

# Fast Action Battle Series

## Series Rules v0.3.8

(April 23, 2006)

### 1.0 Introduction

The FAB Series of games were designed to recreate important battles of the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century, using wooden blocks to represent the major combat formations (Units) and die-cut counters to represent the supporting elements (Assets).

As the Field Commander for your chosen side, you must decide how to make the best use of your Units, Reserves, Assets, and Special Actions towards fulfilling your assigned objectives.

These games are designed to impart a good sense of the history and to play fast (compared to other wargames on the same topic), while being both fun and challenging. Enjoy the games!

There are references to other rules (*e.g.* (4.3)) throughout these booklets. These references should be ignored when reading through the rules for the first time. They are provided to help you find a rule that you might be seeking during play.

### 2.0 Key Words and Concepts

#### 2.1 General

**10-sided Dice** – Regardless of any modifiers and the purpose of the die roll, a roll of '1' will always result in success and a roll of '10' will always result in failure. The dice included with each FAB game are numbered from 1 to 10. If you are using ten sided dice that are numbered from 0 to 9, treat each roll of a 0 as a roll of 10.

**Exclusive Rules** – The Exclusive Rules (those beginning with section 11.0 in the Play Book) represent rules that are specific to the battle being portrayed. If they contradict the Series Rules, the Exclusive Rules take precedence.

**First Player** – This is the Player that moves first each turn and is designated in the Exclusive Rules (13.1).

**Selection Cup** – This is an opaque container, such as a coffee cup, from which Assets and Event Chits are drawn at random. Each player needs a Selection Cup (not included in the game).

**Status Boxes** – Each Player has his own set of Status Boxes on the map sheet. The Available Box holds the Assets/Event Chits that are playable; the Used Box holds the Assets that have been used in the current Game Turn, and the Eliminated Box holds all Used Events and the Units/Assets that have been eliminated.

**Success Number** – This is the Number needed (or less) on a 10-sided die to succeed in what you are attempting. The basic Success Number is always '5'. This can be modified up or down by applicable modifiers. These modifiers are listed on the Player-Aid Card and in the appropriate rule sections.

#### 2.2 Units, Assets, Event Chits, and Markers

**Units** – These are the main combat and maneuver elements. Each Unit's size depends on the battle portrayed, but is usually a Regiment, Brigade, or Division, and it is represented by a

wood block with a label that has been applied according to the **Getting Started Card**. Blocks are normally placed on edge, with the labels facing away from your opponent, providing a built-in limited intelligence system. The Current Step Value should be along the topmost edge of the playing piece. The highest value on each label represents that Unit at full-strength.

**Assets** – These die-cut counters represent small formations which you as the Player can assign to the battles you deem most crucial. There are two types of Combat Assets for game purposes; Indirect-support (artillery, naval gunfire, etc.), and Direct-support (independent formations of engineers, infantry, armor, etc.). For brevity, these Asset types shall hereafter be called **Artillery Assets** and **Battle Assets**, respectively. Various non-Combat Assets may also be included, depending on the battle portrayed (Command Staff, Fuel, etc.).

**Event Chits** – Each die-cut Event Chit contains the title of the event that it represents and the Game Turn that the Chit gets added to the Selection Cup. Event Chits include Replacements, Air Missions, Special Actions, and other events that did or likely could have occurred in the battle. The use of each Event Chit is explained in the Exclusive Rules (17.0).

**Special Actions** – Special Actions represent an extra effort of command and supplies used to prompt soldiers to perform above and beyond the normal course of duty (8.1).

**Game Markers** – These die-cut counters are used to track game information, Unit status, and to denote such things as Field Works, Blown Bridges, and River Assaults on the map sheet.

#### 2.3 Unit Details

**Armor and Infantry Class** – Units & Assets that are Armor Class represent formations with significant armor components. Units & Assets that are Infantry Class represent formations without significant armor components. The Exclusive Rules will show which Unit Types are in each class (13.3).

**Disordered** – Units (not Assets) can become Disordered, which affects their capabilities until they recover (6.5).

**Good Order** – Units without a Disordered or a Recovering Marker are said to be in Good Order and they operate with normal capabilities.

**Higher Echelons** – The Exclusive Rules will identify the Higher Echelons (Corps or Army HQ's) and their associated background colors (13.2). These Higher Echelons are an administrative concept and are not represented themselves by actual game pieces, but all the Units, Assets, and Event Chits in the game will show which Higher Echelon they are subordinate to by the background colors on their labels and counters.

**Morale Checks** – At certain times the rules will call for a Unit to make a Morale Check against its Troop Quality to see if it is able to endure the stress of the task requested of it (6.7).

**Point Unit** – This is the Unit that leads the attack for the Attacker or defends the key approaches for the Defender. Both sides designate a Point Unit for each Combat (6.24).

**Reserve Units** – These are Units that have been marked with a Reserve Marker, which are limited by the counter-mix. Reserve Units may move during a future Movement Phase (5.21).

**Steps/Step-Losses** – Steps are the increments by which Units are built-up by certain Event Chits (or Special Action usage) and depleted by step-losses. Steps are represented by the number of pips on the outside edge of the Unit labels, with the Current Step Value being on the uppermost edge. If a multi-step Unit suffers a step-loss, reduce its current step value by rotating the block 90 degrees counter-clockwise. If a Unit with only one step remaining suffers a step-loss, it is placed in the Eliminated Box.

**Troop Quality** – This represents the skill, equipment, training, and motivation of the Units/Assets, and is shown by the color of the pips on the edge of the piece. Red pips represent Elite quality troops, black pips represent Veteran quality troops, and white pips represent Green quality troops. Current Troop Quality may change as the Unit's Current Step Value changes. A Unit's Current Troop Quality may provide Success Number modifiers for Combat and Morale Checks.

**Unit Status** – This refers to a Unit's current condition (Good Order or Disordered; Supplied or Unsupplied; Marked as a Reserve or not).

## **2.4 Areas**

**Area** – Each numbered and named playing space on the map is called an Area. Units in play should always be within an Area.

**Contested & Uncontested Areas** – An Area containing Units from both sides is said to be Contested. An Area containing no Units or Units of only one side is said to be Uncontested.

**Controlled Areas (friendly & enemy)** – Each Area is controlled by one side or the other, whether contested or not. An Area is controlled by the side that was the last sole-occupant. Players begin each Scenario controlling all Areas identified by the Exclusive Rules (20.0). Change of an Area's control occurs at the instant one or more of the other side's Units (Assets do not change control) are the sole-occupants. Use Control Markers for Areas where the controlling side is not obvious (9.2).

**Terrain** – Apart from Rivers and Bridges, terrain has no effect on movement. The Terrain Difficulty Number shown within each Area indicates the Success Number modifier which is only applied against the Attacker's Ground Fire (6.28).

**Newly Contested Area** – A Newly Contested Area is an Area containing units of both sides, where the Area was Uncontested prior to the just completed Movement Phase. Newly Contested Areas are recognizable at the start of the Combat Phase by the Units within them not yet being displayed face-up.

## **3.0 Sequence of Play**

3.1 **Reinforcement Phase** - Both Players receive new Units, Assets, and Events, and also relocate Assets from the Used Box, all per the rules of section 4.1.

3.2 **First Player Turn** – The First Player moves first in each Game Turn and is the Phasing Player for steps 3.21 through 3.28 below. The Second Player is the Non-Phasing Player.

3.21 **Admin Phase** – Assets and Event Chits are added to the Available Box (4.2a). Events and Engineering Assets may then be played by both Players (4.2b+c).

3.22 **Operational Movement Phase** – Each of the Phasing Player's Units may Move, build Field Works, hold its position, or be marked as a Reserve (5.21 – 5.24).

3.23 **Strategic Movement Phase** – The Phasing Player may move Units marked with a Reserve Marker via Strategic Movement (5.4). Restrictions that apply are found in 14.8.

3.24 **Combat Phase** – All Combats required or desired by the Phasing Player are resolved, in any order the Phasing Player determines, per the Combat Rules (6.0).

3.25 **Reaction Phase** – The Non-Phasing Player moves any Reserve Units that he wishes to move, up to their full movement allowance, removing the Reserve Marker from the units that have moved (7.2).

3.26 **Breakthrough Movement Phase** – The Phasing Player moves any Units marked with an Exploitation Marker (6.8), any Reserve Units (5.21), and any other Units he activates via Special Action (8.21) as desired, in any order desired (7.3).

3.27 **Breakthrough Combat Phase** – A Round of Combat must be fought in Newly Contested Areas, and may be fought elsewhere by spending a Special Action (8.22). Once Combat begins, there is no more Breakthrough Movement allowed.

3.28 **Supply Phase** – Both Players verify the control of Areas, check supply for friendly Units, adjust Disordered Markers, make Unsupplied Morale Checks (Phasing Player only) and remove all appropriate Markers (9.0).

3.3 **Second Player Turn** – The Second Player now performs Phases 3.21 through 3.28 as the Phasing player, with the First Player becoming the Non-Phasing Player.

3.4 **Victory Check** – Victory Points are calculated (19.0) and a check is made for a Sudden Death Victory (19.3).

3.5 **Game Turn Advancement** – If a Sudden Death Victory was not achieved, advance the Game Turn Marker to the next turn unless the last turn of the game was just played. In that case, check the scenario played to determine which side has won the game.

## **4.0 Reinforcement and Admin Phases**

4.1 **Reinforcement Phase** – Both Players perform each of the following actions in the sequence listed below:

a) Move any Reusable Special Action(s) in each Player's Used Box into their respective Available Box. If a Player's Reusable Special Action was Available to him last turn and he did not use it (it's still in the Available Box), the Player may move any one Asset of his choice directly from the Used Box into the Available Box.

b) Both Players move any and all Assets that remain in their Used Box into their respective Selection Cup.

c) Place Reinforcing Units on their respective Entry Area(s) as shown on the Unit label. Placement may not violate stacking, nor may Units be placed in an enemy-controlled Area unless the Area is currently vacant. If the Unit's label lists two Areas, the listed Areas indicate a range of allowable Entry Areas (e.g. AC means the Unit can be placed in Entry Area A, B, or C). If all indicated Entry Areas are currently blocked per the above, the Unit's arrival is delayed by one turn and it then arrives at the nearest allowed appropriate Entry Area (14.2). Units arrive at Full-strength unless otherwise indicated by the Scenario.

d) Place reinforcing Assets/Event Chits in the Selection Cup.

4.2 **Admin Phase** – This Phase occurs at the start of each Player Turn and is performed in the following sequence:

- a) Both Players randomly draw a number of Asset/Event Chits from their Selection Cup as indicated on the Turn Record Chart, placing the drawn Chits in the Available Box.
- b) The Phasing Player may play Event Chits currently in the Available Box as desired. The Phasing Player may also use Engineer Assets currently available to perform Engineering Functions (4.3). Staff Functions (8.3) and certain Special Action uses (8.25+8.26) may also be performed at this time.
- c) The Non-Phasing Player may then play Event Chits, Staff Functions, Special Actions, and Engineer Assets as above.

4.21 **Alternate Event Chit Use** – Either Player may elect to use an Event Chit to move two Assets of the owning Player's choice from the Eliminated Box into the Selection Cup, rather than for its printed (17.0) purpose.

4.22 **Used Event Chits** – Whether used for its printed purpose or the alternative use above, Event Chits are single-use only and each is placed in the Eliminated Box after being used.

4.3 **Engineering Functions** – Each Engineer Asset in the Available Box may be used to perform one of the functions defined in 4.31 through 4.35 below, a function specified in the Exclusive Rules, if any (14.5), or may perform as a Battle Asset during Combat (6.32+6.33).

4.31 **Blow up Bridge(s)** – Bridges may be demolished (blown) where the Engineering Player has a supplied, friendly-controlled, and uncontested Area adjacent to the bridged connection. Each Engineer Asset may blow up to two bridges in an Admin Phase, provided both bridges are adjacent to the same eligible Area. Place a Blown Bridge Marker on the affected bridge(s) and place the Engineer in the Used Box.

4.32 **Repair a Bridge** – To repair a Blown Bridge, the Engineering Player must either Control both areas adjoining the bridge or Control one area and Contest the enemy-controlled one. Each Engineer Asset may repair one bridge in an Admin Phase. The friendly-controlled Area that the repair is originating from must be supplied. Remove the Blown Bridge Marker and place the Engineer Asset in the Used Box.

4.33 **Construct Field Works** – Place a Field Works Marker on any supplied, friendly-controlled, uncontested area containing at least one friendly Unit of the same Higher Echelon as the Engineer, and then place the Engineer Asset in the Used Box.

4.34 **Construct a Road Block** – Place a Road Block Marker on any supplied, friendly-controlled, and **vacant** Area that has a Terrain Difficulty Number of one or higher, and then place the Engineer Asset in the Used Box. The effect of the Road Block is that for the current Player Turn, the first enemy Unit that enters the Area must pay one additional Movement Point to enter, and then it ends its movement in that Area. The Road Block Marker is removed when a Unit pays this penalty or during the Supply Phase of the same Player Turn (9.5).

4.35 **Create a Defended Road Block** – The Engineering Player places the Engineer Asset itself in a supplied, friendly-controlled, and vacant Area that has a Terrain Difficulty Number of one or higher. The Defended Road Block is identical to the Road Block above, except that the Engineer Asset also acts partly as a Unit, in that it may attempt to blow bridges by following rule 5.34d, and it causes all enemy Units to stop in the Area, forcing them to resolve Combat. During the Combat Round, the Defender may not use a Special Action to Reinforce or Retreat before Combat and one Artillery Asset from the same Higher Echelon is the only Asset that may be assigned to help the defending Engineer (no Events). If the defending Engineer survives until the Supply Phase (with or without Combat), it is placed in the Used Box.

*Note: Only use Defended Road Blocks to avert a crisis, as they will often result in the destruction of a valuable Engineer.*

## 5.0 Stacking and Movement

5.1 **Stacking Limits** – Each Area may hold up to two Units of each side. Stacking Limits are enforced at the end of each Phase and throughout each Combat Phase by retreating (6.6) any Units in excess at those times. Units unable to legally retreat to correct overstacking are eliminated instead.

5.2 **Operational Movement Phase Options** – During an Operational Movement Phase, each eligible Unit may be placed in Reserve, move to another Area within range of its Movement Allowance, build Field Works, or Hold its Position.

5.21 **Placing Units in Reserve** – Reserve Markers may be placed on eligible (14.7) Units during the Operational Movement Phase, up to the limit of the counter-mix. A Unit that is in Reserve may move either in the same Operational Movement Phase, in the Strategic Movement Phase, during a Reaction Phase, or a Breakthrough Operational Movement Phase. The Reserve Marker is removed when the Unit moves, when the Area containing the Reserve becomes Contested, or during the enemy Player's Supply Phase (9.5).

5.22 **Moving to Another Area** – During a friendly Operational Movement Phase, each Infantry Class Unit has a Movement Allowance of three Movement Points, and each Armor Class Unit has a Movement Allowance of six Movement Points. No Unit may exceed its Movement Allowance unless moving only one Area (5.32). Units are turned face-up when entering a Contested Area if the other Units within that Area are already face-up from a prior Combat Round, even if the existing Units leave to allow new Units to enter. Otherwise the Area containing enemy Units becomes Newly Contested and the Units remain upright until the Combat Phase.

5.23 **Building Field Works** – A Unit may expend its entire Movement Allowance in an Uncontested Area to place a Field Works Marker in that Area. Only Supplied Units in Good Order may build Field Works. All Units friendly to the Unit that built the Field Works benefit from it in that Area. A Field Works Marker is removed by absorbing the first hit in Combat, by the Area not containing a friendly Unit at the end of any Phase, or by the Area being contested during any Supply Phase. Field Works never benefit enemy Units. Enemy Units have a -1 Success Number Modifier when firing at friendly Units that are in Field Works at the time the Attacking dice are rolled.

5.24 **Hold Position** – The Unit neither moves nor changes its status.

### 5.3 Operational Movement Rules:

5.31 **Movement Point Costs Between Areas** – Units may only move between Areas that are joined by a Connection. The movement costs are as follows:

- A Primary Connection (solid thick red line) costs one Movement Point to traverse.
- A Secondary Connection (solid thin black line) costs two Movement Points to traverse.
- The Exclusive Rules may introduce other Connection Types (14.1).
- Entering an Area that already contains Unit(s), friendly and/or enemy, costs one additional Movement Point.
- Units exiting a Contested Area pay one additional Movement Point (5.33).
- Unsupplied and/or Disordered Units are only permitted to move into an adjacent Area (5.32).
- A Blown Bridge may only be crossed by utilizing the entire movement Allowance of the moving Unit.

5.32 **Guaranteed Minimum Movement** – A Unit may always move from its starting point to an allowed adjacent Area, even if such a move would exceed its Movement Allowance.

5.33 **Exiting a Contested Area** - If exiting a Contested Area, the first Area entered **must** be both friendly-controlled **and** uncontested. From that first allowed Area the Unit may continue moving, up to the limit of its Movement Allowance, but that Unit may neither enter nor create another Contested Area during that same Movement Phase.

### 5.34 **Other Movement Restrictions:**

- a) Units are always moved one at a time, with one Unit completing its move before the next Unit begins its move.
- b) Units must stop when entering either an Area containing enemy Unit(s) or a Road Block (4.34+4.35).
- c) Only one Unit may cross each bridged connection (blown or not) **into** a Contested Area each Movement Phase. There is no limit on Units crossing into Uncontested Areas (except for stacking limits – see 5.1), even if leaving a Contested Area.
- d) The first Unit during each Phase that attempts to cross each bridged connection into a **Newly Contested** Area triggers an opportunity for the opposing side to attempt to blow that bridge. This attempt is optional, and succeeds on a 1-5. If the bridge is blown, the Unit that triggered the attempt may still cross the river if it began the Phase adjacent to the targeted

Area. If the Unit does not or cannot cross, it does not pay the movement cost for the Area it was to have entered. It instead loses one Movement Point and may continue moving.

e) A River Assault Marker is placed for **Newly Contested** (only) Areas where **all attacking Units** crossed bridged connections into the Area **and at least one** of the attacking Units crossed a blown bridge into the Area.

5.4 **Strategic Movement (Strat-moves)** – Only supplied Units that are marked with a Reserve Marker may Strat-move. See rule 14.8 for applicable restrictions. To Strat-move, the Unit is moved from its starting Area to any other friendly-controlled and supplied Area that it can trace a continuous path of connections to, without crossing a blown bridge or moving into or through an enemy-controlled or a Contested Area. Remove the Reserve Marker from Unit(s) that Strat-move.

## 6.0 Combat

6.1 **General Rules** – Combat is **required** for Newly Contested Areas. Combat is **optional** (Phasing Player's option) where an Area was already contested, signified by the Units already being face-up at the start of the Combat Phase. Combats are resolved in any order chosen by the Attacker.

6.2 **The Combat Round** – The following sequence must be followed each time there is a Combat Round fought within an Area. For Combat purposes, the Phasing Player is always the Attacker, and the Non-Phasing Player is always the Defender. **Disordered Units may not participate for the Attacker but do Defend normally (with the -1 Success Number modifier for being Disordered).**

6.21 **Defender's Special Action Decision** – The Defender may use a Special Action to reinforce or retreat from this battle (8.23+8.24). If the Defender retreats, an Exploitation Opportunity arises (6.8), and this Combat Round is over (proceed to 6.29), otherwise continue to 6.22 below.

6.22 **Attacker Assigns Assets** – Provided his forces present can currently trace a valid Supply Path (9.31), the Attacker may assign Assets to this battle from his Available Box by placing them in the Contested Area. No more than **two** Artillery Assets and/or one Event Chit may be assigned for the Attacker. The only limits on Battle Assets are the number in the Available Box and that all Units involved must be from the same Higher Echelon as the assigned Assets. If Units from different Higher Echelons are involved, then no Battle Assets (or Event Chits) may be assigned, only the Artillery Assets are allowed (up to one from each involved Higher Echelon).

6.23 **Defender Assigns Assets** – Provided his forces present can currently trace a valid Supply Path (9.31), the Defender may assign Assets to this battle from his Available Box by placing them in the Contested Area. No more than **one** Artillery Asset and/or one Event Chit may be assigned for the Defender. The only limits on Battle Assets are the number in the Available Box, and that all Units involved must be from the same Higher Echelon as the assigned Assets. If Units from different Higher Echelons are involved, or the Defender is a Defended Road Block (4.35), then no Battle Assets (or Event Chits) may be

assigned, only the Artillery Asset is allowed from one of the involved Higher Echelons.

**6.24 Point Units Designated** – Both sides designate their Point Unit, Defender first. If this is a Newly Contested Area, the Defender points at, but does not reveal the Point Unit until the Attacker also designates his Point Unit. Your Point Unit is used to determine Troop Quality and other applicable modifiers when the opposing side fires at your forces. The Point Unit for both sides will also be the first **Unit** to suffer a step-loss during the Combat Round (Battle Assets may suffer losses before the Point Unit). The Point Unit cannot be an Asset unless there is no Unit present. After both sides have designated their Point Units, unrevealed Units of both sides are revealed in opposing lines, with their current value facing the line of enemy Units.

**6.25 Attacking Artillery Fires** – The Attacker rolls one die per assigned Artillery Asset, modifying the Success Number as indicated by the Combat Table. All hits are applied to the Defender per rule 6.42. If the Point Unit is eliminated, a new one must be chosen following rule 6.24 if any Defenders remain. If all non-Artillery Defenders are eliminated, an Exploitation Opportunity arises for the Attacker (6.8) and the Combat Round ends after any Defending Artillery fires (6.26).

**6.26 Defending Artillery Fires** – The Defender rolls one die per assigned Artillery Asset (more than one may be possible if an Air Mission Event Chit was assigned – see 17.0), modifying the Success Number as indicated by the Combat Table. Hits are applied to the Attacker per rule 6.41. If the Attacking Point Unit is eliminated, a new one must be chosen as in rule 6.24 if any Attackers remain. If the Attacker aborts the Attack (6.41b), the Combat Round is over (proceed to 6.29), otherwise continue to 6.27 below.

**6.27 Defensive Ground Fire** – The Defender fires his remaining Units and Battle Assets, rolling one die per firing Step, modifying the Success Number as indicated by the Combat Table. After all dice are rolled, hits are applied to the Attacker per rules 6.41, starting again with priority ‘a’. If the Attacker aborts the Attack (6.41b), the Combat Round is over (proceed to 6.29), otherwise continue to 6.28 below.

**6.28 Offensive Ground Fire** – The Attacker fires his remaining Units and Battle Assets, rolling one die per firing Step, modifying the Success Number as indicated by the Combat Table. After all dice are rolled, hits are applied to the Defender per rule 6.42, starting again with priority ‘a’. If all Defending Units and Battle Assets are eliminated with at least one unapplied hit remaining, an Exploitation Opportunity arises for the Attacker (6.8).

**6.29 End of the Combat Round** – Both sides move surviving Assets (Artillery and Battle) from the Contested Area to their own Used Box. If both sides have Units remaining in the Area, the Units remain face-up in opposing lines within the Area, otherwise the remaining Units (plus any Units that retreated) are now tipped up and faced away from the enemy.

**6.3 Assets in Combat** – Assets are used in combat by assigning them to a battle, Attacker first, after the Defender decides on his retreat or reinforce options (6.21 – 6.23).

**6.31 Artillery Assets** – The **Attacker** may assign one or two Artillery Assets per battle while the **Defender** may only assign one. Artillery fires during the Combat Round (6.25+6.26).

**6.32 Battle Assets** – Battle Assets may be assigned to each battle if the appropriate conditions are met (6.22+6.23). Battle Assets do not modify the Current Troop Quality of any Unit in the battle, nor vice-versa. Battle Assets are fired with friendly Units (6.27+6.28). Each Battle Asset that suffers a step-loss is eliminated.

**6.33 Engineer Assets in Combat** – An assigned Engineer Asset may automatically eliminate the enemy Field Works Marker, if one exists, instead of firing. To do this the Engineer Asset must have survived Artillery and Defensive Ground Fire, and the Attacker must not have aborted the Attack. The enemy Field Works Marker is removed prior to other friendly Units firing, thus negating the Field Works’ -1 Success Number modifier.

**6.4 Hit Distribution and Priorities** – Hits are applied according to the following rules. All hits are distributed by a combination of **absorbing the hits** (due to aborting the attack, removing Field Works, becoming Disordered and/or retreating from battle) and **taking the hits** by applying step-losses. Players use the appropriate Hit Priority sequence (6.41 or 6.42) to apply Hits against their own Units and Battle Assets.

#### **6.41 Hit Priorities for hits against the Attacker**

**a) Mandatory Step-Loss:** The first hit is always taken either by having a step-loss inflicted upon the Point Unit or by eliminating any one assigned Battle Asset.

**b) If more hits were scored, the Attacker must choose to either:**

- **Abort the Attack:** Ignore all remaining hits by aborting the attack. Units that abort the attack remain in the Contested Area and become Disordered. For River Assaults (5.34e), aborting Unit(s) cannot remain in place; they become Disordered and retreat (6.6) back across the river(s) that they moved across. Any Assets remaining that were assigned are sent to the Used Box.
- **Apply Step-Losses:** Take the remaining hits by applying step-losses. Follow the step-loss allocation rules of 6.43.

#### **6.42 Hit Priorities for hits against the Defender**

**a) Loss of Field Works if Present:** The first hit in the Combat Round from any firing source is absorbed by removing the Field Works marker, if present. Otherwise, no hit is absorbed.

**b) Disorder Option due to Artillery Fire:** When hits from Artillery are applied, *one hit may be absorbed* (after any Field Works Marker has been removed) by placing a Disordered Marker on all Defending Units (not Assets) that are in Good Order or Recovering (6.5). If all Defending Units are already Disordered or there is only a Defending Asset present (4.35), this option may not be taken.

**c) Retreat Option due to Ground Fire:** When hits from Offensive Ground Fire are applied, *one hit may be absorbed* (after any Field Works Marker has been removed) by retreating all Units and Assets present (6.6 – note that retreating Units not already Disordered become Disordered). Retreat is not possible for Defended Roadblocks (4.35). Retreating Units/Assets remain susceptible to priority (d) below for remaining unapplied Hits.

**d) Apply Step-Losses.** Any remaining hits (after any Field Works Marker has been removed and any Disorder/Retreat option taken above) are taken by applying step-losses, using the step-loss allocation rules of 6.43. If the Attacker inflicts more hits than the Defender can Absorb/Take, an Exploitation Opportunity arises for the Attacker (6.8).

**6.43 Step-Loss Allocation** – Step-losses are allocated at the discretion of each Player to his own Units and Battle Assets according to the following restrictions.

- The first Unit to suffer a step-loss must be the Point Unit (Battle Assets may suffer losses before the Point Unit).
- Each friendly Unit and Battle Asset present must receive one step-loss before any Unit receives a second step-loss.
- After all friendly Units present have taken a step-loss and all friendly Battle Assets have been eliminated by taking a single step-loss each, there is no further restriction on how the owning Player distributes any remaining step-losses.

**6.5 Disorder Results and Recovery** – Units (not Assets) can become Disordered (see 9.33 for effects of being Disordered) during a Combat Phase. When this happens, place a Disordered Marker on the affected Unit(s). Recovery is a two-step process for eligible Units (see 9.35 for the procedure to follow during Supply Phases). Units with a Recovering Marker suffer all the effects of being Disordered. Units that suffer a Disorder result while they are ‘Recovering’ have the Marker again flipped to its Disordered side. There is no further effect when a Disorder result is applied to Units that are already Disordered.

**6.6 Retreats** – Anytime a retreat is called for the owning player moves the retreating Units one at a time, still revealed to the Attacker (Units are not tipped back up until the end of the Combat Round – see 6.29), from the retreat’s origination Area to an adjoining, uncontested, friendly-controlled Area (two retreating Units may retreat to different Areas), even if the retreat is across a Blown Bridge Marker. If no such adjoining Area exists, the Unit may not retreat and must take step-loss(es) instead. If a retreating Unit causes overstacking in the Area it retreated to, the Unit must retreat again as above and continue to do so until the stacking limits are obeyed. Units (not Assets) that retreat are marked with a Disordered Marker after retreating unless they retreated via Special Action (8.24).

**6.7 Morale Checks** – At certain times the rules will call for a Unit/Asset to make a Morale Check to determine whether it can accomplish a goal or sustain a challenge in game terms. A Morale Check is performed by the roll of a single 10-sided die for each affected Unit/Asset, with the Success Number of ‘5’ being modified by Troop Quality (-2 Green, +2 Elite) and/or being Disordered or Unsupplied (-1 each). The penalty for failing a Morale Check varies depending on the situation and is outlined in the appropriate Rules.

**6.8 Exploitation Opportunities** – If the Defender of a battle is completely eliminated by artillery fire, retreats via Special Action, or is eliminated by Ground fire with at least one hit that remains unresolved, an Exploitation Opportunity results, and all Armor-Class Unit(s) in that Area make a Morale Check (exception – an Exploitation Opportunity never arises from River Assaults or Breakthrough Combat Phases). Armor-class

Units that pass this Morale Check have an Exploitation Marker placed on them. The Exploitation Marker allows the marked Unit(s) to move in the Breakthrough Phase (7.3).

## 7.0 Reaction and Breakthrough Phases

**7.1 Eligibility** – The Non-Phasing Player’s Units that are marked with a Reserve Marker may participate in the Reaction Phase. The Phasing Player’s Units that are marked with a Reserve Marker, plus those that are either marked with an Exploitation Marker or that have been activated by a Special Action may participate in the Breakthrough Phase.

**7.2 Reaction Phase** – The Non-Phasing Player may move friendly Units marked with a Reserve Marker up to their full Movement Allowance, either to an Uncontested Area or to reinforce a Contested Area, but may **not** use them to create a Newly Contested Area. There is no Combat during the Reaction Phase. Reserve Units may opt to build Field Works rather than move. The Reserve Marker is removed from each Unit after it moves or builds Field Works.

**7.3 Breakthrough Movement Phase** – The Phasing Player may move Units marked with Reserve Markers and those marked with Exploitation Markers, and may also use Special Actions to move other Armor Class Units as Exploitation Units (8.21). Once Breakthrough Combat (7.4) begins, no more Breakthrough Movement is allowed.

**7.31 Movement Restrictions** – Reserve marked Units may make an Operational move with their full Movement Allowance. Exploitation marked Units may only move one Area. Either type of Unit may enter Contested Areas and may build a Field Works Marker rather than move. Reserve and Exploitation Units are moved one at a time, in any order, intermingled as the Phasing Player desires. After each Unit moves or builds a Field Works Marker its Reserve or Exploitation Marker is removed.

**7.32 Newly Contested Areas** – Creating Newly Contested Areas is allowed for both Reserve and Exploitation Units. A mandatory round of Combat must be fought during the Breakthrough Combat Phase for these Areas. Non-Phasing Units in these Areas may attempt to blow bridges that the Phasing Player attempts to cross (5.34d).

### 7.4 Breakthrough Combat Phase

**7.41 Mandatory Combats** – One Round of Combat is fought in Newly Contested Areas that resulted from the Breakthrough Movement Phase. This Combat Round is fought according to the Combat procedure (6.2) without requiring a Special Action.

**7.42 Optional Combats** – Additionally, already Contested Areas may have one Round of Combat fought in them, using the Combat procedure (6.2), if the Phasing Player spends a Special Action to re-engage the Area (8.22).

## 8.0 Special Actions & Staff Functions

**8.1 General Rules** – Special Actions come in two types, Reusable and Single-use. There is also a Command Staff Asset.

- **Reusable Special Actions** represent your personal command influence and may affect Unit(s) of any friendly Higher Echelon(s) and are represented as wood blocks

with a Special Action label. These are moved to the Used Box after use, and automatically returned to the Available Box during the Reinforcement Phase.

- **Single-use Special Actions** represent the Command influence of your Higher Echelon commanders and may only affect Units of the matching Higher Echelon and are represented as Event Chits, which are placed in the Eliminated Box after use. Either type may be used to perform any one function described in rules section 8.2.
- **The Command Staff Asset** represents your HQ Staff working in the background in an ongoing effort to uncover additional resources for you and when available it may be used for any Command Staff Function listed in section 8.3.

## 8.2 **Special Action Uses** – (see also 14.61)

8.21 **Conduct Breakthrough Movement** – Each Special Action spent allows one supplied Armor Class (only) Unit in good order to move in the Breakthrough Movement Phase, moving as an Exploitation Unit (one Area only - see 7.31).

8.22 **Conduct Breakthrough Combat** – Each Special Action spent allows one already Contested Area to have a Round of Combat fought in it during the friendly Breakthrough Combat Phase. This Area may not have already fought a Round of Combat during this same Breakthrough Combat Phase.

8.23 **Reinforce a Battle** – Each Special Action spent allows one Unit from an adjacent Uncontested Area to reinforce a declared Battle (Defender only). This reinforcing Unit may not have been involved in another Combat during the current Combat Phase, may not violate Stacking, and may not be designated as the Point Unit unless the original Point Unit is eliminated. This does not count against the one Event Chit allowed per battle.

8.24 **Retreat before Combat** – Each Special Action spent allows the Defender (only) in a declared battle to retreat all Units as per rule 6.6, except that the retreating units do not become Disordered. The Attacker should await the Defender's decision before assigning Assets. The Attacker is awarded an Exploitation Opportunity (6.8) if this retreat is conducted.

8.25 **Rally the troops** – Each Special Action spent in an Admin Phase allows the Player to designate any one supplied Area. All friendly Units marked as Disordered or Recovering within one connected Area of the designated area recover fully and have their Disordered and Recovering Markers removed.

8.26 **Acquire Quality Replacements** – Each Special Action spent in an Admin Phase allows the owning Player to select a supplied reduced Unit (either Unit Class) to receive one step of replacements, even if the replacement step is elite.

8.27 **Reroute a Reinforcing Unit** – Each Special Action spent in the Reinforcement Phase allows one reinforcing Unit to be placed in any friendly-controlled or vacant enemy-controlled appropriate Entry Area (14.2) outside its listed Entry Area(s).

8.3 **Staff Functions (see also 14.62)** – The Command Staff Asset, when in the Available Box, may be used to perform any one of the below Staff Functions during an Admin Phase, with no Higher Echelon restrictions, after which it is placed in the Used Box and recycled like any other Asset.

8.31 **Replacements found** – One step of non-elite replacements may be added to any supplied Infantry-class (only) Unit.

8.32 **Reserves Made Available** – Mark any eligible Unit (14.7) with an appropriate and available Reserve Marker.

8.33 **Intelligence Gathering** – Choose any one enemy Unit, which is then revealed to you until the end of the Admin Phase.

## 9.0 Supply Phase

9.1 **Sequence** – The following steps occur during this Phase, in the order listed. Both Players are involved in each of these steps and they may resolve their portions simultaneously.

- a) Verify control of Areas
- b) Determine Supply Status & adjust Disordered Markers
- c) Perform Morale Checks for Phasing Player's Unsupplied Units and remove appropriate markers

9.2 **Verify Control of Areas** – Both Players check each Area to verify that control is either intuitively clear or that the Area is marked by a Control Marker from the appropriate side (the last sole-occupant).

### 9.3 **Determine Supply Status & Adjust Disordered Markers**

9.31 **Tracing a Supply Path** – Supply is checked for both Players during each Player's Supply Phase. A Unit's or Area's supply status remains valid until the next Supply Phase. A Supply Path is traced from any given friendly Unit or friendly-controlled Area towards any valid Supply Source (14.9).

- a) The Supply Path is traced through Areas and Connections, but may **only trace over a blown bridge if the tracing Unit/Area is adjacent to that blown bridge**.
- b) Friendly Units may trace a Supply Path out of enemy-controlled Areas, but never into or through them.
- c) Supply may not be traced through **vacant** friendly-controlled Areas which have a connection to one or more uncontested enemy Units.
- d) Supply may always be traced into and through **occupied** friendly-controlled Areas, regardless of enemy Units, either adjacent or in the same Area.

9.32 **Marking Supply Status** – Units and Areas that cannot trace a valid supply path are Unsupplied and have an Unsupplied Marker placed on them. Unsupplied Markers are removed from Units and Areas that were previously marked as Unsupplied that can now trace a Supply Path.

### 9.33 **Effects on Units that are Unsupplied and/or Disordered:**

- a) Units may only move one Area during a Movement Phase, and must still comply with rule 5.33.
- b) Units may not build Field Works or be placed in Reserve.
- c) Units have a -1 Success Number Modifier when firing and when making a Morale Check. These modifiers are cumulative when a Unit is both Unsupplied and Disordered.

### 9.34 **Additional Unsupplied Effects:**

- a) Units may not have any Assets attached.

b) Units must make a Morale Check during the friendly Supply Phase, with failure causing a Unit to either become Disordered, lose one-step, or surrender (9.4).

c) Disordered Markers may not be favorably adjusted (9.35).

d) **Areas and Units** may not be affected by friendly Event Chits, Special Actions, Staff, or Engineering Functions.

**9.35 Adjusting Disordered Markers** – For all their Disordered and Recovering Units that are able to trace a Supply Path (9.1), both Players remove all Recovering Markers and then flip Disordered Markers over to the ‘Recovering’ side.

**9.4 Morale Checks for Unsupplied Units** – The Phasing Player (only) performs a Morale Check (with -1 Unsupplied Success Number modifier) for his Units that are Unsupplied. Units that fail this check that are not yet Disordered become Disordered. Units that fail this Check that are already Disordered suffer a step-loss. Veteran Disordered Units that roll a 10 or Green Disordered Units that roll an 8-10 surrender and are eliminated regardless of remaining steps. Disordered Units with a Current Troop Quality of Elite do not surrender, though they still suffer a step-loss with a failed Morale Check.

**9.5 Removing Appropriate Markers** – The Non-Phasing Player removes from the map all Field Works Markers that are in Contested Areas, all Road Blocks and all Defended Road Blocks; all River Assault Markers and all Exploitation Markers, plus all Non-Phasing Reserve Markers.

## 10.0 Designer’s Notes

Wargamers need more games that are easy to get into, fun to play, shorter in duration, and with a good feel for the history, while also being challenging enough to warrant repeated play.

The above describes both my feelings as a player and the objectives that I laid out for the FAB Series as its designer. I aim my designs towards fun, effect, and feel, since these are the qualities I want when I play wargames. Much of the underlying details of war have been abstracted out in FAB, but they were taken into account in the game’s systems to preserve the correct feel. Decisions on multiple levels, with consequences to each decision, are the things that make a game fun for me. The Players will be faced with plenty of these decisions each turn.

My focus was to put you in the role of the Field Commander, and have you decide where to direct your main effort. You must prioritize and assign the precious few Assets and Special Actions to the Units and battles that you deem most crucial, though all your Units are begging for these limited resources.

A major hurdle for this Series was luck mitigation. Because of the low block count, combat effects had to change from the standard block game system of each hit scored reduces a Unit. By allowing the Attacker to abort an attack if more than one hit is inflicted, and allowing the defender to deflect hits through the loss of Field Works and retreating, and by allowing both sides the option to take hits by eliminating assigned Assets, success was achieved in that the Units more gradually disintegrated. It is still possible for the attacker to inflict multiple hits on the defender, but this is mitigated by the number of times he inflicts no damage at all on the defending

Units because they retreated and/or were protected by the loss of their Field Works Marker.

Field Works represent a higher quality of defensive works than the simple foxhole dug by each soldier before he slept at night. They represent defending troops using sandbags, barbed wire, mines, and the natural resources at hand to fortify a defensive position, and were often rapidly constructed by Combat Engineers attached for such a purpose. These positions were most beneficial for the initial contact with the enemy. After the defensive positions were revealed they were of less value.

One decision that went against the grain of the design was having the Assets and Event Chits displayed face-up. The necessity for this decision was quite simply speed of play. If the Assets were inverted, then limited intelligence would work against both sides, and delays in the game would occur as the owner of the Assets and Events had to reveal them to himself, trying to find the one he wants to play. You are welcome to play with these inverted, if both players agree, but do not expect the game to play as quickly.

I hope that you will enjoy playing this game as much as I have enjoyed refining its various systems. If you have an idea for another battle that you would like to see given the FAB treatment, or if you have rules questions, please write me at:

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Also join us in the discussions concerning the FAB Series either on [www.consimworld.com](http://www.consimworld.com) or [www.boardgamegeek.com](http://www.boardgamegeek.com).