**SOME ADDITIONS AND REVISIONS TO TEST OF ARMS**

-- by Brian Train, 1997

*Test of Arms* was published by Game Designer's Workshop (GDW) in 1988 as one of the games in their "First Battle" modern tactical combat system. Later games in the series included *Battlefield:Europe* (1990) and *The Sands of War* (1992). The game suffered from poor rules editing, and some rules in the game seem to fly in the face of what most reasonable players (meaning me, and possibly you too) would consider to be reasonable simulation techniques. So, I have put together some small additions and revisions to Test of Arms that should clarify the system somewhat and add some new options.

In addition to the errata noted on the slip packed with the original game, I have noted the following corrections:

page 7, column 2, High Explosive Artillery: Delete the last two sentences in the paragraph as they are contradicted by the two succeeding paragraphs.

page 8, column 2, Chemical Warfare: change the phrase "fire hexes" to "five hexes."

Now here are some replacement and additional rules. Use as many of them as make sense to you.

**BASIC RULES**

**Attack Results - Hits on Stacks** (page 5, column 3): As the rule is written, in a direct fire attack into a stack of units in a hex, the exact unit that is affected is determined randomly. This makes it beneficial to clump together, which is nonsense: as Moe of the Three Stooges said, "spread out." However, I think the rule was put there originally to stop the enemy player potting all the individual leaders and Forward Observers on the other side, so replace the rule with this:

**Hits on Stacks:** Fire directed into a hex with a stack of units affects only the target unit (exception: see Artillery). Counters representing individuals (i.e. Infantry Leaders and Forward Observers) may not be attacked unless they are either alone in the hex or mounted in a vehicle. If a dismounted Leader or FO is stacked in a hex with a dismounted troop-class unit that suffers an X result (not two Pins), roll 1 die and the individual is killed on a 1 or 2.

**SPECIAL RULES**

**Limited Visibility** (page 6, column 2): Replace the rule with this table that shows the ranges at which targets may be seen. Units with no sights or IR sights fire with their attack factor halved at night.

**VISION TABLE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Type of Sight Used | | | |
| Condition | N | IR | II | Th |
| Daylight | 20/10 | -- | -- | -- |
| Smoke | -- | 1 | 1 | 10/5 |
| Rain | 3 | -- | 6/3 | 10/5 |
| Night | 1 | 8/4 | 8/4 | 10/5 |

N = no sights; IR = Infra-Red; II = Image Intensification ("Starlight Scopes"); Th = Thermal

x/y = range in hexes at which vehicle (x) and troop (y) units can be seen, where different

If you like Design-Your-Own (DYO) scenarios, add the following: IR and II sights can be "bought" at the rate of one Asset Point per platoon so equipped, thermal sights at two Asset Points. IR sights can be used in any scenario dated after 1950, II sights after 1970, and thermal sights after 1980.

**Chemical Warfare:**  I think this rule was made too strong in the original game - one round of phosgene and everyone on the map had to do the Funky Chicken. Make up some CHEM markers, Assume The Position, and replace the rule with this:

**CHEMICAL WARFARE TABLE**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strike | How to make | "Cloud" size | Effect |
| Light | 1 Field arty salvo | 4 hexes downwind | 1-1 attack |
|  | 1 Medium salvo | 5 hexes downwind |  |
|  | 1 aircraft bomb | target hex only |  |
| Heavy | 2 salvoes/bombs | same | 2-1 attack |

Chemical strikes last as many turns as the size of the strike: remove the most-upwind marker of each strike and move the entire "cloud" one hex downwind at the end of each turn, before new artillery missions are resolved. Attacks are made on anything caught in the "cloud" at the appropriate odds, reduced by two levels if the target is a pressurized AFV (i.e. any enclosed AFV built after 1965) or infantry in chem suits (buy these at one Asset Point per platoon in DYO scenarios), and by one level if the target is an enclosed AFV or rain is falling. Apply the Degraded Effectiveness rule to all units within a radius equal to the current size of the "cloud" in hexes.

**Air Units - Fighter/Bombers:** Add that fighter/bombers can drop illumination flares or chemical bombs in their flight paths. Each unit uses one bombing attack factor: flares illuminate the target and all adjacent hexes for one turn, and a chemical bomb creates a light chemical strike "cloud" in the target hex only.

**OPTIONAL RULES**

**Optional Artillery Rounds** (page 11, column 2):

**Smoke:**  Smoke fire missions last for one turn and the size of the screen produced depends on the firing artillery type: see the Artillery Table. Change the cost of smoke to 1 point per salvo in DYO scenarios.

**Counter-battery (CB) Fire:** This mission can be fired only by Medium artillery, and only at batteries the enemy has already used. For each CB salvo, the player rolls on the 1-3 column of the CRT. A P result means that the enemy battery is suppressed: it cannot be used the next turn and any fire mission it just conducted is cancelled. Two P results in succession mean the enemy battery is destroyed.

**Illumination:** Illumination can be fired by any type of on-map or off-map artillery. Its effect is to make the target hex and all adjacent hexes visible to all units that can draw a LOF to it at daylight ranges for one game turn (i.e. two player turns). For DYO scenarios, illumination rounds cost the same as HE.

**CHARTS AND TABLES**

Besides the new tables given above, add the following table summarizing the effects and capabilities of artillery:

**ARTILLERY TABLE**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TYPE | ROF | HE vs. AFV | HE vs. Soft | CHEM | SMOKE | ILLUM | CB, ICMDP, FASCAM |
| Light | 4 | no | 1-3 | no | 3 hexes | yes | no |
| Field | 3 | 1-4 | 1-2 | 4 hexes | 4 hexes | yes | no |
| Medium | 2 | 1-3 | 1-1 | 5 hexes | 5 hexes | yes | yes (CB: 1-3) |
| Lt Mortar | 1 | 1-(def) | 1-(def) | no | 1 hex | yes | no |
| Med Mortar | 1 | 1-(def) | 1-(def) | no | 2 hexes | yes | no |