SKIRMISH ACTION RULES
DESIGNER NOTES
Rev 10-31-16

Objective: The objective was to produce the simplest rules possible that provided realistic results in a game lasting two to three hours.

Terms/Definitions and Rules Overview: Generic terms were purposely used. For a typical 800-point game, play-ers may think of the C-in-C as a platoon leader, and the HQs as squad or section leaders. A typical force may have a platoon of infantry with several support weapons such as mortars and HMG and perhaps some additional assets like a tank, assault gun, and/or air and artillery sup-port. Players can create larger battles, but keep in mind that larger battles will take longer to play.

The Template: I was always forgetting, losing, or for some reason not having an "Artillery Template" when I need one, so I devised a foolproof system of simply fold-ing a standard 8.5x11-inch sheet of paper in half four times which yields sections of 1/16, 1/8, 1/4 and 1/2 page, and a full sheet is the full page template. Players should never be without a template again!

Defense Factors F/SR/T: The base is 0/0/0. Some troops, like specially trained elite forces and veterans were better able to make use of cover and therefore have a front value. Better trained troops were also better able to respond to flanking fire and take cover from HE, so they have Side/Rear values and finally the best troops were able to better protect themselves from Air Strikes and Artillery fire. Defense values for Hard Models reflect not only armor, but slope (i.e. armor basis), quality and other factors such as weak spots and shot traps.

Casualties: Suppressed indicates a serious degradation of fighting capability. Knocked Out (KO) means the model is Hors de Combat literally out of the fight. That can mean incapacitated, or severely wounded. For AFVs, it can mean damage that will take a long time to repair. It does not always mean killed or destroyed. Players reflect- ing on the ratio of killed to wounded must remember that KO includes wounded troops and damaged vehicles that are out of the fight but not necessarily dead. **Vehicles:** Driving into buildings could damage vehicles, which is why you must take a Qtest for damage if you try. With WWII technology, firing while moving was very challenging and even US tanks equipped with "stabilizers" were much more accurate when firing from stationary positions.
Moving targets were also harder to hit, that's why some AFVs, such as the US M18 Hellcat, placed a premium on speed. Finally, a target that suddenly pops up and moves out of Cover (i.e. Breaks Cover) is harder to hit.

TO&E: Players are really encouraged to use the TO&Es from actual historical battles. If they have invested in painting armies according to other rules systems TO&Es they are permitted to use them, by mutual agreement, as well.
The Tourney TO&E Rules are a synthesis of Na-tional TO&Es "standardized" to facilitate tournament play. In reality, TO&Es varied widely during the war and units were often under strength, so getting an exact TO&E for every country for every year, theater, and bat-tle is virtually impossible.

Points: Players will note that some seemingly similar models from different countries have different point values. Points not only reflect a model's capability but also the number available to the country -- with scarce and limited production types costing more than standard types. Players will often find that it's cheaper to take a historical mix than to take a lot of exotic models.

Ranges/Distance/Time Scales: At first glance players can tell that a constant range scale has not been applied. Playing WWII miniatures on any reasonably-sized table requires this when you consider the average rifle had an effective range of several hundred yards while tanks could fire 10 times that distance and artillery could fire at targets miles away. Therefore, the rangers used were chosen to reflect effective ranges of various weapons scaled to permit use on a tabletop. Likewise, move distance has been scaled to fit the tabletop. The time scale has not been set at a precise length of time. Firefights at the skirmish level tended to flare up and die down very quickly even when part of a big battles lasting days. Players should aim for a game of approximately six turns for maximum realism although games as short as four turns or games of eight or more turns can work well.

Air Strikes: Aircraft really have no place in a skirmish game where ranges are several hundred yards or less. Close air support as we envision it today with aircraft swooping in and laying bombs and napalm with pinpoint accuracy within a hundred yards of friendly troops. In World War II, close air support sometimes meant your troops had as much chance as the enemy of getting hit with the strike. Americans were notorious for bombing anything that moved. The British had a saying: When the RAF flies over, the Germans duck; When the Luftwaffe flies over, the British duck; but when the Americans fly over, everyone ducks.

For those players who must have airstrikes, the rules offer an abstract method to reflect the power and the hazard of using aircraft in close tactical combat. For those that think AA is too strong keep in mind that the Allied Tactical Air Forces in Normandy lost over 800 fighter-bombers during the campaign to destroy about 200 enemy tanks. This is certainly not the best of loss ratios!

The real value of the air support was in destroy-ing supply convoys, bridges, and railheads behind the lines. Players that would like to realistically incorporate that can agree before the game to have one side show up hungry, low on fuel, and short of bullets.

This can be accomplished by making the low supply side Qtest before any action, including moving or firing as their first action. Failure represents that they ran out of bullets or fuel or took time to loot or scavenge.

The most important thing is to ENJOY your gaming experience! Feel free to Contact Us with questions.