

Richard's

Rapid Rule Responses

Our 'three R's' page shares replies to queries received from *RF!* players across the globe. We also include explanations and new rules and ideas.

BASIC RULES

General Terms

We use 'unit' when referring to larger bodies, such as battalions, batteries, squadrons or regiments, and 'elements' when referring to 'bits of units' such as companies, individual guns, heavy weapons, or groups of a few figures.

MORALE

Morale of Sub Units

As suggested in the rule book, German regimental support companies (13th, 14th, 15th and 16th) are normally attached to a battalion. Otherwise, they may test as individual companies if this is agreed by both players. Other nations may also attach regimental or brigade supporting units to battalions for morale purposes.

Rule 1.4 Armoured Infantry

Armoured infantry (such as the armoured panzer grenadier battalion of a panzer grenadier regiment and US armoured infantry battalions) are infantry battalions that happen to be carried in armoured personnel carriers, so they still test for morale as infantry. Truck or carrier-mounted infantry battalions are treated in exactly the same way. Even infantry units with permanently attached tanks or armoured cars still test as infantry (see rule 1.9).

Rule 1.6 Independent AFVs

If an AFV is part of a unit (even if this is mixed) it cannot be classed as independent.

Rule 1.10 IDF and Air Attacks

The morale tests for units under IDF or Aircraft attack also apply to infantry battalions, artillery batteries/battalions etc. In *Rapid Fire!* the 1:15 figure to man ratio means the battalion is the basic unit and companies are normally relatively close together on the table, so morale effects apply to the whole unit, with the benefit that the larger number of figures can absorb more casualties before a test has to be taken. Rare exceptions to this are companies acting in total independence, such as British motor companies or engineer squadrons, although even these will normally be attached to a battalion or equivalent unit. Some scenarios may specify morale tests to be taken at lower or higher levels.

OBSERVATION

Rule 2.4 / Table 5 Observation in Intact Buildings (explanation)

There is no automatic spotting of infantry and support weapons in intact buildings as (obviously) you wouldn't be able to see them, but we allow a chance test to simulate the guy nipping outside for a pee, or the careless flutter of a curtain by a nervous sniper. If they fire they can be spotted automatically at the quoted ranges. Ruins are

more exposed, so you can automatically observe non-firing infantry and have chance tests as a bonus. If they fire, the longer ranges apply.

SMOKE

Rule 3.2 Weapons Firing Smoke

These are normally field and infantry guns, howitzers and mortars. Some tanks and other AFVs were fitted with smoke mortars or dischargers to help conceal their movements (usually backwards) and these can be given a maximum range of 6". Agree which vehicles are fitted with these before the game.

HEROIC ACTIONS

No queries have been received regarding Heroic Actions.

MOVEMENT

Rule 5.1 Vehicles in Built Up Areas

Vehicles can move at normal speeds in built-up areas.

Rules 5.10 and 5.11 Cavalry Horse Holding

We have 'absorbed' horse holders into our cavalry unit orbats so that, when dismounted, the unit's horses are held by 'invisible' non-fighting personnel. However, if you wish to represent horse-holders on the table, 1 figure per squadron or troop should stay with the horses if you want them to stay around when the shooting starts! In this case, add 1 figure to each company or squadron in the *RF!* orbat.

Distance Between AFVs in Combat

We have not specified a minimum distance between AFVs in a unit, as generally it is in the interests of the player to keep them close enough to each other to offer fire support. Of course, radio-equipped AFVs were able to operate at some distance from one another and still maintain communications.

RESERVED FIRE

Amazingly, I can't remember any queries about Reserved Fire. All the years of arguments and fist fights must have resolved the issues. Of course, we did make sure we wrote the rules for this section very carefully.

CLOSE ASSAULT

Rule 7.7 Support Weapons and Close Assault

If a support weapon (i.e. an MMG) fires in a turn before its crew are forced to withdraw after losing a Close Assault turn, it cannot be moved. Otherwise, logic and agreement should prevail. It's highly unlikely that any support weapon would be taken by retreating defenders who have been fighting hand to hand. AT rocket launchers and flamethrowers are possibly more likely to be taken, but remember that only the PIAT AT launcher can fire from within buildings. A dice throw can decide if players can't agree.

FIRING

Rules 8.8 to 8.10 Units in 'Split' Cover

If a company-size unit has figures in different types of cover, the less protective type of cover applies (i.e. if a company has 3 figures behind a wall (hard cover) and 4 behind a hedge (soft cover) then it is treated as being in soft cover).

Rules 8.6 and 8.20 Re-crewing Support Weapons

Figures can't move to re-crew a support weapon (including AT launchers) and fire it in the same turn.

Rule 8.24 Rifle Grenade Launchers

Unless their issue is specified in orbats, allow infantry companies of nations who used grenade launchers (i.e. America and Japan) a maximum of one per company. The 'crew' of the launcher is a company member - not added, which would over-inflate their strength. Limit the launcher to a maximum of 2 shots per game, as it is just added to the company as a more effective way of delivering their normal quota of grenades. The company cannot 'throw' their allocation of grenades if they have already been fired by the launcher.

Rule 8.42 Anti-Tank Firing (modified text)

'If the target moved in the previous turn, or if the firer has moved, or is about to move in the current turn. This penalty does not apply to anti-tank rifles.'

Rule 8.49 Cumulative Light and Heavy Damage (Explanation)

Individual light damages are marked, but have no other effect at the time of the hit. However, these effects are cumulative, so two light damages during a game will result in heavy damage and another two light damages will destroy, unless the AFV takes a move out in contact with a repair or recovery vehicle to permanently remove all damages.

The effect of heavy damage is restricted to a move during which the affected AFV cannot move or fire. No other restrictions apply, but unless repaired by a repair/recovery vehicle the AFV continues to carry the heavy damage and has only to suffer another heavy damage or two light damages to be destroyed. Heavily damaged and destroyed AFVs can also affect morale tests (see rule 1.6).

Rules 8.50 and 8.85 Effects of HE and AT Fire on Vehicle Occupants

For passengers in an armoured vehicle (i.e. an APC) destroyed by enemy AT or HE fire, throw a d6, the result being the number of casualties (exactly the same as external passengers on an AFV destroyed by AT fire).

In rule 8.87 throws of 6 means the external passengers have escaped with no casualties. Only throws of 1 - 5 count when referring to the casualty table.

Table 10 / Rule 8.60 Anti-Tank Firing/Direct HE fire

The penalty of -1 for moving target or firer is only applied once, even if both target and firer are moving.

Rule 8.62 Deduction for Fire again Targets in Hard Cover

The -1 is only for artillery fire. For small arms and flamethrower fire look up the potential effects under 'hard cover' and the appropriate range on the small arms chart (rule 8.7).

Rule 8.68 Late War Allied OPs

This only refers to French, Canadian, Polish, Belgian units etc, not Soviet forces.

Rule 8.76 Battalion and Regimental Mortars

Normally these weapons fire independently and don't need IDF radio throws, as they are controlled by the battalion or regimental HQs.

Rule 8.91 Sdkfz 251/11 Multiple Rocket Launcher ('Stuka Zu Fuss')

For the rocket crates mounted on the Sdkfz 251/11 use the normal Multiple Rocket Launcher method for firing (using the grid), but with only 'one shot' per game. Maximum range is 36", min range 12" with a fire effect per hit of 15 points table 5.

Rule 8.103 Flamethrowers

Flamethrowers automatically hit. The effect on infantry depends on the type of cover they are in. Flamethrowers can fire a maximum of 3 times per game.

German 'Puppchen' AT Gun

AT fire as for rocket launchers (gun type 2) but max range 10". Automatic hit up to 6", 4,5,6 up to 10". HE effect as for AT rocket launchers.

***Sherman 'Tulip' Rockets**

I've recently replied to an RF gamer enquiring about this weapon. Unfortunately I've mislaid the reply and the rule for 'Tulip' firing that it included. If you were the recipient please get in touch.

ADVANCED RULES**ENGINEERING****Rule 20.1 Hedge Gapping**

Any AFV can pass through a hedge. However, if an AFV crosses a bocage hedge (thick and high earth banks) it will rise up and become more vulnerable to enemy AT fire (see rule 20.1). To avoid this gap, the bank (treating it as a permanent obstacle - rule 12.8) with a bulldozer, dozer tank, AVRE Petard mortar, engineers with demolition charges, or (and peculiar to the Bocage) a tank with a Cullin device (metal prongs welded to the bow).

Once gapped, any following vehicle is free of movement penalties if they pass through in the same place. This doesn't apply to the bocage hedge unless the bank is gapped first.

Mine Dogs

As an animal lover I'm not keen, but I suggest an 8" move (as dogs are pretty fast) and on reaching a tank without being hit (fire at as a human target) a 5 or 6 = detonation. Throw for effect as if in a minefield.

Occupying Enemy Trenches

Units can re-occupy their own prepared positions/slit trenches etc and these may also be used by enemy forces. These positions can only accommodate the number of figure they were originally intended for. If necessary, agree capacities of dug-in positions and prepared defences before the game.

SPECIALIST ARTILLERY FIRE

Rule 14.6 Predicted Fire

The deduction of 1 can sometimes mean AFVs are immune from this type of artillery fire. This reflects the lesser effectiveness of predicted fire.

AIRCRAFT

Rule 15.9 Targets for Pre-Ordered Aircraft

The targets can be anything which the player can see at the time of writing the orders for the air attack. We assume intelligence from a variety of sources has been combined to identify targets.

RULE BOOK ORBATS

VG information

German Panzer Kampfgruppe

Page13. The Sdkfz 251/9 (short 75mm) is AT class 4, not 3.
 The Sdkfz 251/10 (37mm) is AT class 5, not 4.

SPECIAL SECTIONS

Cavalry

Cavalry are specifically mentioned in and covered by the following rules:

<u>Morale</u>	1.4, 1.5 and Table 1 + 1.10-1.14 and Tables 3 and 4
<u>Observation</u>	Mounted cavalry (or horses without riders) are classed as 'other targets'
<u>Movement</u>	Table 6 + 5.6, 5.10, 5.11 and 5.12 (see also the Movement section above for additional information on horse holders)
<u>Close Assault</u>	7.2, 7.10 and 7.11
<u>Firing</u>	8.66 (observers) and 8.78 to 8.82
<u>Advanced</u>	20.5 and 20.09

In other cases, the rules that apply to infantry usually cover cavalry as well (in all cases if they are dismounted). Obviously, mounted cavalry can't occupy buildings, or shelter in trenches!

Generally speaking, W.W.II Cavalry are best regarded as a way of moving infantry more quickly than on foot, especially across or through terrain that may be impassable or difficult for wheeled vehicles. We allow for mounted attacks, but like any movement in the open, cavalry will be very vulnerable to enemy fire.

If a mounted figure is within the risk zone and becomes a casualty both horse and rider are lost. If using the advanced medical rules only riders can be 'saved' (until we come up with some rules for vets!).

To keep the rules simple, we have assumed (like vehicle drivers) that groups of horses without riders are being tended by horse holders, without having to use actual figures. To account for this, our cavalry orbats slightly reduce the number of figures in companies/squadrons.

Cavalry will be most effective in games with obscuring and difficult terrain, like forest, hills, swamp or mountains etc.

Night Fighting

We wanted to keep things as straightforward as possible, hence the blanket 'half move' for night fighting; anticipating that the majority of games may include just a 'bit' of night and only a few would be pure night fights. However, in the 'Battle of the Bulge' book I've included two games (in the mini-campaign) that are fought almost entirely at night, and when playing these I found the rules worked very well.

Troops move much more slowly in the dark (try crossing a field at night without a torch), so make sure the distances you're expecting them to cross in a night-time scenario aren't too ambitious. Illumination from mortar-fired star shells and burning buildings and searchlights will provide some limited 'daylight' observation. Part of the planning for an attack could be weighing up whether to move more slowly, under cover of darkness, or provide artificial daylight and be more easily observed by the defenders.

Ultimately (as we all do) the rules can be modified to suit a particular scenario. For example, the rules give a standard movement deduction for snow, but in hard frost conditions snow can provide good going for tanks and other vehicles cross country, but slower conditions on icy roads.

For 'Monty's moonlight' (searchlight beams bounced off low clouds) I'd suggest normal movement rates, but limited to a 2' deep strip (that the user positions) across the table and at 90 degrees to the direction of attack. Outside that area you revert to the normal night movement. I didn't include these limitations in the 'Battle of the Bulge', 'Death of a Division' scenario, but that is a game on a much larger, divisional scale and artificial moonlight only applies in the first few moves.

Finally, one way of getting troops moving more quickly at night is to use roads. At night they are less likely to be spotted and there's no air threat, so risking an advance in a more bunched formation, swooping down the highway towards that vital bridge could be an option!

German Infra-Red Equipment

When using the Uhu IR searchlight-equipped Sdkfz 251 and IR-equipped Panthers use the following rules:

- IR.1 The Uhu Sdkfz 251-mounted searchlight must be static during the move it attempts to find and illuminate a target.
- IR.2 Test to illuminate any single target within normal daylight observation ranges by throwing a d6. A throw of 1 means the Uhu has failed to locate a target.

- IR.3 Any IR-equipped tank or weapon within the appropriate normal daylight observation range of the successfully illuminated target may fire.
- IR.4 The IR searchlights mounted on tanks allow them to move at normal speeds at night and locate targets within 18" as if in daylight. Test to illuminate targets as for the Uhu.
- IR.5 In all cases, normal (daylight) observation restrictions for cover etc still apply.
- IR.6 If the Uhu vehicle suffers any damage from enemy fire, or 2 or more crew casualties, the searchlight is destroyed.
- IR.7 IR-equipped Panthers lose their IR capability if they suffer heavy damage.