

Fields of Mars Q&A

As a preface, the *FOM* rules could use a rewrite. As they are currently written, play in the spirit intended.

1. In 1.485 suggests that the LT's LR is used as a die roll modifier in morale checks, but the play aid and example of play does not mention this in the list of modifiers. Moreover, it seems like a unit with a CE of A would basically be immune to morale checks with an LT possessing an LR of 1 or even 2.

Yes, the MC effect should have been taken out of the rules.

2. There are ridge cards in the terrain deck, but the Battlefield Terrain Table does not list Ridge, only Vantage, Disadvantage, Defile, Strongpoint and Obstacle. When do ridges come into play? I house ruled that the defender can choose to put ridges instead of vantage into the terrain deck in Hilly or Mountain terrain but just wanted to double check with you if I was missing something obvious.

I think your house rule works well. Substitute Ridges for Vantage in Mountain, and Hills only if the Lace Wars map hex is adjacent to a Mountain hex.

3. When a unit is shaken and hit again and has to do a morale check there is an important difference between the play aid and the rules. The rules (1.562) say "This penalty (for successive morale checks) remains in force from Round to Round. Record it either on paper or by using numerical chits." However, the play aid says "MC DRM: +1 cumulative per previous MC made by the same Wing in the same Round." Which do you suggest?

It should carry over from round to round. No rest for the wicked. I would add a rule allowing Rally to remove the penalty entirely. I think also allowing Rally specifically for that purpose, although that may make it too easy to recover.

4. I am a bit confused by auxiliaries when a Wing becomes HdC. 3.743 says that "If a Wing becomes HdC or Advances After Combat, the attached Artillery and Auxiliaries share its fate, either being removed from play or advancing along with the Units, respectively" but 1.571 says that you roll for each auxiliary and a 1-4 they can be reassigned to any remaining wing. I am not sure which approach to use.

Go with 3.743. I'm tempted to apply 1.571 to cavalry auxiliaries acting as flank screens.

5. Also, 1.571 is a bit ambivalent about what happens to artillery (is it removed with the routed brigades or reassigned like auxiliaries?). I ruled that it is removed because teleporting artillery batteries felt a bit too flexible for 18th century warfare but again just wanted to see what the intention of the original rule was.

Artillery is definitely removed.

6. Lastly 1.571 says that leaders are lost on the roll of 0 (Zero) on a D6. But the game comes with no leader casualty chart and no modifiers are mentioned in the rules, so I wonder how a zero is possible. Should I assume that we apply all the combat modifiers in the original combat that caused the wing to rout? Or should this be a D10 roll instead?

It should say '1' not zero.

7. And one last question about converting a battalion level Lace Wars game to Field of Mars. The rules say to create Brigade equivalents (BEs) out of the battalion units and the top counter is the Lead Unit for purposes of determining combat effectiveness. What would stop a gamey player from simply stacking a single B or A unit on top of 7 D or E type units when making each brigade equivalent? Or is there an assumption that each Brigade equivalent should be made of the same troop types and effectiveness level?

This goes back to my original statement about playing in the proper spirit. Your assumption is correct.

Re the French in the late 17th Century, they often formed brigades with 1-2 militia battalions attached, but those battalions were usually 'C' grade. Also, a regiment would nearly always brigade together, so Picardie (4 bn) would be one brigade. A German regiment of 3 bn might have a Lorraine regiment of 1 bn brigaded with it - language issues would probably determine the mix as well as seniority.

Both the Prussians and the French habitually grouped Grenadier battalions into shock formations, so that is legit.