

Strategy & Tactics issue no. 248

Game Title: First Blood: Second Marne, 15 July 1918

Date of Publication: February 2008

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These "eRules" were first posted on 14 February 2008 . They contain 6,645 words.

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See rule 4.4 for errata as of 14 February 2008, in **bold/blue**.

These eRules were updated again on 11 March 2008. See section 13.0. That addition is shown in **bold/green**. This file now contains 6,960 words.

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Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Components
- 3.0 Set Up
- 4.0 How to Win
- 5.0 Sequence of Play
- 6.0 Stacking & Fog of War
- 7.0 Random Events
- 8.0 German Reinforcements

- 9.0 Movement
- 10.0 Fire
- 11.0 Bombardment
- 12.0 Designer's Notes
- 13.0 Play Balance**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 *First Blood: Second Marne, 15 July 1918* (**FBSM** for short), is a two-player wargame of low-to-intermediate complexity that simulates the final day on World War I's western front during which it was the Germans who held the strategic initiative. After that day, the German high command, though they didn't yet understand they were soon to be fully and finally defeated, knew an offensive solution to the war was no longer available to them. The German player is generally on the offensive, trying to cross the Marne River and exit units southward off the map through the Surmelin valley.

1.2 Game Scales

The first game turn of FBSM represents roughly the first two hours of operations after the Germans began crossing the Marne, which were conducted in the early morning darkness. Every game turn after the first represents from 15 to about 45 minutes, depending on the intensity of tactical action that takes place within each turn as the daylight battle unfolds.

On the US side the units of maneuver are infantry platoons, along with static heavy weapon emplacements. The latter represent one or two dug-in and pre-sited heavy machineguns and/or 37 mm guns ("one pounders").

The German units are organized so as to be reflective of the chaos created among them by the intense US aerial and heavy

artillery bombardment that was conducted against their north bank marshalling areas and bridges. That is, German units represent *ad hoc*, mixed, tactical formations (primarily storm trooper infantry), ranging in size from sections and squads up to almost full companies, which the Germans self-organized as they left the complete chaos of the riverbank and moved into the semi-chaos of the actual battlefield.

Each hexagon on the map represents 100 yards from side to opposite side.

2.0 Components

2.1 The components to a complete game of **FBSM** include these rules, a 34x22" mapsheet, and one sheet of 176 die-cut unit-counters. Players will need to provide themselves with one or more regular (six-sided) die to use in resolving combat and other probabilistic events throughout the game.

2.2 The Game Map illustrates the militarily significant terrain found in and around this area of the Marne and Surlin River valleys in 1918 when viewed at this scale. A hexagonal ("hex") grid is printed over the map to regulate the placement and movement of units across it, much as the squares on Chess and Checkers boards. A unit is considered to be in only one hex at any one time.

Each hex contains natural or manmade terrain or water features that can affect the movement of units and combat between units. The various terrains and water features on the map have had their exact real-world configurations altered slightly in order to make them coincide with the hex-grid. The relationships among them from hex to hex, however, are accurate to the degree necessary to present players with the same space/time dilemmas faced by

their historic counterparts in the real war.

Also note every hex on the map has a unique four-digit identification number printed within it. They're provided to help find exact locations more quickly and to allow for the recording of unit positions if a match has to be taken down before it can be completed. For example, the terrain feature known as "Hill 231" is in hexes 1927 and 1928.

2.3 Seating

The US player should sit along the map's west edge, facing east, with the German player sitting and facing opposite him on the east.

2.4 Counters

There are 176 unit-counters in the game, most of which represent combat formations. Others are provided as bombardment markers and memory aids. After reading these rules at least once, carefully punch out the counters. Trimming off the "dog ears" from their corners with a fingernail clipper will facilitate easier handling and stacking during play and also enhances their appearance.

2.5 Sample Combat Unit

Each combat unit-counter displays several pieces of information: nationality by color scheme (and therefore the "side" it's on), unit type, fire factor, range allowance and movement factor.

2.6 Carnage

The reverse sides of all the units in the game show carnage. That is, they present a depiction of the human wreckage remaining when units of these small sizes are eliminated in combat. Whenever a unit suffers that fate, players simply turn it over in place, so it's carnage side thereafter shows upward within

the hex of its elimination. When flipped to their carnage sides, units permanently cease to be “units” for all game purposes, thereafter serving only as reminders of the recent horror that took place in that location.

Carnage markers have no combat effects or stacking values, nor does their presence in a hex generate any extra movement cost for living units as they enter and/or pass through the killing field. Alternatively, if your tastes don't run to an appreciation of carnage, you may choose to ignore the reverse sides of the units and simply remove each unit to a traditional, off-map, “dead pile” as they suffer elimination.

2.7 Nationality& Sides

Each unit's nationality, and therefore the side for which it fights, is shown by its color scheme. US units are printed with a light olive-drab background color. German units are printed with a light-gray background color.

2.8 Unit Types

Every combat unit in the game is identified on the basis of its predominant type of weapon: infantry or heavy weapons.

German Storm Trooper Infantry

US Infantry

US Heavy Weapons Emplacements

2.9 Other counters are provided as bombardment markers and memory aids. Details of their uses are given in the sections noted below.

Phase Now Marker

(see section 5.0)

Light Bombardment Marker

(see section 11.0)

Heavy Bombardment Marker

(see section 11.0)

3.0 Set Up

3.1 Prepare to Play

Players should first decide who will command which side. Place the “Phase Now” marker in the empty box to the side of the “German First Bombardment Phase” box of the Phase Record Track printed on the mapsheet. Temporarily place off to the side, but within easy reach, all the other counters shown above in 2.9.

3.2 US Set Up

The US player sets up first. All US units given in the counter-mix begin play on the map. The US player should first separate his units into two piles: one containing all 48 of his infantry platoons, and a second containing all nine of his heavy weapons emplacements. He should then take 16 of the infantry units and 8 of the heavy weapons emplacements and set them up in hexes of his choice within his “forward zone” (see 3.3 below). After that, he should take his remaining heavy weapons emplacement and 32 infantry platoons and set them up in hexes of his choice within his rear zone (see 3.4 below). In both zones, no more than one US unit may be set up per hex.

3.3 US Forward Zone

This zone consists of all those hexes, other than Marne riverbank and Varennes hexes, which lie north of the Paris-Metz Road that runs from 1032 to 4222, inclusive. It also includes the two hexes of Hill 231. No US units may set up in Paris-Metz Road hexes nor in Marne riverbank hexes.

3.4 US Rear Zone

This zone consists of all the wooded hill hexes on the map, plus

the towns of Paroy and Crezancy, as well as the three hexes of the Moulin Ruiné Prepared Position.

3.5 German Preparation for Play

While the US player is completing that side's set up, the German player should put all of his own side's units into a large-mouthed opaque container, such as a cereal or salad-mixing bowl, which is hereafter referred to as his reinforcement-holding container. (The traditional coffee mug likely won't be large enough to work here conveniently.)

3.6 German Set Up

When the US player has announced he's finished that side's set up, the German player should enter into play the first 30 units of his own side using the following sequence. First, one at a time and without looking, he should draw a total of 30 German units from the container he filled in 3.5. As he draws each single unit he should—starting with hex 4232 and working eastward one hex and one unit at a time—place them in Marne riverbank hexes. Thus the second unit drawn will go into hex 4131, the third into 4032, the fourth into 3931, etc., until the 30th unit drawn completes the process by being put into hex 2342.

The German player may not look into the unit-holding container in order to try to pick specific units for specific hexes. Each unit is randomly drawn from the container. As soon as a unit is drawn, however, both players are then free to look at its non-carnage side. Again, though, a drawn unit must always go into the exact hex for which it was drawn; no rearranging of the draw order is allowed.

4.0 How To Win

4.1 The German player is generally on the offensive all across the

map, attempting to win the game by improving on his historic counterpart's performance in the actual battle.

4.3 German Victory

Play stops, and the German player is declared to have won the game, the instant either one of the following conditions pertain: 1) one or more German units have moved off the south edge of the map via hexes 1900 through 3300, inclusive; or 2) there are no more US infantry units or heavy weapons emplacements anywhere on the map. When judging condition two, recall that carnage markers in no way count as units (see 2.6).

4.4 US Victory

Play stops, and the US player is declared to have won the game, the instant there are no more German units on the map and that side's reinforcement-holding container is also empty of all units (see 3.5). Again recall when judging this victory condition, carnage markers in no way count as units.

4.5 Victory by Concession

Play may also stop at any time if either player judges his side's overall situation to have deteriorated to the point no chance of victory remains for him.

4.6 No Draws

Note that, given the victory conditions, there will be no drawn games; one player or the other will always win.

5.0 Sequence of Play

5.1 Each game turn of **FBSM** is divided into a series of sequenced steps called "phases." Every action taken by a player must be carried out in the appropriate phase as described below. Once a player has finished his activities for a particular phase, he may not go back to perform some forgotten action or redo a poorly

executed one unless his opponent graciously permits it.

Also note that, unlike most other wargames, players need not keep track of the passing of “game turns” when playing **FBSM**. That is, there is no set number of turns that constitutes a complete game of **FBSM**; each match is played until one player or the other fulfills his side’s victory conditions as described above in section 3.0. There is only a differentiation between the first turn and all those that follow it; because the first turn represents actions taken in the darkness of early morning, while all subsequent turns are conducted in the long summer daylight.

5.2 First Turn Special Rules

All during the first turn, the following special rules apply. The Random Events Phase (see section 7.0) and the German Reinforcement Phase (see section 8.0) are skipped. The maximum line of fire (see 10.7) for all infantry or heavy weapons units is just two hexes. Neither sides’ bombardment attacks suffer any “drift” (see 11.2).

5.3 The Phase Sequence Outline is given below. At the end of each phase, move forward the “Phase Now” marker one box on the Phase Record Track printed on the mapsheet. Each time a “US Second Bombardment Phase” (phase XII) is concluded, move the marker back to the first box in the track, the “Random Events Phase,” and begin a new turn. Keep up that process and sequence until one player wins the game (see section 4.0).

- I. Random Events Phase
- II. German Reinforcement Phase
- III. German First Bombardment Phase
- IV. US First Bombardment Phase
- V. German Movement Phase

- VI. US First Fire Phase
- VII. German First Fire Phase
- VIII. US Movement Phase
- IX. German Second Fire Phase
- X. US Second Fire Phase
- XI. German Second Bombardment Phase
- XII. US Second Bombardment Phase

6.0 Stacking & Fog of War

6.1 Stacking is the word used to describe the piling of more than one friendly unit into a single hex at the same time. The general rule is, each player may stack up to 16 infantry fire factors' worth of his side's units per hex; however, no more than one US heavy weapons emplacement may ever be in any given hex, and no infantry units may ever stack with such units. US infantry units may enter and pass through heavy weapons emplacements during friendly movement phases, but they may never end a move in such hexes.

Note that stacking is based on the total of fire factor strength in a given hex at any instant. Thus any number of unit-counters may make up a stack within that overall 16 fire factor limit.

6.2 Stacking counts for both sides all during every turn and throughout all phases. Thus units may not move into an overstack situation even momentarily. Further, units must always be moved individually, one at a time, never as a stack. If a stack is ever found to be overstacked, correct the situation in such a way as to satisfy the offended player, either by elimination of the overstacked unit(s), or by simply allowing the offended player to move it/them to the nearest legal hex. (It's always the offended player's choice of solution).

6.5 Fog of War

In general, you may not look beneath the top unit of any enemy stack. You may only look at the individual units within an enemy stack when you are resolving fire combat or bombardment within that hex. All units of both sides are deployed onto the map with their living (factored) sides showing upward, and they are only flipped so their carnage sides show when they're eliminated. No unit once in carnage status may ever be brought back into play as a living unit.

In situations in which carnage markers share a hex with living units, all the living units should be atop the carnage markers. Carnage markers have no stacking value.

6.6 No Stacking During Set Up

Note there is never more than one unit placed per hex during set up (see section 3.0).

7.0 Random Events

7.1 Each full turn after the first begins with a "Random Events Phase" (see 5.2 and 5.3). At those times both players should roll a die, total those two results, and then together consult the Random Events Table printed on the mapsheet. The detailed explanations for each possible rolled event are given below. Note some events may take place more than once per game, while others may only occur once.

7.2 Random Event 2

US Artillery Problems. All US artillery bombardments during this turn suffer from increased drift. Instead of subtracting the normal five from each US bombardment drift check, subtract four (see 11.3). This event may occur any number of times per

game.

7.3 Random Event 3

German Artillery Problems. All German artillery bombardments during this turn suffer from increased drift. Instead of subtracting the normal four from each bombardment drift check, subtract three (see 11.3). This event may occur any number of times per game.

7.4 Random Event 4

Intense Poison Gas Attacks. One side or the other, or both, have increased the number of gas rounds they're firing within their barrages. All infantry movement factors on both sides are reduced from four to three during this turn. Further, no LOF may be longer than four hexes (bombardment is otherwise unaffected). This event may occur any number of times per game.

7.5 Random Event 5

German Breakthrough West. German infantry have broken through from the west. To simulate that, the German player should immediately roll a die and randomly draw, then deliberately place, that number of infantry units from his reinforcement-holding container. All the drawn units are placed, normal stacking allowed, in one or more west edge map hexes lying between 4231 and 4222, inclusive, which are empty of enemy units. If no such hexes are available, this breakthrough is considered thwarted. At the same time, if all or a portion of the rolled units are available, and one or more empty hexes are available for their placement, the German player may not refuse this event. In any case, this event may not be rolled more than once per game. Any subsequent reroll is considered to

generate “No Event” for that turn.

7.6 Random Event 6-7

US Rally. This turn all US infantry movement factors are increased by one, as are all that side’s infantry and heavy weapons units’ fire factors. Bombardments and LOF aren’t effected. In situations in which units fire into immediately adjacent hexes (see 10.11), when calculating their fire strengths, first add the bonus rally factor and then do the doubling.

If the US player feels this rally has been rolled at an inopportune time, he may decline it, meaning the result is then “No Event” for this turn. He may make that choice each time this event is rolled; however, once it’s been rolled and accepted, this event may not occur again during the same game. Treat each such reroll after its implementation as “No Event” for that turn.

7.7 Random Event 8-9

German Breakthrough East. German infantry have broken through from the east. To simulate that, the German player should immediately roll two dice (or one die twice) and randomly draw, then deliberately place, that number of infantry units from his reinforcement-holding container. All the drawn units are placed, normal stacking allowed, in one or more east edge map hexes lying between 2242 and 1031, inclusive, which are empty of enemy units. If no such hexes are available, this breakthrough is considered thwarted. At the same time, if all or a portion of the rolled units are available, and one or more empty hexes are available for their placement, the German player may not refuse this event. In any case, this event may not be rolled more than once per game. Any subsequent reroll

is considered to generate “No Event” for that turn.

7.8 Random Event 10

German Heavy Machineguns. The Germans have managed to bring together several heavy machineguns, their crews, and enough ammunition for them to have a noticeable effect during this turn. During both of his fire phases this turn, the German player may designate any one unit of his choice as having heavy MG. The effect is to increase their LOF range to 10 hexes for that phase. The same unit need not be picked in each fire phase. This event may be rolled any number of times during each game.

7.9 Random Event 11

German Rally. This turn all German infantry movement factors are increased by one, as are all that side’s infantry units’ fire factors. Bombardments are not effected. In situations in which units fire into immediately adjacent hexes (see 10.11), when calculating their fire strengths, first add the bonus rally factor and then do the doubling. This event may be rolled any number of times per game.

7.10 Random Event 12

Superb Artillery Spotting. The German player should first roll another die in order to find which player will receive this bombardment bonus. If that result is an odd number, the bonus is applied to all German bombardments this turn; if even, it’s applied to all US bombardments this turn. The bonus is, the bombardments of the side awarded it don’t suffer from any drift this turn (see 11.3). This event may be rolled any number of times per game.

8.0 German Reinforcements

8.1 German Reinforcements are units that enter play for the first time after the completion of turn one. There are no US reinforcements.

8.2 Reinforcement Entry via Random Events. See 7.5 and 7.7 above.

8.3 Regular German Reinforcement Entry

As phase II in every turn after the first, the German player should roll four dice (or one die four times, etc.), total that result, and then randomly draw that number of units from his reinforcement-holding container (see 3.5). The procedure here differs from the one used during set up in that, though units are still drawn randomly one at a time, and are then also placed on the map one at a time, the German player may now deliberately choose each entering unit's arrival hex, and normal stacking within those hexes is also allowed.

8.4 The reinforcement procedure is continued until there are no more units left for the German player to draw from his holding container. That development doesn't mean the game is over; however, it is a signal the German player had better get moving toward victory.

8.5 All reinforcement units, no matter their exact method and locale of entry, have all normal movement and combat capabilities available for regular use from the instant of their placement on the map. No German unit, once drawn from the holding container and put on the map, may ever make its way back into the container during that match.

8.6 No matter the method of entry into play of a given reinforcement unit, by random event on a map edge or via a

Marne riverbank hex, the German player may never refuse or delay its placement onto the map. Such refusals or delays may only occur if no appropriate entry hexes are available.

9.0 Movement

9.1 Each infantry unit is moved individually from hex to adjacent hex, expending movement points (MP) for each hex entered from their movement allowance. MP may not be saved from one phase or turn to the next, nor may they in any way be given or loaned from one unit to another. Each moving unit's movement must be completed before the movement of the next unit is begun. Once you've moved a unit, you may not redo its movement that phase or turn unless your opponent graciously permits it.

Both players only move their own side's infantry units during their own movement phases; no friendly movement takes place during the opposition's movement phases. It's not required you move all your infantry units in each of your movement phases. You may choose to move none, some, or all of them, within the strictures given below, in each of your movement phases. Further, a moving unit need not expend all its MP before stopping, and no moving unit may ever exceed its MP during a move.

9.2 No unit may move into a hex in a friendly movement phase unless it has sufficient MP available to pay all involved costs.

9.3 US Heavy Weapons Emplacements (see 2.8) are static; once placed on the map (see 3.2), they are never moved from their hexes-of-placement except to be put into the dead pile (or flipped over in place if you're using carnage markers).

9.4 No Stack Movement

Units are always moved one at a time, never as stacks. The stacking restrictions given in section 6.0 must be observed by all

ground units at all times once set up has been completed (see section 3.0).

9.5 Terrain & Road Movement Costs

Each clear, town, railroad, Surmelin River and railroad hex entered costs one MP. Each Marne riverbank or wooded hills hex costs two MP to enter. Each road hex costs only half an MP to enter, provided a unit is moving from road hex to road hex via a hexside crossed by the road. If a unit is moving into a road hex in any other way, it pays the cost of the other terrain located in the hex being entered.

9.6 Bridges & Rail Crossings

Indestructible bridges exist in both hexes on the map in which a road crosses the Surmelin River (3311 & 3520). Similarly, in hexes in which a road crosses a rail line, (3511 & 3721), a unit using road movement as described above in 9.5 may, within the provisions of that rule, continue to do so to both enter and leave those hexes.

9.7 Enemy Occupied Hexes may never be entered by your units. Bombardment markers may be placed in enemy occupied hexes to signal artillery attacks there; see section 11.0.

9.8 US units are never allowed to be set up in Marne Riverbank hexes, nor may they move into such hexes at any time during play. They may fire into and/or through them normally.

10.0 Fire

10.1 During your side's fire phases, your units may fire at enemy units within their range. Combat is executed by totaling the fire strengths of all the units firing into a given hex, then dividing that total by the defense strength of the hex being fired into in order to get an odds ratio. Each enemy unit in a hex receiving fire from

your units has a separate die roll made for it on the basis of that odds ratio. Each of your units may fire into one hex in every one of your side's fire phases throughout the game.

10.2 Strictures

Each unit may fire no more than once per friendly fire phase, but no unit is ever forced to fire. You may choose to fire with some, none, or all of your units during each of your fire phases throughout the game. The firing player need not declare all his fires at the beginning of his fire phase; he announces and executes them one defender-hex at a time in any order he desires. The resolution of the fire into one hex must be completed before that of the next hex being fired into is begun.

If you need a memory aid to help recall if a given unit has already fired during a fire phase, maintain a common facing among all your units and rotate each one 180 degrees when it fires.

A target hex must contain at least one enemy unit in order for you to be able to direct fire into that hex. No fire may ever have as its target more than a single enemy occupied hex. If more than one enemy unit is located in a hex targeted for fire, each of those units has a separate combat resolution die roll made for it.

10.3 Firing Procedures

First designate the target hex and your in-range units you want to fire into it. Total the fire factors of those firing units, which gives the attacking fire strength. Divide that number by the defense strength of the hex being fired into. That number is based on the terrain in the target hex. Round down any remainder, then set that resultant whole number next to a one on its right to obtain an odds ratio.

For example, if 10 fire factors worth of your units are firing into a Surmelin River target hex (defense strength: 3), that calculation would go as follows: 10 divided by 3 equals 3.33, which would be rounded down to just 3. That three is then set next to a one, to give a final combat odds ratio of 3:1 (“three to one”).

Note that targeted enemy units’ fire strengths in no way effect this procedure. Units in this game have no defense factor; terrains have defense strengths.

10.4 Multi-Unit Fires

In general, units may fire by themselves or in groups, as long as the single target hex is within the range of all firing units. If attacking in groups, then use the combined total fire strength.

10.5 A given target hex may not be fired into more than once in a single fire phase; however, each unit within a target hex has a separate resolution die roll made for it.

10.6 Range

Each unit has a printed range factor (see 2.5), which is expressed as a number of hexes. Units may fire only at enemy occupied hexes within their ranges. When determining range, count the target hex but not the firing unit’s hex. For example, a unit in hex 2236 firing at hex 2232 would be firing at a range of four hexes. A unit in hex 2236 firing at hex 2034 would be firing at a range of three hexes. A unit may fire out to, but not beyond, its range in hexes.

10.7 Line of Fire (LOF) & Blocking Terrain

A unit may always fire into a hex immediately adjacent to it (a range of one). If the range is more than one hex, however, first trace a line of fire (LOF) to the target. LOF are visualized straight lines running from the center of a firing unit’s hex to the center of a

targeted unit's hex. If such an LOF runs through any "blocking terrain," the firing unit may not fire at the blocked target hex. Terrain in a firing or target hex never blocks LOF. That is, a unit can always fire out of or into a hex; LOF is blocked for purposes of firing through hexes.

If firing at an odd angle across the hex grid, use a straight edge, placing it so it runs from the center-dot of the firing hex to the center-dot of the target hex, to determine if the LOF is blocked.

In general, LOF may be of any length within the strictures given above and below; however, also see rule 7.4.

10.8 Blocking Terrain

The following terrain types block LOF: town, wooded hills, prepared positions and railroads. (The railroad ran atop a nine-foot-high embankment.) For example, a firing unit in hex 2717 could always fire into hex 2718, since that's only a range of one hex, a range that can't ever be blocked. It could also fire into hex 2618 because, though 2618 is an LOF-blocking wooded hills hex, a unit can always fire into a blocked hex, it simply can't fire through a blocked hex. A unit in hex 2717 could not, though, ever fire into hex 2518, since the blocking terrain 2618 prevents an LOF from being traced through there to 2518. Likewise, a unit in 2518 could fire into 2618, but not beyond there into 2717. Note that units, neither friendly nor enemy, don't block LOF. Also note that Hill 231, though it blocks LOF, is for all other purposes treated as clear terrain.

10.9 Half-Blocked LOF

If an LOF runs exactly along the hexside boundary between two hexes, and one of those hexes contains blocking terrain and the other doesn't, that LOF isn't blocked. For example, a unit 2821

does have an LOF from there into 3124 (going through 3125 even though 3024 is blocked).

10.10 Combat Results

There are two combat results: defender eliminated (“D-Elim”) and no effect. Eliminated units are simply put into the dead pile or flipped in place so their carnage sides show upward (see 2.6). Units receiving a no effect result aren’t effected in any way. Firing units are never effected in anyway by their own fire; only targeted enemy units may be effected by the fire of your units.

If you’re firing at an enemy unit in a target hex and you have a combat odds ratio of 1:1, that unit is eliminated on a roll of one. If firing with a 2:1 odds ratio, the D-Elim result is achieved with on a roll of one or two; at 3:1 a D-Elim is achieved with a roll of one, two or three, etc. Fires made at odds less than 1:1 are therefore always ineffective, while fires made at odds of 6:1 or higher result in automatic D-Elim results.

10.11 Close Assault Combat Bonus

Whenever one or more of your units involved in given fire attack is firing into a hex immediately adjacent to it (a range of one), those firing units have their fire factor doubled when calculating that attack’s odds. Such units are said to be making a “close assault.”

10.12 Advance After Combat

The participation of one or more close assaulting infantry units in an attack allows those infantry units to advance after combat into the defender’s vacated hex. Such advances after combat are entirely at the firing player’s option. Resolve fire normally, except if the combat result is D-Elim against all the defending units in the target hex, then one, some or all of the close assaulting infantry

units involved in that fire may enter the newly vacated hex. Normal stacking limits must be observed.

Advance after combat is never mandatory, but it must be decided on prior to beginning the resolution of the next attack. Note such advances don't in any way use normal movement phase movement allowances. Also note US heavy weapons emplacements, though they are eligible to receive the close assault double-fire-strength bonus when firing into adjacent target hexes, are still not allowed to move out of their hex of placement by this rule.

11.0 Bombardment

11.1 During each of your side's bombardment phases throughout the game, you may use the six bombardment markers included in the counter-mix (three "light" and three "heavy"; see 2.9), to attack enemy occupied hexes.

11.2 Bombardment is conducted in much the same manner as normal fire. You may conduct bombardment into a given target hex only if a friendly unit can trace a normal LOF into that hex (that's called "spotting"). The spotting unit's LOF may be of any length up to and including its own range allowance. When the spotting of a target hex has been verified, you then place as many heavy and/or light bombardment markers in that hex as you desire. No stacking limits apply.

11.3 Drift

Once all your bombardment markers have been placed, check for "drift" for each one. That is, roll a die for each bombardment marker, then subtract five from that result for US bombardments and four for German. That modified result—from zero to one for US bombardments, and from zero to two for German—is the

“drift,” expressed as a number of hexes, for that bombardment marker. German bombardments always drift south; US bombardments always drift north. No bombardment marker can ever have a drift less than zero. (Zero drift simply keeps a marker in its intended target hex).

For example, if the German player were bombarding with one marker into hex 2136, and his drift roll for that marker turned out to be five, he’d subtract four from that die roll number to get a final drift result of one hex. That means he’d move the marker into 2135, and that bombardment would then be resolved in that new hex. And had he rolled a six for drift, his bombardment marker would have moved two hexes to the south instead of just one.

Drifted bombardment markers will attack any units found to be in their new hex, enemy or friendly. It is possible for drifted bombardment markers to drift off the mapsheet. Such markers are simply lost without effect for that phase.

11.4 Bombardment Resolution

Once all bombardment markers have had their drift calculated and are in their true and final target hexes, resolve each bombardment exactly as given for regular fire in rule 10.9. Note there is never any advance after combat as a result of successful bombardment, even if there are friendly infantry unit in hexes immediately adjacent to emptied target hexes.

11.5 Each bombardment marker may be used once by each player in both his own friendly bombardment phases throughout a turn.

12.0 Designer’s Notes

Viewed from the design side of things, this title owes a lot to Joseph Miranda’s “Manila ‘45,” which in turn owes a lot to John

Hill's "Hue," which owed a lot to David Isby's "Soldiers," which owed a lot to Jim Dunnigan's "Tac 3" and "Panzerblitz." Amen.

From the standpoint of historical simulation, the overarching factors that determined the presentation of this topic were as follows. On the German side, the attacking units were some of the best, most determined, infantry then in uniform anywhere on the planet. The defenders, on the US side, were both too enthusiastic and too inexperienced to understand just how scared and cautious they actually should have been.

The Germans attacked with the ferocity of junkyard dogs and, in doing so, in the operational and strategic sense, they suffered an "A-elim" (attacker eliminated) combat result. Two days after this battle, when they tried to muster and reorganize the attacking storm trooper regiment—which had gone into this fight at full-strength—only some 150 effectives answered roll call. US casualties amounted to over a third of that division's rifle strength lost in killed or wounded.

That's why there are only two combat results: defender eliminated and no effect. The "disruption" result common to most tactical games simply didn't make historical sense here. Units and men on both sides fought until they were dead or simply couldn't go on and, once they were finally down, they were pretty much out of the fight for the rest of the day.

When playing operational- or strategic-level games, river-crossings are usually handled by simply doubling the combat strength of the involved defenders, or halving that of the attackers, or applying one or two column-shifts, etc. What this game provides is a tactical look at the first hours of a river crossing, detailing the experiences of the first few hundred soldiers who go

across, as well as the defenders waiting for them on the opposite shore. The results aren't pretty.

Tactical Tips

1. In general, don't stack unless it becomes absolutely necessary in order to bring sufficient firepower to bear against an enemy held hex that needs to be taken out at that instant.
2. As much as possible, avoid ending any unit's movement in clear terrain.
3. The first objective of the German player should be to entirely clear the east-west rail line of all US defenders. That will greatly improve his force's situation *vis-a-vis* American spotting capabilities.
4. The American player must deploy in depth, along both sides of the Surmelin valley. Cling to the east-west rail line as long as possible, and also move to occupy the two forward flanking villages ASAP. Don't let the Germans get ahead of you (that is, to the south of your main line of defense). You want to avoid having to chase after German units that have broken into the narrow portion of the valley. Keep falling back so the Germans have to keep running into your units.
5. In general, don't worry about casualties. This is the summer of 1918; heavy casualties are expected. Play to the victory conditions.

13.0 Play Balance

13.1 If you feel it's too easy for the German side to win the game, play using the following rules changes. Except as herein added, deleted or otherwise amended, all the rules given above still apply.

13.2 Game Length

The game now ends at the end of Game Turn 16. That means you have to keep track of the passage of complete game turns. A Game Turn Record Track is provided at the end of this rules section. Players should photocopy or otherwise duplicate it, as best suits them, in order to facilitate their play of the game when using this rules section.

13.3 Winning

If the German player hasn't won the game by the end of Game Turn 16, play stops and the US player is declared the winner of that match.

13.4 German Bombardment Deterioration

Starting with Game Turn 9, and for the rest of the game, at the start of each of his side's Bombardment Phases, the German player should put all the artillery bombardment markers into a large-mouth opaque container, such as a coffee mug. He should then openly roll a die and note that result (one through six). He should then select (without first looking) that same number of artillery markers from the container. The markers he draws are the only ones he may use that phase.

FBSM Game Turn Record Track

Game Turn 1	Game Turn 2	Game Turn 3	Game Turn 4	Game Turn 5	Game Turn 6	Game Turn 7	Game Turn 8
Game Turn 9*	Game Turn 10	Game Turn 11	Game Turn 12	Game Turn 13	Game Turn 14	Game Turn 15	Game Turn 16 Game Ends

Notes

*Start rolling for German Bombardment Deterioration.