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Standard Rules for the Variable Combat System

[1.0] Introduction

The Variable Combat System (VCS) provides game designers with the ability to use one, standard game system in a number of different major combat operations. Many factors contribute to the decisions of a commander, and unknown variables have to be weighed, minimized, and factored into the allocation of force. VCS highlights the major factors affecting different battles, providing players with choices similar to what an operational commander might face. To help simulate the unknown factors present in any battle, inspection of enemy units is forbidden at all times except during combat resolution, and note taking is never allowed.

[2.0] Game Equipment

[2.1] The Game Map

Each series game map is represented under a hexagon grid that regulates area and placement of the participating game pieces (units). These maps vary in size, depending on the simulation.

[2.2] Charts and Tables

There are player aids to help regulate movement, combat and special conditions that will affect the turn by turn flow. These may be on the player aid charts printed on the map and also on the loose card stock charts included in the set.

[2.3] Game Pieces

The die-cut cardboard game pieces, (counters), represent the participating units that actually fought in the battles. The unit designations printed on the counter identify the particular branch and association that they belong to within that nationality.

[2.31] Units

The Variable Combat System central theme stresses unit organization. The unit designation numbers are the main tools in this and require that players keep unit members close to one another to achieve maximum results in combat.

The unit designation numbers are printed at the top of the unit and are organized so that the lower parent affiliation is on the left and the higher affiliation on the right (e.g. division/corps, regiment-brigade/division, battalion/regiment/brigade or company/battalion, depending on the scale of the simulation.).

The color band printed at the top of parent units is an additional visual aid to help identify prime units and to help keep them acting together.

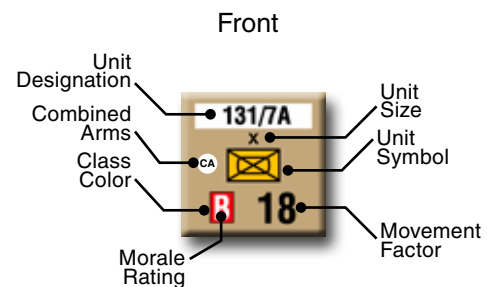
[2.32] Unit Size

Just under the numbered unit designation is the unit size symbol. I=company, II=battalion, III=regiment
X=brigade, XX=division, XXX=corps

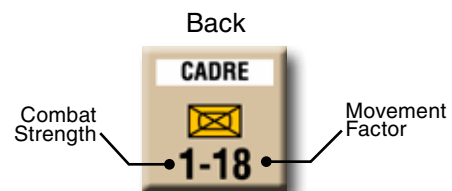
[2.33] Unit Types

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|---------------------------|
| | Infantry | | Mechanized Infantry |
| | Reconnaissance | | Self-propelled Artillery |
| | Artillery | | Tank or Tank Destroyer |
| | Engineer | | Armored Engineer |
| | Warship | | Ranger or Special Service |
| | Garrison | | Anti-tank |

Sample Mech-Infantry Unit



This British brigade pulls a red chit when engaging in combat for the first time. Use the "B" rating when reading the combat strength. Both brigades of the 7th Armored division will have the white identification band. If playing a division scale simulation, the banding would signify corps affiliation.



Cadres

Cadre units are the last step in an organization. They represent the last trained remnants to survive combat losses. Formations that have one or more of their members at cadre status may not use the Integrity bonus in combat. Cadres function and stack as battalions with a fixed strength of one.

Battalions

Battalions use a fixed combat strength, exert no ZOC and are not eligible for replacement.

If playing a Battalion scale simulation, the units would look much like the brigades or regiments with a color class and letter rating.

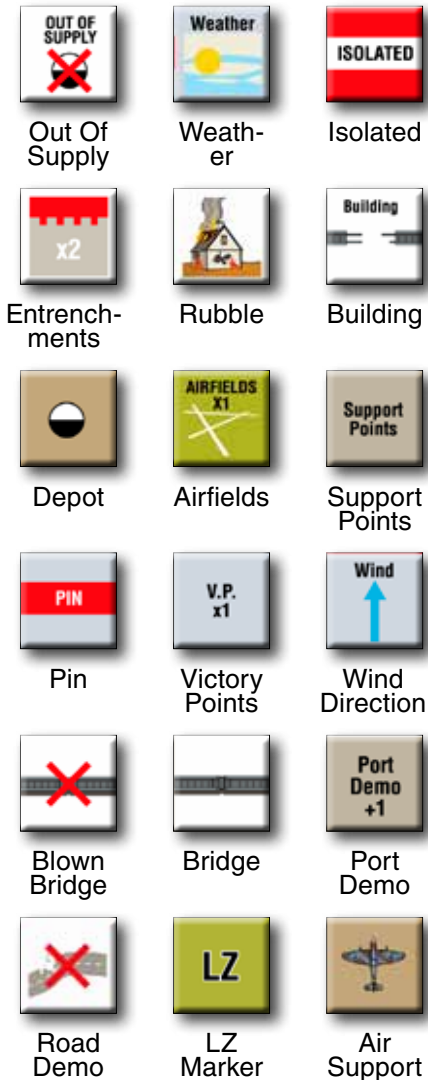


Corps

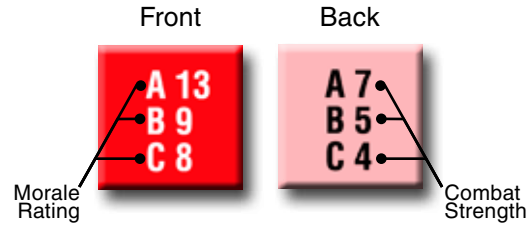
Corps level simulations in this series will be classed and rated similar to the regimental and battalion examples except representing much more manpower and equipment. A Corps is organized into Army sections and act under Army control.

[2.34] Markers

Here are some of the series markers you will find in the games. Additional markers not pictured here may be included in the exclusive series game rules.



Morale Strength Chits



Randomly determines the combat strength for parent units that have a letter rating within a class colored box printed on the lower left of the unit.

Morale Class: The size and equipment that makes up the unit expressed as a color and indicating which strength marker is drawn:

Red=Large; Blue=Medium

Morale Rating: The skill and training of a unit in combat:

A=Very Good; B=Good; C=Mediocre

[3.0] Setting up the game

Units that set up at the beginning of the game are marked with set up codes and follow the scenario chart listing included in the set.

Units that enter later as the game progresses have a different code and are sorted by game turn of arrival.

Optional or Variable units may enter the game only under conditions listed in the simulation exclusive rules set.

Once sorted, place all of the accounting markers on their respective charts, i.e. Weather marker on the weather chart, Support point markers on the tracks at the correct starting numbers and so on until the beginning placement is complete.

[4.0] Sequence of Play

[4.1] The Game Turn

The side having the initiative will play first and is called the Phasing Player.

The simulation designates the phasing player on a case by case basis.

The opposing side is designated as the Non-Phasing Player. At the end of the phasing player turn the roles are reversed and follow the same sequence.

Some unit types are not represented in all simulations. e.g. Naval units will not be found in landlocked simulations.

At the end of one round the Game Turn Marker is advanced.

[4.2] Preparation Stage

[4.21] Weather Phase

Roll dice for weather conditions, ground conditions and/or wind direction according to the exclusive rules for each individual simulation

[4.22] Accounting Phase

- a. Adjust Tactical, Airfield, Support Point and Victory

Point tracks to current totals.

- b. Special Air and Sea mission planning.
- c. Port demolition and Rubble markers are adjusted.
- d. Mutual Variable Reinforcement Segment. Complete this step per the exclusive rule set instructions.

[4.23] Air and Sea Stage

- a. The phasing player stages units preparing to execute parachute and glider missions.
- b. Ships take eligible units for transport and readies ship units for transfer between ports.
- c. Port assault forces deploy to sea hexes outside the target port.

[4.3] Phasing Player Turn

- a. Mutual Supply Phase: Adjust current status of all combat units.
- b. Replacement Phase: Spend available replacement points on eligible depleted or eliminated units.
- c. Movement Phase: All friendly units may now move within the limits of the terrain chart. Reinforcements arrive and move onto the map. Reserves are designated.
- d. Combat Phase: Combat may take place between adjacent units phasing player's discretion.
- e. Reserve Phase: Predesignated reserve units that have not moved may now be moved. No combat takes place in this phase.
- f. Engineering Phase: All engineering functions take place within this phase.

[4.4] The Non-Phasing Player Turn

Follow the exact procedure as the phasing player in the sequence. Non available functions are ignored.

At the end of this player turn, one full game turn has passed and the marker on the Game Turn Record Track is moved forward one space. Play proceeds until the end of the scenario and Victory Points are counted and a victor is declared.

[5.0] Movement

The phasing player performs several activities that include movement of friendly units, entering reinforcements into the game and placing qualifying units into reserve status.

Movement is regulated by the printed movement factor which shows the limit of a units allowance for the phase on the Terrain Effects Chart, supply status, unit type and the presence of enemy units.

[5.1] Tactical Movement

This movement is considered to be in combat ready mode and uses the normal costs on the Terrain Effects Chart.

Units crossing a hexside along a road ignore terrain costs and instead use the road movement rate.

Non-mechanized and mechanized infantry types may

cross unbridged rivers at the cost of one-half of their movement factor. (Exception: 13.0).

Units that enter an enemy ZOC must stop movement for the phase.

During tactical movement, friendly units on the road will cost extra to move through at 1 MF per hex.

[5.2] Strategic Movement

This is a faster movement type that is allowed only in rear areas. Units may not move closer than three hexes, (count the enemy hex not your own), at any time during the phase.

Reinforcements may enter the game in strategic mode.

[5.3] Rail Movement

Check the exclusive rules for uses of railroads, movement rates and conditional uses.

[5.4] Terrain Effects on Movement

Rivers, swamp and level 4 and above terrain types are prohibited by mechanized units if no road provides access into such terrain. (Exception See 5.1)

Units retain fractions until movement is complete. Stacks may move together as long as it doesn't violate the movement rules. A unit must have the required movement factors to enter a hex, however, if only one hex is being moved during the movement phase and the terrain is not prohibited by unit type or ZOCs, the move is allowed anyway.

[6.0] Reserves

Units that have not moved during the movement phase, not adjacent to enemy units and are in supply, qualify for Reserve status.

Qualified units are marked with a Reserve marker during the movement phase.

Reserves may use either tactical or strategic movement normally in the Reserve phase.

There is no combat after movement in the Reserve Phase.

[7.0] Zones of Control (ZOCs)

The parent unit in the simulation exerts a zone of control into the 6 hexes that surround it.

If the scale of the simulation uses Corps or Division size units as the largest grouping, then these exert a ZOC. The regiments or brigades at this scale do not have a ZOC and only control the hex they sit in.

If the scale of the simulation uses Regimental or Brigade size units as the largest grouping, then these exert a ZOC. The battalions at this scale do not have a ZOC and only control the hex they sit in.

If the scale of the simulation uses Battalion size units as the largest grouping, then these exert a ZOC.

In general, the parent unit will have a uniquely colored stripe signifying its organization as a player aid. This stripe will also signal that the unit has a ZOC.

Companies, Squadrons, Cadres and Artillery never exert Zones of Control. Stacks that must retreat through enemy

ZOC lose one step—loss for each such hex.

[7.1] Effect on Movement

All units entering an enemy ZOC must stop and end movement for the current movement phase.

All units that begin the movement phase in an enemy ZOC and wish to move must pay a disengagement cost.

The disengagement cost to leave an enemy ZOC is one half of the printed movement allowance (round any fractions down). This cost is in addition to normal terrain costs. Units may not move from one enemy ZOC to another but must exit to a non—enemy controlled hex. They may not re—enter another enemy ZOC for the remainder of the current movement phase.

Supply may not be traced through enemy units or unoccupied enemy controlled hexes.

[8.0] Stacking

Three combat units may end movement or reserve movement in a single hex.

At the end of the respective phase, the stacking rule is enforced. If any stacks are found after this to be in violation, the owning player must eliminate excess units.

Markers do not count toward this limit.

Enemy and friendly units may never be stacked together.

[8.1] Overstacking

During combat resolution, units may be forced by retreat onto friendly stacks in violation of the three unit limit. This is a temporary, but allowed situation. If this stack is attacked in the same combat phase, the overstacked units do not take part in the new combat. If this attack results in any adverse result, the overstacked units are immediately eliminated.

Stacks must conform to the stacking rule by the end of the next friendly movement phase or eliminate the excess units at the owner's choice.

[8.2] Stacking and Combat

No more than one parent unit, (highest organized grouping), may attack or defend from a single hex.

Additional subordinate units, (all those smaller than the parent unit), may participate in combat from this hex, up to the stacking limit.

As many stacks that can be brought to bear against an enemy unit or stack may take part in the attack. (see 10.8 last paragraph.)

In stacks where more than one parent unit is present, only one is chosen.

The non—participating units may only contribute integrity bonuses, but are also subject to the effects from combat results, including advance after combat, retreats and step—losses.

Up to three artillery units may provide support from a single hex.

[9.0] Morale Strength Markers

[9.1] Unit Class

Unlike the smaller size units in the game, parent units do not have the combat strength printed on the counterface. When engaging in combat for the first time, these units use a randomly picked “chit” from either a Red Class or a Blue Class, corresponding to the class color box printed on the unit.

Place the Red Class chits and Blue Class chits into two opaque cups. Both sides share these chits and return spent chits for re—use.

Once picked, place the chit under the unit to keep the exact strengths unknown to your opponent.

The Red Class represents the strongest units and the Blue Class represent an average value in size and available support.

[9.2] Unit Rating

The Chit Rating, (A, B or C), values the number used in calculating combat odds. A= Highest, B= Average, C= Mediocre Strength. These represent the training and experience of the unit in combat.

The chits are printed with a full strength (darker), and a reduced strength (lighter), side.

If, during combat resolution a step—loss is required of a unit with a strength chit, flip the chit to the reduced side. Some lower strength chits will have a zero on their reduced side. These are 2 step units. The chit is removed to the “chit pool” cup and the parent unit is flipped over to reveal the Cadre side if losses are required.

Strength chits are only revealed immediately before combat resolution of a declared attack or defense, after artillery, air points or other combat assets have been committed.

[9.3] Fixed Strength Units

Cadre, artillery, headquarters, and non—parent units do not require strength chits. Use the printed number on the bottom left of the counterface when calculating combat odds.

[10.0] Combat

Combat may occur between opposing units that are adjacent. Combat is optional but once a stack declares combat, all enemy units adjacent to any attacking stacks must then be attacked in some way during the phase. This may be fulfilled by directing different units to declare these attacks. (exception see 10.1).

The phasing player sets the order of any attacks. Each attack is declared and completed before moving on to another attack.

[10.1] Terrain Effects on Combat

At the top of the Combat Results Table () are lines that apply to the defenders terrain. Use the terrain in multi—hex attacks that is most favorable to the defender

Units defending solely behind river hexsides are doubled in combat strength.

Units in entrenchment hexes, (normally doubled), that defend solely behind river hexsides are tripled in defense.

Units defending in higher terrain elevations receive bonus combat shifts on the Combat Results Table, one for each level of elevation higher than the highest level the attacking units occupy.

Attacking units occupying terrain higher than the defender also receive these bonus shifts. Compare the highest attacker to the highest defender. The difference is the additional shifts awarded.

e.g. The attacker declares an attack from a level 2 and a level 4 elevation. The defender occupies a level 3 hex. The difference is one shift to the right in favor of the attacker.

Units that occupy city, town, entrenchment or Level 4 terrain that is also higher than enemy units, are not forced to attack all enemy units that are adjacent per case (10.0), but may choose one or more adjacent hexes as targets.

Even if in a city, town or entrenchment an attacking unit adjacent to enemy units in higher terrain must include these units in an attack of some kind.

[10.2] Multi-hex Combat

Units may combine forces from two or more hexes to attack adjacent enemy units.

Defenders must be totaled into one sum and may not be singled out of a hex.

As long as no more than one parent unit per hex is involved, more than one hex may be attacked from a single, adjacent hex.

Each battle is separate and may involve only units that are both adjacent and have not already been in combat this phase.

Players must learn soak-off requirements required of friendly units in order to attack effectively. Sacrifice of smaller formations to divert attention will be necessary when focusing the combat strength of attacks to gain advantage in a particularly solid defensive line of units.

[10.3] Parent Integrity

Units belonging to the same *color stripe* grouping and using the same numbered designation, depending on the scale of the simulation, will receive combat bonus shifts to the Combat Results Table when acting together.

Some differences exist for nationalities and also between straight infantry and fully mechanized organizations.

Attached armor and engineer units are not necessary when establishing unit integrity requirements even if designated with the parent identification.

If **all** of the members of a parental organization are adjacent to the defender in an attack, one integrity column shift to the right is awarded.

If **two** members of a parental organization are stacked together or are adjacent to one another, one integrity column shift to the left is awarded.

The requirements for integrity bonuses are checked at the moment of combat.

Parent members reduced to cadre or eliminated, negate

integrity combat bonuses for that formation until replacements are received.

The maximum integrity shifts per combat if attacking is two, if defending is one. These shifts are cumulative with other shifts awarded.

[10.4] Combined-arms

Players organizing their units as cooperative teams will be awarded shifts that show the rewards of team efforts.

[10.41] Combined-arms in the Attack

If the phasing player has armor units that are stacked with infantry, mech-infantry or engineer units, the attack is eligible for a combined-arms shift.

Each attacking combined-arms stack provides a shift to the right on the Combat Results Table.

If an attacking force qualifies for the combined-arms bonus but is attacking solely across river hexsides, the maximum shift for combined-arms is one.

[10.42] Combined-arms in the Defense

Combined-arms defense consists of an infantry, mech-infantry or engineer unit stacked with an armor or anti-tank unit.

A stack with combined-arms defense negates **all** combined arms shifts by the attacker in that combat.

Combined-arms defense that includes armor receives a shift to the left if defending against units that have no armor or anti-tank units.

Entrenchments negate all combined arms shifts by the attacker in that combat.

Some mech-infantry formations possess armor and anti-tank abilities intrinsically. These units qualify for the combined-arms bonus while operating alone or even if reduced to cadre status. These units are identified by a 'circled CA' marking, printed on the counter to the left of the unit type box.

[10.5] Artillery

Artillery units may support combat from non-adjacent hexes within the "range" of no more than three hexes. Instead of combat factors, artillery units provide column shifts, both for offense and for defense.

When figuring the range to the target, count the defending unit's hex but not the artillery units' hex.

The maximum column shifts that artillery may provide one combat when attacking is two, when defending is one.

Artillery may fire twice per game turn. Once supporting attacks in the friendly combat phase and once more if defending in the enemy combat phase.

Artillery that is adjacent to enemy combat units at the moment of combat may not provide column shifts but use their printed combat strength.

[10.6] Air Support

Air units may support ground combat if they are available.

Check the Air Unit Chart and Weather condition to see if air support is available and what the die roll must be to see if the air support arrives.

Range of effect is unlimited for air units.

Successful air strikes provide column shifts both for attacking and defending.

The maximum air support per combat that may be attempted for either attack or defense is one.

If the die range is not achieved in the attempt the air point is lost for the game turn.

Air points may not be saved. The Air Chart reflects current game turn availability.

Any successful air support in a town hex results in the immediate placement of a “rubble” marker.

[10.7] Naval Gunfire Support (NGS)

Warship units may support ground combat if available.

Range to target from sea hexes is figured by ship type and by the scale of the simulation in the specific Exclusive Rules.

Naval gunfire provides column shifts to combat that occurs within the same sea zone. Naval units currently moving between zones may not provide support.

Similar to artillery, NGS column shifts are automatically successful if firing within their respective range.

Extending the range of NGS is possible, and varies with ship type and the scale as detailed in the specific Exclusive Rules set.

Any successful NGS in a town hex results in the immediate placement of a “rubble” marker.

[10.8] Combat Resolution

The procedure in combat is for the attacker, then the defender to declare combat, the units involved, artillery, air points and NGS.

Next, total the combat strength points by revealing chits or drawing new chits.

Players compare the total combat strengths of each side stating the attackers, then the defenders total.

For example: attacker–21, defender–6 or 21–6 Divide the lower total into the higher one and round off in favor of the defender. Simplify this into a ratio: 21 divided by 6= 3–1 odds.

Use the defenders terrain to read the odds on the Combat Results Table.

From this odds column, players apply any column shifts that will affect the final outcome of the combat including Elevation, Parent Integrity, Combined–Arms, Artillery, Air Points or NGS.

Identical column shifts negate one another. Excess column shifts are applied to arrive at the final odds column.

Final odds that are above the maximum or below the minimum column printed on the Combat Results Table are resolved at the maximum or minimum column.

The Attacking player now rolls 2D6 dice and determines the outcome of the combat by cross–indexing the roll with the final column. Apply the results immediately. The loser applies combat results first.

“A” results affect the attacking player’s forces. “D” results affect the defending player’s forces. “B” results affect both with the defender applying results first.

The first number is the retreat requirement. The second, parenthesized number is the mandatory step–loss requirement. A1, A2, A3, D1, D2 and D3 are all retreat results.

If any of the attacking units are armor type units and an attacker loss is required, the first step–loss must come from the armor unit.

If step–losses are required of a parent unit, its chit is flipped over to the reduced side for one step. The reduced chit is removed and the parent unit flipped over revealing the Cadre side for the second step. The Cadre is removed from the map for the third step.

Note that the reduced side of some lower strength chits is a “0” combat strength. In this case the parent unit is deemed to have only two steps of strength and is immediately flipped to its cadre side after one step–loss,

One step units (blank on the back), are removed after one step loss.

Note: On a B1–(1) result, if the defender’s hex is left vacant and the attacker’s force takes 2 step losses, an advance into the defenders hex is allowed.

If friendly units in one hex are attacking into more than one combat, all die rolls must be completed before any advance or retreat. The attacker decides the order in which these results are applied.

[10.9] Retreat

Retreats as called for in combat results are optional. Step–losses may be substituted for retreats on a one for one basis. (Exception See 10.10).

When retreating a stack of units, move the entire stack backward. The entire retreat result must be moved in hexes, without entering the same hex twice or step–losses will be required.

Retreat must follow priorities:

1. To an empty hex free of enemy ZOC.
2. To a friendly occupied hex that is free of enemy ZOC.
3. Into an enemy controlled hex at a cost of one step–loss per stack for each hex entered.

Whenever possible during retreats, a unit must choose a retreat path that leads back toward the nearest friendly supply source.

Armor and Artillery units may not retreat across unbridged river hexsides. Non–mechanized units and mechanized infantry may retreat across unbridged river hexsides.

No unit may retreat off of the map.

Retreating units may be overstacked with friendly units if

forced to, but must conform to stacking limits by the end of the next friendly movement phase.

If an overstacked hex undergoes combat and receives any adverse combat result, the overstacked units are eliminated. These units may not add combat strength, or armor capabilities to the overstacked hex.

If the enemy stack is eliminated due to combat, the victorious units, (yes, the defender may advance), may choose the path of retreat.

The number of hexes in any advance will be the remaining unparenthesised result. This number could be reduced to "0" and would represent a standfast order by voluntary step-losses.

[10.10] Advance after Combat

Victorious units may follow retreating units in the path of hexes they retreat through and mechanized units may deviate from this path after the first hex.

Victorious units move individually. The first hex in the advance must be one that the retreating units occupied.

Non-mechanized units must follow the path of retreat exactly and may continue to follow until entering an enemy ZOC.

Mechanized type units may choose to deviate from this path of retreat after the first hex, up to the number of remaining unparenthesised result, or until entering an enemy ZOC.

Enemy ZOC is negated in the first hex of an advance after combat.

Armor type units may never advance across unbridged river hexsides.

Advancing infantry and mech-infantry may only advance across unbridged river hexsides if it is the very first hex in the advance and then must stop.

[10.11] Breakthrough Results

Bold printed results on the Combat Results Table are Breakthrough results.

Breakthrough results are different in the following ways:

1. The victorious player determines the path of retreat.
2. The option to take step-losses in lieu of retreating is lost for this combat.
3. Retreating units lose their ZOC for the duration of this advance.
4. Breakthrough results do not pay the normal 1 support point cost.
5. Mechanized units are allowed to advance one extra hex under normal advance rules.

[11.0] Supply

Units must be within reach of supplies to function without penalty. The distance to a supply road that is traced through non-enemy controlled hexes is the supply trace and varies in length depending on the terrain.

Supply is traced during the mutual supply phase for both

sides, twice per game turn.

Units are judged for supply during this phase and remain in that state until the next supply phase. (Exception See 12.2)

To be in supply, a unit must trace to a supply road and down this road through consecutive road hexes to a friendly supply source without crossing an unbridged river, road demolition or enemy controlled hex.

For a unit in Level 4,5, or 6 terrain to be considered in supply, it must be adjacent to or directly on a fully connected road or active supply source.

For a unit in Level 2 or 3 to be considered in supply, it must trace through to a fully connected road or supply source 3 hexes or less in length of terrain no higher than Level 3.

For a unit in Level 1 terrain to be considered in supply, it must trace through to a road or supply source 4 hexes or less in length of terrain no higher than level 1. Example: If the only supply road is in Level 4 terrain and a unit is in Level 1 terrain, the unit must be adjacent to the road hex or be marked as out of supply for the player turn.

Level of Occupied/ Intervening Hexes	Distance from road/ supply source
1	4
2-3	3
4-6	1

[11.1] Out of Supply Effects

A unit is out of supply if:

1. It can trace a supply line to a road hex or supply source but the supply line is longer than permitted. or
2. The road from which the supply line is traced is not connected to a supply source of the same nationality.

[11.1.5] All units marked as *out of supply* have their combat strengths and movement allowances reduced as follows:

1. Attack strength is *halved* (round fractions down).
2. Defense strength is normal
3. Mechanized units movement allowance is *halved*, (round fractions down).
4. Non-mechanized units movement allowance is normal.

Note: All units have a minimum Combat Strength of one except depot units.

[11.2] Isolation Effects

A unit is isolated if:

1. It is completely unable to trace through to its supply source due to enemy controlled hexes and there is no friendly, supplied combat unit within three hexes.
2. All friendly depots or supply sources have been captured (note12.2)

All units are considered to be in supply on the turn of arrival or placement on the map.

[11.2.5] All units marked as *isolated* have their combat strengths and movement allowances further reduced as follows:

1. Maximum attacking combat strength is *one*.
2. Defending units are individually *halved* in combat strength, (round fractions down).
3. Mechanized units are reduced to *six* in movement allowance.
4. Non-mechanized units movement allowance is *halved* (round fractions down).

Optional [11.2.6] Isolation and Surrender

If a unit or stack has an isolated marker already in place during the mutual supply phase and is still in an isolated status, add another marker. Units with two isolated markers must roll 1 D6 during the mutual supply phase a surrender die roll of 1-2 -NE, 3-4 -lose one step, 5-6 -lose two steps. Units attacked while isolated and remain in that condition immediately receive their second marker.

[11.3] Supply Depots/Supply Sources

Supply depots provide unlimited supply as a source for its own nationality and limited emergency supply for allies.

Supply depots are placed per the setup or reinforcement schedule. Once placed, they may not be moved except by transfer during the Air and Sea Stage [4.22b], and only to a port.

Supply depots defend with 1 combat strength point if attacked while alone, otherwise they do not count for the defense of the hex. Depots never advance or retreat from combat results. If forced to retreat, they are eliminated instead. Eliminated depots return as reinforcements 2 game turns after elimination. If the only source of supply is from a depot of an allied nationality, the state of supply is reduced by one level.

Supply sources are designated in the exclusive rules and may be a map edge, town, depot or city from which shipments arrive.

[11.4] Air and Sea Supply

During the mutual supply phase, players that have available air units and or ship units may use one available point, either air or sea per non-rain or storm turn to make supply available to one combat unit. Air supply is available on a die roll depending on enemy presence. If the target unit is in an enemy ZOC the die roll is 1-3 on a D6 die. If no enemy is adjacent the supply attempt is successful on 1-5. To be supplied by sea, the target unit must be in a coastal hex. The same die rolls apply for sea supply.

Successful air or sea supply raises the supply level of the target unit by one.

Either attempt will cost 1 support point.

[12.0] Support Points

Both opposing sides are limited as to the number of attacks that may be made per game turn.

Every attack that is made will cost the attacker 1 support

point unless the combat results in a Breakthrough or is performed solely by airborne units on their initial airborne assault.

Additional support point costs for special functions and missions are listed on the Support Point Summary.

Keeping track of costs is done on the Support Point Track per nationality.

Support points assigned a nationality may not be shared or transferred.

Besides the initial support point allotment, support points are gained each game turn as long as a friendly supply depot is active and on the map.

Each depot will generate a varying amount of support points per turn depending on the rating of the source point where it is placed.

If a nationality loses all of its supply depots, all positive support points are lost.

Simulations not using depots use fixed amounts of available support each game turn.

[12.1] Support Depreciation

In game turns in which a side has attacked more than 4 times, support depreciation takes place.

Immediately expend 2 support points from the track. Divide these between the depots that actually supported the attacks.

[12.2] Negative Support

If a support point track is reduced to zero or lower, the supply rating for all units subordinate to that nationality is immediately reduced by one level: Supplied to out of supply, out of supply to isolated.

No combat bonus for either artillery or parent integrity may be awarded if the support is zero or below.

[13.0] Engineers

During the Engineering phase, players may build and destroy bridges, demolish roads, build entrenchments and assist units in river crossing.

[13.1] Bridge Destruction

To destroy a bridge that may be used by the enemy, any supplied combat unit may be used. The unit earmarked to destroy a bridge must trace a legal supply path to the bridge not longer than 4 hexes. Bridges not within 3 hexes of an enemy unit are not eligible for demolition. Use the Demolition Table to resolve any attempts. A combat unit may only attempt two per game turn.

[13.2] Bridge Building

If an engineer begins its movement phase adjacent to a demolished bridge hex and there is no enemy unit also adjacent to either the engineer or the bridge hex, the bridge is repaired providing the engineer remains in the hex for two engineering phases and does not engage in any other activity. Bridge building costs one support point to place the building markers. Use two markers with the building side

up. Remove one on the first completed engineer phase. Flip the marker to its completed side after the second engineering phase is completed.

[13.3] Road Demolitions

Roads in levels 5 and 6 may be demolished in the same way that bridges are. The unit earmarked to demolish a road must trace a legal supply path to the road hex not longer than 4 hexes. Use the demolition chart to resolve these. Repair of a destroyed road takes place exactly as the repair on a bridge except that it only takes one engineering phase instead of two. Any non-mechanized combat unit may be used to repair a road. A maximum of two road demolitions may be attempted per player turn.

A road or bridge demolition attempt may only take place once per target, per friendly engineer phase. Players may not attempt to demolish a road hex that is currently occupied by a friendly mechanized unit. Units occupying Transit Tracks, (if included in the game), are not considered when calculating proximity for demolition attempts.

[13.4] Entrenchments

If an engineer plus one parent infantry or Mechanized infantry unit start and finish 2 full consecutive turns in a hex and no enemy unit is within 3 hexes at any time during the process, a fully functional entrenchment may be created. Use two markers with the building side up. Remove one on the first completed engineer phase. Flip the marker to its completed side after the second engineering phase is completed.

The hex is now a fully functional entrenchment. Units there may now benefit from the added defensive bonuses.

(see 10.1 for effects)

If for any reason the hex is unmanned at the end of any Movement Phase, remove the marker. If the units occupying an entrenchment are eliminated or forced to retreat, remove the marker.

Entrenchments may not be built in City, Town, or Transit Tracks.

One support point is expended on the turn the building markers are placed, regardless of whether it is completed or not.

[13.5] Rubble

If an Air or Naval Gunfire Support Point results in a column shift against an enemy unit in a city or town, a Rubble marker is placed in the hex. The marker is placed in the hex immediately upon resolution of the combat and has no effect on that particular combat; it will affect subsequent combat and unless removed. The marker does affect any advances resulting from the combat which caused the marker to be placed in the hex.

No more than one rubble marker may be placed in a hex at one time. There is no limit as to how many times a rubble marker may be placed in a single hex during the game. The marker has no effect on stacking.

A rubble marker may be removed during the Preparation

Stage {4.2}, by the player whose unit(s) occupies the hex or was the last to pass through it. A player is not obligated to remove a rubble marker.

A unit using tactical movement pays an additional cost of one Movement Point to enter a hex containing a Rubble marker.

Any unit defending in a hex containing a rubble marker receives a one-column shift to the left on the Combat Results Table. Only one such shift may be awarded per combat. The shift is in addition to any received for defending in a town hex.

A unit advancing after combat into a rubble hex must end its advance in that hex. Rubble has no effect on retreats.

[13.6] Entrenchment assault

If an engineer is present in a stack and is attacking an entrenchment, shift the column one to the right on the Combat Results Table. Only one such shift may be awarded per combat.

[13.7] Assisted river crossing

Armor and artillery may be assisted in crossing unbridged river hex sides by the accompaniment of an engineer unit. All units must begin the movement phase stacked and adjacent to the river and expend their entire movement allowance to accomplish this. This movement may not be into or across prohibited terrain, or performed on Rain or Storm turns.

[14.0] Reinforcements

Units scheduled to arrive after the start of play are marked with codes that signify the game turn and the point of entry.

These units may enter during the friendly movement or reserve phase.

Reinforcements may use any movement mode on the turn of entry.

When entering the map at a common road or depot, stage units at maximum stacking and move on the board in column, one stack behind the other as if a road stretched off the map edge.

If all of the entry points are enemy occupied or in enemy ZOC, delay entry by one game turn. Delayed units may then enter at any hex on the same map edge or nearest allied depot.

Reinforcements may delay entry after the scheduled turn of arrival at the owner's whim.

Seaborne reinforcements always enter on the supply depot.

Some reinforcements are marked "VAR". These units only enter if the conditions for their entry are met and the required support and victory point costs are paid for their arrival.

[15.0] Replacements

Players receive Replacement Points by nationality as shown on the Game turn Record Track. Replacement Points may be saved for use on later turns.

Eliminated parent units without non-cadre survivors on the map, units in Zones of Control, out of supply units, isolated units, and artillery may not receive replacements.

Units that have just received air or sea supply may not receive replacements.

[16.0] Designers Notes

The original work in this series that was done by Joe Balkoski has given me over 28 years of enjoyment. In the course of designing my first game in this series, Iron Tide: Panzers in the Ardennes, I realized that much work still needed to be done on the system rules. Thanks to the support of some very skilled hobbyists, I have had the chance to improve the system, expanding it into the next step in “hidden strength” wargaming. While double blind simulations can be remarkable, they are ultimately impractical. VCS provides in a workable format the next best opportunity for this experience, allowing hobbyists to expand the paradigm beyond the standard simulation.

The tools that players use and lessons that they learn are intended to emphasize the cost of modern warfare. In addition to these Standard rules, VCS utilizes game-specific Exclusive rules to recreate some of the most famous battles of WWII. The specific designs that follow will work off of this basic template, branching out (I hope) into a large tree of system game. I’m excited about this prospect, and there are more VCS games already in the pipeline. VCS is a work in progress. Please respect the work involved and do not share these rules without my the written permission of me and Multi-Man Publishing.

Nathan Kilgore

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