

"Playablized" Bastogne

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by Leo House

If you have ever played S&T's game BASTOGNE, you either loved it or you put it upon a shelf labeled "Unplayable Games." The following is a set of rule changes which I feel makes the game more playable without too great a loss of realism.

1. MOVEMENT AND ENEMY ZONES OF CONTROL (EZOC) In the original rules, it costs 4 Movement Factors to move into an EZOC. I suggest rewording this to read that it costs 4 Movement Factors to move out of an EZOC, instead. This allows the German infantry to attack in division-sized units instead of having to break down into regiments. My logic is as follows: It is stated that EZOC is caused by heavy weapons range and enemy reaction. This means that the heavy weapons make it very costly for advancing troops to move into a hex. But, if the defender's heavy weapons can shoot at the attacker, the attacker's heavy weapons can shoot back and you have a battle! It should cost units no extra Movement Factors to move into enemy heavy weapons range, but it should cost something extra to move past the enemy weapons. So, the 4 Movement Factors to move out of a hex subject to EZOC.

2. FRIENDLY ZONES OF CONTROL. This no longer causes a movement loss to move into or through. This change is simply for the sake of playability.

3. FRIENDLY OCCUPIED HEXES. No matter how many friendly units are in a hex, it will only cost 3 Movement Factors to move out of the hex. My reasoning here is both playability and the fact that it is really easy to get into a traffic jam, but hard to get out.

4. GERMAN ENGINEERS. These units are utterly unaffected by, nor can they cause, "Friendly Traffic Jams." They don't count for stacking purposes. Here my reasoning is that they can't cause much traffic trouble due to their size.

5. BRIDGES. I suggest cutting out a lot of 1/4" by 1/2" rectangles from thin poster board to represent "blown" bridges. A combat unit may blow a bridge by spending an impulse next to it. At the start of the game, the Allied Player may declare any bridges on or behind his front line to be "blown."

6. IMPULSE MOVEMENT. Impulse Movement upsets some people. One big hang-up is that one player has a very long turn, while his opponent sits in utter boredom. This can be solved by using the ANZIO BEACHHEAD movement technique. That is: attack/countermove/attack, In

the first impulse of his turn, the player moves and can attack. Then the defender can move all his units $1/4$ of their Movement Factor (but no less than 1 hex in an impulse) and may not attack. Then, the attacker can move his second impulse and attack again.

7. ADVANCE AFTER COMBAT. Victorious attacking units may always advance into the loser's hex unless it is across an unbridged river or a blocked side. In those cases only units starting their Game Turn in the hex from which they are attacking may cross over; i.e., they cannot move to an unbridged river or blocked side, attack and then move on. In addition, they must follow the blocked side restrictions as to how large a force can get across.

8. ARTILLERY. It does not cost any supply units to employ artillery except in a barrage. In a barrage, the artillery may fire on just one Combat Factor of a unit. This can result in having to break down a large unit to take the loss. This disorganizes the large unit, but that's what a barrage does, doesn't it?

9. INITIAL DEPLOYMENT. Two of the 26th Volksgrenadier Regiments sneaked across the Our River on the night of December 15, 1944. Put them there, due west of where the 26th VG is listed as starting. The Allies will be real happy about this.

10. FIRST TURN MOVE. On the first turn, the Allies get no "countermove" between German impulses. This will make the Allies even happier.

11. SUPPLY ROUTES. For use with the Optional Supply Rule II. Supply routes are traced 8 Movement Factors from the Supply unit to the unit to be supplied. For the Germans, supply routes can also be traced 8 Movement Factors from a road east or on the "Start Line" if the road leads back to an edge behind the "Front Line." The Allies can also trace routes 8 Movement Factors from the west edge or north and south edges of the board behind their lines.

12. SUPPLY RETURN. Very simply, $1/2$ of a player's supply units expended in the "A" impulse of the turn return in the "P" impulse of the same turn. ALL units are returned to play in the following "A" impulse. My reasoning here is that supply columns are being sent forward all day, not just in the morning, though their might be more in the morning to allow for reorganization during the night. Also, now that attacks are allowed in the "P" impulse, there is a need for more supply units.

In some of the foregoing, I may seem to have complicated the game instead of making it more playable. This was done to balance the game and realism and playability were secondary. As to why you can now attack in the "P" impulse; I figured that people fought as well in the afternoon as in the morning.