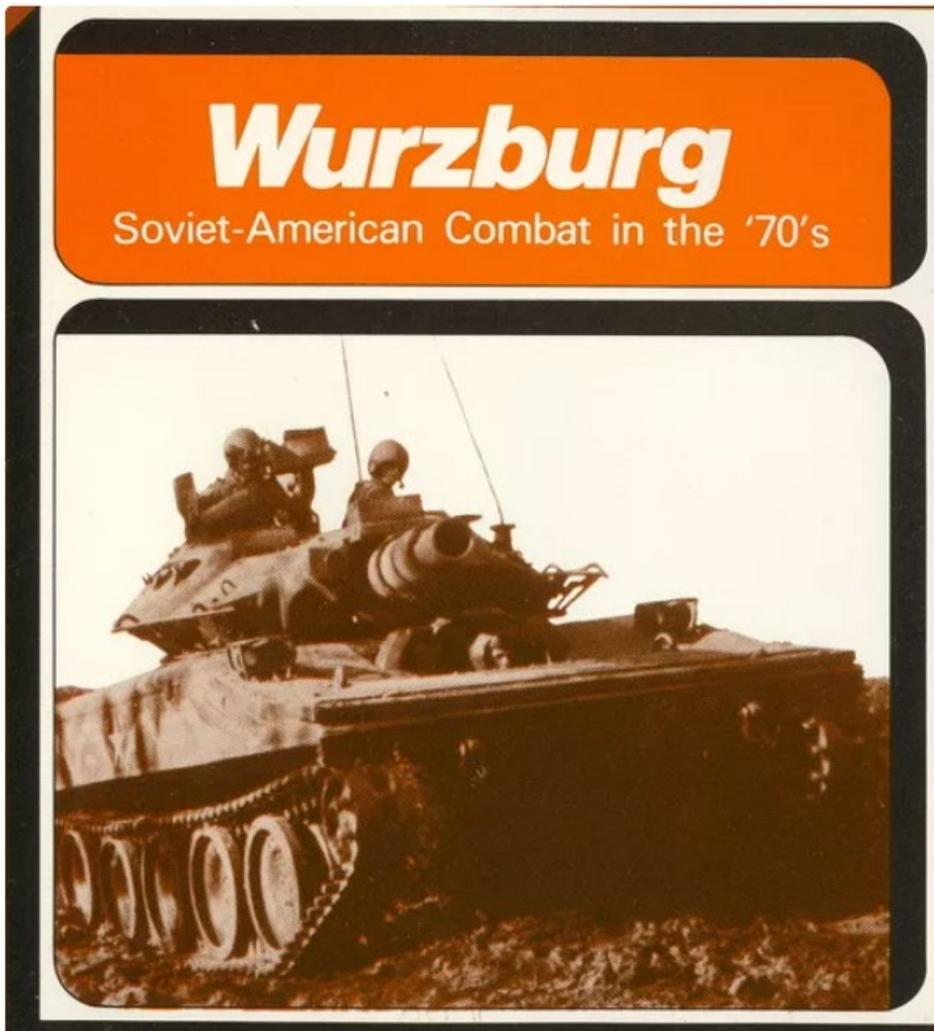

Wurzburg, SPI 1975

Scenario: “Advance to Contact”

Replay by George Nap



Wurzburg – SPI Publications

Second Modern Battles Quad game in a row.

I chose this because it is a short scenario and I have played both Chinese Farm and Wurzburg. At 32 turns, Golan seemed excessive, although I may try a truncated version (after completing this replay I read some reviews on Golan and apparently the action is done in seven turns, the other turns are a design for effect to provide an unhurried pace for the Israeli player. Either Syria wins early or gets ground to dust, so I will try that one out after this play.)

Off to West Germany in the 1970's, I was personally there in the late 1980's, stationed at Cooke Barracks in Goeppingen, with the 3rd Brigade (Danger Forward), 1st Infantry Division (Duty First).

Standard IGO-UGO, locking ZoC's which are not nullified, cannot retreat through, no logistics. Arty can fire offensively and defensively.

Playing the six turn “Advance to Contact” scenario [16.1]. Not using nukes. Neither side starts on the board!

I have struggled with how to handle artillery in these games. They are omnipresent and can affect battles to a degree out of proportion with their doctrinal and pragmatic abilities.

I do not allow bombardment attacks to meet the requirement that units must attack all enemy units in their ZoC, it is not in the rules and my reasoning is as follows. Artillery/helos/ground support points can support such attacks but must be combined with a ground unit attack to meet the mandatory attack requirement. (Grunts and the like are pretty good at keeping their heads down during bombardments, and timing has never been so good as to keep their heads down consistently enough to remove them from combat in general.) So, if you take a chance and declare a barrage which is not combined with a ground attack on a unit adjacent to a friendly and that bombardment causes a retreat you have accomplished the mission and removed the requirement, however if you do not cause a retreat you have already fired that unit so it is not added to the ground attack. For play purposes, you must declare all arty points being used against a given ground unit at one time, so you can have one unit bombard without ground support, and another supporting the ground attack in case the first bombardment fails to displace the enemy (see how what seems a tiny rule change ends up daisy-chaining into a logical convolution....?).

I hesitate to change rules in games like this, because they are meant to be simple games and when you change one thing, you may change others. However, I will try a new wrinkle on artillery in this replay. My added rules are as follow:

[8.16] Counterbattery fire occurs when artillery and/or ground support points fire on an enemy artillery unit which is not being subjected to a combined attack with ground units.

[8.161] During the barrage phase artillery targeted by counterbattery fire which suffer and Br, D1, D2, D3, D4 may not fire Final Protective Fire [FPF] during this combat phase. (NOTE: The Br result does not force a retreat consistent with barrage rules, but it does preclude the unit attacked from firing FPF.)

[8.162] Terrain effects do apply to defending units during counterbattery fire. They also apply to helicopter units which we can assume will be using nap of the earth [NoE] and other cover/concealment countermeasures taking full advantage of the terrain.

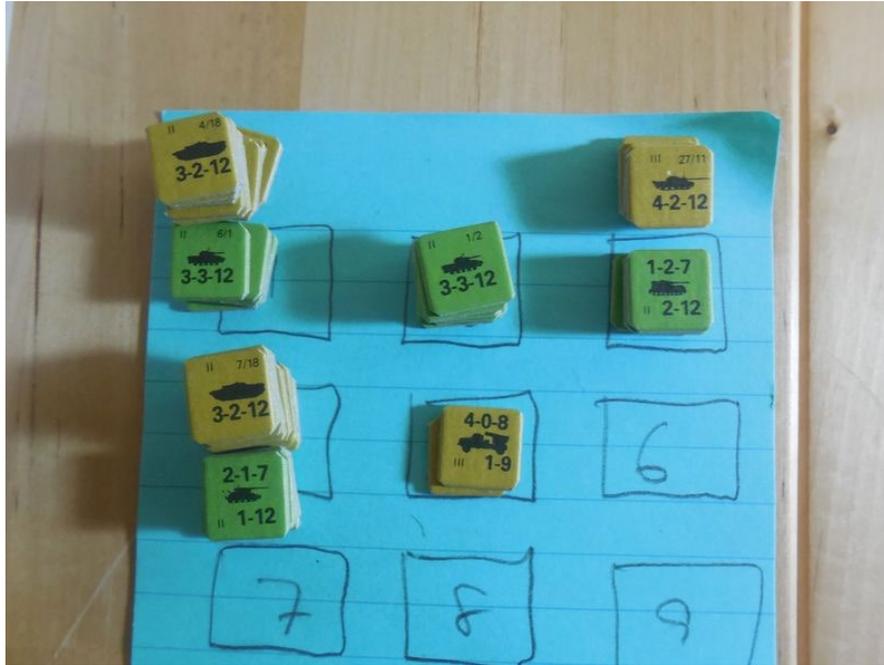
[8.163] Helicopter units may only suffer counterbattery fire from ground support points (air units).

[8.164] Ground support points are immune from counterbattery fire.

The designer’s notes seem flawed. The US enters on the south map edge, with only one road hex bisecting that map edge. For game balance, I also allowed US forces to enter on the road hexside to the extreme southeast actually on an eastern map edge. The Soviets are nowhere near as constrained, having generous choices of entry roads. I think the designer notes, which advise the US to defend forward and fall back to Wurzburg, are either an artifact from a previous iteration of the rules, or assume the US can enter on the road halfway up the western map edge, which based on how the rules are written for reinforcement entry in this scenario I cannot see my way clear to allow.

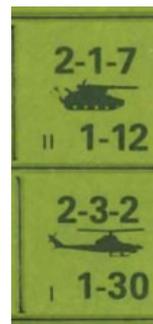
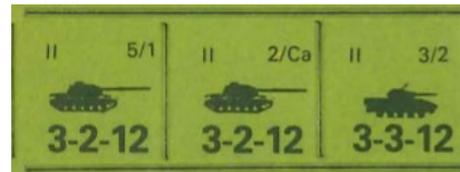
I rotate arty units as they fire, both barrage, and FPF, if you wonder why they are that way on some maps. It also helps identify pre/post combat phase pictures.

Victory conditions are straightforward, most hexes of the ten comprising Wurzburg controlled with a line of supply to board edge wins, ties are a tie. Supply lines are vulnerable. It would take two units in the Soviet rear to cut their lines, probably some units forward of where the lines are cut they would have to screen the late Soviet reinforcements which could reopen the supply lines. US supply lines are much more vulnerable – even with me allowing the US to use the road which exits in the far southeast as a supply source, which I will do- one unit in 1317 cuts both US supply lines. All bridges on the map are considered blown, so rivers must be crossed expending 3 movement points to do so, you cannot retreat across rivers and if forced to do so are eliminated. US moves first.



(Left) Hand mand reinforcement chart!

T1 Americans (Green) :



T1 Soviets (Brown):





Turn 3:



US: Losing 3/2 armor was due to bad tactics on my part. We are positioned to take the Soviets in the flank, so that is what we will try. We have a preponderance of arty which will now come into play. We extend the left and hammer the right. Our tank task force with 1./2 and 2./3 armor attack out of Mainstockheim obliterating 1/20 infantry. The Long Toms on Gruffenwald counterbattery Soviet arty, forcing a D1 and taking them out of the equation. Our 155mm batteries near Winterhausen support the attack ob 6/1 and 2/Cav on 9/10, +10 mobile, we cannot afford an exchange in this game. D2.



Here I note I accidentally reversed the US reinforcements for turns 3 and 4 which actually is worse for the US in my opinion, so I will let it stand.



Soviet: Right now we hold the preponderance in Wurzburg, we cannot get at their supplies easily, so we will secure the flank and get ready to defend the town. 23/11 and 9/10 with arty support attacks 2/Cav with FPF support at +3, tempted to go active, but that would expose us to an unfavorable AX, so mobile BR. Rocket arty fires in support of 24/20 and 2/18 attacking 1./2 with FPF from the Long Toms +4 mobile: D2 sealing the US bridgehead and protecting the flank.





Soviet; Here come the reinforcements. We push back and declare a mobile CRT (active was tempting and had the US forces not had their backs to the river I would have gone active, but we just need retreats and we have arty available now, so this turn could be decisive.) We pick off 1./2 armor on the east flank, and 6/3 infantry on the west. 2/3 infantry dies in Wurzburg but forces a BR leaving the hex last under US control. Our other spoiling attacks are all repulsed, the last one under heavy FPF costing us 2/9 and 3/18 infantry. Wurzburg is open. Disaster!



Soviet; We must position to retake Wurzburg, continuing to apply pressure. We attack 4/1 but FPF forces us back, their spearhead remains. 5/3 dies without a retreat and we retake a hex of Wurzburg. Our spoiling supporting attacks are disastrous, the outcome is to be determined in Wurzburg.

US – Right now we control 6 hexes of Wurzburg and have cut Soviet supply lines. Let's see if we can keep that. After combat we now hold seven hexes of Wurzburg and Soviet supply lines are cut.





Soviet – last turn, need to retake at least two hexes of Wurzburg and establish a supply line just for a tie. Our brave forces accomplish this in two separate attacks.



We ground assault all exposed batteries to eliminate their ability to PPF. Our first attack results in a BR eliminating the defenders but repulsing us, so we cannot win. Last attack is fully supported by US PPF, 5/1 repulses 27/11 tanks and takes another city hex.



US city hexes marked by US units or tile spacers. The Result: A US Victory.



Soviet arty FPF is pretty weak vs plentiful US arty, and Soviet arty with only one 5-2-7 is not as dominant vs US arty with better FPF in this one. I made sure to advance after combat to maintain contact and force Soviet counterattacks in Wurzburg. I was surprised myself, I thought the Red Army would be triumphant.

But, it was a costly US victory.