

## **EXPERIMENTAL GAME RULES**

The following experimental game rules are alternatives to the current rules, designed to deal with some of the problems we've run into since the rulebook came out. Please note that these are not 'new rules' that *must* be used. They are ideas that I'd like feedback on, and which will then be discussed in depth in the Epic rules review. Also note that I won't make any changes unless they are broadly approved by the Epic community and the rules committee.

### **HIT ALLOCATION**

Revision Date: October 1st, 2004

The first of these experimental rules covers hit allocation. The current rules use slightly different methods for allocating hits depending on circumstance or weapon being used, and this has caused some confusion. The aim of the new rule is to come up with one method of allocating hits that is used in ALL circumstances.

#### **1.9.6 Allocate Hits & Make Saving Throws**

The hits inflicted on a formation are allocated against eligible targets that are in range and the line of fire of the enemy. Hits are allocated by the defender (ie, the player whose formation is under attack) 'from the front to the back' of a formation. Note that this is the opposite of suppression. You may not allocate a second hit to a unit until one hit has been allocated to every potential target, or allocate a third hit until all targets have been allocated two hits, etc.

The defender may allocate the hits that have been caused in any order he likes. However, hits can only be allocated against units that they can affect (eg, AT hits may not be allocated to infantry units, and AP hits may only be allocated against armoured vehicles), and hits must be allocated to the closest potential target first.

Note: Hits are assigned front to back in any order (eg AP,AP, AT, AT, MW, AT, MW, AP, AT). Once all hits have been allocated make saving throws for each unit that has been hit, using the unit's Armour value from its datasheet or the cover save from the terrain table. Roll a D6: if the score is lower than the Armour value or cover save value than the unit fails its save, and is destroyed and removed from play. If the roll is equal to or greater than the armour or cover value then the unit is saved and it remains in play. Make a separate armour save for each hit the unit suffers. Remember that the target formation receives a blast marker for each unit that is destroyed.

#### **DESIGN CONCEPT: Speed Dice Rolling**

It is possible to speed up dice rolling without altering the overall result of shooting by allocating hits against units of the same type as a group, and then making all of the saves together, and finally removing casualties from the models closest to the enemy. For

example, if a unit of six Space Marines and Three Rhinos took 3 AP hits and 2 AT hits, then the defender could simply say "I allocate the AP hits to the Marines and the AT hits to the Rhinos". He would then roll 3 dice for the Marines saves, removing any casualties by eliminating the Marine units closest to the enemy, followed by rolling 2 dice for the Rhino's saves and removing any casualties in a similar manner. Please note that you will need to agree with your opponent that it's okay to use this method to allocate hits in this way, and that even if an opponent agrees, he can still ask for you to use the 'official' method in situations where he feels it is warranted.

### **1.12.5 Resolve Attacks (replace paragraph 4 & 5 with the following rule)**

Each player allocates the hits and make saving throws in the same manner as they would when allocating hits from shooting. Hits may only be allocated to units that were directly engaged in the combat (i.e., that belonged to the attacking or defending formation and which were within 15cms of the enemy). Infantry units from formations taking a charge action may not take cover saves (they are assumed to have left cover to charge the enemy), but other infantry units may take cover saves normally.

### **2.2.6 Macro-weapons (delete the 'Allocating Hits' rule – allocate the hits using the rules above)**

*Note: The old restriction about allocating MW to units range' no longer apply, so CC MW hits inflicted by a unit in base contact with be allocated to units further away if all units in base contact are eliminated.*

### **3.2.5 Titan Killer Weapons**

If a Titan Killer weapon is fired at a formation that includes both war engines and other types of units then the defender *\*must\** allocate all the Titan Killer weapon hits to war engine targets. Roll for damage immediately after allocating the hit. The War Engine counts as having been allocated a number of hits equal to the damage rolled.

*Note: I went with the defender allocating the hit as that is the way that the 'core' rule (1.9.6) works (so as to avoid 'sniping' when allocating MW hits). What the TK rule means is that TK hits *\*must\** be allocated to WE if there are any in a formation - note you don't have a choice in the matter. This is a bit like AP and AT hits needing to be allocated to units they can effect. With AP and AT hits, however, we ignore what happens if they have to be allocated to targets that they can't effect as... well they can't effect them! With TK weapons if there are no WE in the formation they can still effect other targets.*

## ASSAULTS

Revision Date: October 1st, 2004

The second of these experimental rules covers the way that assaults are carried out, and is mainly aimed at dealing with some of the stranger situations that can occur when friendly units are set up to lend support to a small attacking force.

### **1.12.5 Resolve Assault (change)**

All units have two assault values: a close combat value and a firefight value. Units that are in base-to-base contact with the enemy use the close combat value, while units that are not in base contact but are within 15cm and have a line of fire to the enemy can use their firefight value. Units that are armed only with close combat weapons and do not have any small arms or other ranged weapons may only attack if in base contact with the enemy.

Roll 1D6 for each unit that may attack. Note that Blast markers do not suppress units from formations involved in an assault – it is assumed that the proximity of the enemy means that everyone joins in! Compare the dice roll to the unit's close combat value if it's in contact with the enemy, or its firefight value if it's within 15cm of the enemy but not in base contact. If the dice roll is equal to or greater than the relevant value, then a hit is scored on the enemy. No modifiers ever apply to these dice rolls.

Each player allocates the hits and make saving throws in the same manner as they would when allocating hits from shooting (see Experimental Hit Allocation below). Hits may only be allocated to units that were directly engaged in the combat (ie, that belonged to the attacking or defending formation and which were within 15cms of the enemy after charge and counter-charge moves were completed). Infantry units from formations taking a charge action may not take cover saves (they are assumed to have left cover to charge the enemy), but other infantry units may take cover saves normally.

*Note: The old restriction about allocating MW to units that are 'in range' no longer apply, so CC MW hits inflicted by a unit in base contact with the enemy can be allocated to units further away if all units in base contact are eliminated.*

If all of the units in the defending formation have been killed and at least one attacker survives, then the attacker wins and the assault is over (see 1.12.8).

If all of the attacking units directly engaged in the assault are killed then the assault has stalled and the defender wins (see 1.12.8). 'Directly engaged' means being within 15cm of a defending unit after charge and counter-charge moves have been completed. If even one of the original attackers that was within 15cms of the enemy survives, then the attack has not stalled.

In any other case, both sides can call on support (see 1.12.6).

Important Note: Kills inflicted in an assault do not count for placing blast markers or for breaking a formation until AFTER the result of the combat has been worked out. Also note that the attacker must completely destroy the defending formation to win at this stage, while all the defender has to do is to kill all the attacking units that made it to within 15cms of a defender.

#### **1.12.6 Supporting Fire (addition/change)**

Both sides may call upon support unless the defender has been wiped out or the attack stalled as described above. Calling on support allows units from other formations to attack with their firefight value if they are within 15cm and have a line of fire to an enemy unit directly involved in the assault. In this case ‘directly involved’ means belonging to the attacking or defending formation(s) and in a position to attack. This rule represents units from both sides that are not directly involved in the assault lending supporting fire when they see their friends coming under attack. Units from formations that are either Broken or Marched this turn cannot lend support.

Roll to hit using the firefight values of the supporting formations, and then allocate hits and make saving throws as you would do for shooting attacks. Once all casualties have been removed you must work out the result of the attack (see 1.12.7).

#### **1.12.7 Work Out Result (addition/change)**

After both players have removed casualties, the outcome of the combat must be decided. First, if one side completely wiped the other side out, then it is the winner. If this isn't the case then each player rolls 2D6, and adds any modifiers that apply from the chart below to the single D6 that rolled highest. Note that you don't add your dice rolls together, but use the single dice with the highest score. Whoever has the higher score after any modifiers have been added wins the assault.

In the case of a tied dice roll fight a second assault using any surviving units, starting with step 4 (i.e. roll dice, allocate hits, make saves and resolve the combat all over again with any survivors). Units from both sides are allowed to make a counter charge move before the second round is fought, with the attacker moving his counter charging units first (see x.x). If a second round is fought then any casualties from the first round carry over when working out the result of the combat.

#### **1.12.8 Loser Withdraws (add the following at the start, before the first paragraph)**

After the result of the combat has been worked out (either because all defending units were destroyed, or the attack stalled, or through a result roll), then the loser is broken and must withdraw, and formations on the winning side receive Blast markers for the casualties they suffered.

## **BARRAGES**

Revision Date: October 1st, 2004

The third of these experimental rules covers the way that barrages are carried out, and is designed to solve some of the 'min-maxing' problems associated with the current barrage table.

### **1.9.8 Barrage Table**

Change the To Hit rolls for 3 point barrages to AP4+/AT5+.

### **2.2.6 Macro-Weapons**

Change the paragraph for barrages to the following:

Barrages: Work out the macro-weapon's barrage normally. Use the To Hit Rolls for AP weapons against any targets hit by a macro-weapon. Units do not receive a saving throw unless they have reinforced armour or an invulnerable save.

## **AIRCRAFT VS AIRCRAFT**

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It has been pointed out that aircraft are far less effective at shooting down other aircraft than flak batteries are. This clearly isn't right, so the following simple changes are proposed to make aircraft vs. aircraft combat more deadly.

### **4.2 Combat Air Patrol (add to end of second paragraph)**

Formations that are on CAP remain on CAP until they make an interception. If they haven't made an Interception by the end of the turn, then they can either stand down and return to base normally, or remain on CAP into the following turn.

### **4.2.3 Anti-aircraft attacks (add to end of second paragraph)**

Aircraft that are carrying out a CAP or Intercept action may add +1 to all of their to hit rolls.

## **SKIMMERS & POP-UP ATTACKS**

Pop-up attacks have been a contentious issue ever since rules were first introduced for them in the 2nd Edition of Epic (the SM/TL version). The rule currently in the rules has the benefit of being simple to apply, but it can feel cheesy in use, especially when a skimmer pop-ups up to an incredible height in order to get a shot at a unit hiding behind a building or suchlike. The following experimental rule tries to get round this, while at the same time increasing the defensive benefits of being able to pop-up.

### **2.1.13 Skimmers (replace paragraph 3 with the following)**

Skimmers that are on Overwatch are allowed to ignore terrain that it is either touching or that starts within 15cms of it when it traces its line of fire to the target; the skimmer is assumed to pop-up high enough to see over the terrain it is hiding behind, makes its attack, and then drops back down again immediately after the attack has been resolved. Please note that enemy formations that are on Overwatch are not allowed to shoot at the skimmer when it makes a pop-up attack (because you are not allowed to overwatch an overwatch attack).

In addition, a skimmer may choose to pop-up high at the start of any move. In this case, however, the skimmer remains 'popped up'. Doing this allows the skimmer to ignore terrain that it is either touching or that starts within 15cms of it when it shoots, but it also allows enemy units to ignore terrain that starts within 15cm of the skimmer when they shoot back at it. Note that popping up in this way is carried out as part of a move, and therefore enemy formations on Overwatch are allowed to shoot at the skimmers as they pop-up. The skimmer may return to ground level at the start of any subsequent move (including a subsequent move taken as part of the same action if you Double or March), but until it does so it will remain in the elevated position where everybody can see it. Skimmers that are flying high may go into Overwatch or take Sustained Fire actions, but they may not embark troops, and may only disembark troops that are equipped with Jumpacks.

### ***DESIGNERS NOTES***

*First of all, please note that paragraphs 2 (ignore terrain as moving) and 4 (may treat all assaults as firefights) still apply to skimmers.*

*I don't think we need to allow AA weapons to engage high flying skimmers under this rule; we can assume that skimmers that pop-up will evade flak by dodging under cover before the flak can engage it, and most AA weapons have an AT value they can use to engage high flying skimmers with. In any case, the main reason that we introduced Flak attacks was because otherwise AA weapons in mixed formations never got to fire; earlier versions of the rule forced the formation to be on OW orders, and the Flak attack counted as the formation's OW attack for the turn. As only AA weapons could engage the aircraft, this meant that most of the units in the formation lost their attack for the turn. The Flak attack rules were introduced to get round this problem. The same issue does not apply to*

*high-flying skimmers; a formation can shoot at the skimmers normally, allowing all units with the right type of weapons and that are in range to fire. This will make life very hard for high flying skimmers, without them needing to worry about coming under fire from free 'bonus' attacks by AA weapons too!*

## **GARRISONS ON OVERWATCH**

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This very simple rules modification makes garrisons rather more useful, and gives defensive tactics a bit of a leg up over an all-out attack. Although the change is subtle, it could have profound effects (especially when combined with the experimental assault rules), and will therefore require careful playtesting.

### **6.1.5 Set Up Spacecraft & Garrisons (add to end of final paragraph)**

Garrisons are assumed to start the game in Overwatch (ie, they are assumed to have chosen to take an Overwatch action in their previous Action phase, which has 'carried over' into the first turn of the scenario).