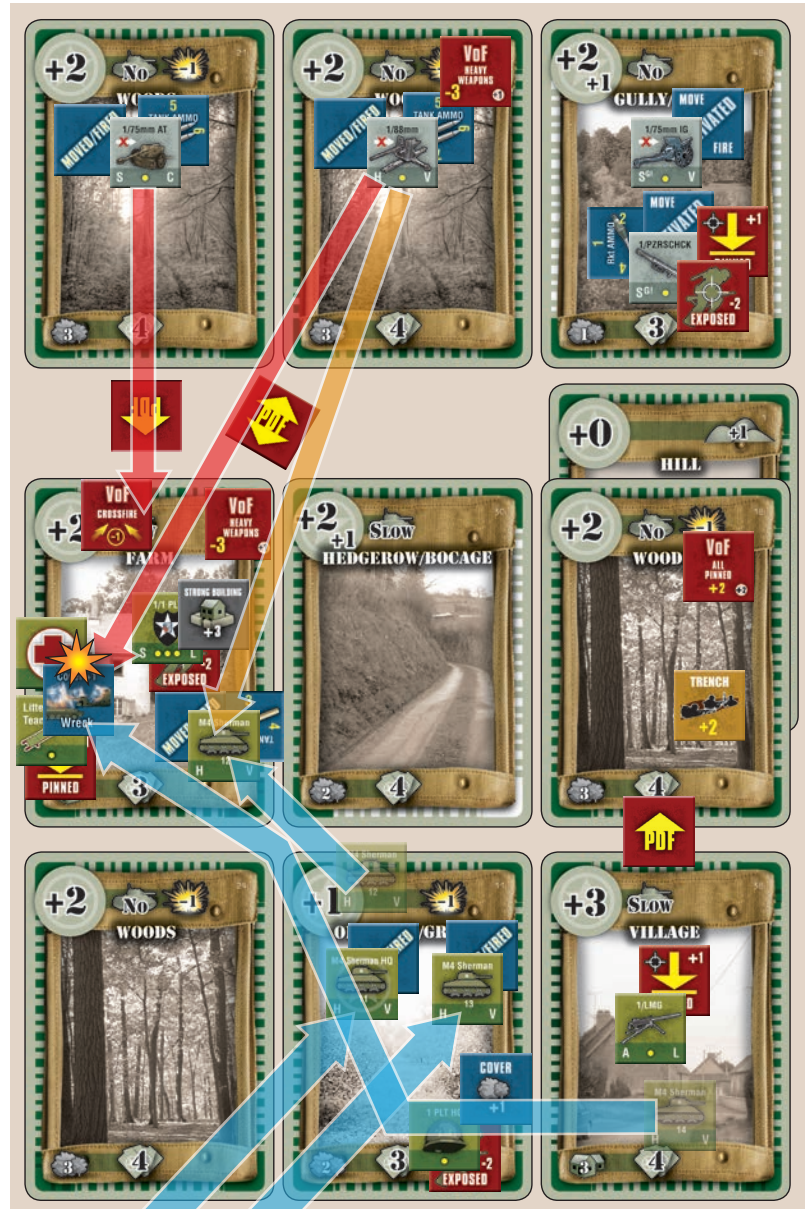
Mutual Combat Phase

There are no Fire Missions or Potential Contacts to resolve.

Pinned Recovery Segment

1/LMG is no longer under a VOF, so we remove its Pinned marker. The All Pinned VOF on the Hill is replaced with an Automatic Weapons VOF.

The German Panzerschreck is also not under a VOF, so its Pinned marker is removed.

Combat Effects Segment

German 88mm is Hit with an A result. It is reduced by one step and marked Pinned. A pinned Assault Team is placed on its card. It uses one more ammo (for the Heavy Weapons VOF it is firing at the infantry in the Farm)..

US Litter Team is Missed

1/1 squad is Pinned

M4 Sherman uses one ammo

1/LMG uses one ammo

CLEAN UP PHASE

Exposed markers, Moved/Fired markers and Activated markers are removed.

VOF on the Farm is reduced to Small Arms.

We'll leave the example there. The 88mm Gun is reduced and pinned which will help.

Tanks can be powerful, but can also be knocked out very quickly by AT Guns, especially if they don't have infantry support.

Mission 2: Tank Attack

Now try hitting a moving target!

For this exercise, place PC A markers on each card on Row 1. For each Contact revealed, place a Spotted M5 tank with 5 ammo under enemy control on a random card on Row 3, or on the left or right card of Row 2 if Row 3 is inaccessible to vehicles (trafficability "NO").

Note: During WWII the Germans captured numerous M4 Sherman tanks and put them to use, so to face US-made tanks in battle would not be unreasonable. In this case we're safely training in the Welsh valleys far from the front, and have plenty of mini-tanks to spare. If you own any *Fields of Fire* expansion sets with German vehicles, feel free to exchange the M5 for one of them.

Enemy tanks are activated for AT Combat & Vehicle Movement every turn. They do not draw on the Enemy Activity chart for an Action (but will shift fire along with other units on their card as usual). In each AT Combat & Vehicles Phase they will take one of the available Vehicle Actions (Move, Move & Fire, AT Fire) in order to achieve a list of priorities that differ from mission to mission. They Reaction Fire when given the opportunity in the same way as AT Guns.

Tank Attack Training Course Enemy Tank Priorities

1. AT Fire against any US tank in LOS (random if multiple targets are available).
2. Move towards the nearest card containing a US HQ taking a route that avoids as much Reaction fire and Basic VOF as possible. (Includes PLT HQs, CO HQ and Tank HQ.)
3. Concentrate Fire on an AT-capable unit under its VOF

Note: As a unit with an A VOF rating, the M5 will open fire on any US infantry targets with its Automatic Weapons VOF, choosing a new target card each time it moves according to the priorities in 6.1.1. It can carry out AT Fire after a successful Grenade Attack draw (as indicated by its G! Superscript VOF rating). In order to satisfy priority 1, it will stop moving to AT Fire on a US tank should the opportunity present itself.

Vehicle Action Order

Some missions will dictate an order that Vehicles take their actions in. All Vehicles of one group on both sides will take their actions before moving on to the next group. In this exercise the following order will be used:

1. Vehicles
2. AT Guns
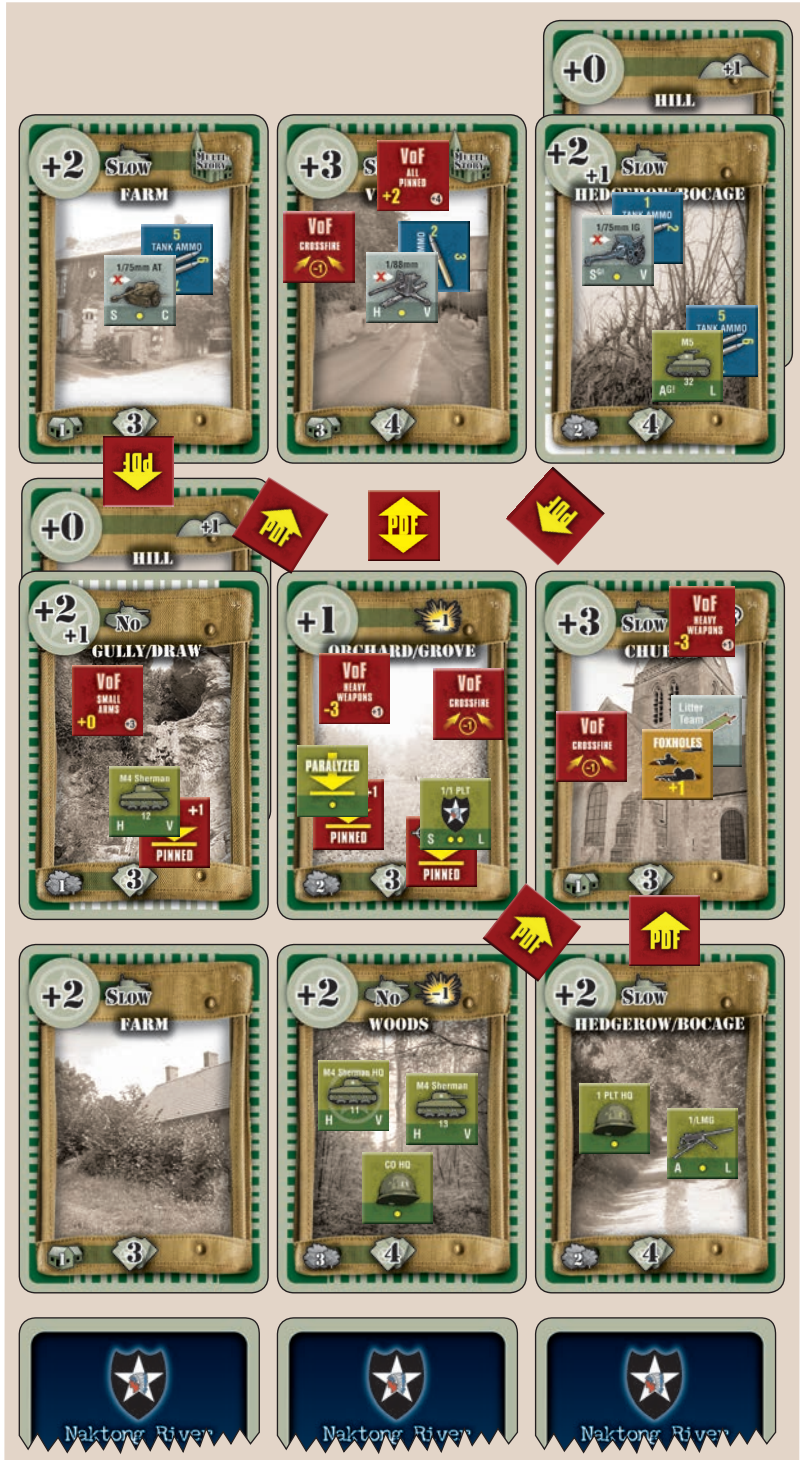
Note: If an order is dictated, usually combat vehicles will get to take actions before transportation vehicles like Jeeps and trucks. AT Guns will generally go last. The most common role for the AT Gun is to Reaction Fire against any vehicles moving through their LOS. Quick Shot capable AT Guns may be able to Reaction Fire several times in a turn by making successful Quick Shot draws, so can be quite deadly while their ammo lasts.

AT Combat - Tank vs Tank example

This is the situation after a couple of turns. We've taken out the Panzershreck already (it's now a Litter Team), but an M5 under German control has just turned up on the top-right card. All AT-capable units on both sides are Activated.

MUTUAL AT COMBAT & VEHICLE PHASE

As the player is on the attacking side, we get to go first. The situation is not great, if we want to get anything done here quickly, we're going to have to drive into a wall of fire.

We'll start with Sherman 12. They are Pinned which for a vehicle indicates that the crew have closed all their hatches (known as 'buttoned up'.) They can carry out all their actions without restriction but have various disadvantages in combat. Sherman 12 also has no infantry support so they may not last long. We decide to do the last thing the enemy is expecting and charge the 88mm AT Gun in the Village.

First we declare Sherman 12 is going to Move, and resolve the Small Arms VOF on its card. The Net Anti-Tank Modifier is +2 (+3 Small Arms, +0 Defensive, –0 Terrain, –1 Pinned). We draw a card which gives an AT result of 6 for a total of +8—Missed. So far so good.

Sherman 12 moves into the Village. We ignore the All Pinned VOF as it's not capable of harming the Sherman.

All three AT Guns and the M5 tank are eligible for Reaction Fire so we draw randomly between them—the 75mm AT Gun will go first. They have a Net Anti-Tank Modifier of –5 (-3 Gunnery at Close Range, +0 Defensive, +2 Terrain, +1 Moving Target, –1 Pinned, –4 Tank Ambush on Pinned target). We draw a card and get a 2. The total is –3, a result of Brewed Up. The Sherman explodes into flames. Two casualty steps representing the crew are placed on the card. Smoke from the burning Sherman prevents the 88mm from firing out of its card, so we replace its VOF marker in the Orchard with Small Arms (from the crew of the 75mm Infantry Gun) and remove the Crossfire marker. The 75mm AT Gun uses one ammo and is marked Moved/Fired.

Next the enemy takes a turn. Because of the Vehicle Action Order imposed in this mission, only the M5 is eligible to take an action.

The enemy tank's first priority is to AT Fire on a US tank in LOS but right now it can't see us, so it won't do this. Its next priority is to move towards one of our HQs. All three of our HQ units (CO HQ, 1st PLT HQ and Tank HQ) are at the same distance and both available routes (through the church or through the orchard) will be subject to Reaction fire from our Shermans, so we draw between the two randomly—the result is the Orchard.

There is no VOF on its current card so it moves straight to the Orchard. Our pinned units there shift fire on to it as it enters the card. We can now Reaction Fire at it, and pick our Tank HQ to do so.

The Net Anti-Tank modifier is +1 (Gunnery at Short range +0, M5 Defensive Value –1, Cover +1, Moving Target +1,). We draw an Action card, its a Zero making the total +1—a result of Knocked Out. Great! We draw for a hit on the M5's crew step, a result of L places a Pinned German Litter Team hidden under the wreckage of their tank. Our Sherman HQ is marked Moved/Fired and its ammo is reduced from 3 to 2.

Next we'll try to close with the 75mm Infantry Gun in the Bocage. Sherman 14 will take a Move action. First they move to the Church; there is no VOF on their current card, but they will be accidentally hit by our LMG as they move into the church terrain. That's not a problem, as the Anti-Tank Combat modifier would be at least +6, no effect (Automatic Weapons VOF +2, Terrain +3, Moving Target +1, Defensive +0).

The 75mm Infantry Gun Reaction Fires as a response to our first move. First we draw three cards for a Grenade Attack (base of two, plus one for a Tank Ambush bonus), it's a success. Next we calculate the AT Fire. The Net Anti-tank modifier is 0 (Gunnery at Short range –1, Defensive +0, Terrain +3, Moving Target +1, Tank Ambush –3). We draw an Action card and get an AT result of 8—Missed. The 75mm Infantry Gun ammo is marked Moved/Fired and its ammo is reduced by one. It's now out of ammo so we flip it to its Fire Team side. Next turn, the crew will fall back as per the Out of Ammo rules for enemy units, so we won't need to worry about them for much longer (8.11.1).

Finally the German 88mm gets to take a turn, but with the smoke from our burning Sherman blocking its LOS, it can't fire at any of our units.

+0 HILL **+1**

+2 SLOW FARM
MOVED/FIRED **3** **4**
1/75mm AT ✗ **V1**
S • C
1 **3**

+3 SLOW VILLAGE
AMMO **2** **3**
1/88mm ✗
H • V
Smoke +2
Burning Wreck
3 **4**

+2 SLOW HEDGEROW/BOCAGE **+1**
1/75mm IG
Fire Team
S • C
2 **4**

10d ⬇

10d ⬇

+0 HILL **+1**

+2 NO GULLY/DRAW **+1**
VoF SMALL ARMS **+0** •3
1 **3**

+1 ORCHARD/G...
VoF ALL PINNED **+2** •4
Litter Team
Cover **+1** PINNED
PARALYZED **+1**
PINNED
Wreck
1/1 PLT
S •• L
PINNED
VoF SMALL ARMS **+0** •3
3

+2 SLOW ...URC...
VoF CROSSFIRE **-1**
VoF HEAVY WEAPONS **-3** •1
Litter Team
FOXHOLES **+1**
MOVED/FIRED
M4 Sherman **13**
H • V
VoF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS **-1** •2
1

PDF ⬇

PDF ⬆

+2 SLOW FARM
1 **3**

+2 NO WOODS **-1**
TANK AMMO **1** **2**
M4 Sherman HQ **11**
MOVED/FIRED
H • V
CO HQ
3 **4**

+2 SLOW HEDGEROW/BOCAGE
1 PLT HQ
1/LMG
A • L
2 **4**

Naktong River

Naktong River

Naktong River

And that's the end of the Vehicles Phase. Later in the Combat Effects Phase VOF will be resolved against the German Litter teams, and in Clean Up the enemy 75mm AT Gun will shift fire to put our pinned units in the orchard under more pressure. The burning Sherman tank will remain until the end of the mission, effectively neutralising the 88mm unless any of our units are brave enough to close to point blank range with it.

Vehicle combat in *Fields of Fire* is often over in a turn or two as tanks try to out manoeuvre one another, AT guns reaction fire at their every action, and both sides burn through their ammo with capabilities like Quick Shot.

Defensive Setup

Defensive Missions

Up until now this guide has covered the basics of handling your troops in an attack on enemy positions. A Defensive mission plays out quite differently, with the enemy assaulting your units and trying to break through your lines. The tactical focus will be on setting up a strong defensive line, adapting to changing circumstances and ensuring that there is a good rotation of fresh units being sent to the front line as LATs fall back.

The sequence of play for defensive missions is slightly different to that of offensive missions and combat patrols; the enemy will take their actions before you, which will give you a chance to react. In addition, new PC markers are placed on every turn.

For this example we will work through the set up and opening of Naktong River Campaign, Mission 4; a daylight defensive mission.

1.0 Check the Campaign instructions

1.1 Experience Points

First we take a look at the experience points table. This indicates what is expected of us, beyond the straightforward Mission objective (Secure 6 of 12 cards behind the Main Line of Resistance). The more Secured cards we have by the end of the mission, the better. So we'll try to hold on to both rows for as long as possible. We also get points for destroying tanks (which it's usually a good idea to try to do anyway), and also trucks. The more trucks that make it through our lines, the more trouble they will cause for companies elsewhere to our rear. We also get points for capturing enemy casualties, which is not always easy in a defensive mission, but we can possibly make some daring raids across the MLR to capture prisoners to gain these points.

As usual, none of these are strictly speaking necessary to complete the mission, but they should be taken as a guide to what you should be aiming for.

1.2 Organizing the Company

Fill out the Mission Log

First we check the Table of Organization & Equipment (TO&E) to see which units make up the core of our company. These are our core units; three rifle platoons made up of three rifle squads, an MG team and a bazooka team each, a weapons platoon made up of three 60mm Mortars (represented by one 3-step unit) and three 57mm RCLs, and finally a head-

quarters platoon represented by our HQs (CO HQ, CO XO and 1st Sgt) and two runners which we place on the CO HQ assets box on the Command Display.

As noted in the Table of Organization & Equipment, each of the units in the weapons

platoon can be attached to one of our rifle platoons (or left unattached).

We also receive some additional attachment units specific for this mission. A Mortar FO, Artillery FO, two .30 cal HMG teams, one .50 cal HMG team and two 75mm RCL teams.

We decide to attach our three 57mm RCLs to each of our rifle platoons, and the mortar section to 3rd platoon. Looking at the additional attachments, we'll attach the Arty FO to 1st platoon and the Mtr FO to 2nd platoon and a 75mm RCL each to 1st and 2nd platoons. We leave the three HMG teams unattached (they can be given orders from the CO HQ and CO Staff).

Assign Assets

From the list of assets we assign the following:

6 EE8 Field Phones - CO HQ, CO XO, 1st, 2nd, 3rd PLT HQs and the Mortar Section.

4 HC Smoke - One for the 1st squad in each rifle platoon, one for the 1st Sgt.

4 WP Smoke - One for the 3rd squad in each rifle platoon, one for the 1st Sgt.

Red and Green Star Parachutes for the CO HQ.

Red Star Cluster for CO XO.

Purple smoke for 1st Sgt.

We decide that no more pyrotechnics will be needed, and that the Jeep will be of little use, so it'll be left behind. We place all of the assets on the command display, plus the two runners and CO HQ's BN TAC radio. Assets can be placed under the units themselves on the map if you prefer, but the Command Display is helpful for reducing clutter.

The Parachute Flares which CO HQ is assigned will be used to trigger Final Protective Lines (FPL) and Final Protective Fire (FPF). The XOs Red Star Cluster will trigger a general Cease Fire order, purple smoke will be used in an emergency by 1st Sgt to make anyone nearby Move to his position. We note the designations on our log sheet.

In your first few missions, it can be hard to judge what pyrotechnics you need to assign. Don't feel that you have to use any of them. Chances are they won't be used unless a very specific situation occurs in your game. It's highly recommended that CO HQ has some flares to trigger the FPL in defensive missions though.

The complete list of orders you can assign to pyrotechnics can be found in 4.3.6.

1.3 Setting Up the Map

We set up the map as described in the mission instructions. We place a Main Line of Resistance (MLR) marker between Rows 2 and 3. According to the campaign rules, we can place a Casualty Collection Point on any face up card, or in the Staging Area. The Staging area seems like a good place for it, we place it on Column 4. During the mission we'll try to funnel our casualties back here.

Map at setup—and considerations on potential FPL placement.

1.4 Our Company Positions

Now comes the most important part of the defensive mission; where to set up our units. This requires a little more consideration than an offensive mission or combat patrol. We'll divide the process into a few steps to show how one might consider placement.

 Final Protective Lines (FPL): The first thing we will do is think about our Final Protective Lines—pre-agreed emergency firing zones to try to stop us being overrun. Any tripod mounted machine gun (indicated by an Arrow over the VOF rating) can be designated for FPL by placing one of the two FPL markers on it. Unlike other units, these guns do not fire at enemies automatically, they wait for a signal from CO HQ before exerting an H VOF (regardless of the actual rating of the machine gun) in the direction of the diagonal arrow indicated on the FPL marker (ignoring any other PDF from their card).

This can be a great way to slow down an oncoming enemy, especially at night as they are not affected by limited visibility. Looking at the map we've drawn, it seems that the opportunities are somewhat limited by the hilly terrain. We'll set up the FPL guns (our two .30 cal HMGs) on Row 1 as shown in the illustration. They will be used if we're forced to fall back. And if it seems like we're well in control of things towards the end we can always repurpose them as regular guns (a Shift Fire order will have them open fire along the regular PDF from their card and remove their FPL marker). Rules on using FPL can be found in 7.2.4.

Another option might be to keep them aimed at one of the hills on Row 3 or 4 in the expectation that the enemy will appear there. But that would have them fire over the heads of any enemies in between, making them less effective as the enemy advances.

Fortifications: The mission instructions inform us that we get two Foxholes per US occupied card. The mission objective is to have 6 cards Secured (cleared and occupied by our units) by the end of the mission. We're going to aim for 12, so we place all our Foxhole counters (24 of them) on the map ready for our units to take position in them. Some missions have Bunkers, or allow you to place buildings on the map, which can be useful for your CO HQ and CO Staff to set up in. In this mission, it's just Foxholes.

AT Weapons: I have my AT-capable units (Bazookas, RCL) up front, as there seems to be an awful lot of enemy vehicles in the package list. AT-capable units can Reaction Fire at vehicles in the AT Combat & Vehicle Movement phase without direct orders from HQs, so all we have to do is ensure they are in position.

Other Unit Positions: We set up 1st Platoon to cover Columns 1+2, 2nd Platoon to cover Columns 5 + 6 and 3rd platoon in the middle to provide support from whichever direction is needed. The Mortar Section is placed on Row 1. They carry an EE8 Field Phone that 3rd PLT HQ can call them on to place indirect fire on any enemies the HQ can see from their position on Row 2. We keep the .50 cal HMG in reserve. 1st Sgt is nearby and can quickly push them to the front line if needed.

 Final Protective Fire (FPF): Mission instructions state that we have Artillery FPF available in this mission. Similar to FPL, this is intended as emergency last-ditch fire from our supporting artillery. We can place an FPF marker anywhere within LOS of an eligible spotter (CO HQ, Arty/Mtr FO). When activated the Field Artillery Battalion will continue to bombard the marked card with its 105mm guns until it runs out of ammo (or is ordered to stop). Another useful way to slow down the oncoming enemy - so long as they head in the direction you expect them to.

We place our FPF marker on the big hill on Row 3, Column 5.

Phone Lines: Since we are using Field Phones, we receive 4 phone lines for use in the mission. As our units and HQs are already in position, we place three phone lines directly on the map in Row 1, Columns 1, 3 and 5. We give the 4th line to 1st Sgt in case we need an extra in an emergency. It is placed on the 1st Sgt Assets box on the command display.

> **Note:** Keep an eye on your phone lines during defensive missions. A lot of artillery will be dropping on your front line, and enemy units will be attempting to infiltrate, both are capable of cutting your phone lines and hampering your command structure (4.3.4). Phone lines are never lost permanently, but be sure to quickly fix any that get cut in this way.

HQs: Our CO HQ and CO XO will begin the mission in the staging area in Column 4 (our designated CCP). They are in communication with our HQs via field phones (all of the cards of the Staging Area are connected by phone lines, and these lines can connect to phones or other lines in Row 1). They will enter the map when needed, but otherwise will be responsible for rallying retreating LATs and sending them back to the front line.

1.5 The Staging Area

Some thought is needed as to how the Staging Area will be utilized in this mission. To a certain extent we need to consider the mission as a whole and the kind of game we want to play. As a safe area which cannot be fired into, it could easily be overused to quickly retreat important units

FPF Marker

Unit Setup. Dotted yellow lines indicate phone connections.

every time things start looking dangerous, or you could even keep the whole company in the Staging Area for several turns triggering no enemy units. Neither of these would lead to a particularly exciting or memorable game. Imagine playing an offensive mission where no enemy units appear; it doesn't make for a fun time.

So when setting up the Defensive mission, you need to forget about "how can I best take advantage of the system" and rather consider "what would make an interesting mission". This is a bit of a mindset shift which can take some getting used to. Just remember that your mission is to defend the MLR. If no-one is on your front line, you're probably not taking your orders seriously.

As a guideline for this mission we're going to impose the following restrictions on how we use the Staging Area (these should not be taken as a set of strict rules, as every defensive mission is different).

1. Besides CO HQ, CO Staff and units transporting casualties, only LATs can move into the staging area.
2. A reserve can be set up in the Staging area, so long as most units are defending the MLR. (Although, after considering the width of the map and our available units, we have opted to place all combat units on the map anyway).

1.6 The Main Line of Resistance

Unlike map boundaries in an offensive mission, the MLR is not a fixed unpassable line. For the most part you are expected to stay behind it (and oncoming enemy forces will generally not give you the breathing space to consider counter attacking). However, the line may shift due to events (there are two in this mission, Flanks are Open and Fall Back), and the MLR may be crossed at any time by Assault Teams (although they cannot advance further than the row adjacent to the MLR). This can be handy for capturing prisoners, slowing down oncoming human waves, placing smoke-screens or illuminating terrain at night. Campaigns may allow more or less flexibility by special rules.

And now we're ready to face the enemy.

Defensive Sequence of Play & Potential Contact

In a defensive mission, there are two main gameplay changes:

- The Sequence of play changes. Enemy units on the map take their turn before Friendly units (on the sequence of play we use 3.2 Defensive Missions Enemy Activity Phase, and not 3.4 Offensive Missions/Combat Patrols Enemy Activity Phase).
- The map begins with no Potential Contact markers. Instead they are placed on the map in every turn.

So let's take a look at how we begin this mission. Our units are all set up, The Game Turn marker is in the Turn 1 box. Activity Level is at No Contact.

Higher HQ events do not begin until Turn 2, so we skip the **FRIENDLY HIGHER HQ EVENT PHASE.**

DEFENSIVE MISSIONS: ENEMY ACTIVITY PHASE

We skip the **Enemy Higher HQ Segment**, since we are still on Turn 1.

Enemy Activity Check Segment

The first thing we do at the start of every Enemy Activity Check Segment in a defensive mission is to place PC markers on the map. We look at the PC Placement Timing chart for the mission:

Attack Timing Table

Row	Turn					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	N/A	A	A	C	B	A
3	B	B	A	A	C	B
2	C	B	B	A	A	C
1	C	C	B	B	A	A

It's Turn 1 which means we're going to place PC C markers on all of the cards in Row 1 and 2 and B PC markers on Row 3. These PC markers will be resolved normally in the Potential Contact Evaluation Segment. We don't have any units who might trigger PC markers on Row 3 at the moment, but potentially we could send assault teams over the line..

Now, that's a lot of PC markers to place every turn, so most of the time we'll simply skip placing the markers on Rows 3 and 4. There is no chance of a US unit being on Row 4 in the PC Evaluation Segment unless an event occurs to shift the line, and we don't intend on having anyone scout over the MLR to Row 3 for a while. If we change our minds, we can always add PC markers later.

After this, we would make Enemy Activity checks for all enemy units on the map, before moving on to the Friendly Command Phase where we can react to the situation.Here at the beginning of Turn 1 there are no enemies on the map, so we move on.

PC markers will be resolved as usual on all US occupied cards in the **Potential Contact Resolution Segment**. Finally in the **CLEAN UP PHASE**, any PC markers that were not triggered are removed.

Afterword

Each defensive mission has its own unique twists. Some are night missions, some begin with you surrounded by the enemy with no Staging Area to fall back to. Many feature enemy vehicles attempting to smash through your lines. It is best to become comfortable with offensive missions before attempting a defensive; you will have a better idea of what the enemy is capable of, how the various rallying actions work and what the capabilities of your units are. The epic 12-turn, 8-column wide Defensives can take a significantly longer time to play than the average offensive mission.

Preparing for an Air Assault

The use of helicopters was a defining feature of the Vietnam War. They introduce a new set of activities for the *Fields of Fire* player to manage. In this example of play we will step through the setup of Vietnam Campaign Mission 1, Operation Ala Moana Part 1. This is a pre-planned air assault mission where the company enters the map via a single Landing Zone (LZ) in 4 waves. The full set of air assault rules can be found in section 11 of the rulebook.

Equipment & Organization

First, let's take a look at the instructions in the Vietnam Mission Book. The Table of Organization & Equipment gives us two options for set up: we can bring along the 81mm Mortar Section, or we can use 4th Platoon instead. We opt to use the 4th platoon set up. As the design note states, this was the more usual set up for most of these missions.

60mm Mortar Team and Mission Attachments

We will assign the mortar team to 4th Platoon, FAC to 1st Platoon, Arty FO to 2nd Platoon and Mtr FO to 3rd Platoon.

Experience Distribution

The Table of Organization & Equipment indicates that we have some flexibility in assigning experience levels to some of our company units.

CO HQ, 2nd PLT HQ, 3rd PLT HQ begin the campaign with an experience level of Green, CO XO and 1st PLT HQ are Line and 1st Sgt is Veteran. Our Attached units all begin at Line.

The remaining units' experience levels are determined by assigning each step an experience rating. Since we are using the 4th Platoon option, the TO&E states that we must assign 7 Veteran Steps, 18 Line Steps and 14 Green steps.

We refer to the Average experience levels table to determine the final experience level of multi-step units after assigning steps. For example, we can see from the 3-step units row on the chart that assigning two Veteran steps and one Line step to a squad results in a Veteran Experience level unit.

After the initial calculation, we do not need to track individual step experience levels.

We distribute our flexible experience steps as follows:

1st Platoon				2nd Platoon		
Unit	Steps	Result		Unit	Steps	Result
1/1	VVL	Veteran		1/2	VVL	Veteran
2/1	LLG	Line		2/2	LLG	Line
3/1	LLG	Line		3/2	GGG	Green
1/W/1	V	Veteran		1/W/2	V	Veteran
2/W/1	L	Line		2/W/2	L	Line

3rd Platoon				4th Platoon		
Unit	Steps	Result		Unit	Steps	Result
1/3	LLG	Line		PLT HQ	L	Line
2/3	GGG	Green		1/4	LL	Line
3/3	GGG	Green		2/4	LL	Line
1/W/3	V	Veteran		Mtr Team.	L	Line
2/W/3	G	Green				

V= Veteran Steps (7) L=Line Steps (18) G=Green Steps (14)

Assigning Assets

The mission instructions list the available assets. We will distribute them amongst our units, placing them on the Command Display. Refer to illustration on following page.

First, we have 10 CO TAC radios to distribute as we like. We'll hand out the first 7 to our HQs and Staff as it's important that they are always in communication. We will also give a radio to one squad in each platoon which will give us some flexibility in moving around the map as we try to Clear the mission objectives.

We decide 2/1, 2/2 and 1/3 are the best choices to assign radios to. Three Line rated squads. The thinking being that the Veteran squads will do just fine on Initiative if they need to strike out alone, and the Green squads are just not reliable enough.

Next, we hand out HC Smoke to 1/1, 1/2, 1/4 and 1st Sgt and WP to 2/1, 2/2, 2/3 and 2/4. CO HQ has a Red Star Parachute and CO XO has a Red Star Cluster. These flares are one-off assets keyed to Cease Fire orders, to be used in an emergency when too many squads are firing at shadows in the jungle to no effect.

Finally, we distribute the colored smoke amongst the CO HQ, PLT HQs and Staff. All of these will be used to mark Landing Zones for our helicopters in case the Primary LZ becomes unusable.

Map Setup

We set up the map as shown in the mission instructions. The center card must be "LZ Capable", this is indicated by a helicopter mark in the bottom right of the card.

If the card drawn isn't LZ capable, we can simply swap it for one of the face-up cards which is. Or discard it and draw new terrain until an LZ capable card turns up.

Next take all of the PC markers (A, B and C markers) and turn them over to their ? side. Pick 24 of them at random and place them on all of the terrain cards except for the LZ.

Our mission instructions inform us that we must clear 12 cards (meaning 12 cards which began with PC markers must have no PC marker and no enemy units at the end of the mission—US units do not have to be present).

A Primary LZ Tactical Control is placed in this center card.

Map at the beginning of Turn 1.

AIR ASSAULT PLANNING CARD
MISSION 1

Loading Plan

Before any air assault mission begins, you will need to plan for how to load the company into the aircraft. Likely the first thing you will notice is that they do not all fit neatly. The Landing Zones (LZs) can only accommodate a few aircraft at a time, and the aircraft themselves have limited capacity. You can detach teams from squads to increase the flexibility of your load, or even leave units or single steps behind altogether. In some missions this may be necessary due to limited transportation capacity.
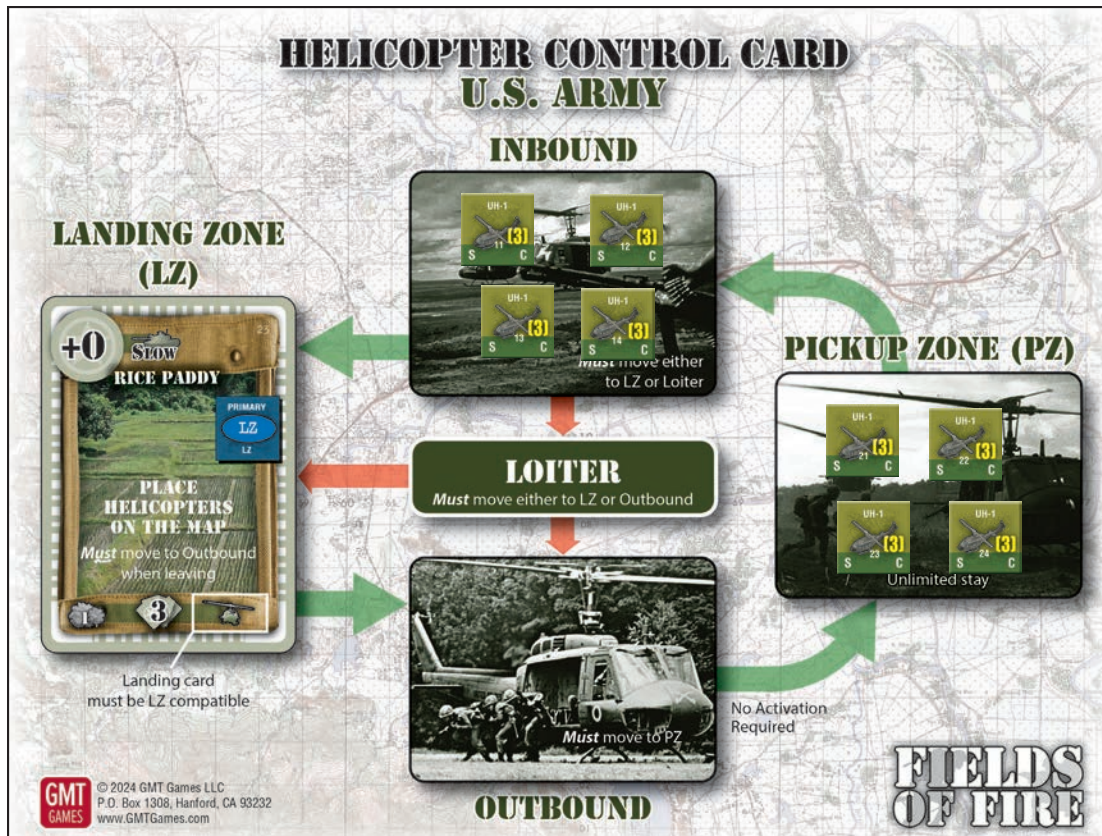
automatically through the staging areas before being placed on the map. We can intervene if the LZ suddenly becomes dangerous by use of the Loiter box (this too is considered part of the assault sequence and also does not require Commands from the CO HQ).

Events during the game may place ammo in the Pick Up Zone. This will have to be moved manually to the map using CO HQ activation orders and colored smoke to mark the LZ as described in chapter 11.

Setup

Since we elected to use 4th Platoon, our company consists of 48 steps (including the three attachments). The total lift capacity available to us is 60 steps (12 x UH-1's with a transport capacity of 3 each and 2 CH-47s with a transport capacity of 12 each) so the entire company can eventually be brought into play.

Using the Mission 1 assault planning chart we divide up the company as shown on the diagram.:

Mission 1 is a cold LZ (no PC marker is placed on the central LZ card) so forces can flow into and out of the LZ uncontested. This plan front loads the company command post with Arty FO and FAC. In a contested LZ a more conservative plan may be more advisable. The detached Assault Teams can be used to supplement our squads on landing, or they can be used independently depending on how the situation develops.

Although they can fit on one CH-47, we divide the final 12 steps into two helicopters to reduce the risk of losing a large portion of our company in a single RPG strike.

Setting up the Helicopter Control Card

The units in this mission do not enter the map from a regular Staging Area, instead they move through the staging areas of the Helicopter Control Card, without the need to spend commands, as described in chapter 11. We place the 1st wave of UH-1 helicopters in the Inbound box (ready to move to the map in Turn 1). We place the 2nd wave of UH-1 helicopters in the Pick Up Zone. Each turn, helicopters will advance

Final preparation & Checking of CSR Rules

We are about ready to start, first we take a read through the campaign special rules to see if there is anything important to bear in mind. The biggest difference compared with Normandy, Naktong River and Heartbreak Ridge is CSR 5: Tunnels. Usually the Potential Contact System requires that the enemy is placed in such a way that it can fire upon the unit which triggered it. In Vietnam, an enemy package might be triggered by one unit, but the placement direction may put it on a card with different US units, which the enemy package will open fire on instead (as per 6.0 Basic Combat Principles). This makes it very hard to locate safe positions for HQs to control the company from.

We note that there are three different types of VC squad, so we place them in a cup ready to be drawn randomly. And also that some of them are armed with one-shot RPGs. We shall have to bear this in mind as any RPG armed squads in LOS of our LZ will Reaction Fire on our helicopters as they come in to land.

This will be a complex mission that will put together several of the concepts that you have learned over the past three campaigns. Vehicle mechanisms, complex packages with exceptions, complex communications and so on. It's not a problem to get some of it wrong, or forget the exact sequence and need to draw a random card to determine what should happen next. Don't forget that this is your game, you're the one in charge.

Reconstitution & Replacement

Reconstituting your Company

The construction of *Fields of Fire* as a campaign with a series of missions is a fundamental precept of the design. Most tactical level board games are scenario based, where a player is "all in" for a particular mission and does not have to worry about what happens next. In *Fields of Fire* the actions you take after a mission are as important as those within the mission, and they are just as much a part of the game. This need to balance between mission accomplishment and sustaining the company across the whole campaign is a completely different dynamic than scenario based games. The player sets the conditions for the next mission based on how experience is distributed, and replacements are integrated.

Plan on spending 30 to 40 minutes on this activity after completing your mission. There is no right or wrong answer to how you reorganize your company after a mission. The more damage the company has sustained the harder the decisions become as you decide where you can afford to leave "holes" in your company. Conversely, You cannot have more than your full structure (TO&E). So, if you had a "milk run" mission and there are more replacements available than losses, you cannot over-subscribe your starting TO&E.

As a guideline to making decisions, there are some basic principles. In priority order you should:

1. Reconstitute/Promote your HQs and Staff.
2. Reconstitute/Promote your company Weapons Teams - these generate volumes of fire greater than small arms.
3. Reconstitute/Promote rifle squads last.
4. Retain three platoons; it is better to have 2 squads per platoon than 2 platoons of 3 squads.

Reconstitution & Replacement Example - End of Vietnam Campaign, Mission 1

For this example we will reconstitute a company that has just completed mission 1 of the Vietnam campaign. The company began their mission with 48 steps (including three FO attachments). For guidance, the units in the following diagrams have been labeled with markers indicating their Experience level (Green, Line or Veteran).

Shortly after landing, the company came under heavy fire from multiple directions. We held out for ten turns, keeping the central LZ clear and achieving our objectives but were hit hard.

Company at the beginning of the mission—fresh, naive and ready for action.

Situation at the end of Turn 10. The enemy are holding on; it's time to get the hell out of here!

The Tally:

- 10 Casualty steps (only half successfully evacuated)
- 5 Paralyzed Teams (including 1st PT HQ)
- 3 Litter Teams
- 3 Fire Teams
- 3 Assault Teams
- 24 of 48 steps were affected; half the company!

With its hard-to-spot veteran enemy units, unpredictable enemy placement, and no safe Staging Area to rely on, this mission can be absolutely brutal on new commanders. It's important to keep a clear head and not let the escalating breakdown of your units get to you.
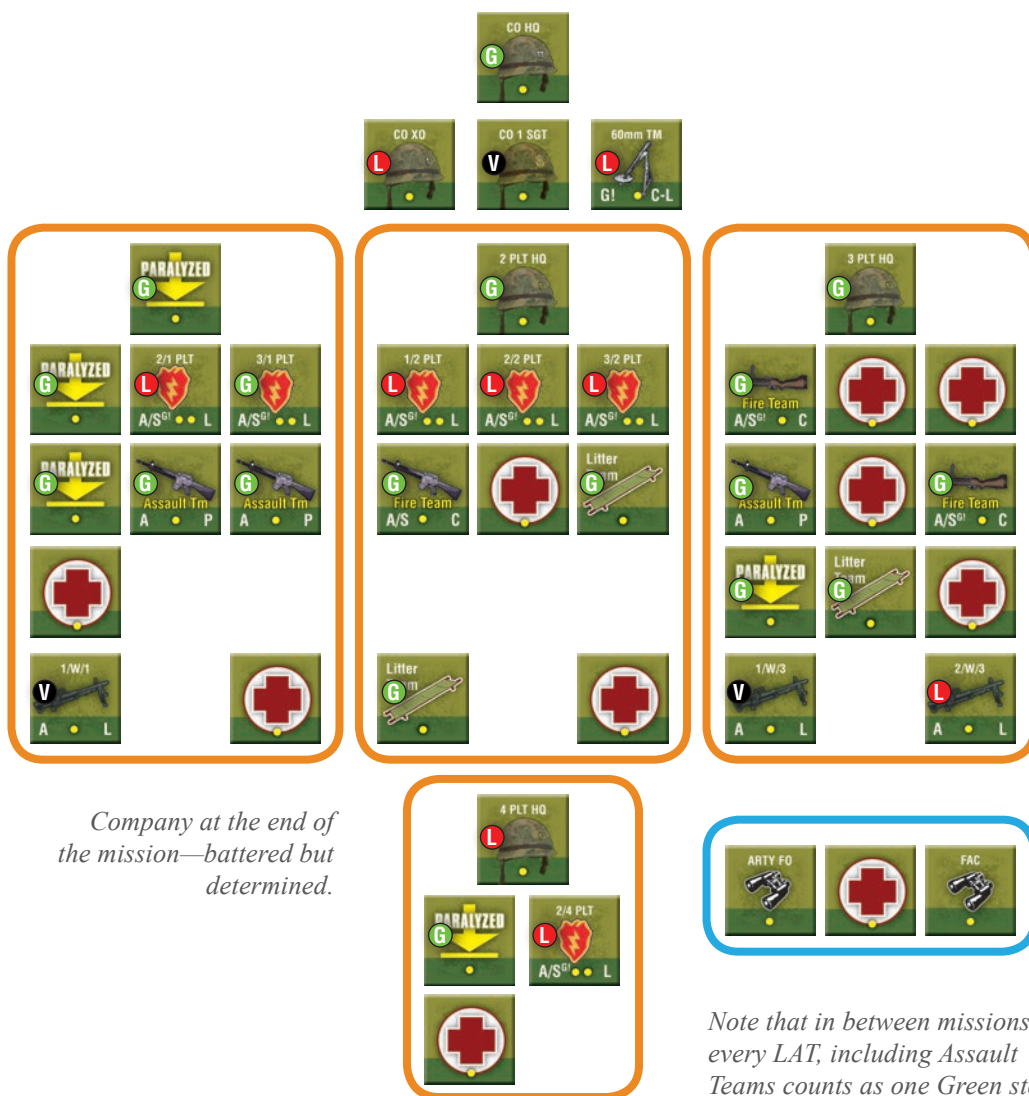
Fortunately we picked up a lot of experience points over the course of the mission. We'll use this to reconstitute the company:

- 14 Cleared cards: 18 points (1 each for the first ten, then 2 points each for cards 11-14)
- 5 Enemy casualties (2 captured): 7 points
- 2 Successful Grenade Attacks: 2 points
- 5 Evacuated casualties: 10 points
- **Total: 37 points**

The first thing we need to do is to check that the number of LATs and good order units remaining on the map and on the Command Display match the number of steps that the company started the mission with. We can do this visually with the counters. We know the company began this mission with 48 steps; CO HQ, CO XO, 1st SGT, a one-step mortar team, Mtr FO, Arty FO, FAC, three platoons made up of an HQ, three 3-step rifle squads and two MGs each, plus a 4th platoon made up of an HQ and two 2-step squads.

Laying out the counters we can see that no mistakes were made, we have the same number of steps (including casualties) as we started with.

Note: Keep a record of how many steps you started the mission with and don't forget to take into account steps the enemy has taken prisoner, steps removed due to events, and any extra LAT steps you may have placed on the map as a result of vehicles being destroyed. If you do happen to have made a mistake, simply add or remove LATs from the company to get the total amount (or you can be harder on yourself and assume any missing units have gone AWOL and replace them with casualties).

Company at the end of the mission—battered but determined.

Note that in between missions, every LAT, including Assault Teams counts as one Green step.

Important! LATs and casualties are never tracked during the mission. It doesn't matter where a paralyzed team, or a casualty came from originally; simply arrange your LATs and casualties anywhere you like to account for all of the gaps in your company. Bear in mind that any steps you note as being casualties cannot be Reconstituted. These gaps in your company will need to be filled by replacement steps later.

Before we begin, the Vietnam campaign has a Campaign Special Rule that we must adhere to. The removal of two veteran steps as a result of troops being rotated home. Any two steps will do, they don't have to be picked at random. We can choose between our two veteran MGs and the veteran 1st Sgt. That's a tough choice. I don't really want to leave 1st platoon with no MG (or entrust the MG to a new recruit later), so I pick 1st Sgt and 1/W/3 MG. I may regret this choice later. Never mind.

Reconstitution of the Company

So let's get on to spending our experience points and reconstituting the company. As mentioned above there are no correct answers and you should reconstitute your units in the way you think you can make best use of them. The following example disregards some or all of the principles above as I rely on my own, no doubt misguided, instincts about what is best.

Note: It costs **1** point to promote a Green unit to Line, and **3** points to promote a Line unit to Veteran. Units cannot be promoted twice during this process. After promoting your steps, work out the overall experience level of the unit by using the Averaging Experience Levels chart on the Charts & Tables player aid.

HQs

Let's take a look at our HQs and Staff first. I want to promote CO HQ to Line experience for 1 point. This will make things much easier going forward. I'll also promote 2nd PLT HQ and 3rd PLT HQ to Line for a point each, CO XO to Veteran for 3 points and 4th PLT HQ to Veteran for 3 points. We also spend three points to promote the Mortar Team to Veteran. We can't do anything about 1st Sgt right now as he's gone home. We'll just have to make do with whatever green replacement the battalion deems to send us later.

Company units that we lost during the mission can be reconstituted from LATs. Each LAT counts as one Green step. For all units except HQs and Staff, after reconstitution we can then use an experience point to promote them to Line experience. New HQs and Staff however must remain at Green and cannot be promoted. We use the Paralyzed Team that we placed in 1st PLT HQ's spot when we laid out the counters earlier to reconstitute our new Green 1 PLT HQ. This costs no experience points.
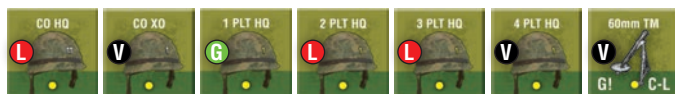
Next let's look at our three main rifle platoons.

1st Platoon

The casualties indicate gaps that we will need to fill later with replacements, in 1st platoon that's the 3rd step of squad 1/1 and 2/W/1 machine gun.

- We spend 2 points to reconstitute two steps of squad 1/1 and promote them both to Line experience. This results in a single 2-step, Line rated squad.
- 7 points to promote the first two steps of squad 2/1 to Veteran (3 points each) and reconstitute the third step, promoting it to Line (1 point). Two Veteran Steps plus 1 Line step results in a single Veteran experience 3-step squad.

- 2 points to promote the first two steps of squad 3/1 to Line and reconstitute the third step. We don't need to promote the third step as two Line Steps plus 1 Green step results in a single Line experience 3-step squad.

2nd Platoon

This platoon is also 2-steps down.

- We spend 1 point to reconstitute 1/W/2 MG team and promote it to Line experience.
- 1 point to reconstitute the third step of 1/2 squad and promote it to Line. This results in a 3-step Veteran unit. Veteran + Veteran + Line = Veteran.

- 6 points to promote both remaining steps of 2/2 squad to Veteran. This results in a 2-step Veteran unit.
- 2 points to promote the first two steps of 3/2 squad to Line. This results in a 3-step Line unit (Line + Line + Green = Line).

3rd Platoon

This platoon took a real beating during the mission. We'll try to salvage it as best we can.

- 2 points to reconstitute all three steps of 1/3 squad and promote the first two steps to Line (Line + Line + Green = Line).
- 2 points to reconstitute the remaining two steps of 2/3 and 3/3 squads, promote them to Line and combine them together. This results in a 2-step Line squad (we'll call it 2/3).

- We have no 3/3 squad. Hopefully we can entice some new recruits into the company later to make a brand new squad.

Note: An alternative at this stage for 3rd platoon might be to leave two single step fire teams without forming a squad from them. When we get our replacements, we would be able to combine two steps with them to form two new squads. Generally a platoon of three squads, even reduced, is better than two.

4th Platoon

We've spent all 37 of our experience points. The one step remaining of 1/4 is reconstituted as a generic fire team, while no changes are made to 2/4 squad.

Attachments

Attachments are units that have been assigned to our platoon by the battalion command. Their reconstitution, promotion and replacement in case of destruction is entirely out of our hands. When we start the next mission, a fresh set of Attachments will be prepared for us, so we can ignore these units (in this case the Mtr FO, FAC and Arty FO).

Replacements

The Vietnam campaign gives us a generous 6 steps of Green replacements at the end of each mission. In addition, since we suffered 10 casualties in the previous mission we receive two extra veteran replacements (one per four casualties, rounded down).

All campaigns have their own rules for replacements depending on the historical situation and time scale involved. One of the requisites for replacements in the Vietnam Campaign is that one of the green steps is used to replace a Line or Veteran level PLT HQ. Again this represents units being rotated home or sent on R&R. We'll replace 3rd PLT HQ. A bit of a blow as we just spent an experience point on them. Perhaps we should think more carefully about who we promote in the future…

That leaves us 5 Green and 2 Veteran replacements to make use of and 11 gaps in the company to fill. There are times (rarely in the Vietnam campaign) that you receive more replacement steps

than spaces in the company to fill. The remaining steps are lost as they are sent off to other companies.

We'll replace 1st Sgt first with one of the green replacement steps. New HQs and Staff are always rated Green, so it would be a waste to expend one of our two veteran steps for this. Green Staff don't tend to be very useful, but they are better than nothing and we can promote them if they survive mission 2.

In 1st platoon we'll add a Green step to 1/1 squad (their experience remains at Line) and use a veteran step to form a new Veteran 2/W/1 MG team.

In 2nd platoon we'll add our second veteran step to 2/2 squad. According to the Averaging Experience Levels Chart, adding a Green step would cause their overall experience level to drop to Line, so we don't want to do that. A Line replacement would achieve the same result, but we don't have any, and Green replacement steps cannot be immediately promoted to Line even if we had experience points left over from Reconstitution. We'll use the third green step to make a new Green 2/W/2 MG team.

Note: Line steps are rare, but you may have steps that were removed from the company due to events or because they left to guard prisoners, or you may just have left them behind in the last mission. These steps retain their original experience levels.

For 3rd platoon we'll add the 4th green step to 2/3 to make a 3-step Line rated unit.

And finally we'll add the 5th green step to the fire team we had left over from 4th platoon to form a Green 2-step 1/4 unit.

And we're all set for mission 2.

Company after reconstitution. Battle hardened and ready to move on to the next mission
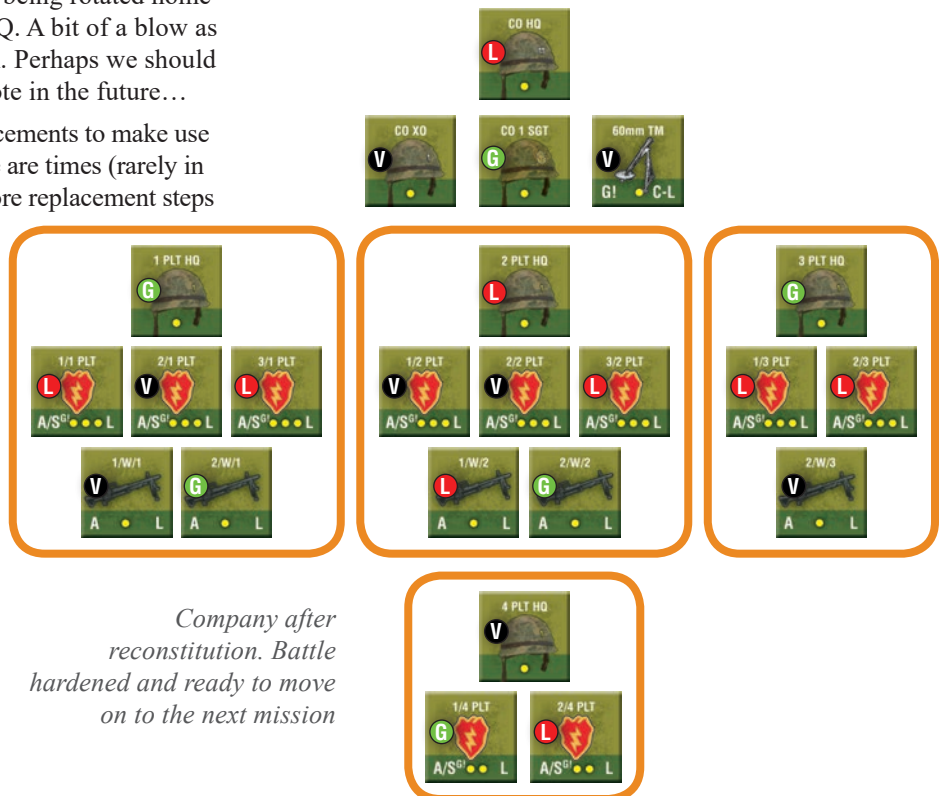
Designer's Notes

This journey began in earnest around 2005. I toyed with the design idea for many months before pitching it to GMT Games. It started as handwritten notations on note cards and has come so far since then. While I will always think of *Fields of Fire* as my baby, I was not a single parent. It has been a team effort the whole time. When the first edition was published in 2008, I was mobilized to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom, which made it rough timing. It got there through my dedicated wife, Stacy, and my understanding children and through countless hours from the first and second edition developers, David Gee, Dick Vohlers and Ricky Gray. And now, a truly deluxe third edition. It is extremely humbling to see the amount of effort and care poured into this. Andrew Stead and Colin Parsons cannot be praised or thanked enough for this edition. What is better is, as amazing as this is, its just the beginning, there is more to come.

Early on I wanted to design a game engine that was open ended. I wanted it to be as different as possible from other tactical games. Based on my own experiences and research I saw it as the "anti-ASL." A game of command and control. From enforcement of unit structures—battalion to company to platoon to squad; having soldiers all belong to a formation; right down to the unique artwork style.

The solitaire approach provided a subtle nod to the challenge of command, the profound loneliness. There is only one commander, all eyes are on you. You must struggle to balance the mission and the lives of your soldiers. How to make sense of the chaos of modern warfare. The play of the cards is meant to be similar to solitaire as well. Actual combat is rarely balanced, but two-player games need it to be for both players to have a challenging experience. In combat, leaders strive to ensure that combat is not balanced; on offense, force is massed on a narrow frontage to achieve superior numbers.

The cards provide an abstraction of terrain that is not like geomorphic map boards. World War II was not a succession of ASL Board 3 villages. Terrain is a profound aspect of infantry combat and can be very subtle, infinitely unique, and well below the details of a map. Cover is found within a card and represents much of that complex variation. Even when using cards, each campaign needs a unique deck.

The communication requirements to pass commands are an integral part of command and control. I must be able to communicate with someone to tell them to do something. When everyone is taking cover and dispersed it becomes infinitely more difficult.

The Volume of Fire (VOF) concept of diminishing returns is based on the concept of an empty battlefield and area fire. In modern combat, small units deploy in loose, skirmisher formations and use cover and concealment as much as possible. This leads to an empty battlefield with fleeting targets. The byproduct is that most fire is directed at an area, as opposed to a specific target. Leadership is not required for troops to open fire, but it is necessary to control, shift, or cease fire. The LOS rules have two basic functions. One is to have simple application and the other is the fixed lines, the sides and corners, which is meant to enforce a linear deployment, which is how combat units train to move and fight. This allows more realistic deployment without formation rules forcing the player to deploy a certain way.

Ultimately the design is intended to give the player the same considerations and types of choices as an actual company commander. To feel, even for a moment, the burden and responsibilities. To generate a narrative, a paper time machine, a window to the past, tell the story of these men in distant lands in the heat of battle. If you experience any of this, then the team and I have accomplished our mission. Good luck.

~Ben Hull

Suggested Reading

I saw online a player suggesting that learning to play *Fields of Fire* is like attending a Service Academy. Despite the hyperbole, there is a grain of truth in this. There are lots of details of military structure, doctrine, and tactics under the hood. The game is large, there are hundreds of pages of printed material in each volume. As a designer and with the help of a dedicated team we wanted to present an immersive, role playing experience. Approaching it with a broader base of general military knowledge is helpful. Here are some books that are worth reading that may give more insight into what the game is depicting and help bridge the institutional knowledge gap.

MacDonald, Charles B. *Company Commander*
MacDonald served as a young rifle company commander in the Battle of the Bulge and to the end of the war in the 23rd Infantry, 2nd Infantry Division. His unflinching account has been required reading for officers since its publication in 1949. The book propelled MacDonald into a career as a military historian, and he penned many other excellent histories.

Johns Jr., Glover S. *The Clay Pigeons of St. Lô*
As a Major, Johns commanded the 1st Battalion of the 115th Infantry, 29th Infantry Division in the Normandy Campaign. The memoir was written not long after the war and provides an excellent overview of infantry tactics.

Webb, James. *Fields of Fire*
A work of fiction, but Webb served as a Marine rifle platoon commander in the 5th Marines in Vietnam, was wounded and awarded the Navy Cross. He later served as a U.S. Senator and Secretary of the Navy.

Developers' Notes

Fields of Fire can be a challenging game. Though not as difficult to play as its reputation would suggest, and certainly not as complex as games like *ASL* or *A World at War*. However, unlike other heavy wargames, as a solitaire game the new player often found themselves alone with only the rulebook and assistance from a bewildering number of hints, tips, guides and videos scattered across the Internet, many of which seem to contradict each other.

With this new edition, our intention as developers was to first and foremost maintain the integrity of the game. As long-time players ourselves, we already knew that the journey through learning the rules and looking up clarifications was worth it. *Fields of Fire* is a terrific game, with a level of simulation that feels like we're making important decisions at every step and not simply solving a puzzle. Volume I has four detailed campaigns with a high level of replayability and the system has immense potential for future expansions.

Since *Fields of Fire* was first released, the market for slick, streamlined solitaire games that you can quickly learn and play in a lunch break has expanded immensely, so there was no intention to cut down, streamline, or as fans of the game might say "dumb down" the system. Anyone wanting to play a less complex tactical solitaire war-game has plenty of choice. Our goal was to present the player with everything they might need to know to play the game in the box. A rulebook packed full of examples, even if this meant expanding it to an intimidating number of pages, a beginner's guide that would take you by the hand and teach you the flow of the game a few pieces at a time, examples of play covering the different styles of mission you may come across, and mission books that would take the time and space to explain everything the player needs to know to start playing.

We'd like to thank Jason Carr and GMT One for putting out the call for people to work on a new deluxe edition of *Fields of Fire*. Also, of course, Ben Hull for not only supporting a reworking of his game but for being on-hand to discuss game mechanics and intentions with us in detail, and actively creating new material, detailed guidelines and updated information on the historical battles included in this volume to take *Fields of Fire Deluxe* beyond a "clarifications project" to a true third edition of the game. In doing so we have ended up updating almost every component in the game and we hope you enjoy the final product.

<div align="right">Andrew Stead, Colin Parsons</div>