Lionel Tarr's WW2 Wargame Rules

Editor's Introduction

These rules hold a special place in my affection, in that they were the first set of 'serious' wargame rules I ever used. First published (so far as I'm aware) in Don Featherstone's 1962 book 'War Games' – the rules seemed to have everything – tanks, infantry, even aircraft.

When I cam across them sometime around 1968, if found that at last I had a game that made sense of having lots of toy Airfix tanks and infantry.

Later I discovered that Lionel Tarr had written the rules for his long running solo re-fight of the Eastern Front – apparently played over a period of 10 years). I was also surprised to learn that he started his campaign in 1959. So they have a long and respectable pedigree.

Anyway, for some entertainment I re-typed the rules to play at a weekend wargames conference run by Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group – as a sort of nostalgia trip. It was surprising just how many of those present remembered them.

I still think these are easy to understand and readily playable rules – and despite their age (45 at the time of writing) – they stand up well against more recent offerings.

So – I commend the Lionel Tarr Modern Warfare Rules to you – try them, have fun.

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MODERN WARFARE
THE RULES

Moves. Each player throws a dice to decide who moves first for each game move.

Move Distances

Arm	Road Inches	Cross-country Inches		Road Inches	Cross-Country Inches
Infantry	5	4	Self-Propelled guns	8	8
Cavalry	10	8	Jag Panther tank	8	8
Horse Artillery	8	6	Fighter aircraft	36	
Horse Transport	8	6	6 moves over table		
Motor Transport	24	18	Tactical aircraft	24	
Half-Tracks	24	24	5 moves over table		
Light Armour	18	18	Heavy Bomber	24	
Spotter Planes	18		8 moves over table		
10 moves over table			Transports	24	
Medium Tank	10	10	8 moves over table		
Heavy Tank	8	8			

Firing

Ranges

Weapon	Killing Range Inches	Weapon	Killing Range Inches	Inches
Sub-machine gun	3	88 mm field gun	60 HE	36 AP
Flame (man-pack)	3	88 mm a/aircraft	40	
Flame (tank)	6	105 S.P. gun	80 HE	50 AP
A/tank projector	6	122 S.P. gun	100 HE	60 AP
Rifle	12	75mm field gun	60 HE	30 AP
Light machine gun	15	3.7 cm armd. car gun	22	
Heavy machine gun	18	75mm tank gun	30 AP	60 HE
15/20 mm cannon	18	88 mm tank gun	36 AP	60 HE
5 cm mortar	1 to 9	76 mm tank gun	30 AP	60 HE
8 cm mortar	6 to 24	85 mm tank gun	36 AP	60 HE
12 cm mortar	6 to 60	82 mm recoilless a/tank gun	30 AP	
45 mm a/tank gun	25			
Twin-barrelled heavy machine gun, dive bombers or ground strafing.	18			

Calculation of casualties (small arms). 6 rifles or 3 sub-machine guns; 1 light m/g; 1 heavy m/g or 1 mortar bomb equal one dice and the number scored on that dice is the number of hits scored if the target is in open. Troops under cover in buildings, trenches, woods, etc., only suffer quarter-rate (except if mortar fire when it is half-rate). When opposing forces meet, each throws a dice and the highest has the right to fire first. This is excepted in the case of flanking (enfilade) fire which always take precedence. Troops enfiladed thus are always subjected to *two* volleys before being able to return fire.

Artillery firing (including mortars). This kind of fire-power can come under one of three headings:

        1. Open sight firing.
        2. Observed firing.
        3. Map firing.

        For complete control and to obtain results that most resemble reality the following conditions apply:

        1. *Open sight firing*. In cases where the target is visible from the site of the gun or mortar - fire for effect of hit by using burst-circle or points system to determine casualties (see below).

        2. *Observed fire.* An observer must be in a position where he can see the target and he will direct the guns on to the target (as the gunners are not in a position to see it for themselves). One dice is thrown for each gun to decide the range and a 5 or 6 is necessary to obtain that range. If, however, one observer is observing for more than one gun, only one gun of that group needs to range to enable *all* guns of that group to fire. If that observer is killed, of course, *all* guns have lost range instead of only one gun if he were only observing for that one.
        When the target is one specific object such as a house or a machine-gun post the dice now thrown to see effect of fire also has to be a 5 or 6 for a direct hit. If lower number is scored the object at which the gun is aimed has been missed by 6 inches and a burst-pattern placed over the point of impact decides casualties.

        3. *Map firing*. Observers are not required for this type of fire which is directed by Gun Position Officers on to unseen areas (that is, areas unseen by these officers). This is mainly used for harassing only, but should the area concerned contain troops, vehicles, stores etc., losses can probably be inflicted. Ranging rounds have to be thrown as in Section 2 above, but a further 6 is required to hit a specific objective or to inflict losses in men. If less than 6 is scored use burst-pattern as above.

Targets ranged. It is necessary only to range a target or area once from any one gun position, as weapons once ranged can switch targets accurately. But should a gun be moved than ranging rounds must be fired again. Similarly, a switch right or left, and an increase or decrease in range, can be made without a ranging round.

Burst-pattern. This is a circle of card or perspex of a specified diameter (according to weapon concerned) which is placed over point of impact when hit is scored. Everything or everyone within that circle is considered hit. Sizes of circles are as follows: 75 mm: 3 inches; 88 mm: 4 inches; 105 mm: 5 inches; 50 mm mortar: 3 inches; 80 mm mortar: 3 inches; 120 mm mortar: 4 inches; tactical bomb: 5 inches; heavy bomb: 6 inches; anti-personnel mine: 3 inches.

Material damage. To determine material damage the following points system is used: All weapons have a *strike points value* depending on their calibre or power and all appropriate material has a *defence points value*, based on strength and speed of moving vehicle, for example.. To decide whether a hit has been scored, three dice are

thrown by firer simultaneously, their total score plus the particular weapon's *Strike Points Value* must equal or exceed the *Defence Points Value* to destroy that objective. (Thus, and 88 mm Field Artillery piece with a strike points value of 5 is trying to hit a reinforced blockhouse with a defence points value of 18. The firer throws his three dice and scores 5, 5 and 3 - a total of 13 plus his 5 strike value gives him 18 also - thus the blockhouse is hit and destroyed.)

Individual targets attacked from the air carry a maximum points value of 20, but a town, as a whole, has only its normal defence value.

	Weapon/machine	Strike	Defence
	Infantry a/tank rifle	3	-
	Inf. a/tank rocket projector	6	-
	Inf. a/tank gun 3.7:4.5	4	15
	Inf. a/tank gun 88 mm	5	15
	Field artillery 7.2	4	13
	Field artillery 8.8	5	13
*	Self-propelled gun 7.5	4	14
*	PzKw III tank 7.5 gun	4	14
*	PzKw V tank 8.8 gun	5	16
*	T34 tank 76 mm gun	4	15
*	T34 tank 85 mm gun	5	16
*	T60 tank 45 mm gun	3	14
*	Self-propelled gun 8.8 cm	5	15
*	Self-propelled gun 122 mm	5	15
*	Armoured car 3.7 cm	3	13
	Fighter aircraft	6	22
	Tactical bomber	6	20
	Medium/heavy bomber	10	22
;	Twin-barrel A/A cannon	4	-
	A/personnel mine	As per burst pattern.	
	(1 dice is thrown each move per tank or man whilst on the minefield. 5, 6 means hit an further dice are thrown to discover effect.)		
	Soft vehicles (lorries etc.)	-	7
	Buildings	-	7
	Reinforced blockhouses	According to weapons therein	18

* All armoured vehicles have defence points for their thicker frontal armour when hit (plus 2 points). They lose 2 points when hit on the side and lose 3 points when hit in the rear.

; Can engage aircraft which is ground-strafing.

Air strikes. Individual targets attacked from the air carry a defence points value of 20 - a dice throw that scores below this figure means a miss of 6 inches and a burst-pattern is used to ascertain casualties. Troops inside buildings hit by bobs are considered killed. Troops shot-up from the air suffer normal casualties.

Flame-throwers. When used against infantry equals one sub-machine gun. When ranged upon tank from rear and within its specified range it takes a strike points value

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of 6. When used against houses, the house is automatically 'fired' and troops within have dice thrown for them as usual. Any survivors retire via the opposite side of the house to that from which the attack came - if this is not possible, then all survivors are also destroyed.

Mines. Minefields are marked upon the map of the player who has them. They are laid by engineering troops with each man laying 1 inch to each side of himself and he moves at a quarter of his normal rate. personnel thus engaged are non-combatants but are armed to defend themselves if they are attacked. There are two types of mines - anti-tank and anti-personnel. Anti-tank have a strike points value of 6 per tank for as long as the tank is actually on the minefield. Anti-personnel mines have a burst pattern as ruled and a dice is thrown each move for as long as the troops are on the minefield. troops who do not move are safe. All vehicles and troops crossing minefields only move at half their normal rate.

Smoke. All burning material produces smoke. A smoke canister fired by a tank, for example, produces smoke for a distance of 6 inches from where the canister lands. A tank or building that is on fire produces smoke for a distance of 9 inches. This smoke is represented by coloured cotton wool about 6 inches in height and it lasts for a specific number of moves depending upon wind strength (see below). If wind is *slow* smoke remains in position for 4 moves, if wind is *medium* for 3 moves, and if wind is *fast* for only 2 moves.

Wind dice throw: 1 or 2 means from north,3 means south, 4 means east and 5 or 6 means west. Dice for strength: 1/2, slow; 3/4, medium; 5/6 strong.

Hand-to-hand fighting. When troops come into actual contact in this fashion, one dice per six men involved is thrown. Casualties are half dice score. this procedure continues until one of the two forces is at half its original strength, then morale rule (see below) applies. If men stand fast, melee continues under same conditions.

Morale. When half the number of men attacked are killed, a dice has to be thrown to determine the morale of the remainder. 1 or 2 = men stand fast, 3 or 4 = an orderly withdrawal and 5 or 6 = routed. When troops are routed they move at double their normal rate until baseline or friendly troops are reached (whichever is the nearest). Mechanical vehicles move at normal rate.

Concealment. When troops or equipment are in positions out of sight of enemy they need not be placed upon the table but must be noted upon their commander's map. Night movements are similarly concealed and take place in one move which incorporates all the eight moves of darkness. The periscope (see separate note) must be used at all times to obtain vision from the actual model height on to all troops, vehicles, etc., possibly hidden by undulating ground, trees, etc. Such troops (excepting gunners and mortarmen) cannot fire and remain concealed unless sniping is carried out.

Day/night. Daylight is deemed to be the first 14 moves of the game; night is the next 10 moves - the whole equals 24 hours, or one day.

Paratroops. The use of paratroops or glider-borne troops is subject to the following conditions:

      1. 18 men per aircraft.

      2. 1 piece of equipment (i.e. gun and limber, light truck and crew etc.) per glider.

      3. Paratroops land on Dropping Zone and gliders on Landing Zone en masse and not deployed. They cannot fire whilst dropping, and dropping itself counts as one move. Para transports when hit by flak are brought down and one dice is thrown for every six men on board - the number thrown represents paratroopers who are uninjured

Motorised infantry. When vehicles containing troops are attacked, first use the points system to determine if lorry is hit and destroyed then carry on in the same way as for paratroopers in a plane hit by flak (see above).

Barbed wire. Dannert wire is laid by two men in normal moves. Wire halts infantry one move and it can be crushed flat by tank making pathway same width as tank for infantry to pass through.

Trenches and foxholes. Troops digging these can take two moves to dig a trench big enough for their personal use.

Street fighting. Assaulting infantry can cross a street in their normal move but must split it into two thus - if their move is 5 inches then they move 2.5 inches, halt for firing (their own and enemy) and then survivors carry on remaining 2.5 inches. This is to give defenders chance to fire. Defending forces suffer half casualties when under rifle fire, and two-thirds casualties when under heavier fire such as machine guns. Mortar fire gives one-quarter casualties.

Visibility. At commencement of battle throw dice for wind (already covered) and for visibility. These situations decided by dice prevail throughout that particular battle. Dice throw of 1/2 means rainy, overcast conditions; throw of 3/4 means normal conditions; throw of 5/6 means bright, sunny day. If rainy and overcast, throw dice again. 1/2 means visibility of 28 inches, 3/4 visibility 34 inches, 5/6 means visibility of 60 inches.

Bombers hit. When loaded up and hit, a bomber can either blow up or jettison its load. One dice decides 1-3 it jettisons and 4-6 it blows up. When jettisoning - if by a Stuka the bomb is dropped immediately under where the plane is hit, if by medium/heavy bomber bombs drop in line directly along route of aircraft. To decide position, a marker is dropped from bomb-bay under the plane, from pint where this marker touches the ground measure 8 inches and this is the position of last bomb, casualties decided by dice and burst-pattern based on strike value.

Final Assessment. if the battle is part of a campaign, at end of game count casualties both in vehicles, artillery and men. They are then divided accordingly: one third of them are totally destroyed and out for good, one third are considered hospitalised and recover in 6moves from end of game, whilst one-third are replaced by reserves who join main body in three moves from the end of battle.