FOG OF WAR – BASIC

By Scott Dillin

As a long time RPG gamer, I've occasionally found the need to simulate large scale battles to work in conjunction with my fantasy games. However, there are several problems with integrating any sort of war game into your RPG:

- Learning and applying a new set of mechanics mid-game can fry a player's brain

- Character death from a board game or other abstraction makes players hate you

- Many wargames take several hours to play, eating an entire session or more

- Some players hate this kind of stuff, as they came to play an RPG. This is often for the reasons above.

The product of some trial and error is the very simple, very streamlined FOG OF WAR – BASIC (FOG). A monkey should be able to learn it in about 5 minutes, but the details will provide enough of a challenge to keep the game interesting after several games. Additional rules will be released in the near future allowing for more sophisticated options. FOG sacrifices realism for speed of play and general balance.

I generally would recommend FOG be used to supplement your RPG storyline, giving the heroes advantages or disadvantages in more traditional encounters that follow a session of FOG, rewarding them for playing the game well, but still giving them a chance of success (albeit diminished) should they lose. In this way, they are appropriately rewarded for playing FOG well, but are spared the

feeling they're having their throat cut for losing a mini-game. Cold dice in FOG will wipe out an army quickly, so keep this in mind if much hinges on the battle.

But enough talk… let's get started.

BASIC UNITS

All Units in FOG have four stats:

1. Attack (ATT) – A bonus to attack, reflecting all forms of attack for a single unit.

2. Defense (DEF) – A bonus to defend, be it armor, defensive magic, or fleetness of foot.

3. Speed (SPD) – How many squares of normal terrain a unit can move. Difficult terrain slows movement.

4. Health (HP) – The number of damage points a unit can suffer before falling. When a unit reaches 0 HP, it is removed from play.

Some Units also have additional abilities, which are discussed in the POWERS section below.

A typical unit has a 3 in each of the basic stats. Below is a basic infantry unit:
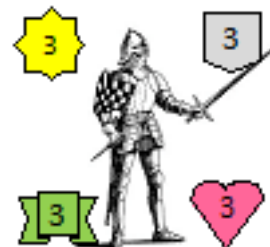
Each unit occupies a single square on a standard 1" battle map. Units do not have facing.

TURN ORDER

The first turn of the combat is determined by each side rolling off with 1d6, the highest roll going first and proceeding in descending order.

Each side in the battle activates all of its tokens sequentially in the order of their choosing. After taking an action, each token should be rotated clockwise to indicate that it has completed its turn. Players should agree as to who will control which tokens.

Each token may take only one of four possible actions:

1. MOVE – The token moves up to its movement value.

2. ATTACK – The token attacks using its attack value, as modified.

3. CHARGE – Move up to token's move value and attack with +1 to attack value

4. POWER – Token uses a special ability as set forth below.

MOVEMENT

A token can move on normal terrain to any adjacent square, expending one movement per turn in doing so. Difficult terrain (mountains, trees, water, etc.) costs double movement points. Units electing to move or charge may always move a minimum of one square.

Charging units must move a minimum of one square in order to charge, and may not charge if adjacent to another enemy unit.

COMBAT

Combat is resolved as follows:

1. Attacker rolls 1d6 and adds his attack value, plus any modifiers

2. Defender rolls 1d6 and adds his Defense value, plus any modifiers

3. If the Attack total exceeds the Defense total, the Defending unit reduces its HP by this amount. If the Attack total does not exceed the Defense total, the Defending unit remains unharmed.

TERRAIN MODIFIERS

Certain types of terrain or combat situations give additional modifiers:

- Difficult terrain – Moving into difficult costs two movement points instead of one (note all tokens electing to move may move a minimum of one square regardless of terrain)

- Trees – Units occupying wooded squares cannot be attacked at range

- Mountains – Units attacking with range while occupying a hill or mountain square add 1 to their range value.

POWERS

Some individual units have powers which may be used in lieu of moving, attacking, or charging. In the basic game, there are the following special powers:

- HEAL – Use of this ability restores one adjacent unit to full health.

- RANGE (#) – Use of this ability allows a unit to attack using its full attack value up to (#) squares away (i.e. Range (3) allows a unit to attack a defending unit up to 3 squares away.

CHARACTER BONUSES

For added flavor, the contribution of high level player characters or NPC's can have an effect on a unit that they are paired with. Should the unit ever die, the character or NPC moves immediately to take command of the nearest unmanned unit, thus conveying the benefit to that unit.

These are just suggestions, and any variation pleasing to the GM will work. Keeping a net bonus of +2 tends to maintain balance. If fewer units than PCs remain on the field, the PC that lost the last unit has effectively fled. If all friendly units are killed, the PCs retreat or are captured, as the GM deems appropriate.

Some example bonuses are as follows:

PC Class	Bonus
Barbarian	+2 Attack
Rogue	+2 Defense
Wizard	+3 Attack, -1 Defense
Monk	+2 Speed
Fighter	+2 Hit Points
Druid	+1 Speed, Ignore Difficult Terrain
Cleric	Add Heal Special Ability to any unit, or heal additional unit if leading Clerics
Ranger	Add Range 3 Special Ability to non-ranged unit

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL RULES

The Basic Game is intentionally bare bones. This is going to let you accomplish your epic warfare goals of spicing things up a little, but not encumber anyone with a complicated rule set. However, if you want to add a little more, you might consider the following:

- Flanking - where two friendly units are on exact opposite sides of an enemy unit and adjacent to that unit, attackers get +1 to Attack Bonus.

- After Combat Healing – At the end of the battle, cleric units may attempt to heal fallen units. For each fallen unit, the player may roll 1d6 per healing unit available to render assistance. A roll of 6 means that the unit is saved, and lives to fight another day. Extra 6's do not convey additional benefit.

- Veteran Units – Units that survive a battle get a +1 to attack. Note that this may be burdensome to keep track of without marking the token itself.

SAMPLE UNITS

Those are the basics. Distribution of units is best achieved by GM fiat, but in case you're seeking to evaluate basic unit strengths, here are a few standard units and their point values:

Good Guys

Unit	Attack	Defense	Speed	Hit Points	Cost	Special
Soldiers	3	3	3	3	2	---
Archers	2	2	3	3	2	Range 3
Clerics	3	3	3	3	8	Healing
Mages	5	1	3	2	8	Range 3

Bad Guys

Unit	Attack	Defense	Speed	Hit Points	Cost	Special
Goblins	2	2	3	2	1	---
Orcs	3	3	3	3	2	---
Ogres	5	3	2	4	8	---
Skeletons	2	2	3	2	2	Range 3
Zombies	3	4	1	3	2	---

At this time we don't have art/tokens built for the individual units. A future release with more rules and units may include tokens for the units themselves.

Questions? Contact us:

skylandgamesinfo@gmail.com

skylandgames.com