

[Return to Ed's Hobby Hovel](#)

Rencounter

Being a Set of Rules for Ambuscades, Skirmishes, Rencounters, Affrays and Divers Small Actions Conducted with Model Soldiers

by Edward Allen

Version 0.987, last modified 7/7/98

[Current Version](#) - This link will take you back to the original, if you are reading this on a copy stored locally elsewhere, and you want to see the most up to date version.



Copyright 1997, Edward A. Allen

Permission granted to download this file and/or print it, to make copies for personal use or for people you game with. Permission is withheld for distribution of copies in which the text content has been changed. The sale of Rencounter is prohibited without prior written consent of the author.

I can be contacted by electronic mail at Email: allen@sequence.stanford.edu or by leaving an entry in the [Guest Book](#). I have started a little mailing list where I announce updates to the rules. If you would like to be on this list, please send me a mail or leave a guestbook note.

Comments and suggestions on these rules are welcome.

Notes to Rencounter regulars

Changes since version .97

- rewrite of the morale section, hopefully clearer and with less redundancy, as well as dealing with a couple of special cases that have turned up in recent games.
- aggressive melee modifier rule to deal with problem of bloodless combat between experts.
- change to outnumbering rule in melee - it matters more now, order no longer matters, and figures from other units can affect the outnumbering.
- new campaign rules regarding skill improvements and wound effects after battles
- finally got the rule in for shooting into melees or past friends
- some minor typos fixed
- **Changes in version .98** - first hack at automatic weapons and grenades for 20th century games, fixed some typos and a bit of awkward grammar clarified.
- .981 - link to Basaranca scenario
- .982 - Piftol's Revoult link, top armor grade clarified to 4, had been 3 or 4 in various places in the rules. 7/14/97
- .983 - Fixed a dangling bit of sentence in the -4 mod for fast moving snap fire, added weak bow as a weapon to cover hunting bows used by some indigenous tribes that were noticeably outperformed by revolvers in more than rate of fire.
- .984 Homeward Bound scenario link, new optional hero rule, roughed in smoothbore artillery rule

- .985 Some typos & grammar fixed, some rules options added regarding melee weapon breakage and sticking, and serious wound knockdown, and rules for wounded horses and cavalry tramples and combat expanded.
- .986 Clarification of the melee stroke wording
- .987 Clarifying section added under movement on handling melee break off.

* Bullets indicate sections that are incomplete, but planned.

Scale: One model is one man. One inch is four scale yards. One turn is approximately 5 seconds.

Rencounter is intended to provide a playable game for skirmish actions using up to about ten units on a side, with four to ten figures in each unit. It should give you games where derring do and turns of fate loom large, where the confusion, mischance, and surprise of such actions are represented in an entertaining fashion.

The word Rencounter with which the game is named comes from the French word rencontre and is an obsolete form of the English word encounter, with the specific meaning of a duel or skirmish.

Scenarios for Rencounter

By Will Scarvie, (will@tallis.saic.com)

American War of Independence - [The Pen is Mightier than the Sword](#)

The Zulu War of 1879 - [The Death of Louis, Crown Prince of France](#)

Peninsular War or generic horse and musket - [Homeward Bound](#)

By the Cannister & Grape Wargames Group

[Piftol's Revoult](#), an English Civil War scenario

By me, as yet unfinished

[The Bandits of Basaranca](#). I ran it at the Memorial Day con in Modesto run by HMGS West (provisional). I still need to get the stats and some other details down in HTML.

By John Foley, on his site

[Two Minutes to Noon!](#), an ACW scenario with a train

Check out the [Quick Reference Sheet](#) for players. The current version condenses the combat charts down to one page. The next version will include another page to summarize movement rates, time for actions, and other rules.

The Figure

Experience

Each miniature figure should be rated for experience using one of the following ratings:

- 6* Master (alternately Hero)
- 5 Veteran
- 4 Average (alternately Regular)
- 3 Green (alternately Novice)
- 2 Raw Troops, Courageous Noncombatants

1 Scum (Scum of the Earth, alternately Rabble) or Petrified Noncombatants

The rating determines what initiative score the figure must roll on a D6 to activate, and determines a skill modifier for various activities. The roll required is equal to or less than the number. Masters can be handled in one of two ways. Either they always succeed unless affected by wounds or morale modifiers, or they fail if they roll a 6 and then a 4-6 on a second confirming die. If you use any, choose the version that best fits your conception of how infallible they should be, as a house rule before the game.

Most games will use the ratings of Veteran, Average, and Green for all or the majority of the figures involved. Raw and Scum ratings were added to represent non-combatants that might be more the object of the victory conditions than actors, or large mobs of undisciplined rioters with no training, little skill, and mixed inclination towards violence. Masters were added to represent rare highly skilled individuals in the course of a Samurai game using part of these rules. Only very seldom should more than one master or hero be on a side, and even having one is an occasion. Conan, Musashi, Sgt Rock, movie heroes, and high level RPG player characters are examples of masters. If one is present, he will probably be a leader.

Fire Skill

Fire skill in Rencounter is a base chance to hit in an attack using a missile weapon thrown or fired with a gun or bow. If you want a fancier roleplaying style of differentiation, figures could have different skill levels with different weapons. Otherwise, simply use the unfamiliar weapon penalty whenever the weapon used is one of a type that the figure did not start the game with. The basis of the fire combat system is to roll less than the figure's modified fire skill to score a hit. Fire skills might typically range from 4-10, with the occasional 2 or 12 for incredibly bad or good shots.

Melee Skill

Melee skill in Rencounter is a base chance to hit in an attack using a melee weapon such as a fist, knife, sword, or spear. If you want a fancier roleplaying style of differentiation, figures could have different skill levels with different weapons. Otherwise, simply use the unfamiliar weapon penalty whenever the weapon used is one of a type that the figure did not start the game with. The basis of the melee combat system is to roll less than the figure's modified fire skill to score a hit, or as the defender, to successfully parry. Melee skills also would typically range from 4-10.

Weapons

Most figures will simply be equipped with the weapons depicted on the figure. For leaders or other special figures it may be appropriate to have them armed with something extra like a pistol or knife that is concealed. Such additional weapons should be noted in a side record, as should ammunition limits if these differ from the normal basic load for the weapon. If the weapon in hand differs from the one depicted, it should be noted on paper and declared when visible to the enemy. Weapons that require loading or preparation like crossbows and guns should have their load state indicated at the beginning of the scenario. Unless there is a surprise rule in effect for the scenario, they will probably be loaded and ready.

Armor

The figure's armor should be obvious from the figure itself. The ratings are

| Armor | Description |
|-------|-------------|
|-------|-------------|

Rating

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 0 | No armor | naked or just wearing ordinary clothing. |
| 1 | Light Armor | a leather jack, buff coat, or similar, often with a helmet. |
| 2 | Half armor | helmet and a back and breast plate, maybe with tassels, a short mail shirt, or similar armor that leaves arms and legs only lightly protected. |
| 3 | Nearly Full armor | lobster armor with boots, full mail, other nearly full body protection by metal armor, usually with a helmet that provides a lot of facial protection. |
| 4 | Full armor | Maximillian plate, fantasy full plate, other very heavy head to toe protection that you want to distinguish from armor in class 3. |

I am using these ratings directly as modifiers, which probably underestimates the effects of armor a bit. You might consider having more armor grades so the top numbers are higher, or perhaps doubling the modifiers to have armor be strong in effect.

Riding

The Experience level of the figure +2 will serve as a horsemanship level for most trained cavalry figures, if needed to determine loss of control or falls after wounds. If desired for a particular scenario, players could establish that some mounted figures have a horsemanship rating not correlated with their general experience level, to indicate veteran infantry moving as mounted infantry when ambushed, or some similar situation. If possible, it is a good idea to have separate foot figures and extra horses to represent mounted figures that dismount during the scenario. Note that wounds to both the rider and the horse should modify horsemanship rolls. It is harder to control a horse crazed by a wound.

Simplified characters in larger games

In larger games, it may become unwieldy to keep track of many varying individuals. To keep things moving well, it would serve to have each unit have only one common Experience level, usually Average or Green, perhaps with the leader one step better. Skills can also be pegged to experience levels, so that all Veterans are 10 in fire and melee, all Average figures 8, all Greens 6, etc.

Organizing the Unit

Numbers

The number of units and number of figures in a unit are up to you and a matter of taste, time, and the number of figures and players available. Typically, a game will have 4 to 7 units on a side, with each unit numbering 4 to 6 if mounted or armed with missile weapons like guns and bows, up to perhaps 8 to 10 if all melee-armed foot that can be handled relatively simply, like a squad of pikemen. For Old West Gunfights and similar very small duelling situations, having each figure act individually as a "unit" makes sense. In such games, you can ignore all the special rules below pertaining to leadership and just turn up the card to see who acts and then have him roll the individual action die to do something useful and not freeze.

Leadership

Each unit should have one identifiable figure that is the leader. The leader is useful for keeping his men moving (Follow Me, Volley Fire, and Formed Charge orders), activating men, and possibly personifying the player on the battlefield, getting named and invested with some personality as if a role-playing game character. Leaders are usually the best or one of the best figures of the unit in experience and skills, but

interesting scenarios can use leaders who are new to the trade of arms, novice subalterns trying to lead squads of average or veteran troops and the like. Leaders will often get different weapons and armor from their followers, the partizan for the sergeant, a brace of pistols and a fine sword for the foot officer, and so on.

Sequence of Play

Basic Concept

Units are activated in a random order, with the leader or all individuals in the active unit then dicing to determine whether they act or hesitate. The time represented by a turn is so short that a few moments hesitation or consideration by a figure, or a stumble, wavering aim, a fumbled move in loading, and similar less than completely efficient moves can be well represented by the loss of a turn. Three alternate methods for determining the order of activation of units are provided, so pick one that suits your taste, or use some variant of your own.

Order of Units

Method One, Cards

Make a list of the units in the game and code each one to match a playing card. Put those playing cards into the deck with one Joker added signifying "Reshuffle". Or using blank cards, write the names of the units on the cards themselves. Old business cards or leftover MtG land cards are handy for this purpose. Shuffle the deck. Draw cards off the top and activate the indicated unit when its card comes up. When the Reshuffle card comes up, the turn ends, and remaining units do not move in that turn. Or play without a Reshuffle card if you want to make sure that each unit gets to move each turn. Playing without reshuffle is better if using these rules in a roleplaying scenario where people will be upset if the enemy can get in multiple moves without their personal character being able to respond.

Playing without a Reshuffle card is also a good idea when figures have high movement rates and moves not executed make for odd changes in relative positions, like in an action with a lot of cavalry.

In a recent test game, we used cards with three cards assigned to each unit and one reshuffle card in the deck. It was a fantasy game so identical M:TG cards were assigned to each unit. You could do the same with a normal card deck by assigning each unit a number or face card. Any king drawn moves the King's Guard or something like that. This system moved it along very quickly. An optional rule we tried out was to allow any unit to reserve an action and jump in after any other unit's actions were completed before the next card was drawn. If another card for the same unit came up, the held card was discarded without giving an action but the new one could be held. All held cards were lost when the reshuffle card came up. It helped in the early ambush phase and nobody bothered to hold back actions once the action got really started after the ambush was sprung.

Method Two, Dice and Markers

This method requires no preparation time in listing units or marking cards, but uses a marker and an extra die for each unit.

For each activation, roll 1D6 for each unit. The owner of that unit rolls the die for the unit. The highest die unit gets that activation. If the highest roll is a tie between units of only one side, activate them all. If there is a high roll tie between units of opposing sides, reroll the tied dice. When a unit is done with its activation,

place a marker next to it to indicate that it is done for the turn and don't roll its die in the next set of activation rolls.

As a variant, if all the dice rolled tie, then have the turn end with no more activations. If only one unit remains to be activated, have the opponent roll a die to tie it and end the turn, otherwise having the last unit activate.

Method Three, Dice and Counters

This method has no collective turn that locks all the units together in time. Each unit goes whenever it wins the activation contest roll. Each unit will need a die and a way to tally a count (another die, chips, or tickmarks on a roster sheet). Roll an activation die for each unit and add the unit's current tally. At each activation contest roll, the unit with the highest total (including any necessary tie breaker rolls) activates, each other unit adds one to its tally. When a unit wins an activation contest, it resets its count to zero. Thus it is random which unit moves next, and a unit might move twice before one or more opponents move once, but the odds favor whichever unit has waited the longest in any particular activation roll. If you need to keep a count of the number of turns for some victory condition or other reason, choose one unit as a reference unit, and count a turn each time it activates. The die rolled for activation should be equal to the number of units in play or the next size up that fits. Thus for 9 units, roll a D10. The competitive rolling and marking is slower than cards, but gives a nice uncertainty in which you seldom know who will move next or how many activations a particular unit will get between activations of another unit, and yet no unit gets stifled much in its overall number of actions over a game. This used to be my method of choice, but lately we've been using card systems for speed of play.

Actions

When a unit activates, it is not certain that its men will act effectively. They may hesitate, freeze, stumble, fumble, stop to think, find an obstacle in their path, or any of a number of other reasons to lose a few seconds activity. If things look bad, they may panic and run away from the enemy or duck into cover. If wounded, they may pass out or quit the fight. All of this is covered in the action roll. There are four instances where only the leader rolls for the whole unit, Follow Me, Formed Charge, and Volley Fire, and Follow Him orders. Otherwise, each man is rolled for separately against his own experience level. When the action roll is successful, the figure can execute one turn of action. Some actions take up the whole turn. Some take more than one turn, and are carried over from activation to activation until completed or abandoned like loading a muzzleloading gun. Some actions can be combined and done at the same time, walking and giving an order for example. Others may be done in the same turn, sequentially divided into an action done in the first half of the turn and an action done in the second half of the turn. Declaring just why a man failed an action roll or repeatedly does so has been one of the more amusing roleplaying aspects to Rencounter.

Follow Me

The leader rolls against his own experience level and if he rolls equal to or less, the whole unit activates and can follow him for movement only. No other actions can be taken. Modify the roll normally for morale or the leader's wounds. If other men are suffering individual modifiers for their wounds, modify again for those men only. They are left behind unmoving if the final score for everyone else indicates a move, but the wounded men fail. The unit should be relatively close together for a Follow Me order. Allow a one inch spacing between bases for green or worse troops, two inches for regulars, three for veterans, and four for heroes to link to someone who is linked to the leader. If some men in the unit are separated from the unit or unable to move, then only the ones near the leader can be moved with a Follow Me order. Move the leader and then move the other men so they are abreast or behind the leader. He can't use "Follow Me" and remain in the center of a mob or skulking at the rear. Other than the leader moving to the front, a limited amount of

formation change is acceptable, stringing out behind to pass a narrow gap, or two inches or so of divergent movement for expansion, etc. If the roll is failed, the unit does not move, except for required follow through movement by fast moving cavalry and the like. If you want to show drill of regular close order foot, you could allow multiple groups to move together under the "follow me" roll of a higher level leader, but only if in a base to base orderly linear formation at a walking pace under 3" per turn.

If an activated unit is moving under a Follow Me order and it is behind another unit blocking a gap, on a road, or otherwise impeding it, the leader can opt to Follow in Column and hold his unit's movement until the blocking one moves. If the blocking unit then fails to move that turn, the unit Following in Column loses it's move as well.

Formed Charge

Formed Charge is like Follow Me, except it allows the unit to move and enter melee combat. Roll vs the lowest experience rating in the unit, instead of the leader's rating, since all the shirkers have to go in to danger and if they are hesitating they will have to be pushed, pulled, threatened. This takes some time. Everybody is checking right and left to make sure he's going in with his fellows beside him and this makes the body as a whole tend to hesitate a bit. If the roll is failed, the unit does not move, except for required follow through movement by fast moving cavalry and the like.

Volley Fire

Volley Fire is like Follow Me, except it requires the unit to be in formation, with the leader where he can see his men and the enemy. All should have loaded missile weapons. The unit cannot be in melee combat.

Roll vs the leader's rating and if he succeeds, all followers can shoot a basic shot. Veterans or Masters can shoot an aimed shot. Others just level their guns and fire. The leader is giving orders and does not fire himself.

Follow Him

If you want to have a unit move together but the leader is not out in front leading by example, the unit will naturally be more hesitant about closing with the enemy. As with a formed charge, use the worst experience rating instead of the leader's, unless they are moving away from known or suspected enemy positions.

Individual Actions

To do anything beyond the above collective orders, roll a die for each man against his experience level and modified by wounds or morale modifiers to see if he acts. In certain cases, described under morale, wounds, and movement below, a man who fails to act will not freeze in place but will take some limited action required by the rules.

Leader activation of a subordinate, "buttkicking"

If a leader activates but one of his men within 3" does not, the leader can move adjacent to the man and give him a direct order which will activate him. This is the leader's entire action for the turn. If the man is wounded, he must roll again and score less than 7 - wound points to activate. Thus a man with a serious (2 point) wound will activate on a 4 or less. A routing figure can be rallied this way, but not an incapacitated figure.

Time and number of actions

Each turn represents approximately 5 seconds of activity by the activating unit. Some actions that figures can take don't require that much time, so these are set to require only 1/2 turn, and two such actions can be done sequentially in a turn. Some can be combined with others simultaneously, like movement and giving orders or movement and snap fire.

Action Time

- Movement 1/2 or 1 If 1/2 turn of movement is done, then prorate it to 1/2 of distance rated for the whole turn. A half turn of movement can only be done by figures moving at a rate that allows them to decelerate to 0 speed "instantly", thus cavalry can move no more than 3" (1/2 of the 6" rate) in a half turn and then be counted as standing still in the second half turn.
- Firing 1/2 to fire one shot or two at the Fast repeater rate with weapons that have this rate. Can be combined with movement but counts as snap fire, with penalties varying by movement speed and weapon type.
- Loading 1/2 turn up to several turns, depending on the weapon. This must be done stationary with most weapons, but can be done at the walking movement rate (usually 3") with weapons that are easy to load, like cartridge breechloading firearms. Horsebowmen can load a bow at any speed on horseback.
- Drawing a sheathed weapon 1/2 turn, can combine with movement
- Sheathing a weapon 1/2 turn, can combine with movement
- Switching weapons from hand to hand 1/2 turn to move one weapon from one hand to the other, 1 turn to swap two weapons held each in one hand.
- Standing from prone 1 turn
- Falling prone 1/2 turn
- Kneeling 1/2 turn
- Ducking to full cover from partially exposed position 1/2 turn if voluntary, instant if enforced by duckback rule.
- Assuming a firing position from full cover 1/2 turn.
- Melee attack 1 turn, can combine with charge move to contact, and weapon draw or hand to hand switch at a penalty.
- Aiming 1/2 or more turns
- Recovering from the shock of a serious or crippling wound 1 turn, and cannot be combined with standing or moving.
- Fix bayonet 1/2 turn to draw, plus 1/2 turn to fix socket bayonets or 1 turn to insert plug bayonets. Can be done at the walk.
- Unfix socket bayonet 1/2 turn, Remove plug bayonet 2 turns

Calculate other times on the basis of a 5 second turn.

Effects of Wounds

Modify the action die roll for a figure by adding the number of wound points to his roll.

Minor 1, Serious 2, Crippling 3. These wound points could total up to 5, the figure dies if it reach a total of 6.

Morale

Treat the action rolls for the men in a unit as morale checks in any turn in which one of the following circumstances applies: Since the last time the unit was activated

- one or more men in the unit has been killed or sustained a crippling wound or
- the unit has witnessed the elimination of a friendly unit within 24" .

or in the previous activation of the unit, one or more men

- became incapacitate by wounds by rolling 8+ on his action roll or
- ran away due to a morale failure action roll of 8+.

For these morale check action rolls, use the following die roll modifiers:

- Each man (other than the leader) in the unit incapacitated, with a crippling wound, dead, or run away +1
- unit leader incapacitated, with a crippling wound, dead, or run away +2
- Each man adds his own wound points, but doesn't count himself for the above modifiers.
- Checking for eliminated friendly unit within 24" +1
- Checking for eliminated friendly unit within 12" +2

These are cumulative, except count each eliminated friendly unit within 12" only for that condition and not the within 24" condition.

Eliminated units are those in which all men are incapacitated, crippled (3+ wound points), dead, or run away.

In rare cases where a unit has split up to the point where men couldn't be aware of the loss of unit members after the split, do not apply modifiers for unit members a man doesn't know are lost, but if the part of the unit a man knows about after the split is 3 or less in number, count each of those that he is aware of being lost at +1 extra. He's feeling even lonelier when he doesn't know the fate of others. This should help discourage breaking up units for the sake of avoiding morale penalties.

Action Rolls of 1 - Allow any figure that is seriously wounded (2 wound points) and not yet incapacitated or healthier, to always get an action on a roll of 1. This gives some hope that even the lamest soldier might have a moment of glory.

Effects of Action Rolls Greater than 6

Sometimes the above modifiers will make a roll higher than 6 possible. Use the following effects:

If a man rolls a 7 he will try to retreat directly away from the enemy, enter cover and hide if possible; or surrender if a fit, unengaged enemy is at close fire range with a loaded weapon, or within one move and armed with a melee weapon, and there is no friend available to intervene and cover is too far to reach. Unless surrendered, he can subsequently act normally if rolling under 7. If he is suffering from a serious wound or worse and on foot, he will fall down at the end of any enforced movement. If seriously wounded or worse and on horseback, he must make a horsemanship check or fall from his horse.

If a man with a serious or worse wound rolls an 8 or higher on any action roll, he is overcome by his wounds, falls down, and can take no action for the remainder of the game. If only minor wounds and morale loss contribute to the roll reaching 8, he will otherwise act as per a roll of 7 above, and continue doing so for the remainder of the game.

To represent troop quality differences in morale failure, increase the permanent morale failure number of 8 above by 1 for Averages, by 2 for Veterans, and by 3 for Masters. Thus a Veteran will temporarily run or seek cover on a 7- 9 and run for good on a 10.

If the leader is rolling for a unit using one of the collective orders, then apply the die roll >6 effects above to men as individually modified if necessary. A 7 or higher rolled by a leader, counting his own modifiers in such a case affects all men in the unit as above if they can see him cowering or running or others of the unit that are reacting that way because of the leader's failed morale.

Leader influenced morale rolls *optional rule*

If you want to further represent leadership in morale, you can have the leader roll first, and if he succeeds, troops in base to base contact with him or who can see him within three inches will have a positive moral modifier of 1 to offset same unit casualty or witness to destruction modifiers. If he panics with a 7+ result, apply the lost leader penalty instead.

Heroes *optional rule*

Any figure rolling a natural 1 on his first activation roll that counts as a morale check can roll again immediately. If this second roll succeeds against the figure's unmodified experience value, he is "berserk" or "inspired" and will not be subject to any further morale checks for the remainder of the game. If you are tracking characters from scenario to scenario, he can do the same with an initial natural 1-2, and if the second check succeeds, will be able to do it in the next game following on a 1-3, etc. Any failure of the series will step him back one point on the initial roll for the next game. Complete successes over a course of several games might result in such a hero that he makes that first roll on 1-6 and only the second roll is needed for him to be heroic. Audie Murphy is one real life example of a person who was habitually cool and heroic in combat in a way that could not otherwise be simulated within Rencounter. A unit of Viking berserkers could be considered to be a bunch of such "natural warriors" or "bloody loonies" that have been collected together.

Movement

Foot

Speed

Basic foot movement

A man on foot can move 6" when activated. This can be reduced by terrain or by wounds (-2" per wound level). Crawling on all fours can be done as fast as 3", but only 1" if trying to low crawl to maintain prone target benefits. Crawling is slowed by 1" per wound level, low crawling by 1/3" per wound level.

Advanced foot movement

Normal moves are 6" as for basic foot movement. A man can run 9" per turn for a short while before becoming fatigued. Unless you want to add an additional individual stamina statistic, each side should be rated for how many turns a man can run full speed before becoming winded. A simple rating might be to use each leader's experience rating as the number of running turns for his unit. OR use each man's own experience number. Melee turns should also count against the limit for men running after fighting in melees. The resting time to regain the full running rate should be pretty long in Rencounter's time scale, maybe moving at walking or less rate and not fighting for twice the number of running turns.

Moving backwards

A man on foot can move backwards up to 3". If he is going faster than 1" in any terrain other than smooth, clear ground, roll an extra action check to avoid tripping.

Turning

Basic foot turning

A man on foot can make 6 turns of up to 45 degrees, together or separately.

Advanced foot turning

A man running at over 6" per turn can make 4 turns of up to 45 degrees, separated by 2" between turns.

Horse

Speed

Basic Horse Speed

Horses can move 12" per turn, accelerating and decelerating by 6" per turn.

Advanced Horse Speed

Horses can move 18" inches per turn, accelerating and decelerating by 6" per turn. A man riding at over 12" per turn falls off if he fails his action roll and then fails a followup "Horsemanship" test action roll. Resolve falling injuries as described below under Special Actions and Circumstances.

All wounded men on horseback or men on wounded horses moving at greater than 3" and rolling over 6 on action roll must test horsemanship as above or fall off. Horsemanship test rolls use wound (both man and horse) and morale modifiers.

Cavalry that fail action rolls continue at the same speed or decelerate by 6", turning only as necessary to avoid running into terrain features.

Cavalry previously halted or moving backwards can move backwards at 2".

Turning

Horses moving up to 6" should be able to make 4 x 45 degree turns.

Horses moving up to 12", 3 x 45 degrees with 3" separating turns.

Horses moving up to 18", 2 x 45 degrees with 6" separating turns.

Obstacles

Horse can jump over some obstacles. This requires a horsemanship roll. If failed by an odd number the horse balks and sheers away or stops before the obstacle. If failed by an even number, the horse goes over but the rider loses his seat and falls. As a rule of thumb, a 2 1/2 foot high fence is a basic horsemanship roll and every 6" higher is a +1 to the roll. Riding at high speed on a horse in woods or tall brush similarly requires horsemanship rolls, as defined by the referee for the terrain at hand. Densely spaced trees with low branches obviously should be more difficult than widely spaced trees with no branches low enough to sweep a rider from the saddle. Declare a safe speed for a patch of woods and a -1 penalty for each 3" or 6" over. See below under "Effects of enemy figures on movement" if the obstacles are other figures.

Wagons, Artillery, and other Wheeled Conveyances

*Handle in later version - basically most will move about as fast as foot, though some light ones up to 12" . They turn like horses moving a bracket faster. They are particularly sensitive to terrain effects.

Effects of enemy figures on movement

A figure may not move through an enemy figure. This includes base stands of a reasonable size, up to 1" across for most 25mm figures, up to 1/2" across for 15mm figures, about the same depth for foot, as deep as necessary to accommodate the horse for cavalry.

Cavalry that are charging into a unit of enemy figures too fast to stop and without room for attacking in passing will have to roll one horsemanship check to get to horse to go in and not sheer off where there is room and a second on contact to for the rider to stay on at the contact. If both succeed, the horse will hit an enemy figure in front of it after the rider resolves his melee attack. If the figure struck was not engaged in melee by the active rider or another member of the rider's unit, he can roll an Action check immediately and use it to dodge out of the way if there is space to the side, or to attack the rider or horse. The impact of a charging horse will knock a footman down and roll for damage against him. Take the damage roll at +2 if it is moving over 12", +4 if over 6" and up to 12". Under 6" speed, the horse will just stop. Add +1 to this modifier if the horse is particularly small, like some steppes ponies, -1 if it is big like a knight's destrier. If a horse is forced to run into another horse this way, total their speeds if they are heading within 45 degrees of head on to each other, and subtract the lower speed if one is within 45 degrees of the same direction as the other. If the total goes over 18", then the damage roll is at +0 for speed. Roll the damage against both horses. If either is wounded by the collision, then it's rider takes another horsemanship check to not fall off, modified by the horse's wounds and his own.

Accidental collisions between horses and friendly troops they can't avoid should be resolved using the same damage rules. Friendly foot would get a similar activation check to dodge first if they have room.

Leaving Melee - A figure in base to base contact with an enemy figure can freely move away without the "free swing" that some rules systems would give his opponent. Unless attacked from behind, he'll either have to back out, possibly risking tripping, or turn and leave. If using advanced foot movement and initially turning more than 45 degrees, he'll only be able to run away 6" in the break off move, as moving faster would require separation between the turns. The opponent will probably be able to chase him down and attack again when his own next action comes if no other factor has intervened. Disengaging from melee requires a lot of attention to one's immediate opponent and is thus not eligible for a group move under a "Follow Me" command by a leader. Each figure breaking off will have to roll his own activation. A pass-through Formed Charge by cavalry that attack partway along a move and continue away immediately is the only disengage that can be done by a group order, leadership being exerted before the contact.

Terrain and movement

At this scale, trees tend to represent individual trees, so figures cannot move through a tree trunk.

Brush and boggy ground should impede infantry some and others more.

Hill effects vary with steepness.

For now, go by referee definition.

Terrain effects should reduce speeds by 1/3, 1/2, or 2/3 with increasing severity, as these are easy to calculate fractions of 6 and its multiples.

Buildings have lots of factors to handle - doors, windows, stairs, wall climbing, jumping down, wing it for now. Remember, one turn is 5 seconds.

See the notes below in the Terrain section of Special Actions and Circumstances for more notes on handling terrain.

Combat

Fire Combat

Skill

The base chance to hit on a D12 is the figure's skill. Roll less than or equal to skill to hit. Rolling a natural 1 is not a guarantee of a hit when shooting, but gives a chance to confirm a lucky hit with a second roll if the natural roll needed was -4 or better.

Roll needed Confirming roll on D12

| | |
|----|---|
| 0 | 9 |
| -1 | 7 |
| -2 | 5 |
| -3 | 3 |
| -4 | 1 |
| -5 | 0 |

An example of using this rule: Private Wilton has a fire skill of 5 and after all modifiers (-6 total) are applied to a shot needs -1 on a D12. Instead of scratching as being impossible we deem it to be a low odds shot. Looking at the table above, we see that Jake needs to roll a 1, and then if he gets it, he can get a hit by rolling a 7 or less on a second D12. Basically, he has about a 5% chance of a hit. With modifiers dropping his effective skill to -4, he'd need snake eyes on D12s, 1/144, a great trick if you can pull it off and worth gloating and load complaints about luck by the opponent. At -5 or worse he can't hit at all. If you keep track of your dice by color, you could even roll these together, noting, say, a white die as the shooting die and a red one as the confirming die.

Rolling a natural 12 is always unsuccessful.

To Hit Modifiers and related rules

Add these modifiers to the Skill number to get the roll needed on a D12. Note that the modifiers have been inverted and applied to the skill instead of the die roll, as was done in earlier versions so that the numbers "feel" better. What you actually need to roll on the die to hit is the same, though.

Range

| | |
|------------|----|
| Too Close* | -2 |
| Short | 0 |

Medium -2

Long -4

Extreme -6

*Too Close is base stand contact for pistols or thrown weapons, up to 2" for long arms and bows.

Armor and Shields

Thrown weapons, bows, and crossbows add target armor and -1 for a medium shield, and -2 for a large shield. Low velocity firearms like muskets and shotguns take -1 vs armor 3 or 4. If the shield makes the difference versus a javelin, then there is a 50% chance the javelin is stuck in the shield, affecting the target as if a minor wound until the javelin is removed from the shield (3 actions) or the shield discarded (1 action).

Cover

- 1 Partially obscuring cover
- 2 Mostly obscured by leafy cover
- 2 Protected by partial solid cover (approx 1/2 covered)
- 3 Protected 3/4 by solid cover
- 4 Just enough showing out of solid cover to see and fire a gun
- 5 Protected all but small part, e.g. peaking out or shooting through a loophole

Duck backs

A shot that misses due to hitting solid cover (it would have hit if not for the cover modifier) will often cause a man to flinch. Also roll duckbacks for any missile wounds against figures in cover that don't actually knock the guy over. Roll an action check for the figure at -2. If failed, he ducks back completely behind the cover immediately (out of the normal sequence) at the end of the current activation's resolution. This means that multiple shots fired at him during the current activation will all be resolved and then he will duck back behind cover. It will require a 1/2 turn action for him to move back into an exposed firing position.

Target Size

Mounted Target +1 and then roll for man or horse hit (1/3 chance it's the man) or aim at one or the other at normal to hit and have a 1/6 chance of hitting the other instead by accident if a hit is scored.

-1 kneeling

-2 prone

Ignore kneeling and prone target modifiers for shots at 2" or less range. It doesn't matter that you are lying down if the shooter is standing right over you looking at your body lengthwise.

Aimed Fire

Aimed fire is possible at short range or greater.

One half turn spent aiming 0. Half turns of aim come from situations like reloading a 1/2 turn reload weapon and aiming for the second half of the turn, then firing in the next turn.

One turn spent aiming before firing turn +2.

Two or more turns of aim +3. (not cumulative)

Aimed fire that is braced on the terrain like a windowsill or rock or when firing prone or an aid like a musket rest gets an additional +1.

A moving figure cannot aim, but a figure can move for 1/2 turn, and then stand still and aim in the second half, if moving on foot or at the lowest horse rate.

Snap Fire

Snap Fire is firing with no time spent aiming.

Snap firing is at a -2 penalty when combined in the same turn with another action like walking, reloading or drawing a weapon. If the only action taken in the turn is one shot, there is enough aiming (1/2 turn) for no penalty. Throwing weapons take the -2 penalty but get a 50% range extension if thrown while running in the same direction.

Bows fired from horseback, firearms and crossbows can snap shoot while moving faster, at a penalty of -4.

Multiple shots

If using a fast repeating weapon, up to 4 shots may be taken in one turn. If using a slow repeating weapon, two shots may be taken in one turn. The first shot is taken as aimed or snap shot depending on whether there was any aiming prior to the shot. Each shot after the first in one turn is at a -1 cumulative penalty. Double action revolvers and automatic pistols are examples of fast repeating weapons. Single action revolvers are examples of slow repeating weapons. Fire continued from turn to turn is considered to be a snap shot in the next turn unless new aiming is done.

Moving Targets

Target moving

| | |
|------------|----|
| 3" or less | +0 |
| 3.5 - 6" | -1 |
| 6.5 - 12" | -2 |
| 12.5 - 18" | -3 |

Appearing Targets

Target first seen by shooter during target's preceding unit activation. -1

Target first seen by shooter during current unit activation. -2

Fire past friends, or at enemies engaged in melee

If a friendly figure is partially blocking the line of sight to a target, then treat him as if he were providing hard cover to the target. The to hit chance is modified by the amount of the target blocked. If the to hit roll is such that the shot would hit the cover, it hits the interposed friend instead.

If a friend is in melee with an enemy figure, then handle as above but apply a further -2 to the shot, as the two are close together and assumed to be moving unpredictably. This also provides 2 chances in 12 of hitting the friend meleeing that target even if the friend is not apparently blocking the direct LOS between firer and

target.

Damage

Roll 1D12 and adjust the die roll by any weapons damage modifier or target protection damage modifier.

1-2 Struck dead
3-4 Crippling wound
5-7 Serious wound
8-12 Minor Wound
Higher - no effect

Subtract 1 from the die roll if the too hit roll succeeds by 3 or better beneath the highest number needed to hit.

All missile weapons adjust their damage modifier +1 at extreme range, unless this is modified by a special rule for the particular weapon. For instance, shotguns and blunderbusses should be at -2 at "Too Close" range and attenuate by +1 per range bracket.

Loading

Reloading a weapon is a multi-turn action for many weapons. A side record will need to be kept of how many successful actions a figure has towards getting his gun reloaded. If a weapon had a loading time of 1/2 indicated, then it can be reloaded and fired in the same turn, taking the snap fire penalty.

A referee wanting even more realism might inflict some of the real life loading errors like forgetting a step or accidentally doubling a step to some failed action rolls that occur during loading. Remember the anecdotes about the rifles picked up on the field after Gettysburg with as many as six or eight bullets rammed uselessly into the barrels.

Opportunity Fire

In some cases, particularly when the terrain is dense and/or there are cavalry in the game, it may be useful to have an opportunity fire rule. I consider this an optional rule. As an alternative to a normal action, a figure can take aim at an area. This requires an action roll as usual. If any enemy enters the area targeted, the figure may shoot him if he succeeds at an "opportunity fire action roll" which he attempts immediately. He may only attempt one such opportunity fire between each activation of his unit. Treat the shot as if aiming for 1/2 turn, thus no snap fire penalty but no aiming bonus versus the target that enters the target area. Target movement and appearing target modifiers, etc apply normally. The area a figure can cover is a judgement call, but a 4" diameter circle is a good starting point and will serve unless you prefer a different size template declared before the game begins. You might want to allow more experienced men to cover a bigger area than novices or have the opportunity fire zone be along a line of sight or arc from the firer. Experiment. In a refereed game, the player could declare the target area secretly to the referee, but the model should be facing it. Opportunity fire aim, like other aim, will be broken by a duckback result against the aiming figure.

Missile Weapons Table

| Weapon | Range | | | | Damage | Reload | Shots | Repeat |
|----------------------------------|-------|-----|------|---------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Short | Med | Long | Extreme | Modifier | | | |
| Javelin* | 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 | +1 | 1 | 1 | N |
| Weak Bow | 4 | 8 | 12 | 20 | +1 | 1 | 1 | N |
| Short Bow | 8 | 16 | 24 | 40 | +1 | 1 | 1 | N |
| Long Bow | 12 | 24 | 36 | 60 | 0 | 1 | 1 | N |
| Light Crossbow | 10 | 20 | 30 | 50 | +1 | 3 | 1 | N |
| Heavy Crossbow | 15 | 30 | 40 | 60 | 0 | 6 | 1 | N |
| Matchlock Musket | 10 | 18 | 26 | 45 | -1 | 4 | 1 | N |
| Flintlock Musket | 10 | 20 | 30 | 50 | -1 | 2 | 1 | N |
| Flintlock Rifle | 18 | 36 | 48 | 72 | 0 | 4 | 1 | N |
| Cap and Ball Rifle | 18 | 36 | 48 | 72 | 0 | 3 | 1 | N |
| Breechloader | 20 | 40 | 60 | 80 | 0 | 1/2 | 1 | N |
| Single Shot Breechloader Carbine | 16 | 32 | 48 | 60 | 0 | 1/2 | 1 | N |
| Magazine Rifle ** | 20 | 40 | 60 | 80 | 0 | 1 | 5-17 | S |
| Magazine Carbine ** | 16 | 32 | 48 | 60 | 0 | 1 | 5-17 | S |
| Flintlock Pistol | 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 | 0 | 2 | 1 | N |
| Cap & Ball Pistol | 4 | 8 | 12 | 18 | 0 | 2 | 1 | N |
| Cap & Ball Revolver | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | 0 | 6 | 6 | S |
| Small Double Action Revolver | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | +1 | 2 | 6 | F |
| Large Double Action Revolver | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | 0 | 2 | 6 | F |
| Small Single Action Revolver | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | +1 | 2 | 6 | S |
| Large Single Action Revolver | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | 0 | 2 | 6 | S |
| Blunderbuss # | 4 | 8 | 12 | 18 | Var | 2 1/2 | 1 | N |
| Double Barrel Shotgun # | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | Var | 1 1/2 | 2 | S |
| Machine Pistol | 5 | 10 | 15 | 25 | +1 | 1 | 20 | Fx2 |
| Submachinegun | 7 | 14 | 21 | 35 | 0 | 1 | 20 | Fx3 |
| Lt. MG unbraced | 16 | 32 | 48 | 60 | 0 | 2 | 30 | Fx3 |
| Lt. MG braced | 25 | 50 | 75 | 125 | 0 | 2 | 30 | Fx3 |

Increase the loading time of socket bayonet weapons by 1 turn for care in avoiding the bayonet point. Plug bayonets take 2 turns to pull and 1 to sheathe prior to loading.

*Increase each range by 50% if throwing while running in same direction to set up throw. This does incur the snap fire to hit penalty, but extends range.

** Many magazine rifles can be reloaded for each shot firing at an effective reloading rate of 1/2, to save the magazine for crisis moments when a higher rate of fire is needed.

Shotguns and blunderbusses get a +2 To Hit modifier at short through long range, and have damage modifier of -2 at "Too Close" range and attenuate by +1 per range bracket. At short range they can roll vs two adjacent targets, at medium, two targets within 1" of each other, at long range up to 2" separation (plus any targets between), at extreme all in a 4" wide area.

Revolvers can reload 2 chambers in one turn, or all 6 in 2 turns.

Repeat is the rate of repeated shots in one turn, N is none (single shot only), S is slow (2/turn max, F is fast, 4/turn max.

Automatic weapons

Experimental rule for automatic weapons: Fx2 or Fx3 give up to 8 or 12 shots respectively, taking the -1 per shot penalty as before. For older guns that don't have a selective fire "burst" setting, require an extra action roll to stop at the desired number of shots and not waste the rest of the magazine on the shot. For newer guns that do have a selective burst setting, assume they can get off as many bursts as an F repeater would single shots. Each burst being the size appropriate to that model (usually 3 rounds?).

A braced MG means one that is using the bipod or tripod from the appropriate prone or seated/kneeling position or over suitable hard cover or pintle mounted. The above listed LMG would be magazine fed and reloaded by the gunner. I'll have to work on rules for having a loader assist and for belt fed guns, changing barrels, etc.

Obviously the table is not all-inclusive. Interpolate additional weapons as needed for a scenario. Remember that a turn is 5 seconds and assume a veteran who can make the ideal rate of fire for the weapon for determining reload rate. Additional time for less experienced troops will come naturally out of failed action rolls. As a referee or group, feel free to adjust such details as ranges, rates of fire, damage modifiers, magazine capacities, and reload times to reflect your superior knowledge of particular weapons. The numbers in the table represent generic classes of weapons, and specific models are likely to differ. I would like to hear what changes you make and why, so I can consider incorporating them. I am not a completely knowledgeable gun buff, so you are likely to know the values better if you are one. Relative accuracies of different guns can be reflected in the range bands, and taking the weapons into account when you set up the fire skills for your scenario. It has been pointed out to me that the extreme ranges listed above are pretty conservative for many rifles and other firearms. This is true, at last to the extent that they are certainly able to shoot a bullet much farther, possibly with useful aiming. My guess is that the hit probabilities are very low beyond the listed ranges. If you think that effective fire can be done at longer ranges and have a big enough table or rescale the ground scale to fit, go ahead and adjust the extreme, and maybe the long range of appropriate weapons upward to suit your group's view on the matter.

***Thrown Objects**

For now, compare the object or weapon thrown to the javelin, and reduce the range as appropriate for things that are heavier or less aerodynamic. Allow the same kind of range boost for a running throw. A small rock or

grenade should be able to go about 2/3 as far, and a really big rock, flaming brand, or barroom chair about 1/3. Assess the damage modifier similarly by comparison to existing weapons. Grenades & flaming brands have to land somewhere. If a miss is rolled, scatter them with a D12 for direction, 12 o'clock being in the direction of the throw, and a distance of 1D6 inches plus the number missed by. They cannot scatter back towards the thrower more than half the distance from the thrower to the target.

Melee

The Stroke

Attacking in melee combat is an action available when an activated figure is adjacent or moves adjacent to an enemy figure. Both the attacker and defender roll for each melee attack. If the attacker's score is a success and the defender's fails, then the defender is hit and you roll for damage, with the difference in the to hit and parry rolls possibly causing a modifier to the severity of the wound inflicted.

The Riposte

When a figure is attacked in melee combat, he can roll an Action check, which, if successful, will allow him to count his combat roll as an attack and damage his attacker if he wins the roll. If this roll is failed, his combat roll is defensive only. Ripostes are not possible against attackers who began their move behind the defender and attacked from behind the defender. Ripostes only hit the attacker when the defender rolls a successful parry, and the attacker missed his attack. Also, some of the modifiers that do not apply to the parry might affect the riposte, like the attacker's body armor and shield use.

Skill

The base chance to hit on a D12 is the figure's skill. Roll less than or equal to skill to hit or parry. Rolling a natural 1 is always a successful hit or parry. Rolling a natural 12 is always unsuccessful.

Charging

Charges are any moves to melee contact. Charging attackers are resolved after combats by troops that begin adjacent in the current unit's activation. Cavalry, with their inability to stop instantly if moving fast, may have to resolve their melee combats in passing, as they move by an opponent. Each still only gets a single attack at some point in its movement.

One Vs Many

As a defender, a figure can only riposte versus one attacker during any one unit's activation. He can still roll versus each attacker to parry that attacker's stroke.

The defender's parry chance is decreased by each active attacker engaging him over 1 and the attackers' chances improved by one for each extra attacker over 1. Defending masters are skillful enough to evade gang-up tactics and use the enemy numbers against them, causing them to collide, etc, in the approved Hollywood fashion, so ignore these modifiers if a master is defending. If figures from more than one unit are attacking a single individual, then when any one attacks, the ones from the other unit can make action rolls to help add to the gang up modifiers, but don't actually attack except in their own unit's activations. By active attackers, I mean only those that succeed in their action rolls. Guys standing around in confusion, off balance, or whatever the failed roll means do not contribute to the gang-up modifier.

Example: A young King's Musketeer, Experience of 4 is facing three of the Cardinal's Guard, also Experience 4. The Guards card comes up and they attack. Action rolls are 3, 5, 1. Two of them activate. This is one more than the base of one attacker. Each of the active two will get a +1 to his melee to hit chance and the Musketeer will get -1 to his parry vs each.

Example 2: The King's Musketeer is facing the three of the Cardinal's Guards and has Milady DeWinter (a unit herself) at his back. The Guards card comes up and they attack. Action rolls are 3, 5, 1. Two of them activate. Milady also rolls an action roll and succeeds. Each of the active two guardsmen will get a +2 to his melee to hit chance and the Musketeer will get -2 to his parry vs each, because of Milady's threat, even though she doesn't actually attack at this moment. When her card comes up, if no one has left the melee, all three guardsmen would get to attempt activation to add outnumbering modifiers to her attack.

Example 3: Miyamoto Musashi, an Experience 6 master, is surrounded by enemy ashigaru. He feints one way and two stumble into each other avoiding him. He whirls the other way and now an enemy finds one of his comrades between himself and Musashi and holds his blow. Okay, well we aren't modelling at quite this level of detail, but the net effect is that Musashi being a master makes all parries at full value, and all his attackers only have their ordinary rolls. They better hope some of them have high enough melee skills to be effectively aggressive and reduce his parry that way.

Last Shot vs Charge *optional rule*

In most games lately, we've been allowing figures with loaded guns who are charged from the front to get off one last shot if they succeed at an instant action check. This is with the target in base to base contact so the the too close penalty and the moving target penalty and the snap shot penalty if they haven't been previously aiming at the charging figure. So it is usually a crummy shot. You might make this in lieu of a parry or allow the shot and the parry. We've usually played with both shot and parry but no riposte. Sword and pistol armed figures should be allowed both defenses, but the weapon in the off hand should take a -2 penalty.

Weapon breakage in parries *optional rule*

If the attacker hits and the defender successfully parries, sometimes a weapon will be broken. If the attacker rolls low enough, the defender's weapon or shield will be broken. If the defender rolls low enough, the attacker's weapon will be broken. The number to break the opponent's weapon is 2 or less. Add the damage modifier of your weapon to your roll and subtract the opponent's damage modifier, to see if you break his weapon. Treat a metal faced shield as -1 for this purpose, wood or hide with metal rim and/or boss as 0, and plain wood +1, plain hide or wicker shield as +2. A defender will lose his shield first if he has one, and will use the shield's modifiers instead of his weapon, under the assumption that the shield is the mostly likely thing to block the attack.

For example: Attacker with sword and melee skill 7, defender with battleaxe and melee skill 6. Attacker rolls 4, defender 3. The sword has damage mod 0, and the axe -1. For sword vs axe, $4+0-(-1) > 2$ so no harm is done to the defender's axe. Axe vs sword, so $3-1 = 2$, and the attacker's sword is broken. If the defender had axe and a metal rimmed wooden shield with the same rolls, the attacker's sword would not be damaged, as the shield would be the parrying item with a 0 modifier. If playing with hit locations, and the defender has a wounded shield arm, treat his weapon as the parrying item first instead.

Weapons getting stuck *optional rule*

Many historical accounts mention melee weapons getting stuck in the victim. To simulate this possibility, when a crippling wound or an outright kill is inflicted, have the attacker roll a D12 immediately against his melee skill to unstick the weapon. If this roll fails, a successful activation will have to be spent prying it loose if he wants to keep it. If he is riding a horse going too fast to stop, he will lose the weapon, left behind in the body, if the unsticking roll fails. On a natural 12 on the unsticking roll, the user discovers that the weapon was broken or badly bent in the victim. Blunt weapons like gunbutts and chairs won't get stuck, but still give a 1 in 12 chance that the weapon is broken, higher if the ref rules the weapon is particularly fragile. Chairs in

brawls, for example, should splinter most of the time, to replicate Hollywood results if nothing else.

Shooting the Bayonet Free *optional rule*

An fun optional rule for the bloody minded, especially if the above rule is in use, is to allow anybody with a socket bayonet on a loaded gun to shoot the gun for an automatic damage roll after any time they inflict a serious or worse wound with the bayonet. The recoil will free the stuck bayonet. Obviously this does not apply to plug bayonets.

Attacking horses *optional rule*

A melee attack against a mount should be resolved with the normal modifiers to the attacker's melee roll. While the horse has no ability to parry itself, it's rider may be able to, or the horse may be able to dodge the blow or otherwise spoil it. If the attack is coming from a direction that the rider will not be able to parry effectively with the weapons he's using, like from in front of the horse and he has a sword, then have the horse roll a "parry" roll representing its attempt to dodge or other movement spoiling the attacker's strike. Appropriate melee skills would be 3 for your random horse off the street, 5 for a trained cavalry horse, or 7 for a knight's trained warhorse. The referee may want to adjust these in general or for particular horses. Modify this by any armor on the horse, wounds, etc. Treat the horse's "weapon type" as unarmed. Allow the rider to count as an extra enemy "outnumbering" the attacker just as if the horse were any other friend of the rider. If the rider is well positioned to block for the horse, like using that sword and the attacker is right alongside the rider's leg, let the rider parry for the horse as he would for himself. This may not represent actually getting the sword interposed in front of a low stroke, but may be scaring the attacker back out of effective reach, to save his own head. A light lance should probably allow the rider to parry to the front as well. A heavy couched lance wouldn't have much ability to parry at all, so unless the attack was from his shield side, use the horse's own roll.

Attacks by horses *optional rules*

Most horses are not trained to attack and will only do so by trampling under the movement rules about collisions. A few horses, like the warhorses of some knights, are trained to combat, by rearing up and striking with the forehooves, biting, kicking, etc. If such horses appear in a scenario, when moving 6" or less in the turn, allow them to attack to the front or directly to the rear with a melee skill as above, counting as 0 to hit modifier, and +1 damage modifier, if the rider makes his horsemanship roll. A failure just means he didn't coax it to attack. If the horse does attack, the rider makes another horsemanship check to avoid being unhorsed by the horse's rearing and fighting.

Pretty much any horse may kick somebody directly behind it if scared or startled. When it's group goes and it is being crowded by somebody or something adjacent and directly behind it, and there is any ongoing melee or firing within 6", roll 1D6 for a special activation for the horse in addition to the rider's normal activation. On a 1, the horse kicks at the melee skill listed above under Attacking Horses, scoring damage with a +4 modifier if it hits (+5 for small horses, +3 for big ones). Any parry rolled vs this kick is basically a dodge.

Damage (Rolled on D12 after successful hit)

- 1-2 Struck dead
- 3-4 Crippling wound
- 5-7 Serious wound
- 8-12 Minor Wound
- Higher - no effect

Modify roll by attacker's weapon.

Target armor 3 or 4 +1

Attacker succeeded by 3 or more points under To Hit chance -2

Melee Weapons Table

| | To Hit | Dmg Mod | Ranks | Use with Shield |
|-----------------|--------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Sword | +1 | 0 | 1 | Y |
| Spear/Bayonet | 0 | 0 | 2 | Y |
| Pike | -1 | 0 | 4 | N |
| Axe/Mace | -1 | -1 | 1 | Y |
| Halberd | 0 | -1 | 2 | N |
| Knife | -1 | +1 | 1 | Y |
| Unarmed | -2 | +2 | 1 | Y |
| Improvised Club | -2 | +1 | 1 | Y |
| Javelin | 0 | 0 | 1 | Y |

Other weapons are possible. Factor them as seems appropriate and agree before the game.

The more wieldy the weapon is, the higher the To Hit modifier.

The more damage it does, the lower the Damage modifier.

An extra rank can fight if there is more than 4 feet in front of the grip and approximately every 3 feet beyond.

Weapons marked Y for shield mean that a shield or second "Y" rated weapon can be used to block, gaining the defense modifier.

Situation (all modifiers adjust the skill based to hit number)

Above opponent (includes cavalry vs foot and foot vs prone) +1

Charging at 4" or greater rate with a thrusting weapon +1

Mounted charge at 7-18" speed +1

Drawing weapon or switching weapon from hand to hand in same turn as attack -2

Wounded attacking figure -1 Minor, -2 Serious, -3 Crippling

Target 1/2 protected by cover - 2

Target 3/4 protected by cover -4

Each active, outnumbering attacker after the first, parry at -1 (cumulative, waived for defending masters)

Multiple attackers vs single defender, each activated after 1st, attackers get +1 (cumulative, waived for defending masters)

Target Armor Rating -Armor (0-4)

Attacking vs small or medium shield or two weapons -1

Attacking vs large shield -2

Attacker's rank behind first -1 (cumulative per rank)

Parrying from well-ordered, close formation +2

Aggressive attack - High melee skill fighters can take voluntary penalty reduction as far as to skill 6, and reduce opponent's attack or parry roll by same amount.

Bad Footing, difficulty seeing, other as set in scenario or determined by referee -?

Unfamiliar weapon type -2

Attacked from behind -2 to parry and no shield use

Wounds

I sometimes hang little plastic rings on figures to indicate wounds. Small labels stuck on the base, bits of colored pipe cleaner, or wounds recorded on a roster are other possible bookkeeping tools.

Minor wound - one wound marker

-1 to initiative, melee, shooting and other skills, -2" to movement on foot

Serious Wound - two wound markers

Knocked down and requires 1 successful activation to recover from the shock before standing back up.

-2 to initiative, melee, shooting and other skills, -4" to movement on foot

Variable knockdown *optional rule*: To add a little spice at the expense of a bit more complexity, have a serious wound only knock the man down if he fails an instant activation roll. Apply the wound modifiers and the damage modifier of the weapon that hit him to his Experience Number.

Crippling Wound - three wound markers

Knocked down and requires 1 successful activation to recover from the shock before standing back up.

-3 to initiative, melee, shooting, and other skill rolls, -6" to movement on foot

Wounds are additive. Two minors equals one serious. A minor and a serious equals a crippling wound.

Two crippling wounds will kill. Combinations of wounds between Crippling and Death can total -4 or -5 modifiers and double that in movement penalties. **Wounded horses** Minor wounds just modify the horse's maximum speed and any horsemanship checks the rider has to make. Horses are not knocked down by serious wounds but require a horsemanship roll on the rider's next activation to not fall off, effects as below. Horses are knocked down by crippling wounds, and the rider will require a horsemanship check to dismount without taking falling damage or being trapped by the fallen horse. If the horsemanship roll is failed, he'll fall and take a damage roll at +6 up to 6" speed, +4 at 7 to 12", +2 if faster. Then roll a second check. If that is failed too, he is pinned by the horse and will require a successful activation check at -2. to free himself. Others can help him giving +2 to this roll for each activated friend assisting him. If using the variable knockdown for serious wounds above, apply it to crippling wounds inflicted on horses too, to see if they are

knocked down. If a rider continues to ride a wounded horse, using the advanced movement rules he'll have to continue to make horsemanship rolls if it is moving fast, as described above in the movement rules.

Observation

Spotting Hidden Enemies

I'm still free-kriegspieling this, trying to settle on a level of detail to use. As a rule of thumb, assume troops of reasonable fieldcraft who are stationary in leafy cover can remain hidden until the enemy get close. Maybe give the enemy one roll to spot a unit per turn needing under 12 minus the range in inches on a D12, with a 2 point bonus if he spotting unit includes a master, 1 point per veteran, and 1 point for each potentially visible green soldier in the hiding unit. Double the range if the hiding unit are in bright colors, triple for shiny armour, double if infantry and doing nothing but trying to observe, halve for observers running, or on trotting or galloping horses, firing at others more than 6" or 90 degree away from target. Double if observers are notable scouts, half if notably unobservant like some guards cavalry. Guys shooting from cover should usually be spotted especially if using pre-smokeless powder firearms. Guys moving carefully in cover might double the spotting range. You might want to set absolute visibility ranges through brush, corn, or lichen-simulated bushes. Maybe only allow spotting rolls if something changes like the hiding guys move or the spotters get closer so that spotting does not become inevitable once you get close enough and then wait a few turns. If you have a nicely worked out spotting system that you might be willing to give me to use here, I'd be glad to get some email on it. I've tried a number of ideas and most have worked okay, but were very informal, at the 'decide on a chance to spot and have 'em roll a die' level.

Hearing Enemies

* The system should take into account distance, experience, armor, and activity of hearer, type of target and movement, and ambient battle noise.

Communication

Spoken Commands

Messages should be limited to a few words per five second turn. Somewhere around 10 words or one sentence.

Signals by Horn, Gun, and Flag

* Prearranged signals, require target able to perceive them and successful actions to make or react to them.

Special Actions and Circumstances

***Fires and Smoke**

*number of actions and rolls to ignite various objects, spreading rates, effects on figures

Herd movement by riderless horses

Set up a little table to show how they will move randomly among front side directions part of the time and start following groups of friendly horses sometimes and stay with their downed rider sometimes.

***Terrain**

Terrain at this scale should be directly representative. If there are four trees in a woods, there are really four trees and they are each standing right there and have a trunk as thick as it looks, so may or may not be good for cover. You can't walk through a tree and move it out of the way as you would in a larger scale game. If a tree looks climbable then you can allow for characters to climb it, with the referee determining how long it will take, how it restricts LOS and how much it conceals the person in the canopy, and what might make the climber fall, etc.

I typically don't deduct from movement for 0.5" contours, take off an inch from infantry moves for going up 1" contours and 2" for 1.5" high contours. Cavalry double this or worse. They might take 1" for 0.5" contours, 3" for 1" contours and treat 1.5" contours as only climbable by spending the whole move and making a successful horsemanship check unless on a marked trail that crosses the contour at an angle, or a road that smoothes the steepness, possibly switchbacking up the face. Depending on how your hills are constructed, you may need a different formulation, especially if the ground represented is particularly bad or you use continuous slope hill models.

Boggy or sandy ground or fordable streams might all impede movement, typically slowing cavalry more than infantry, and wheeled transport even more. Use common sense. Camels, for instance, should be impeded very little if at all by sandy dunes.

General movement rates of all terrain on the table should be spelled out by the referee or scenario designer at the beginning of the game, unless the ref has some special plan to have the fog of war intrude in the scenario and one side does not know that, say, everything within 10" of the fallen tree is boggy ground.

Doors and windows should be handled by how easy they are to open or break. Remember that a turn is about 5 seconds and think about how long it will be to unlock, open, climb through, or break down. Shooting out locks will help with some, axes hasten the rate of breaking down a door, etc.

Fanaticism

Fanatics charge into combat on a follow me at the leader's value. They will attack surrendered troops, so there should be a modifier against surrendering to them. They might have some other special rules like being unaffected by the loss of friendly units, ignoring the first point of wounds on activation rolls and in the optional knockdown checks vs serious wounds.

Higher Level Leadership

Typically we play with one leader who is an NCO, "natural leader", or junior officer per unit.

Lately we've begun experimenting with higher level leaders who command the whole on table force. These can basically work in a couple of ways.

They can be floating leaders who can attach to a unit and just act as an extra normal leader in it, as well as having leadership influence, butt-kicking, etc, over the unit's intrinsic leader, and the ability of changing the unit's overall "mission" objectives, if you set such at the beginning of the game.

We have also experimented in one game with giving the commanding leader a separate activation card and allowing him to re-activate one unit to which he is attached each turn for an extra move or volley, but only things that can be done collectively under leadership direction. He could of course move alone to attach to a different unit. Play with either idea or try some other.

Weather

Weather can have all sorts of effects, ranging from rain wetting bowstrings, slow matches, and gunpowder making bows and early firearms less useful to making the ground slippery and hazardous or making it hard to see or hear one's enemies. In general, the scenario designer should consider the effects he wants unusual weather conditions to have on his game. There is probably not time for the weather to change in a Rencounter scenario, lasting at most a few minutes of "game time".

Falling Injuries

The system should account for height and speed of horse or wagon movement. Basically a fall from a galloping horse or an unexpected 10 foot or prepared 20 foot fall should be a damage roll at +2 or thereabouts.

For falls from horses or moving vehicles, take a damage roll at +6 up to 6" speed, +4 at 7 to 12", +2 at 13 to 18", 0 at 19 to 24", and -1 for every 6" speed higher if from fast vehicles.

*Explosives

More later, but here's a quick and dirty beginning rule for grenades - Figure on 1 action to get a grenade out, (1/2 if strung on a convenient bandolier and both hands are free) and 1 action to arm the grenade for throwing. 1/2 action + any aiming for the throw itself. After placing the grenade with the thrown object rules, resolve the explosion by treating the grenade as +1 to the damage roll and +1 per 1/2 inch anybody is away from the grenade. If the grenade does a serious wound or worse, the target is knocked down, a light wound knocks him down if he fails an action check (apply the wound - test immediately). A damage roll of 14 or less will require a similar action roll vs knock down even though no wound is caused. The fall will be away from the grenade. Any man knocked down will be stunned and require one action to clear the stun just like seriously wounded men from gunshots do.

If you want Hollywood detailed grenades, don't have the grenades blow up immediately. They go off at the beginning of the thrower's next action on 11 or less, a 12 being a dud. An enemy man with a live grenade nearby can throw himself on the grenade by making an action roll at experience -2, and this will add +3" to the effective distance for all friends in the blast radius, but attacks him at -3 to the damage roll. Or at experience -2, he can spot it, pick it up, and try to throw it back at -2 To Hit in addition to all other mods as one action, dropping anything in his good hand in the process. At action roll -1 he can kick it away 1D3 inches with 1D3 inches scatter from that point. If the grenade was thrown by a vet or master take an additional -1 for him being able to time the fuse better with the throw.

Explosive effects on terrain like walls and doors will have to be free-kriegspieled for now. Take into account the amount of explosive, the distance from and nature of the possibly-destroyed cover as To Damage mods, reading kills as destruction with blow-through, and wounds as proportionally weakening the cover.

Artillery

Here's a first cut at a simplistic smoothbore muzzle-loading artillery rule.

Task times Lay loaded gun with cannister 1/2 or roundshot 1. More time would be taken with long range roundshot, but that's shooting off the table in Rencounter. Fire gun 1/2 Load light gun - 3, 6 pounder - 4, 9 pounder - 4 1/2, 12 pounder - 5 Crew sizes are pretty big when including all the men that handle the horse

team and the ones who tend and bring forward the ammunition and help prolong in addition to the ones actually handling the gun. Probably a leader and 8 crew to maintain the above rate with the 6 - 12 pounders through a game. Maybe only 5 or 6 others for a light 3 pounder or such. A crew that gets shot up should be slower, add something like 1/2 phase per man lost. If you start with extra, don't start penalizing until under the size above. For simple play just roll the gun crew leader (or acting leader, if the original is lost) for activation for them to perform standard move the gun and shoot it tasks. Assume that these are highly drilled tasks. If you want to get really detailed and roll for each man to do his part, clearing the barrel, loading the powder and shot, ramming home, covering the touch hole, etc, and potentially see individual tasks get interrupted by casualties you could, but trained gun crew should be at a bonus to experience level, compared to their performance of other tasks, to make up for the drilled nature, and the way a group task will slow up a lot if you actually have to test for each part that must simultaneous happen to proceed to the next step. The only task we split out in play test was a Boxer Chinese gun captain actually shooting the piece, which led to some British marksmen shooting at him specifically to stop him. In that game we ruled that the linstock with the slow match had to be picked up by somebody else before firing the gun, but we didn't test for it to go out and have to be relighted. Guns with that fire a cap with a lanyard instead would get rid of that issue.

To begin with, we'll just cover cannister and grapeshot, typical short range anti-personnel loads. An artillery fire skill of 9 for the gun captain is where I'm starting in working out this table, you probably wouldn't want to shift this more than up or down 2 for a trained crew. You will want to give the other crew an artillery fire skill rating too, either the same or lower than the gun captain's depending on the training level. The "Too close" to hit mod being a benefit instead of the penalty as in small arms, is because the cannon's aim won't waver if you're in front of the muzzle trying to melee.

Cannister and Grape fire

Range in inches To hit mod Damage modifier

| | | |
|----|----|----|
| 5 | +3 | -6 |
| 12 | 0 | -5 |
| 24 | -2 | -4 |
| 48 | -4 | -3 |
| 96 | -6 | -2 |

Cannister spread 1" wide per 10" down range

Grape -1 to hit mod out to medium range, -2 to long and extreme, spread 2" per 10" down range

Bounce modifiers to hit:

Hard rocky ground +2

Wet, marshy, or muddy ground, soft sand -2

To hit modifiers to account for volume of balls fired: 3lb -1, 6lb 0, 9lb +1, 12lb +2

Both cannister and grape will roll versus all targets in that cone, friend and foe, until stopped by something solid like a hill or very stout walls. Weaker walls should give a penalty to the to hit and damage mods or maybe just damage if really flimsy.

Quick loading - risky shortcuts for faster fire versus charging targets and such. Each action roll success during quick loading counts double towards the loading time. If the last one needed succeeds, there will be a missfire or accident on the shot on a natural 12 on the first to hit rolled for. If the last action roll needed for loading is failed, roll a D6 and a 6 causes an immediate missfire/accident check. Once you start a quick loading, you'll have to finish that way and take the risk, or spend double the time quickloaded to recheck safety. You can't just do the last roll as normal loading to avoid the risk.

Missfires & accidents

Roll 1D12

1-2 Gun explodes - all within 6" roll damage roll for wound, +1 per inch away from gun.

3 Gun shoots prematurely and unaimed, roll base damage rolls for wounds to 2 crew. Another d6, 1-3 high shot, misses all past 12 and at -3 to hit within 12". 4-6 low - resolve only out to 12" (24" in rocky ground) and at -3 to hit versus targets in arc in front.

4 Same as 3-4 with 1 crew wound

5 Same with no crew wound

6-8 Somebody got burned or got struck or run over by recoiling gun - roll base damage roll for wound to 1 crew.

9-12 Loading mistake - no fire until 1-6 actions spent to clear and reload.

Detailed games for Old West and the like

For detailed Old West gunfight games I have been using some of the following modifications.

Resolve by half turns instead of turns to get finer grained sequencing.

Sequence by smaller units, just one or two men each.

Separate pistol and long arm fire skills.

Wound Locations:

1D6 after damage is rolled.

1 Left Leg

2 Right Leg

3 Left Arm

4 Right Arm

5 Body

6 Head

If you want to distinguish between them, increase the movement penalty on leg wounds to 3" per level, with 1" minimum crawl, but go one point lower in the penalty vs shooting. For arm wounds, roll action check immediately (counting wound) or let go of what you are holding in that hand, and increase the combat penalties by one, but reduce the movement penalties to 1" per level of arm wound. Head and body wounds effects are as before.

In general each player handles fewer, more detailed characters, probably just one or two each.

Still considering but unplayed: Add some special skills like fast-draw which would allow a snap shot with a holstered gun in one half turn action if fastdraw skill roll made.

Add detailed fumbles like fastdraw dropped or snagged gun, shot self in foot, jammed guns, misfires, bad loads, etc.

Campaigning and Improvement between games

Clearly this can be very complicated up to the level of a full roleplaying campaign that uses Rencounter as a combat resolution mechanism. But locally, we've been tying together Old West and some Colonials games by simply rolling for skill increases for surviving named characters after games. The scheme has been to give a roll against each skill used by a character in the game for that skill's improvement by one point. The roll uses the same dice type as the skill's normal rolls but with the skill improving by rolling OVER it's previous level. If it is at the maximum level, it can't increase. This also makes it easier to get better if you are lousy than if you are already pretty good at something. Thus an old west gunfight character who has managed to use his pistol, ride a horse, and fight with a knife in a game would roll for improvement to his experience rating and his riding skill on D6s, and his pistol skill and melee skill on D12s. If he has experience level 4 and rolls a 5 or 6 on the D6, he goes up to experience 5, veteran. If he is already a master, exp 6, he can't get any better.

If you want to represent the effects of accumulated wounds that don't completely heal, and the possibility of dying from gangrene or other complications after the fight, for any wounded character roll a d6 for each

wound point he has suffered.

Treat the results as follows:

1 - sepsis - the wound got worse, reroll that wound point as two dice instead of one

2 - permanent wound point - the effects of that wound on dice rolls and movement are permanent. This probably works better if used with wound location rolls.

3-6 - Healed - The wound point is gone in the next game the character appears in that is more than a month of campaign time after the current game.

If because of sepsis, he ends up with more than 5 permanent wound points from this fight, he dies from complications to his wounds after the battle.

Subtract 1 or 2 from the roll if the character's situation after the fight would be particularly hazardous for wound recovery - like the enemy captures him and denies any care of the wounds, or he crawls away through a swamp or desert unaided by comrades.

If instead the character receives prompt, high quality, medical care, allow one reroll of any 1s or 2s. Only if the reroll is still bad, apply the results.

Fantasy games

We have played one fantasy game of Rencounter, a two parter with one scenario taking place in a woods and the other in a small dungeon beneath. Races were differentiated by the skill levels, equipment, and some off the cuff racial special rules that I made up as GM. Some large monsters only took a penalty for every other wound point if not killed outright, some could see in the dark, some had different movement rates, etc. Each side had a spellcaster. The monsters had a goblin wizard who could only cast a fear spell and magic missiles. The magic missiles were basically handled as if he had a revolver for number of attacks and how they worked. The fear spell was usable once and had a range and area of effect and caused a morale check with a penalty. The other wizard had three or four spells, and a magic rating to roll against to cast them, each characterized before the game on his note card, a speed spell that would give a unit double movement for a few turns, a fireball, invisibility, etc. Typical D&Dish spells, with the sorts of effects any decent gamer can make up on the spot. I'm not going to write up an elaborate set of fantasy rules anytime soon, but you can see the kinds of things you can do with it if you want to. For the dungeon games, we played on foamcore-based dungeon scenery mostly stone textured by a quick painting with a cheap tan crafts acrylic and then sprayed with faux granite spraypaint. The usual hallway dimension was 2" wide. Walls were typically made 1.5" high to make them clearly walls, but not too high to get at the figures. The good guys had a map so we laid out all the dungeon pieces, but the bad guys used hidden movement.

Victory

Unless one side is in a scenario determined "fight to the death" situation, a time should come when completion of the mission is longer a consideration of the troops under your command. At this point they will collectively retreat and the other side wins. You can consider this point reached if the total number of unrouted and not cowering lightly wounded and unwounded men is less than half your force or when no unit on your side has more than half its men healthy and unrouted. For forces with less elan, you can set this threshold higher, at the 1/4 or 1/3 point of total manpower losses, or half the units on the side or all but one being at 1/2 strength. The fifty percent mark probably makes for a pleasantly bloody game in which it is pretty clear that the situation is not salvageable when the breakpoint is crossed.

Closing Notes

The Rencounter system evolved from games played using the Colonial Skirmish Wargame Rules put out by Steve Curtis and friends at Skirmish Wargames, Somerset, England, in the 1970s. Their rules use a one second phase and plotted movement. In the mid 80s, I was playing a lot of these rules with a group in Berkeley. After several games, we became dissatisfied with the plotting system, and I came up with the beginnings of the sequencing system seen in Rencounter, with unit activation and action rolls, and the phases grouped into 4 second turns to allow a significant amount of activity to occur in each activation. We experimented with various forms of unit activation, settling mostly on the dice and counter dice system in the later games. The unit activation rules and action rolls were also used later with some other combat systems in games run by friends for periods ranging from 1066 to WWII. Rencounter is an attempt to refine the system to better incorporate morale and wound effects and get it fixed on paper, with new movement and combat systems used, so as to make it a complete system of its own, with no purchase of any other rules set needed for movement and combat rules. This set is the first nearly complete version recorded on paper (or on computer anyway) and will undoubtedly have loopholes, imprecise wording, and incomplete handling of some issues. I hope you find what is here interesting enough to try it out and give me feedback that will help tighten them up.

To minimize the necessary bookkeeping lookups from rosters, one trick I use is to record the figure's name and fire, melee, and experience level on the bottom of the base of a 25mm figure using a round 5/8" diameter office label. This fits nicely on a 3/4" circle like a penny or washer, which most of our skirmish figures have as bases for keeping individual figures upright. The format is something like:

Sgt. Gridley

F 7 M 6

Ex 4

For 15 mm figures on 1/2" square metal bases I am planning to cut out some magnetic sign material to make sabot bases that will go underneath and leave a lip sticking out behind onto which I'll glue small laserprinted labels to show the stats in a way that is visible without inverting the figures.

Wounds can also be recorded on bases, using the very small round stickers and a code like MW for minor wound, or with colored stickers using a color code for severity. These can often go on the top of the base to be readily apparent.

Scenario Design Suggestions

There are 3-6 units on a side in a typical game, with 4 to 10 men in a unit. Smaller units suffer fewer losses to morale in general, and are more tactically flexible so use this factor to represent the more regular or highly trained side. In a force with a mix of missile and melee only troops, the melee only units can be bigger, as having less stuff to remember. Cavalry units tend to balance better if a bit smaller than infantry units if the number of units on each side is equal.

Notice how the lethality can be tweaked from realistic to slaughter by adjusting the average fire and melee skill scores you use.

Here is some advice I sent in reply to a query on scenario setup for beginning gamers recently:

Here's a simple, general, all purpose generic squad creator for Rencounter, assuming you know nothing about

the organization or quality of the troops you are going to represent:

Pick a number of units for each side. 2-5 is good. If weapons quality is very different, like rifles vs spears, give the worse armed side more units. Likewise if one side has to attack against fire, give it more units.

For each side:

Roll 1D6 + 4 for group size. Use this size for all groups of the same side. Make one a little larger or smaller if you want to use the extra figs that aren't evenly divisible by this number.

If these numbers are too far apart, making the force sizes too uneven, bump them closer, or give the side with smaller units a couple more.

Roll for the leader of each group:

1 Newly appointed Novice Exp 3

2-3 Average Exp 4

4-5 Veteran Exp 5

6 Hero Exp 6

Roll for everybody else:

1-2 Novice Exp 3

3-4 Average Exp 4

5-6 Veteran Exp 5

Make all fire and melee stats double the Exp level of the figure.

If that is too boring, for variety, roll for each man's Fire and Melee score and modify it by:

1 -2

2 -1

3 0

4 0

5 +1

6 +2

Since Rencounter can be used to represent infantry and cavalry combat (no armored vehicle rules yet) across a couple of millenia, it is a bit beyond me to tabulate everyone in history for how good they are. For that, you'll have to read a little about the armies or the campaign you want to represent, and get a feel for it that way. That's part of the fun of historical miniatures gaming. You need not be an expert. Reading one book about, say, the Gettysburg campaign, should give you plenty of info from which to construct ACW Rencounter scenarios. Nearly all campaign histories will give you a sense of, at least, Side A knows what it is doing, Side B was ill-led or filled with raw recruits, or whatever the relationship was. Not to mention informing you of the weapons, tactics, and typical names to put on people. Often they will also give you good scenario ideas too.

Just convert that into game stats. More novice leaders and maybe bigger groups on the poorly led side. More novice troops on the side that just got filled by drafts of new recruits.

Or you can just say "I have some riflemen figures and some dragoons. I wonder how it would work out if I have a 2 mostly veteran squads of rifleman guarding a village against 4 mostly novice squads of dragoons" and wing it. Then try it again with a different village and maybe fewer, better dragoons. Or in the Old West, just decide if the first gunfight of the day is between Clint Eastwood and somebody equally gnarly, a couple

of drunken townsmen on each side, or a couple of movie-lead quality gunslingers vs a mob of extras.

You can apply either imagination or research or both.

On Points Systems Sorry point system lovers, there is none here. This isn't that kind of game. For an entertaining and manageable game, you'll do pretty well if each side has 3 or 4 units, and one side has an advantage in the number in each unit or more units and other has either a weapons advantage or skill or experience level advantage or tactical position advantage like being in ambush or some combination.

In colonials scenarios, I tend to run squads of Imperials with maybe a 1 point average advantage (though both sides have a wide spread) in melee and fire over the natives, a faster firing weapon, like Martini Henrys vs Jezzails & melee armed guys, and 4 or 5 man units against 7 to 10 man units. The Imperials often have smaller proportion of greens and larger of vets. If the number of figures available to each side has to be closer, then I take away the qualitative difference.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the authors of the Colonial Skirmish Wargames Rules and The Old West Gunfight Skirmish Rules, whose rules got me started in skirmish gaming over twenty years ago and to Greg Novak and other members of the University of Illinois Conflict Simulations Society of the early 70s where I first played those rules.

Thanks to the original Colonial Skirmish wargames group that met at my apartment every week for almost a year around 1984 and played through the experiments with sequencing that were the beginnings of what became Rencounter. This group included Mark Alvarez, Brian Collins, Dave Kush, Micheal Sloan, Ken Payne, Kerry Hanscom, Freddy Avner, Milton Soong, T. O. Green, Martin Costa, Klaus Schultheis, and probably a couple more people lost to my memory.

Thanks also to the people who have begun playtesting Rencounter itself: Martin Costa, Aaron Gorfein, Harry Morris, Kerry Hanscom, Jerry Hashimoto, Eric Rauscher, John Carnahan, Jeff Zorn, Paul ??? and various friendly folks who have tried it out and conventions or made suggestions via the internet.

Thanks again to Harry Morris, for going through a serious editing pass. Some of the results have been folded in above (the easier typos to fix so far) and more will go in as I find time to rewrite the problem areas he noticed.

Thanks to Will Scarvie and the cannister and Grape group for scenarios.

Thanks to Avi for putting up with me and my gaming habit.