

Thunderbolt Apache V1.4

Steven McDougall, 24th October 2014

Campaign Set Up – choose campaign and prepare your full squadron

- Shuffle Special Condition and Mission Event decks and place on board
 - **Select Campaign card and Situation card:** place on Air Base Sheet
 - note these choices on Player Log
 - note starting Special Option (SO) points and Days on Player Log (these are shown on the Situation card)
 - gather the terrain hexes shown on Campaign card
 - **Select Battalion cards** to determine the targets associated with the chosen Campaign
 - randomly select Battalions one at a time from the following decks in order: Assault, Assault, Support, Command, ...etc.
 - stop drawing once the cumulative VP total of the drawn Battalions equals or exceeds the Campaign Set-Up value (shown on Campaign card)
 - place corresponding Battalion counters in appropriate enemy sector of the game board, full side up (A=Front, S=Transit, C=Rear) (note that certain Situation and Battalion cards may affect placement)
 - stack selected cards on board (note: some may reduce SO Points)
 - **Buy Aircraft** cards to fly the Campaign (record the costs on Player Log)
 - these must have a service year equal to or less than the year of the chosen Campaign
 - cumulative cost of aircraft must not exceed the starting SO allocation (SO cost of each aircraft is shown along LS side of card)
 - **Buy Scouts** to help increase the number of turns that aircraft can spend over the battlefield when conducting a given Mission (also reduce Stress)
 - each Scout costs 1SO (record the costs on Player Log)
 - each Scout will be available once each day of the Campaign
 - **Select Pilots** that are able to fly the chosen aircraft (find matching counter)
 - choose 1 Pilot for each Aircraft + 1 extra Pilot per Aircraft *type*
 - each Pilot initially has an *Average* Skill Rating
 - Skill Levels can then be *adjusted*: zero-sum, so an increase in 1 Pilot's Skill Level must be coupled to a decrease in another
 - Skill Levels can be adjusted as much as desired
 - SO points can now be spent to *promote* Pilots to higher Skill Levels (record the costs on Player Log)
 - each level increase costs 1SO point
 - Skill Levels can be increased more than once
 - Place SO Point counter (remaining SO) and Day counter (Day 1) on Track
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Start of Day – decide which targets to attack today and allocate Aircraft/Pilots

- **Draw a Special Condition card** and apply effects to *all* Missions flown during the entire day (unless otherwise stated)
- **Choose Battalion cards** from those drawn earlier that you wish to attack during the current day (one or several, free choice)
 - each card chosen represents a separate Mission that your pilots will fly today: each Mission will require you to destroy a variety of enemy units
- **Allocate Aircraft and Pilots to each Mission**
 - remember, a Pilot can only fly certain aircraft
 - remember, a Pilot and aircraft can only fly one Mission per day
 - no Pilot is ever assigned to an unmanned aircraft
 - place Shaken -2 counter on any Pilot that is currently Shaken
- **Allocate available Scouts** to Missions of the day (place Scout markers on Battalion counter(s) in the sector display)
 - only 1 Scout per Mission (i.e. per Battalion counter) per day
 - these are usually available again at the start of each new day
- **Choose first Mission of the day** and note this on Player Log
 - also, place corresponding Battalion card in Target Card Box

Mission Resolution – attack units associated with the current Battalion card

Target Bound – arm Aircraft and set up the battlefield for the Mission

- May choose to abort the Mission
 - cannot re-assign Aircraft or Pilots to other Missions of the day
 - do not gain No Fly Stress Recovery bonus
 - Pilots do not gain Stress
- Otherwise, continue to **arm each Aircraft**
 - Weapons, ECM Pods, and Fuel Tanks are Aircraft-specific (as shown on their respective cards, 1 Fuel Tank and POD maximum per aircraft)
 - the total weight of loaded weapons, pods, tanks (shown boxed in top left corner of counter) cannot exceed Aircraft Weight Points (shown on bottom left corner of card)
 - note that some sectors of the battlefield may have a Weight Point penalty
 - this can be negated for *all* Aircraft flying the current Mission at a cost of 1SO (record the cost on Player Log)
 - each weapon, pod, tank has an **Ordinance Point Cost** (shown next to its weight on counter): every group of 10 OPs (or part thereof) incurs a cost of 1SO (record the costs on Player Log)
 - note that Air-to-Air weapons have yellow stripes on them and can only be fired at enemy Helicopters

- **Draw a Target-Bound Mission Event** from the Mission Event deck
 - apply effects of top section of card
 - a Pilot's Evasive Skill reduces any hits inflicted by event
- **Check Engine Damage** for each Aircraft that has unrepaired damage
 - roll 1d10 for each: crashes on 1 or 2
(remove aircraft from Campaign and roll for Pilot Search and Rescue at end of Mission +2DRM)
- **Place terrain** hexes randomly on board (depicts Battlefield for the Mission)
 - shuffle and place each tile with arrow pointing upwards
- **Place Enemy units** randomly on board
 - roll 1d10 for each unit listed on Battalion card and place in corresponding hex (only place ½ the number of each unit type if Battalion was reduced to ½ strength due to an earlier attack)
- **Place friendly Aircraft** on any perimeter hex(es)
 - more than 1 Aircraft can be placed in the same hex
 - select the altitude of each Aircraft (H or L) and note the speed of each Aircraft as shown in table on board
 - Aircraft that must move or are chosen to be moving in their 1st turn are placed at the edge of the hex they occupy
 - Aircraft must be at H altitude if placed at a ridge edge
 - hover-capable Aircraft (speed 0) chosen to be hovering in their 1st turn are placed in the centre of the hex they occupy
- **Check Scout Success** by rolling 1d10 & cross-referencing Scout Table
 - return the Scout counter to the display if not lost
(remove from Campaign otherwise)
- **Place Loiter marker** on Track
 - default is space 5 but this can be modified by Scouts and Battalion cards
 - +2 Loiter turns for any Aircraft carrying Fuel Tank

Battlefield Resolution – Aircraft movement and attacks repeated over a series of Loitering Turns

- For each *high-altitude* Aircraft (not RQ-1, MQ-1, AC-130), **draw a Pop-Up chit** randomly from cup
 - No Enemy chits are immediately returned to cup: no effect
 - Enemy unit chits (red triangle at top left corner) are placed on a random (1d10) Battlefield hex (returned to cup if destroyed)
- **Roll 1d10 for Enemy Cover**: consult table on game board (and P13)
 - a unit is moved to Cover by placing in on any ridge edge of its host hex (if available)
 - Buildings can never take Cover

- ***Fast Pilots now act*** one at a time on the Battlefield

Altitude

- choose Altitude of the Pilot's Aircraft (and flip counter if necessary)

Movement

- Aircraft on the edge of a hex are in motion and *must* move into the adjacent hex: this costs 1 speed point
 - hover-capable Aircraft can then hover in the centre of the entered hex
(AV-88s can move to edge of hex as it has a speed of 0-2)
 - otherwise, place the Aircraft at any edge of the entered hex (except the one just crossed)
- if a hover-capable Aircraft *begins* its turn hovering (i.e. in the centre of its hex), then it can either remain hovering or spend 1 speed point to move to an edge of its *host* hex
- if an Aircraft *enters or crosses* a ridge at Low Altitude, then it must roll 1d10 for *each* ridge edge and consult

Ridge Evasion Table

- +1 for each Pilot Evasion Skill Point
- -1 for each Pilot Stress Point
- Aircraft crashes if roll deals Stress Points that make Pilot Unfit at any time during move
- do not roll for any ridge where the Aircraft *begins* its movement
- if an Aircraft leaves the Battlefield, then it will play no further part in the attack but will participate in the Home Bound step

Attacking

- an Aircraft can attack *once at any stage* before or during its movement
- Pilot declares enemy targets in any 1 hex *within LOS, attack angle (if moving), and range of the deployed weapons*
 - note: ***Independent weapons*** can be fired at one hex outside that targeted by the Aircraft
 - attack angle is clarified by schematic on board
 - a hovering Aircraft can target units in its own hex or any single hex in any direction
 - LOS is traced hex-by-hex by the shortest available path and is blocked by ridge edges for Aircraft flying at Low Altitude (only)
 - some Aircraft (A-10C, AH-64D, MQ-1, RQ-1) have the Linked capability and effectively act as spotters for each other: if one of these Aircraft has a target in its LOS, then all other Linked Aircraft can “see” the target too
- Pilot assigns Weapons *or* Cannon to the identified target(s), then can *either*:
 - attack *each* enemy unit in the Aircraft's hex with any/all *Weapons* (see P9 for details of use, altitude limitations, etc), *or*

- attack *each* enemy unit *not in Cover* in any 1 hex within LOS, attack angle (if moving), and range of the deployed *Weapons, or*
- attack any *one* enemy unit in Aircraft's hex with *Cannon, or*
- attack *each* enemy units in Aircraft's hex with *Cannon* if Aircraft is hovering
- **Procedure:** roll 1d10 for each assigned Weapon or Cannon
 - + Cannon Skill of Pilot if firing *Cannon*
 - + Strike Skill of Pilot if firing *Weapon* at target in Aircraft's hex
 - + Stand-Off Skill of Pilot if firing *Weapon* at target in different hex
 - -2 DRM if Pilot is Shaken
 - \pm Modifier on target counter (if applicable)
 - score a **Hit** if **Result** \geq **Attack Number** (top R of Weapon chit or Aircraft card)
 - 1 Hit destroys an enemy unit (flip counter)
 - remove any spent Weapon chits from Mission
- **Enemy Helicopters Move**
 - if there is any Aircraft within the attack range and the LOS of the enemy helicopter, the helicopter does not move
 - if there are Aircraft out of the attack range but within the LOS of the enemy helicopter, the helicopter moves 1 hex closer to the closest Aircraft (choose randomly if more than one)
 - may pass freely across ridges
 - otherwise, the enemy helicopter does not move
- **Enemy Units Attack**
 - *all* surviving enemy units target the closest Aircraft it is able to attack (choose randomly if more than one) (see P11-12 for unit details)
 - LOS is not blocked by ridge edges when firing at Aircraft flying at High Altitude
 - each enemy unit can only attack once per Loiter Turn
 - all attacks are declared before any are resolved

Procedure: draw # of Hit Counters = Attack number on enemy unit
(top R of chit)

- ECM Pods can negate an attack on a 1d10 roll ≥ 7
- before drawing, adjust number of Hits by the Evasive Skill of Pilot
 - each Evasive Skill Point can cancel either 1 Light Hit or reduce a Heavy Hit to a Light Hit
- drawn Hit counter has no effect if targeted Aircraft name appears on top of counter
- details of Hit counters are given on P17-19
 - damage with asterisk inflict lasting damage
 - return instant and permanent damage chits to cup

- Pilot becomes Unfit if his Stress exceeds Shaken range
 - remove all Weapons (only) from Aircraft: Pilot can no longer attack
- **Slow Pilots now act** one at a time on the Battlefield as per Fast Pilots
- **Reduce Loiter Counter** by 1 space and **continue Mission if Aircraft are still on Battlefield by repeating Battlefield Resolution steps**
 - if Aircraft are still on the Battlefield when marker moves into Bingo 6+ space, place Bingo 6+ chit onto Aircraft card(s)
 - if Aircraft are still on the Battlefield when marker moves into Bingo 10+ space, flip Bingo 6+ chit on Aircraft card(s)
 - any Aircraft still on the Battlefield when marker moves below Bingo 10+ space immediately crash

Home Bound – Mission has ended, assess strength of targeted enemy Battalions and fly home

- **Battalion is destroyed** if total value of remaining enemy units is less than or equal to the 2nd bracketed number on Battalion card
 - remove Battalion marker from Sector map, set card aside
 - note X and VPs (see RH side of card) on Player Log
- **Battalion is reduced** to ½ strength if total value of remaining enemy units is less than or equal to the 1st bracketed number on Battalion card
 - flip Battalion marker to Half side
 - note ½ and ½ VPs (↓) (see RH side of card) on Player Log
- Otherwise, Battalion remains at full strength
 - Battalion marker remains on Sector map
 - note F and 0VPs on Player Log
- **Draw a Home-Bound Mission Event** from the Mission Event deck
 - apply effects of bottom section of card
 - a Pilot's Evasive Skill reduces any hits inflicted by event
- **Roll 1d10 for each Aircraft with a Bingo counter**
 - Pilot suffers 1 Stress for each pip less than Bingo number
- **Pilot Search and Rescue:** roll 1d10 for each Pilot who was flying an Aircraft that crashed during the Mission
(not Pilots who were killed due to the draw of a Killed Hit counter)
 - +1 DRM for each Weight Point of Weapons/ECMs/Fuel Tanks that other Aircraft involved in the Mission choose to sacrifice
 - +2 DRM if Aircraft crashed during Target Bound step
 - +1 DRM if Aircraft crashed during Home Bound step
 - consult SAR table on Air Base Sheet for outcome

- **Record Pilot Stress** on Player Log for each Pilot in the Mission
 - ascribed Stress Points depend upon the attacked Battalion's Range Band (shown on Sector map)
 - reduce number of Stress Points by Pilot's Cool
- **Record Pilot Experience Points** on Player Log for each Pilot in the Mission
 - 1XP gained for flying the Mission (even if crashed or killed)
 - +1XP if Battalion was destroyed
 - +1XP if *all* non-PopUp units were destroyed
 - note that some Battalion or Mission cards can give XPs
- **Record any Lasting Damage** on Player Log for each Aircraft in the Mission, then remove damage counters
- **Check for Pilot Promotions**
 - promote if XP total \geq XP target on Pilot card
 - Newbie \rightarrow Green \rightarrow Average \rightarrow Skilled \rightarrow Veteran \rightarrow Ace
 - note new status on Player Log and record any remaining XP
 - re-check his Stress and record his new Cool Rating
- **Complete the Record of Victory Points for the Mission**
 - check VPs from Mission card if Battalion destroyed or reduced ($\frac{1}{2}$ VPs \downarrow if Battalion only reduced - gain remainder if destroyed later)
 - -1VP for each Pilot killed
 - -1VP for each crashed (manned) Aircraft
- **Return to Mission Resolution step if there are still outstanding Missions to fly today**

End of Day – Squadron maintenance and enemy manoeuvres

- All *Pilots that did not fly* during the current day **lose 2 Stress Points**
 - lose additional Stress Points = Cool Rating
- **Gain Daily SO Points** shown on Situation card (record on Player Log)
- **Move all enemy Battalions** (except Fixed) still on Sector map
 - roll 1d10 and consult table on board for action
 - lose 1SO Point for each enemy Battalion in Friendly Rear Band
 - lose 3SO Points for each enemy Battalion in Air Base Band
 - record the SO losses on Player Log
- **New Aircraft can now be bought** to replace those that crashed or are badly damaged
 - costs is 2VPs per Aircraft: must be like-for-like (can simply recycle existing card)

- total number of Aircraft cannot exceed initial Squadron size
 - if a damaged Aircraft is replaced, its undamaged parts can be salvaged and used to reduce damage on other Aircraft in the Squadron (HUD, Display, Controls, Engine, Cannon, Pylon)
- ***New Pilots*** can be brought into the Squadron to replace those that have been killed or suffered massive stress
- cost is 1VP to replace with a new Pilot of the same Skill Level
 - card mix is a limit on the available Pilots
 - cannot increase the size of the Squadron
- ***Aircraft can be repaired and Pilots wounds healed***
- cost is 1SO Point to remove 1 damage chit (record on Player Log)
 - note that even damaged Aircraft can fly Missions
- ***Rest and Relaxation:*** may spend 2SO Points (*total*) to remove 2 Stress Points (+ Pilot's Cool Rating) from *every* Pilot in the Squadron (record on Player Log)
- **Return to Start of next Day unless end of Campaign reached**
- advance Day counter and mark current SO total on track
 - check Campaign Outcome if end of final day (see Campaign card)
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