

The Kamfpanzer Plot

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I've played two versions of *Kamfpanzer* (Ba in- Tsagan Hill and Flavion) with the experimental simultaneous movement and I can say it's the most beautiful idea you've ever come up with. Advantages: realism, speed, simplicity, and excitement. It can be very complex without detracting from playability. Most playable game I've ever seen. We, Ed Reinhart and I, have tried both versions of the movement sheet and offer the following comments/suggestions to other players:

Get clear photocopies made of the plotting chart and plastic-coat both these copies and the original hex-sheet chart. Use china markers or grease pencils and tissue paper. It is impossible to use the hex sheet to plot movement in detail, so use the hex sheet and grease pencils to mark your positions and rough out your tactics for the next move. Then use the plotting chart to write down the specific moves. At the end of each turn, erase and start over. After a few moves you will find each movement turn taking as little as ten or fifteen minutes to plot and execute no matter how complicated. Another advantage is that if you must stop in mid-game, you can chart your positions on the plastic hex sheet and come back to the game at any time in the future without having to keep one corner of the room set up with the game board.

Some changes were made in the movement codes for simplicity; condensation and practice have shown them to be beneficial:

On the mapboard the direction indicator was recoded as follows:

A: N (North), 2: NE, 3: SE, 4: S, S: SW, 6: NW.

Incidentally, before plasticizing your hex sheet, mark with magic marker the hills, forests, roads, and streams, and label as they appear on the map. This will make planning much easier. You might want to make extra copies of the virgin hex sheet first so you can adapt other games to this simultaneous movement style.

The movement/firing codes were changed as follows:

Action	Code
Direct non-H Fire	DF
Tight Pattern H Fire	TF
Loose Pattern H Fire	LF
Opportunity Fire	OF
Overrun	OV
Embark	EM
Debark	DK

These codes are easier to remember and apply than the straight alphabetic codes.

Plots are written as shown in the rules, except that each section is separated from the next by a comma. Put an X at the end of a completed sequence so you can be sure what has been finished. When a man is panicked, draw a line through his plot and put a large P in a circle. Make sure you don't let your competition know which of your men have panic movement instead of plotted movement, so as to make it harder for him to anticipate your plan of action. Of course this forces you to trust your opponent to panic and plan panic-induced movement honestly, so you can only keep panic movement secret if you trust your gaming partner.

An example of the new plotting

symbolism follows:

UNIT	PLOT
#145	N4,SE3,N8 x
#94	OF (N)
#104	DF 145 (or) DF 2218x
#114	S5, SW4,S2 x P: N5 x

Explanation: #14S went North 4, Southeast 3, then North 8. End of move.

#94 Opportunity fired due north to the limit of its range;

#104 made direct fire against enemy unit #145, or you can write that he made direct fire against hex #2218, whichever is easier to write.

#114 was charted to move South 5, Southwest 4, and South 2 and stop, but was panicked. New move: North S.

If you mischart you must follow your chart as far as possible, stopping when it is no longer possible to move legally. For instance, if you miscounted a stream, in' actual movement you'll find yourself stopping one or two hexes sooner than you had planned, depending on how much you undercounted. If you charted a direct fire at a specific hex and it was not the hex you meant, tough. You fired at that hex. If that hex had one of your own men in it, also tough - you fired on your own man, with all the consequences that implies. If you charted two men to move one after the other, one was miscalculated and forced to stop earlier than planned, the other cannot move through him. He must stop at the last legal hex behind him. If you charted a completely illegal move, you cannot move at all.

A panicked man charted to

move, moves by the panicked plot instead. All other men *not charted to move* simply don't do anything - neither move nor fire. A man charted to just sit there continues to just sit there. Another clarification: a man sitting on a town half-hex or woods half-hex can be fired upon by anyone he has free field to fire upon. You cannot shoot along a line of side-by-side woods-edge, hexes through more than one woods hex (i.e., if you are on 0625 you cannot fire at a man on hex 0621, nor he at you).

Sometimes it is easier to chart out your movement in shorthand. For instance, you are on road hex #2819. You want to go down the road. You'll be there the rest of your life charting out the switchbacks of that section of road, so just write "South on road to hex 2127" (In code: S on road to 2127)

Keep in mind that a 15-hex man moves three times faster than a 5-hex man. If they look like they're going to intersect, move the 15-hex man three hexes and the 5-hex man one, then the 15-hex man three more hexes and the 5-hex man one, etc., to see if they intersect. This applies also if the 15-hex man is only moving ten movement points. This is where moving a man a certain number of hexes, then charting him to stop for a certain number of hexes and resume movement afterwards becomes significant.

A word on tactics.

First a few obvious remarks:

Your enemy is not standing still. He is moving or firing simultaneously. If you plot movement for man who is obviously going to be fired upon, he is probably going to be pinned and not be able to move. For unknown reasons, some players find it difficult to keep these self-evident truths in mind when plotting their movements and fire plans. Plan your moves so you dodge his fields of fire or at least dodge the most obvious opportunity fire lines he is likely to lay. If your

man is in a position where he is surely going to be fired upon, don't chart movement - instead, fire back - or fire at something - but fire. Charted movement would be just a waste of time. If you have to go plowing through fields of opportunity fire, send your expendable men first and plot the others around them so they don't get in your way.

Remember the panic table: it can kill you. If you are shooting at a man you *must* put out of action, assign a couple of units to fire at him, a couple of units arranged so that if one is panicked, the other won't be and can still fire.

Another thing: never, ever, forget the victory conditions. They can force your enemy to do suicidal things he would never do in real life because he knows the victory conditions, and he'll win the game even though you slaughter him. And the victory conditions, remembered by you but ignored by your opponent, can allow you to do some weird -things to pull the game out of the fire. In the Flavion game, the French are assigned to, Town 1. and the Germans enter from the north edge of the map. The French immediately spread out to the woods and hills on the east and west sides of the map near the town, and the Germans waste some time moosing around in the woods and trying to inch past the opposition. Around about the sixth turn of the game, the French and the defensively inferior Germans had knocked off two or three units and disrupted two or three more. At this point, the Germans, in a dense mass at the west-central portion of the board out of range of Town 1, are assaulted by a suicidal attack from eight French units from Town I and Hill 1. Of course the Germans eventually decimate them and easily exit more than their required 11 units off the south edge of the board, but not before the French have knocked off ten German units - thus winning the game just

when the Germans thought they had it in the palm of their hand.

On entrenchments: we ignored the stated rule. that entrenchments abandoned simply cease to exist, and substituted as follows: entrenchments remain and can be abandoned and retaken by both sides. However, entrenchments attacked *from the rear* or *from the side* are reduced in defensive effectiveness from four to only one. For this purpose it is important that the player placing entrenchments place them *facing* a certain direction.

Note the ineffectuality of the infantry units in the game; having no close assault capabilities, they are able only to attack one another, artillery units, get in the way of attacks, and sustain damages. Is this realistic?

-Michael McCarthy