

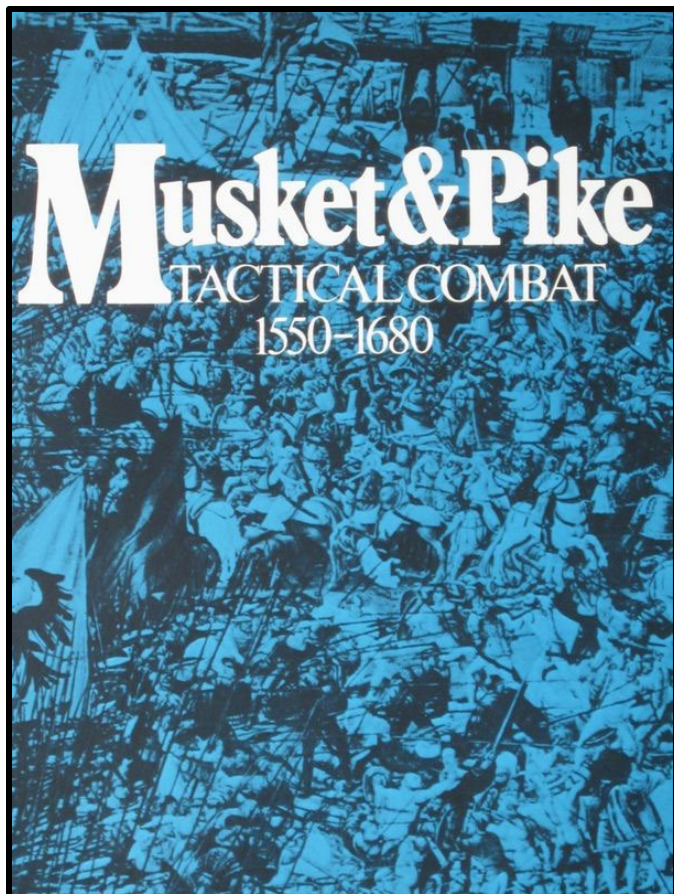
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# Musket & Pike, SPI 1973

*by Joe Beard*

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**Musket & Pike: Tactical Combat, 1550-1680 – SPI Publications**



**MUSKET & PIKE: Tactical Combat 1550-1680** is a tactical-level simulation of the evolution of ground combat from the appearance of the individually-operated firearm to the introduction of the socket bayonet in the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century. **MUSKET & PIKE** was designed by John Michael Young and published in 1973 by Simulations Publications, Incorporated (SPI).

## DESCRIPTION

**MUSKET & PIKE** is a wide-ranging examination of European warfare during the period of sometimes muddled transition from edged weapons to firearms. This change would, besides completely overturning the traditional tactics and usages of European warfare, also fundamentally transform the way in which Western society both viewed and organized itself for war; not surprisingly, it was a long and often bloody period of adjustment. To understand just how truly revolutionary was this transition from edged weapons to man-portable firearms, it is only necessary to briefly examine European history, starting with the Dark Ages.

During virtually the entire span of centuries that marked the Middle Ages, the mounted, armored knight was the dominant influence on warfare in Europe. In the period following the Middle Ages, the disciplined professional pikeman supplanted the mounted knight as the decisive force on the battlefield. The pikeman's time, however, like that of the knight before him, would also pass. By the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the individually-manageable firearm would finally bring to a close the infantry tradition of massed, well-trained spearmen that stretched back to the hoplites of Classical Greece.

This is the central problem confronting the players in **MUSKET & PIKE**: finding the correct balance, during this awkward period of transition, between the shock power of massed professional pikeman, and the firepower of trained musketeers.

## The Game

The game turn sequence in **MUSKET & PIKE** is simple, logical and easy to follow, although a “turn phase track” would have been

[4.2] SEQUENCE OUTLINE

1. *FIRST PLAYER-TURN*

The First Player is designated by the individual scenario. The Player whose turn is in progress is termed the Phasing Player.

A. *Fire Combat Phase:* the First (Phasing) Player allocates and executes the Fire attacks against Enemy units within the fire units' Range Allowance.

B. *Movement Phase:* the Phasing Player may move all of his units up to the limits of the units' Movement Allowance, within the restrictions of the Movement Rules.

C. *Melee Combat Phase:* the Phasing Player allocates and executes all melee attacks against adjacent Enemy units, according to the rules for Melee Combat.

2. *SECOND PLAYER-TURN*

The Second Player follows the exact same sequence and procedures as the First Player, using his own units and assuming the role of the Phasing Player.

handy. The turn sequence proceeds as follows: the first player executes fire combat, then moves his units, and finally executes *mêlée* combat; the second player then repeats the same sequence, after which the turn marker is advanced to the next game turn. The simple game mechanics and clearly-written rules make **MUSKET & PIKE** easy for new players to learn and play.

The interesting and frustrating challenge posed to the player by the game's design is finding the right balance between the firepower of musketeers and artillery, and the shock power of pikemen and cavalry. Players will find, I think, that no matter what deployment they try, it will never quite work out the way they hoped.

**MUSKET & PIKE** offers eighteen scenarios that depict actions from the Spanish-Dutch War (1568-1609), the French Wars of Religion (1562-1598), the English Civil Wars (1641-1651), the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), the Franco-Spanish Wars (1635-1658), the Austro-Turkish War (1663-1664), and the War of the English Succession (1688-1691). Among the many battles depicted in the scenarios are the following:

1. *Mookerheyde* (14 April 1574)
2. *Coutras* (20 October 1587)
3. *Nieuport* (2 July 1600)
4. *Lutzen* (18 November 1632)
5. *Nordlingen* (6 September 1634)
6. *Dunkirk Dunes* (3 June 1658)
7. *Brentford* (12 November 1642)
8. *Grantham* (13 May 1643)

[3.33] SUMMARY OF UNIT TYPES

| Symbol | Abbreviation | Name                 |
|--------|--------------|----------------------|
|        | MP           | Militia Pikemen      |
|        | PP           | Professional Pikemen |
|        | EP           | Elite Pikemen        |
|        | MM           | Militia Muskets      |
|        | PM           | Professional Muskets |
|        | LC           | Light Cavalry        |

|  |    |                       |
|--|----|-----------------------|
|  | HC | Heavy Cavalry         |
|  | SC | Swedish Cavalry       |
|  | RC | Reiter Cavalry        |
|  | DR | Dragoons              |
|  | LA | Light Artillery       |
|  | MA | Medium Artillery      |
|  | EA | Early Heavy Artillery |
|  | HA | Late Heavy Artillery  |

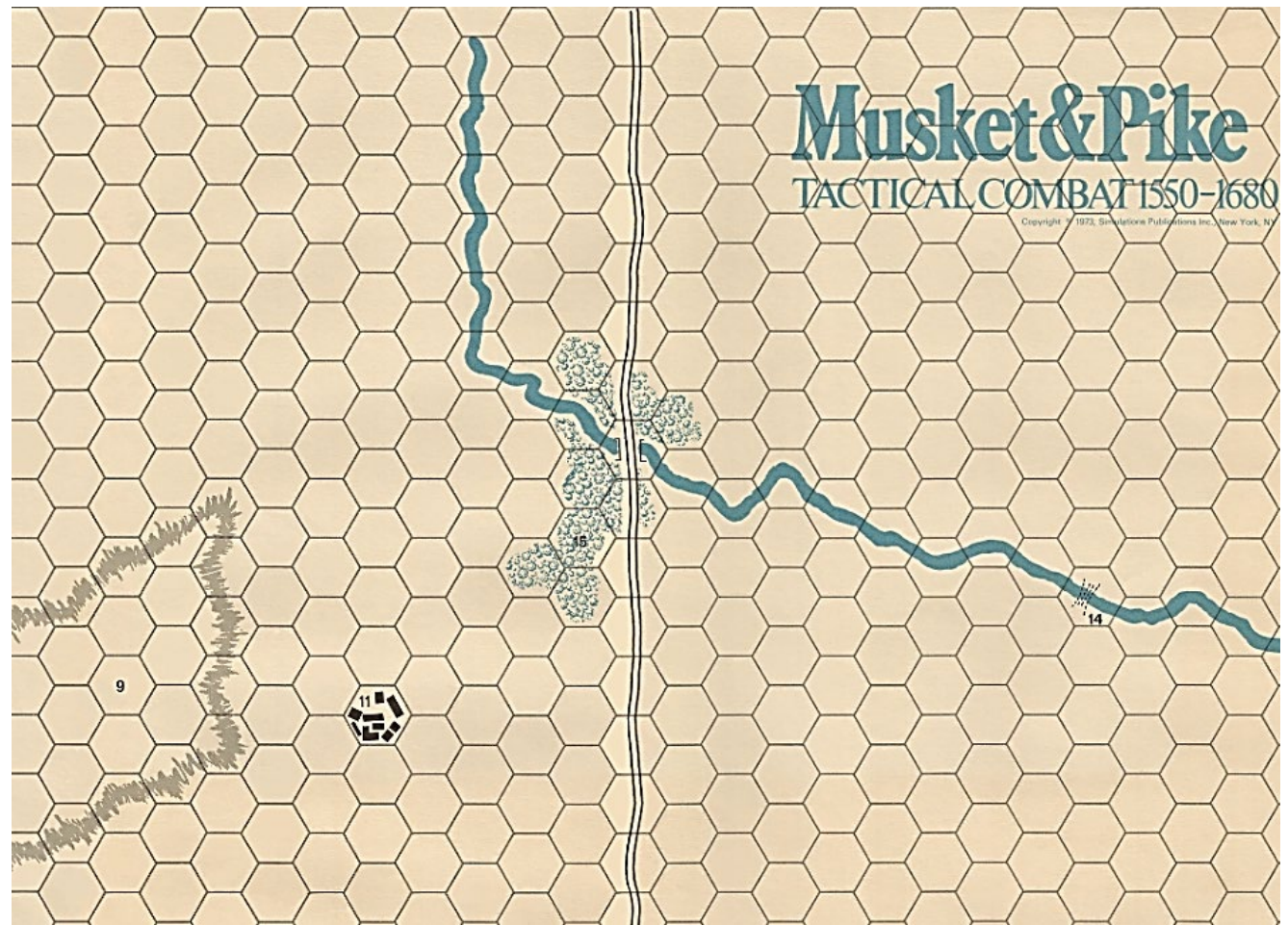
9. *Staverton* (4 July 1643)
10. *Marston Moor* (1 July 1644)
11. *Aberdeen* (15 September 1644)
12. *Nasby* (14 June 1645)
13. *Dunbar* (3 September 1650)
14. *White Mountain* (8 Nov 1620)
15. *Fleurus* (29 August 1622)
16. *Breitenfeld* (17 September 1631)
17. *Szentgotthard* (1 August 1664)
18. *Killiecrankie* (27 July 1689)

In addition to the numerous scenarios, **MUSKET & PIKE** also includes a set of optional advanced rules that really should be used as soon as players become familiar with the game system. These optional rules add to the historical feel and excitement of the game, without introducing undue complexity. These rules include, among other things: *cavalry caracolla*; *infantry squares*; *advanced road movement*; *dismounting cavalry*; and *artillery capture*.

## A PERSONAL OBSERVATION

**MUSKET & PIKE** is one of a number of games designed by John Young that spanned the period from the Napoleonic Wars, through the American Civil War, up to and including the Franco-Prussian War and beyond. I confess that I remain a big fan of Young's many games, even after all these years. His designs are almost always innovative, interesting, playable, and fun. And despite his tragic and untimely death many, many years ago, John Young leaves behind a library of some of the best game designs that, in my opinion, SPI ever published.

Finally, **MUSKET & PIKE** is probably not the most sophisticated or colorful tactical game that a player is likely to encounter in today's marketplace. Certainly, there are a number of newer tactical offerings that are both more detailed in their simulation architecture and



much more attractive in their presentation. Nonetheless, this is still a title that is quick to dive into and fun to play; for that reason, old as it is, I believe that it is hard to find a better, more exciting game than **MUSKET & PIKE!**

### Design Characteristics:

- Time Scale: 5 minutes per game turn
- Map Scale: 50 meters per hex
- Unit Size: each infantry or cavalry unit represents 100-125 men; each gun unit represents 4-6 artillery pieces
- Unit Types: militia pikemen/professional pikemen/elite pikemen, militia muskets/professional muskets, light cavalry/ heavy cavalry/Swedish cavalry/Reiter cavalry, dragoons, light artillery/medium artillery/early heavy artillery/late heavy artillery and information markers
- Number of Players: two
- Complexity: low/average
- Solitaire Suitability: above average
- Average Playing Time: 2-3 hours

### Game Components:

- One 22" x 28" hexagonal grid Map Sheet
- 400 ½" Cardboard Counters
- One 6" x 11½" map-fold style Set of Rules and Scenario Instructions
- One 8½" x 11" combined Turn Record Chart and Errata (30 April 1973)
- One 6" x 14" Fire and Melee Combat Resolution Table
- One 6" x 9¼" Terrain Effects Chart
- One 8½" x 11" back-printed Scenario Historical Background Sheet
- One ¾" x 8½" SPI Customer Complaint Card
- One small six-sided Die
- One SPI 12" x 15" x 1" flat 24 compartment plastic Game Box (with clear compartment tray covers) and clear plastic game cover with Title Sheet

## MUSKET & PIKE MOVE AND FIRE PHASE GAME TRACK

To correct the failure of SPI to include some type of Move and Fire Phase Chart to assist players in keeping track of their individual turn operations, I have posted a Game Track that I designed myself as a “player aide” for anyone who owns a copy of MUSKET & PIKE. I hope that those of you who decide to use this Turn Sequence Track find it useful.

### MUSKET & PIKE PLAYER PHASE TRACK



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