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Subject: Blitzkrieg Module System

The Blitzkrieg Module System
James F. Dunnigan & Redmond Simonsen
Supplement to Issue #19 Strategy and Tactics magazine
(c. Dec 1969)

Reviewed July 7, 1997 by James B. Byrne

Physical components:

Three (3) 8.5 x 11 inch sheets of single sided unmounted counters:

1 red (267 count)

1 blue (267 count identical to red)

1 b&w with five (5) minor country forces
 Nord Walkure (48 count - 4 blank)
 Sud Walkure (24 count - 2 blank)
 San Estados (36 count - 2 blank)
 New Endor (24 count - 5 blank)
 Calaedia (24 count - 8 blank)

note 1.

The module components were reprinted c. 1973 at which time the above counters were mounted on four single sided die cut sheets (200 count each) and the minor country forces given colours. The number and types of units remained unchanged.

 NW (black on 10-20% grey screen over red)
 SW (red on 30-50% grey screen over red)
 SE (black on 20% grey screen over blue)
 NE (blue on black)
 C (blue on 20% grey screen over blue)

Player charts

CRT, OOB and Production chart
double sided 8.5 x 11 inch (2 count)

Turn Sequence Chart, Air Mission, Supply, Weather and Unit
Characteristics chart
double sided tri-fold 8.5 x 11 inch panel size
(1 count - 6 8.5x11 pages)

Weather Indicators
single sided 4.25 x 11 inch (1 count)

Time record Chart
single sided 4.25 x 11 inch (1 count)

Rules (bound in magazine)
eight (8) 8.5 x 11 inch pages containing eighteen (18) modules.

Not provided but required for play.
one (1) copy of The Avalon Hill Game Company Limited Blitzkrieg Game

Commentary:

The Blitzkrieg Module System was essentially a play test kit for the forthcoming Strategy I by SPI. It took an existing commercially available wargame and provided an enhanced counter mix and rule extensions which were meant to move Blitzkrieg from a mere game to something approaching a simulation.

The most fundamental change to the game as published was the introduction of naval units and rules (M11) , along with units for the "minor" countries on the board (M18). The addition of large quantities of low value infantry units for the "original" two sides allowed players to explore the dynamics of conflict between balanced mechanized forces and basic large infantry armies (M8).

In addition to the items mentioned above, the modules added:

Units and rules for guerilla forces. M15
Units and rules for Railroad movement. M7
Rules for fluid ZOC for motor/mech units. M1 M2 M3
Rules and counters for unit production and production costs. M9
Rules and counters for air bases and flak. M12 M13
Rules for weather. M14
Rules for variable victory conditions and scenarios. M17
Rules for variable stacking limits by unit class. M5
Rules for modified combat results. M4
Rules for advanced supply and supply expenditure. M10
Rules for specific artillery effects and limitations. M16

As any or all of the modules could be added to or substituted for the basic Blitzkrieg rules a play analysis is pointless. However, without question the module added considerable play value to the original game. For an example, the provision of the minor country units permitted one to play out "brush fire" wars. The major players (Big Blue - renamed Azurnerreich and Great Red - renamed Krasnynorad [I wonder if the boys in Colorado ever heard that one]) feed their clients with just enough support to prevent collapse but never enough to kick in the door.

The Naval rules were remarkable for their simplicity and their dramatic effect on play. Naval units consisted of Task Force (TF) units, LST units and MST units. TF could carry up to three (3) factors of TAC or FTR air and one (1) factor of ranger ground units. MST could lift ground units whose combat factors did not exceed the lift limit displayed on the counter. LST's could not provide sea lift but could provide shore assault landing facilities up to the limits printed on their counters.

The air rules and missions were extensively enhanced.

An interesting option was presented under the production module was a rule requiring players to pay their opponent the production point cost of any friendly units lost in combat in cents (I guess that today's equivalent would be dimes). The idea being to make one feel the "cost" of a failed campaign in terms that one could relate to.

The Blitzkrieg Module System is old and long out of print. It is

based on a game that is itself even older but only comparatively recently out of print. There are without doubt more innovative and graphically pleasing offerings for conflict board gamers. However, the BMS holds a special place in my collection for both historical and sentimental reasons. If you own Blitzkrieg then the BMS is well worth owning in its own right.

Oh, by the way, I paid the princely sum of \$8.50 CAD at Wolco for Blitzkrieg (the price sticker is still on the box) and another \$4.00 USD directly to SPI for the S&T issue with the Blitzkrieg module system. The only other board wargame that I played nearly as much in my life is SPI's War in Europe, and that set me back \$40.00 USD at a time when I was earning the sum of \$6.27 CAD per day in the Navy. All in all, it was a really good deal.

Regards,

Jim

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