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# ***OLD FRITZ***

**ONE BRAIN CELL ARMY LEVEL RULES**  
**for the Seven Years War In Europe**  
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## AN INTRODUCTION TO ONE BRAIN CELL RULES

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These rules were first devised some considerable time ago as an alternative to the mainstream of tabletop figure wargames, to find, through a different approach a radically faster method for calculating the results of inter-unit combats. In many other sets of rules for figure battles the more common method for calculating the result of combat might follow this sequence;

- i. Move the unit within firing range.
- ii. Calculate the number of casualties received and inflicted by firing (if any).
- iii. Calculate the effect on morale of the firing, e.g. in terms of percentage casualties, or drops in morale etc.
- iv. Roll dice and consult some sort of morale chart to determine the influence of the unit's morale on its subsequent actions.
- v. Usually following a good morale result, units in some games are permitted to close to some sort of hand to hand combat, which is then calculated, giving a result both in terms of numbers of casualties and sometimes further morale effects.
- vi. Occasionally the melee calculation is followed by a further test for morale conditions with a die roll - for the effects on subsequent actions.

Now, this sequence does not always appear in exactly this form in every set of wargame rules, but it is an indication of how many sets adopt a common basic approach to the combat resolution problem for 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century battles.

It was plain to me that if these steps could be made simpler then the game would obviously be much faster - but that there also would come a point when each step would reach a state of 'minimum simplicity', beyond which it ceases to be an independent step at all and have little or no value in the structure of the set of rules. In addition, no matter how much you may simplify the six steps, there are still six steps to work through. The next stage was to reduce the number of steps - but which step to cut out? And why?

Before answering these questions, let us look at what the 'Six Step Model' means in terms of time and motion of the game itself. An 18<sup>th</sup> century battle might have 50 or more battalions a side, of which maybe 20 a side or so are engaged at any one time. At an optimistic rate of 30 seconds per step, it would take about an hour to process an typical move - not counting time spent on moving figures and command and control. And when you think about it, is it reasonable to take an hour to resolve 1-5 minutes of combat actions (which represents the sort of time slice of a normal wargame move)?

The solution a lot of players and clubs find for this is to have a large number of experienced players using a well known and rigid legalistically-defined set of rules and accepting the shortcomings of the rules as a necessary sacrifice in order to fight a historically realistic sized battle. Obviously experienced players can process moves much faster. The disadvantage with this approach is that the inexperienced player is thereby marginalised and discouraged - and not every group is big enough to make this practical.

So, perversely, I decided to design a game that allows a few players to fight battles, in a reasonable time and without the need for very large numbers of brain cells on the part of the players.

In approaching the design, I redefined the problem by looking at it from the other end. I asked the question “what information do I want the rules to provide about a given combat?” The answer was threefold:

- i. Who won?
- ii. What were the casualties?
- iii. What were the changes in the relative positions of the units involved (i.e. who ran away?)?

This also led me to ask another question; “Do I mind how this information is arrived at?” In answering this, I had to admit that when one views the battle from the point of view of a senior commander the minor details of battalions Vs battalion combat was an irrelevance - in other words the answer is “No”.

So here is the start of a system which is a little different. On the one hand we should be able to input the combat situation (strength, size of unit, quality, morale, tactical positions etc.) and at the end we have the three key pieces of information required. This is no different in aim from the Six-Step Model, but the calculation need not be sequential in quite the same way.

It has often struck me - and many other people too, I am sure - that the crucial thing in a close combat or firefight is the state of the participant’s morale. Some units were beaten before they started, and some units’ effectiveness depended upon their reputation among their enemies. An assumption in the normal wargame is that the results of combat follow a rigid cause and effect progression - that is, a unit will run away because it has taken heavy casualties and therefore has low morale. In the system I am suggesting these calculations need not necessarily be carried out in that order.

Using this system, the close combat would determine the winner first, and the detail of casualties etc. is determined afterwards. This might seem strange at first, but it does have advantages. For example we know from reading about battles that units often take their greatest casualties in the pursuit after they have broken, and we also know that the most casualties from musketry occur when both sides engage in a standing firefight and neither will give way. We know that often cavalry would not close and cross sabres unless their opponents had shown signs of recoiling or running away first.

In these examples, we are actually better placed to assess casualties quickly if we know who won first.

This would be determined primarily by the morale status of the units, with factors for states of disorganisation, casualties taken so far etc.

The results of combat can be arrived at by reference to a single combat results table giving who won, how decisively they won, and the casualties inflicted, in one fell swoop. This should meet the objectives outlined above, in that we have moved from a Six Step Model to a One Step Model - or to give them their more correct (and now generally accepted) title:

***One Brain Cell Rules.***

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The rules you have in your hand are an attempt to put that concept into practice. I hope you feel up to giving them a try and find them a refreshing change.

Jim Wallman  
Streatham 1992

## 1. SCALES

*Each bound represents* approximately 10 minutes on the battlefield.

This time interval has been chosen because the majority of close actions would have been resolved in this time or less. It also roughly approximates to the time taken for infantry to close from extreme to close artillery range. There is therefore no need for detailed treatment of the minutiae of actions during an assault, it is swept up in a single calculation.

*The ground scale* is 1mm = 2 metres. Figure bases and unit frontages should be consistent with this scale and the actual numbers of men in the historical unit. The figures are merely convenient representational markers, so any appropriate size of figure can be used to meet your taste and to fit the unit frontage. That said, these rules have been written with 15mm figures in mind.

*Each figure represents* between 50 and 60 men. Most battalions can be represented in the same way, i.e. a group of 10-15 figures, usually 12. There is no special reason for this, except that it is convenient for those with whom I play the games.

For artillery, the gun models are merely representative. The number of figures of gun crew represent the number of guns in the artillery unit.

*Frontages:*

Infantry; Allow 4 men per metre, hence a 500-man battalion would have a frontage of 125 metres or 6 cm and be represented by 10 figures.

Cavalry; Allow 3 men per metre frontage for battle cavalry.  
Allow 1 man per metre frontage for light cavalry.

## 2. COMMAND AND CONTROL

It is important to remember that the player in this game is not a battalion or regimental commander but in command of a corps/wing or a even whole army.

In this case it is important to plan properly and to issue orders. Order issuing takes time as does the dissemination and comprehension of orders.

Any force is divided up into realistic sub-units (usually defined as 'wings' or 'corps' of an army).

These are normally given orders as a whole, such as “Attack the enemy Centre”, “Hold the ridge position” etc. All the battalion-sized units in that formation act accordingly. In some cases the corps/wing may consist of two lines which may engage in successive waves. Whatever the orders, they are not normally altered easily - use the following times as an example:

Allow 2 minutes per battalion/cavalry regiment to be ordered.

Allow ten minutes for the overall order.

Allow ten minutes for transmission of orders.

***For Example:*** General Hermann von Amstradt, commanding the right wing of the army wants to launch an attack on the Austrian position on the ridge to their front. His force consists of 12 battalions and 2 regiments of cavalry, of which he is sending half to attack.

*10 minutes to write the order*

*10 minutes to transmit the orders*

*14 x 2 = 28 minutes for basic orders (even those not moving need to be informed of the plan and their part in it)*

*48 minutes in total = 5 bounds..*

These may seem to be a long time, but you must remember that the style of battle in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was leisurely and slow moving by modern standards.

You may alter these times to reflect the quality of individual generals if you feel it is appropriate as follows:

Exceptional general	60% time
Good general	80%
Average general	100%
Poor general	150%
Useless general	200%

**LIMITATIONS:** Units in close combat may not accept new orders (but you still have to count the time as above)

Generals in close combat may not issue new orders or send/receive messages.

### 3. MOVEMENT

Line infantry	12" (600 metres)
Grenz/Croats etc	14" (700 metres)
Medium guns	12" (600 metres)
Heavy guns	10" (500 metres)
All Cavalry walk at	18" (900 metres)
Hussars & Lt Dragoons trot at	45" (2250 metres)
Cuirassier, Gensdarmes, & Dragoons trot at	36" (1800 metres)

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## 4. LIMITS TO MOVEMENT

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### IT TAKES ONE COMPLETE BOUND TO:

- wheel or pivot through more than 45 deg;
- limber or unlimber medium guns.

### IT TAKES HALF A BOUND TO:

- Wheel or pivot through up to 45 deg;
- turn into line from column,
- or to column from line;
- about turn;
- cross a linear obstacle;
- engage in a close combat.

### IT TAKES TWO BOUNDS TO:

- To limber or unlimber heavy guns.

### TROTTING CAVALRY MAY NOT CHANGE DIRECTION AT ALL.

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## 5. CLOSE ACTION/COMBAT - THE PROCESS

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The result of a close combat is determined by a single comparative die roll. This die roll will model all those imponderables in battalion to battalion combat such as order of fire, nerve, morale, luck, accuracy etc.

A typical sequence of action would be as follows:

- a. If the unit's or wing's orders insist upon it, one side will declare that they intend to attack their opponents line or position. The forces involved are moved to within 2«" (120 metres) of each other and infantry musket smoke (cotton wool) represented if appropriate.
- b. Each side involved will roll one die (d10), either per battalion/regiment, or other convenient grouping of the force, faced off with the enemy grouping or units. Essentially, the relative scores on the dice are examined in each case, and the highest score wins. Having determined the winner, the exact implications of a win/lose result is determined in the combat results table.

- c. If the units involved have a reasonable proportion of their movement allowance remaining, then they may finish their movement (where it is physically possible and not inconsistent with the combat results). Should a unit be beaten and instructed to withdraw or run away, this is carried out on the following bound. Alternatively, if an attack has taken its entire move to reach the enemy, then clearly both the combat rolls and the results can appear in the following bound.

## 6. CLOSE ACTION/COMBAT - THE CALCULATION

The combat is decided by the roll of one d10 per side, and taking the difference in the scores.

The results are reflected in three ways:

- a. Enforced reaction by the unit.
- b. Permanent disorganisation/casualty. This is represented by removing figures.
- c. Temporary disorganisation/exhaustion/disruption markers (I usually use little green counters).

The little green counter covers a multitude of sins, in that it represents all the various temporary causes of reduced effectiveness of a unit. Similarly, the casualty represents not only a loss of gross manpower, but any other permanent loss, such as key officers/NCOs.

The green counters are accumulated, and can only be removed while resting. One counter can be removed every turn the unit does nothing at all.

Troop quality is a highly subjective assessment, and I do not intend to get into a controversial 'National Characteristics' debate here. The rules cater for a difference in quality, rather than an absolute quality rating - so players can use whatever rating they like. My quality ratings are given in section 9 below.

### ADDITIONS TO DIE ROLLS:

Outnumbered or overlapped frontage	-1
Outnumbered by 2-1 or more	-3
Outnumbered by 3-1 or more	-5
Enemy to rear of unit and engaging	-6
Each 10% casualty in battle so far	-2
Each green counter on unit	-3
Tactical advantage (usually determined by the umpire)	from +1 to +3
Cavalry fighting a heavier type of cavalry	-2
Each quality grade higher than enemy	+2
Hussars/Lt Dragoons vs infantry	-3
Dragoons etc. Vs infantry	-2

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## 7. RESULTS TABLES

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There are three distinct sets of results,

infantry vs infantry,

cavalry vs cavalry

cavalry Vs infantry.

They only vary slightly. Take the difference in the die scores.

### INFANTRY VS INFANTRY

- |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| +4 or over   | The unit is unaffected by the action. Continue to obey orders. If the enemy are withdrawing but not running away, take the casualty test (see below). If the enemy is running away take a pursuit test (see below).                          |
| +1 to +3     | The unit morale is still quite good, but it will not proceed further this bound. Take one green counter and a casualty test.                                                                                                                 |
| ZERO         | Both sides will stand and spend a bound in firefight. Both must take a green counter and a casualty test.                                                                                                                                    |
| -1 to -7     | Withdraw in good order at half normal speed. Take one green counter and a casualty test.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 8 to -15     | Run away in disorder. Move at 20" (1000 metres) per bound, taking one casualty per move running (representing desertion) - two per bound if 'unreliable' troops. In addition take two green counters. If pursued take casualty test as well. |
| -16 or under | The unit disintegrates and deserts. If surrounded it will surrender. If unreliable foreigners (i.e. Saxons in Prussian service) they will change sides, and take a casualty and two green counters.                                          |

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**CAVALRY VS CAVALRY**

- +4 or over      The unit is unaffected by the action. If the enemy are withdrawing or running away then pursue them. If pursuit is not required take a pursuit test. If the enemy are withdrawing and the unit follows up, take one casualty and two green counters. If the enemy is running away then take no casualties and two greens.
- +1 to +3      The unit morale is still quite good, but halted 2«” from enemy and it will not proceed further this bound. Take one green counter.
- ZERO      Stand off, neither side has the nerve to close. Both must take a green counter.
- 1 to -7      Withdraw in good order at half trot speed, or walk if a manoeuvre is necessary. Take two green counters. If pursued take one casualty and three green counters.
- 8 to -15      Run away in disorder at full trot speed. Taking one casualty per move (representing desertion) - two per bound if being pursued. In addition take four green counters.
- 16 or under      The unit disintegrates and deserts. If surrounded it will surrender. If being pursued, the pursuing unit will also be dispersed, since the action will have dissolved into a number of individual chases and skirmishes. May not regroup in this battle.

**CAVALRY VS INFANTRY**

Score	Cavalry	Infantry
+4 or over	Pursue defeated infantry (take pursuit test). Take 2 greens and no casualties.	Remain steady and obey orders. No greens or casualties.
0 to +3	Halted at musket range. Take casualty test and two greens.	No advance, take one green and no casualties.
1 to -7	Withdraw up to half a walk move and take a casualty and 3 green counters.	Withdraw for half a bound and take one green. If pursued convert to run away result below.
8 to -15	Run away for a trot move, take four green counters & a casualty test.	Run away. Take two green counters and a casualty. If pursued take 3 green counters and 2 casualties.
16 or under	Disperse. Unit blown away by musketry.	Unit dispersed. Pursuing cavalry (if any) dispersed also, chasing down individuals, looting baggage etc.

**CASUALTY TEST**

This is taken as directed in the results tables above.

Roll 1d10 per 6 figures firing (i.e. usually 2 dice per bn):

Additions:

Troop quality	Enemy Withdrawing	Enemy Routing	Enemy Standing
A	+3	+1	+4
B	+2	-	+3
C/D	+1	-1	+2
E/F	-	-2	+1
G	-1	-3	-

Each green counter on firer -2

Target in effective cover of some sort -2

Add together the scores from each battalion firing, and the results are:

- Score <5 = No effect
- 5-14 = 1 casualty
- 15-24 = 2 casualties
- 25+ = 3 casualties



## 9. TROOP QUALITY

The following is how we define our troop classifications:

- A. Superlative troops of the highest calibre. Only a very small proportion of any army.
- B. Elite units, usually guard or the equivalent.
- C. Good or very experienced line units.
- D. Standard well trained units
- E. Trained and disciplined but of generally low quality.
- F. Poorly trained or ill disciplined.
- G. Poorly trained and ill disciplined (i.e.. Freicorps).

## 10. SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS

This is normally neglected in wargames, but in the interests of authenticity should be included.

There should be one wagon model per battalion or 'battery', two per cavalry regiment, plus an army reserve of one wagon for every three major units. Each model represents 6-10 wagons.

Since these wagons are primarily for food and fodder they will have little or no immediate tactical significance to the course of the battle other than the most important one of getting in the way, and slowing up the army's movement as a whole. Armies that leave their wagons unguarded or uncovered do not last very long.

## 11. PLAYING THE GAME

The interpretation of the rules is left to the players and/or the umpire if available. Players are strongly recommended the books '*The Army of Frederick the Great*' and '*The Army of Maria Theresa*' both by Chris Duffy, if you can get hold of them. Sadly they are currently out of print.

These rules depend totally upon players feeling and playing to the spirit of the period, and not to the word of the rules. Where the rules produce unhistorical results, discard them or adjust them at will.

If you have any comments or queries on the rules, then please write to:

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