

Chadwick:

On MGs: The term heavy machine gun is used fairly widely to mean a tripod-mounted machine gun. In CD we differentiate between HMGs (bigger than rifle caliber) and MMGs (rifle caliber) but I think we are more fastidious about it than the rest of the world.

There are two reasons why some MGs hit one better than the norm: either they are HMGs or they are twin mounts, such as the twin MGs in the Pz I turret and a number of other light tanks and armored cars. Giving them two separate MGs (which we did in CD1, and maybe 2, I forget) over-rated them, and so did giving them another ROF (in my opinion), but giving them a +1 to hit seems about right.

On BH scenarios 25pdr batteries: Not correct. Two batteries each with two models (four models total).

On OT-34 flame tank: The OT-34 was indeed a regular T-34 with a flamethrower replacing the bow machine gun. However, fuel storage for the flamethrower was internal, and made the normally cramped turret all but impossible to function in. Since it was already an ST, and I didn't want to write an "RUCT" (Really Unbelievably Cramped Turret) rule, I just lowered the ROF to 0.

On early war British: The engineer stand represented the pioneer platoon, but the more I learned about the unit, the less sense it made to include it. There were only about twenty men (fewer, as I recall) and their function was not combat engineering (or even non-combat engineering) but rather repair and renovation of structures so that the battalion could quarter itself wherever it went.

The new version of the scout section was picked for ease of representation,. By the strictly number of carriers present it might justify two, but from a game point of view a recon LMG platoon carried in a carrier seemed a better way to represent the unit and how it was used. It still has the ability to scout mounted or dismounted, but it also is a great dismounted asset, with lots of firepower, to reinforce a threatened area. Lots of Bren guns in the carrier section.

I wasn't aware that the 2-pounders were towed in France, but now that you mention it I'm not surprised.

The criteria for including divisions what not what readiness category they occupied but rather whether they fought in the ETO/MTO/NA theaters. 46th had a long and varied combat career overseas. Most of the other divisions I did not include never left the UK (or went directly to the Far East). The 12th and 23rd are, admittedly, right on the line. Technically they both went (briefly) to France, but neither were deployed there as combat divisions. They left their artillery and signal troops in the UK and were used as labor troops in France. Although I believe that some of the components of the division were involved in the fighting retreat, the

divisions themselves were moved back to the UK in early June and disbanded at the end of June, and neither division was awarded France as a battle honor.

On BUA: Quite possibly. While I'm happy with the rules as written, everyone should remember that the RAW state that the standard BUA template is simply the most common encountered, but other sizes and characteristics may be appropriate to modelling specific types of BUAs, and it even recommends some BUAs being open blocking instead of blocking for visibility. A string of one-area small BUAs is well within the spirit of the rules as written, at least as I practice them.

On Rises: Except we already have a good and simple rule: if you're on the rise, people can see you, if you're behind the rise they cannot. There really isn't a need to complicate this in my mind.

To the best of my knowledge, no other game has rises which are exactly like CD TOB rises. That being the case, there will sometimes be a tendency to want to "fix" the rule by making it agree with everyone else's, but just because it's different doesn't mean it's broken. Even folks in the armed forces sometimes fall into this trap unknowingly. I've had actual tankers tell me (some on this forum, I think, but certainly some on the old mailer) that tanks should only be able to go hull down on the crest of hills -- not because that's how they were taught to do it (they emphatically were taught to never take up a defilade position on the geographic crest), but because that's what they were used to in other games.

Confining the crest to very narrow ones probably works for Europe, but less so for North Africa, where there are large areas of slight rise or slight depression which do not constitute a "hill" in game terms but which block visibility to the far side. Some features fought over in the El Alamein area are hardly elevations at all -- just enough to block line of sight.

On returning Transport to the rear: it does not count as movement toward the enemy.

The **Mark VI** anti-armor line reads:

HMG -AP 1 X 6(7)0 X X

because this deprives the weapons of a close range and so removes its ability to cause a kill on any AFV with an effect roll of 10. It was not effective enough, in our opinion, to give it that capability.

On command in recon units: All command armored cars in armored car companies which are otherwise all-recon should also be considered recon. I understand Aris' argument, and it has merit, but I think it is splitting things a bit fine for the game. Command troops in British armored car squadrons did quite a bit of scouting on their own -- so far as I know -- and the

same is true of command platoons in German armored car companies. These squadrons/companies were often split up into small platoon/troop packets.

On Soviet artillery: In game terms the Soviets never get artillery staff stands. What the Soviets have right now is the battalion command/observation stand, which has no responsibilities for moving or commanding troops (since there are battery commanders to do that now), and so he can move around and call fire all he likes, which is my understanding of what he actually did.

The batteries either fire indirect in response to his orders, or they fire direct fire (very common for Soviet guns), or they fire indirect from fairly close defilade -- reverse slopes, etc. -- which the rules now specifically allow them to do without pushing the battery CO forward. So I really don't think adding a bunch of battery-level FOs is a good idea.

On Italian SP Guns: The initial organization of the Semevente groups was two batteries each of 4 guns, so 2 models is correct. Later (as I recall) the groups were expanded to three batteries of 6 guns each, giving the group a total of 18 guns, which I rated as 4 models in the old Grey Book. Given the way we handle batter organization, I believe I would stay with 3 models now for a 3-battery group.

Good catch. The **correct movement values for the M-8** should be 48/28W, same as the M-20. Must be a pasting error. I'll put it on the next US update.

OFFICIAL

Bocage is a linear obstacle.

On advanced orders: There is no contradiction. Players declare their advanced orders in the command phase of a turn. The players declare those orders in the initiative sequence they have already rolled for the current turn -- not the next turn. (And indeed how could they?)

On smoke: The more elaborate cross-wind smoke screens are definitely the stuff of pre-planned fire missions and deliberate barrages, but everyone should note that the smoke missions available as called fires in the CD:TOB game rules are exclusively of the sort called -- at least by the US Army back in the 1980s -- "Quick Smoke."

Quick Smoke relies simply on dumping smoke rounds on a target point and letting the wind do the rest. The smoke screen is always down-wind of the impact point. Bob's right that if you are going to do anything much more elaborate than that, you aren't going to get it done on the fly. But Quick Smoke is doable by most artillery units on fairly short notice.

Jake's right on movement carry-over. There is none. Movement status is by current turn, and the turn ends and starts are distinct event boundaries.

With respect to smoke, Jake's answer is also correct. Under the rules they count as the same mission, and so you can adjust an HE mission and then switch to smoke without rerolling it.

For Frank,

so you would allow the **BH trucks away rule** for all theatres?

Steve

Yes, I would, Steve. We use it in our games from time to time now as well, although most of our games lately have been desert games.

Here is the TRANSPORT TO THE REAR rule from Benghazi Handicap
Whenever a stand dismounts, the owning player may simply remove the transport vehicle from the battlefield.

The transport vehicle may be returned to the battlefield at the start of any movement phase, when the player would declare prep fire, next to the originally transported stand. However, transport vehicles may not move the turn they are replaced on the battlefield, nor may any troops mount the vehicles or limber guns that turn.

(And then in a design note) Players should not return vehicles to play if the passengers have moved to a position the vehicle could not reach, such as the other side of a salt marsh uncrossed by a track, or an escarpment unbroken by a reentrant.

On phantom stands: Actually, in most games we seldom have more than about six phantom stands, mostly infantry, but occasionally (for the Axis) a Tiger, an 88, or a couple medium tanks -- just enough to get people's attention. Same for the Allies -- perhaps a TD, an infantry company, and/or a couple Shermans. In my experience, it takes very little to throw everything into uncertainty.

I've mentioned this before, but I saw Steve Alvin (of this list) do a wonderful thing in a game - he had a phantom US tank destroyer which he held off as his command reserve. When he put it on the table, the Germans were positive it had to be real, and milled around for about two turns in uncertainty before springing to the fact that it wasn't. Nicely done, Steve.

On morale modifier for proximity to enemy: Any AFV in proximity causes the penalty. Some may be scarier than others, but try writing THAT into a rule.

On command observation stands: I'd only differ in saying that the command/observation stand is not really the current equivalent of an FO stand -- it is the battalion commander and observation post. What were formerly separate FO stands are now broken up into small FO parties and are part of the command elements of the companies and battalions -- hence the need for a command stand to call the fire and also the lack of actual FO/spotter stands in the game.

With respect to the **Target of Opportunity reinforcements** for the Hold at All Costs Mission...

The mission statement says that it is added as an off-board reinforcement and refers to the Reinforcement rule. That rule says roll and if you roll a 7 or higher the reinforcements arrive. It doesn't make provision for two successive waves of reinforcements, so when the die roll (or turn number) triggers them, they all show up.

On command reserve: Out of LOS does not count as concealing terrain. Entrenchments do.

Rule 11.5.4 "Concealing terrain consists of vegetation, built-up-areas (BUA), entrenchments, and all man-made obstacles, except for barbed wire."

So note that, in the desert, an 88 command reserve can be placed anywhere (except within 12 inches of the enemy) provided it is placed in an entrenchment -- and the entrenchment can be held off the table until the command reserve is placed.

On rallying: Actually, you have a bigger problem than you think. You don't rally stands; you rally companies, and you can't rally a company unless the entire company is in the effect radius of the rally order. So if you scatter a battery all over the place and it becomes shaken, you have major problems getting its "mind right" again.

On Jake S: Glenn and I are making Jake the official "Command Decision Rules Arbiter," so by all means consider his rulings Official.

On medium mortars: All medium mortars should have a burst size of 1.5".

On smoke: The smoke response should read thus:

If the target point of the smoke is within LOS of the observer, the smoke is called in as a normal mission - i.e. supporting, organic, or dedicated, depending on the observer and firing battery's relationship.

If the target point of the smoke is outside LOS of the observer, the smoke is called in as H&I. The presence (or lack) of visible enemy or friendly stands within proximity to the target point is immaterial.

If the target point is within LOS - normal response roll. If it isn't, then H&I.

Normal HE mission, H&I doesn't use ammo, whether it lands or not.

Smoke, H&I - i.e. any mission outside the LOS of the observer - does not use ammo if it doesn't come in, but does use ammo if it does.

Normal HE mission, non H&I uses ammo if it comes in, and doesn't if it doesn't come in.

Smoke mission within LOS of the observer uses ammo if it comes in, and doesn't if it doesn't come in.

On Forced Back: For all those who are confused by the Forced back rule, here is the way that it works in game.

If you are forced back, one of two conditions must be true.

1) There are no visible enemy stands within LOS.

2) There are visible enemy stands within LOS.

In condition 1:

If you are not in cover, you must move toward cover. If you cannot reach cover within your BMA, you must move your full BMA toward that cover. If you CAN reach cover within your BMA, you MAY stop when you reach it.

If you are in cover already, you must move 1 inch toward your table edge. If that means you have to leave cover, you must leave cover. You may move your full BMA toward your table edge if you wish.

In condition 2:

Regardless of whether or not you are in cover:

You must move directly away from the closest visible enemy stand (that means spotted and within LOS). You must move a minimum of 1 inch, and a maximum of your BMA. If you can break LOS from ALL enemy stands, then you may stop short of your BMA. If you CAN'T, you must move your full BMA.

Effects on Movement

Stands that are forced back outside of 6 inches of their order cube, they may not follow that order. If, at the end of being forced back, they are still within 6 inches of the order cube, they may follow that order.

Effects on Fire

Stands that are forced back may not fire that turn.

Effects on Morale

For each stand that is forced back, the company suffers a -1 to their morale.

Multiple Force Backs on the same stand

If a stand suffers multiple force backs in a single PHASE, it is still only forced back once. If a stand suffers a force back over multiple PHASES, it is forced back multiple times (i.e once in Opp Fire and then again in General). Regardless of the number of times forced back, the company only suffers a -1 per stand for morale.

On rallying: 6.2.7 Rally Orders

A Rally order must be placed adjacent and touching the issuing command stand. A company may only be given a Rally order if all stands of the company are within 6 inches of the order. (Rule 21.4)

On stands at the beginning of the game: All stands at the beginning of the game are considered hidden, and they are in concealing terrain.

Even if they fire, they are still considered in concealing terrain - only if the move from that position do they lose the concealment.

On laying IDF templates: If the guns are offboard, then the perpendicular to the line of fire is also parallel to the board edge.

It doesn't say that in the rules, but that is the ruling - unless otherwise specified by the referee, off board guns are firing from your baseline, and so the templates must be put down parallel to your base edge.

If the guns are on board, then the template is perpendicular to the line of fire.

On open blocking terrain: Your spotting distance is only halved once for open blocking terrain, regardless of the number of pieces of open blocking terrain that you are looking through.

On deviation from axis of advance: Not exactly. For infantry, with a fairly modest movement allowance, it practically means that. For vehicles, quite a bit more deviation is possible. The important thing is that you end the move back within 6 inches of the original axis of advance.

The six inch variance is there to allow a unit to change its formation slightly. Otherwise, once a unit was in column, it could never shake out into line, as each vehicle would have to end up exactly on the same axis of advance.

On artillery: What we have provided instead are three powerful tools to model differences in artillery practice and effectiveness between nations.

1. Can they dedicate batteries?

That is, do they push lots of trained artillery forward observers right up to the supported maneuver companies? The US, British, and Germans do, and that's about it.

2. Do they have artillery staff stands?

Artillery staff stands allow artillery battalions to routinely fire battalion-sized missions in response to any fire request, as opposed to a multi-battery fire mission being an Event of Great Import. The British have staffs from about late '42 on, as does the US. The Germans don't get them until 1944, and then just at battalion level (while the British and US have them at higher levels as well, allowing really big fire concentrations).

3. What's the troop quality?

Veterans get a +1 modifier on the fire response table, and that's significant over time.

On close assault ratings: Platoons armed with SMGs and MP-44 assault rifles get a +1 to their ROF in close assault, which is way better. We didn't think that the M-1 had that much of an advantage at close range, so we just gave it a +1 to hit in close assault instead.

On turret armour rating: I've always tended to take either the turret front armor or the mantlet, rather than add even part of one to the other, as in most cases the mantlet's purpose is to cover the actual hole in the turret front armor where the gun is mounted. In some cases the mantlet is very small (covering a small opening), in others quite large, covering a very big opening. But there usually isn't, in my opinion, all that much overlap between hull front and mantlet in either case.

Without getting too involved in this, I will say that the CD methodology has traditionally used the weakest element of the armor on a face, rather than the average of the armor of the face. Not all strikes over the course of a turn hit the weakest element, of course, but those are the strikes which, as events, become most... interesting. (None of the strikes, of course, hit the "average" armor.)

Only when the weakest element was an insignificant (in my judgement) part of the face was the stronger element used -- for example, when the mantlet covers so much of the turret face as to render the actual turret front armor nearly irrelevant (as in the case of the Panther and Tiger I), or the "nose" armor was such a small part of the face of the tank that the superstructure front was used instead.

Originally, CD rated the turret and hull armor separately, and whenever the vehicle was not in defilade, all strikes were assumed to be against the weaker of the two, and only the hits while in defilade were against the turret. That was a more rigorous treatment, in my view, but for the sake of ease of play we have averaged the two (with a bias toward turret armor) in the current edition.

On tank-infantry team movement: The teams moves at the slower of the two movement rates.

On HIW in BUA: 1) Weapons stands are definitely HIW - they are listed as such in the data charts.

2) Rule 11.2.6 should say that:

"Personnel stands other than towed gun crews and HIW are considered similarly elevated for purposes of fire combat. All nonpersonnel stands, gun crew stands, and HIW located in a BUA are considered to be at the same level as the surrounding terrain for purposes of being spotted and for purposes of firing into or from the BUA.

3) This clears up my confusion about centers of BUA's. The center of a BUA is considered higher than the perimeter of the BUA for visibility only. (11.2.5). 11.3 states that:

"Line-of-fire (LOF) is identical to line-of-sight (LOS) (Rule 11.2) with two exceptions: First, gun crew stands and Heavy Infantry Weapons (HIW) stands in BUA are always treated as being at the height of the BUA for observation, but at the same height as the surrounding terrain for firing. Second, friendly stands, but not enemy stands, are obstacles to direct fire LOF. A stand can see through a friendly stand but may not fire direct fire through it, except for Supporting Fire below."

Therefore the basic motto is line of sight is the same as line of fire - i.e. if you can see it you can shoot it, with the exceptions listed in 11.3.

Basically, the wording is designed so that being in the center of the BUA allows you to see and shoot over the perimeter of the BUA, but without making the center of the BUA an additional level higher than the perimeter.

On 'Close' range large calibre direct fire: (33.1.2) The rule should say close or medium.

On manhandling guns: You may manhandle guns forward and then fire in the general fire phase (with -2 if hasty advance).

Rule 17.3.2 third paragraph reads:

"All of the guns of a single command or observation stand requesting fire (such as all howitzers of a single battalion) may fire as a single firing unit."

It should read:

"All of the guns of a single command/observation stand requesting fire (such as all howitzers of a single battalion) may fire as a single firing unit."

That is, the command/observation stand of an artillery battalion has the unique ability (that is to say, an ability not shared by other non-artillery battalion command stands) of being able to call all of its subordinate artillery as a single firing unit.

8.3.1 Barbed wire and cavalry: The bottom line is that the rule itself only allows dismounted personnel to pass through barbed wire, not mounted personnel.

On the Russian Zampolit: The zampolit stand in a Soviet rifle battalion is a way of compromising between no command assets below the battalion level and way too many command assets.

The lack of command assets at company level in Soviet units is not so much driven by a total lack of qualified commanders (by the end of the war, there are more officers in a typical Soviet rifle company than in a German infantry company) as it is the small size of Soviet companies, as well as a certain crudeness to Soviet infantry tactics throughout the war. If you give every Soviet two-stand company a commander, and every four-stand German company a commander, the Soviets have just gotten twice as flexible, stand-for-stand, as the Germans, and that's not right. But no command assets other than the battalion CO is not -- generally speaking -- quite right either.

So the battalion zampolit (and the name, by the way, is a contraction of the full title, meaning deputy commander for political affairs-- politruk is a more general term meaning political officer, usually of junior rank) is a nice historical hook upon which to hang some additional command capability. I think that it works fairly well in game terms as well. Anecdotally, I have found a lot of mentions of commanders sending their zampolit to a crisis point to take charge of the troops there and organize a defense or attack. The memoirs are usually by officers at a higher command level than battalion, but that's because most memoirs are from officers holding higher ranks.

As to why it's a command-infantry stand, that's easy. It enables us to add the stand without having a third type of command asset. The joint command nature of the stand limits its ability, and the extra guys can as easily represent command post security personnel.

On morale: If an enemy stand is hidden, it cannot cause a morale check, cause a morale check modifier, or remove the cover bonus to morale for stands in the open.

If an enemy stand is NOT hidden, then it does.

On flank shots: RAW any shot from outside the front arc is considered a flank shot, and since LOF is identical to LOS (with 2 exceptions that don't apply here), and LOS is traced from any point to any point, then technically if any tiny part of your vehicle is past that 90 degrees you get a flank shot.

On rubble: 1) Rubble is treated as a BUA - in that it has the same 5 sectors that a BUA would have. Any one of the sectors of a BUA can be rubbled, or all 5, or any combination thereof. Thus, one BUA could have the north, center and south sectors intact, with the east and west rubbled, while another could have the east and center sectors intact, with the north, west, and south sectors rubbled.

2) Rubbled sectors are treated as BUA sectors with regards to capacity, with the obvious exception that no vehicles may be in a rubbled sector, as it is considered impassible terrain to vehicles. Thus, a rubbled BUA could contain a maximum of 9 infantry stands.

3) Height - Rule 11.2.5 states that a Rubbled BUA sector is 1 level higher than the surrounding terrain. A low BUA could not see over a rubbled BUA, as it is also the same height. A standard or tall BUA could, however, see over rubbled BUA sectors, as they are 2 and 3 levels (respectively) higher than the surrounding terrain.