

WORLD WAR II

A Campaign Game for WAR Rules
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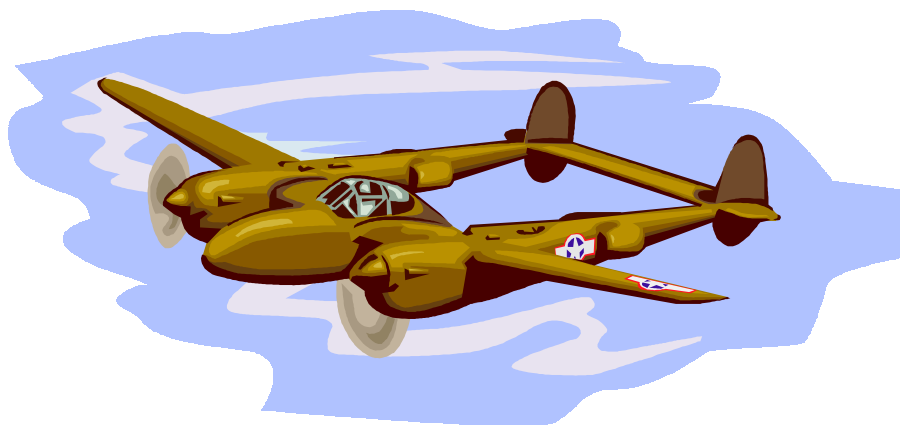


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface: designer's notes, what's new
Character Creation: attributes, experience, typical NPCs
Scaling System: weapon and armor sizes, scale table
Action Resolution: tasks, initiative, attacking, defending
Damage: what it means, autofire, explosions, special cases
Healing: first aid, surgery, natural recovery
Vehicles: special rules, sample vehicles, enormous vehicles
Movement: speed class table, chase & combat rules
Optional Rules: task modifiers, ammo bookkeeping, speed rules
Sample NPCs: The Guns of Navarone, The Eagle Has Landed

PREFACE

This was supposed to be one of those quick and dirty one-page systems floating around the Net. I don't really know how it ended up as an actual game. A very simple game, yes, but much more complex than I intended. And I didn't want to leave out all the neat stuff I had come up with.

WWII is not a very detailed game, nor was it ever meant to be that way. What I've tried to

create is a system which allows for easy conversion from any of the published games out there. At low attribute levels the game is rather deadly, while high-level characters can do some very cinematic things and survive. But whatever the power level, there is not much bookkeeping, even for vehicles. West End Games' STAR WARS RPG is complex compared to this.

Anyway, I hope you like this, at least a little bit. The game is so open-ended that anything can be added without violating the basic principles. Rules for other genres than WWII can easily be extrapolated from the present ones.

BTW, you can of course freely spread this game around as long as you include the small copyright notice above and do not change the contents in any way. And if someone wants to pay for this... you know my e-mail address.

What's New

WWII is based on my generic science fiction RPG known as WAR. This version incorporates all of the refinements made after the initial release of the original rules. There are also some additions, which were not included in the last released version (1.3). Some things have been left out because they do not belong in a WWII game. This file does not include equipment or vehicle lists. They will be available separately.

CHARACTER CREATION

Every character has three attributes: Ability, Skill and Luck. They are rated on a 1-6 scale. Ability covers all natural abilities like strength, stamina and perception. Skill covers all areas of training like melee combat, radar operation and aircraft piloting. Luck is resorted to when the other two cannot help anymore. It measures how often random events turn out into your favor. It is also your "defense" attribute.

Skill, however, is somewhat different from the other two attributes. It measures all aspects of the character's training, as mentioned, but it is not an accurate measure of the skills he's unfamiliar with. For example, soldiers would know about firearms, close combat, battlefield first aid and the like. They are less familiar with fighter piloting or nuclear physics. For these unfamiliar aspects, character's Skill is halved, rounding down. This might be recorded as "Familiar/Unfamiliar" on the character record. See Examples, below.

A beginning character has seven points to divide between the three attributes. At least one point must be put into each of them. Six is the maximum natural limit for all attributes. If the GM wants to run some cinematic, very dangerous scenarios, he might want to give 10 points to starting characters.

Each character also gets some equipment. This depends entirely on the Game Master and the scenario he is planning to run. In this game most equipment is combat-oriented.

Attributes can be improved by experience. A character gets one experience point from each adventure he successfully completes. When he has collected X+1 points (X is the attribute he wants to raise), he can spend the points and the attribute goes up by one. If the GM wants to, he can decide to award 2 experience points for a long, arduous adventure that was successful beyond the call of duty. This cuts both ways: if someone really messes up, the GM may leave him without even a single point. This may also happen if the adventure was very easy and/or short.

Examples: Sergeant Ray Blues is a combat-hardened veteran. His attributes are: Ability 3, Skill 4 and Luck 3. Normal people without any training usually have attributes of 1. Soldiers fresh from training, police officers and the like have attributes of 2. Veteran fighters have attributes of 3 or higher.

Sgt. Blues has been a Marine longer than he can remember. During that time he has become familiar with most forms of man-portable death and destruction. He's also pretty good at unarmed combat and driving various wheeled vehicles. Sarge has never piloted a P-38 Lightning, and wouldn't want to try it anyway. He was also asleep during the first aid training, so he usually tries to get a good medic in his squad. Sgt. Blues's Skill could be recorded as 4/2.

Normal civilians ("no-shoot targets", as Sarge calls them) have Skill of 1 from the military point of view. However, they might be reasonably adept at whatever they do to pay the bills. Thus, while their Skill might be recorded as 2/1, they only get in the way in a firefight. This means that for the purposes of a typical combat scenario, their Skill would be recorded as 1, since it really doesn't matter whether you are a clerk or a CEO if you just have to run away from anything remotely resembling danger.

SCALING SYSTEM

All weapons and armor in the game belong to one of three size classes; Small, Big or Huge. The classes are a combination of actual size and offensive/defensive capability. A list of examples follows; more info on heavy weapons can be found in chapter 5.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| ARMOR: | Small: Helmets, flak vests and other body armor |
| | Big: Unarmored vehicles and light structures |
| | Huge: Armored vehicles, bunkers and other fortifications |
| MELEE WEAPONS: | Small: Melee weapons |
| | Big: Vehicle collisions |
| | Huge: Overkills (being run over by a tank etc.) |
| GUNS: | Small: Handguns |
| | Big: Rifles, shotguns and small cannons (20-50mm) |
| | Huge: Bazookas, tank guns and artillery |
| AUTOGUNS: | Small: Submachine guns |
| | Big: Automatic rifles, machine guns and autocannons |
| | Huge: WWII era had no real Huge Autoguns |

The scale division has a simple meaning. Weapons cannot damage armors which are of bigger scale, and they do extra damage to smaller scale armor. There is one exception to this rule: people with NO weapons can damage people in

SMALL armor, but their attacks are less effective. The effects are summarized in the following table:

| | NO weapon | SMALL weapon | BIG weapon | HUGE weapon |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| NO armor | n | +1 | 2x | a |
| SMALL armor | 1/2 | n | +1 | a |
| BIG armor | - | - | n | a |
| HUGE armor | - | - | - | n |

Legend:

-: no damage

1/2: half damage, round down

n: normal damage

+1: one extra point of damage

2x: double damage

a: automatic kill on any hit

Examples: Sergeant Blues is a Marine. As such he usually has with him a M1A1 Thompson SMG (Small autogun), his beloved .45 Colt Peacemaker revolver (Small gun) and a standard-issue flak vest & helmet (Small armor).

Sarge knows that his armor will help him to take hits from fragments and small-caliber bullets. However, it does not make him invincible. If he is shot at with rifles, he starts looking for cover. If he is attacked with Huge weapons, he calls for artillery support.

ACTION RESOLUTION

All attribute checks are done in the following way: Roll one six-sided die. Subtract the result from your attribute and add one. If the result is more than zero you have succeeded, and the bigger the result the better the final outcome. The next few paragraphs give more guidelines for specific situations.

Difficulty Modifiers: Since the game uses a six-sided die, even a modifier of one becomes very important. Thus the following rule: No matter how easy or difficult the task at hand is, the modifier can never exceed +1/-1. Since the original WAR rules had no task difficulty modifiers of any kind, these are explained in "Optional Rules" below.

Initiative: The GM should use individual initiative in combats that have only a small number of participants. First everyone rolls an Ability check. If the result is positive, he should

remember or write down the number. If the check fails, that character is hesitating this round. He cannot take offensive actions, unless he is first attacked, in which case he can try to shoot back. All characters who succeeded in their initiative checks can act as they wish, from the highest result to the lowest. Ties are not rerolled, unless there is a direct conflict (that is, who gets to shoot first). A failed check can be rerolled each turn until it succeeds. Positive results stay in effect until the fight ends.

Group Initiative: When both sides have more than 10 combatants, it can be very time-consuming to roll initiative for every one of them. For these situations there is an alternative initiative system. At least one man on each side must be chosen to be a team leader. The team leader rolls initiative for all people in his command. In order to do this, he must be able to communicate with his troops and be aware of the tactical situation (i.e. he cannot hide in a bunker). If the leader hesitates, all his men follow suit. If a leader is incapacitated, it will take 1D6 rounds to replace him with another one, unless he already had a successor ready. When the unit has no leader, it hesitates automatically. Note: This system is only meant to be used with squads of 10 men or so. Company commanders do not roll initiative for their entire force.

Attacking: Roll a Skill check. The result tells you how many points of damage you inflict on the target; i.e. 0 or less means you missed. The GM decides whether the target is in range, and if there will be any modifiers. See the scale table for possible multipliers. See also "Damage" for additional rules. BTW, this game doesn't count ammo, except for some easily counted items like hand grenades. If you really want to, see the chapter "Optional Rules".

Defending: Roll a Luck check. The result tells you how many points you can subtract from the damage done to you. However, Luck doesn't help if someone hits you with a big enough weapon to cause Autokill.

All other checks follow the same rules. In a competitive situation, like arm-wrestling, whoever gets a better result wins. A tie means that the situation doesn't change.

Examples: Sgt. Ray Blues is guarding the camp during an extended operation. Suddenly he thinks he hears some noise from the surrounding jungle. He rolls a listening (Ability) check; the enemy patrol rolls sneaking (Skill) rolls. If he gets a bigger result than any of the Japs, he has heard all of them etc.

Luck is with the enemies and they manage to get very close to the camp before Sgt. Blues notices them. Everyone rolls Initiative. Sarge gets 3; the enemies get various numbers from 2 to -2. He grabs his trusty Thompson and opens fire at the five-man patrol.

Sarge has a Skill of 4. He rolls a 2, thus the final result is 3. Luckily all enemies are wearing no armor, which means that he does one extra point of damage (see scale table, above). He had decided to shoot multiple (his limit is five, but the GM rules he cannot hit them all) targets, and thus Sarge hits a total of 4 targets for 4 points of damage. This is sufficient to kill all four enemies hit (their Luck rolls fail miserably).

However, he missed one man. The enemy points his Arisaka rifle (Big) at Sarge's general direction and squeezes the trigger. He hits and does 2 points of damage. Sgt. Blues has Small armor, so one extra point is added. Sarge has a Luck of 3. He rolls 2, so he avoided only two points. The last point gets through. Sarge grits his teeth when the slug glances his chest causing a rib to break. Then he ventilates the Jap with a hail of .45 hardballs.

DAMAGE

The Attack check tells you the base number of damage points. In addition to scale, some special cases can modify this. Damage is either lethal (most weapons) or non-lethal. The latter class includes unarmed attacks and blunt melee weapons. However, all Huge attacks are always lethal.

Autofire: All autoguns cause one additional point of damage if they hit. This is added before any scale multiplication is made. Or, they can hit multiple targets with one burst. The GM decides how many targets can be hit; then the attacker makes a normal check. If successful, he hits them all for the same damage. The attacker must choose either added damage or multiple targets. He cannot have both. The choice must be done before rolling. Note: a character cannot hit more targets than Skill+1, unless he's firing into a massed crowd. Then he will hit Skill+1D6 (if he uses a Small autogun) or Skill+2D6 (if he has a Big gun) targets. This reflects the fact that powerful rifle rounds often penetrate and hit multiple targets.

Shotguns: If a shotgun is loaded with slug ammunition, follow the normal rules. If buckshot is used, treat any armor as one scale

level bigger for the purposes of stopping the attack. If any damage gets through, one point is added to it after all other modifications are made.

Explosions: If the GM rules that an explosive round or hand grenade could affect multiple targets, the same amount of damage is inflicted on each of them. There are a couple of modifiers to this. People who are in good cover take only half damage, rounded down. Also, people who are beyond half range of the blast take half damage, rounded up. These modifiers are cumulative. The following chart lists some modern examples. Note that Huge non-armor-piercing explosions do not affect vehicles with Huge armor. You cannot order a 155mm HE barrage to clear out a tank platoon, that's what HEAT shells are for.

| Type Of Explosion | Area Of Effect (Damage Level) |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Fragmentation hand grenade | 25 meters (Small) |
| 81mm mortar (HE shell) | 70 meters (Big) |
| 155mm howitzer (HE shell) | 140 meters (Huge) |
| 500-lb conventional bomb | 200 meters (Huge) |
| 500-lb napalm bomb | 140 meters (Huge) |

Special Cases

There are some weapons which are not as easily classified as guns and normal explosions. This chapter gives some rules for them.

Flame Weapons: Their damage depends on their physical size. Incendiary hand grenades do Small damage, flamethrowers Big and air-dropped fire bombs Huge. However, no flame attack can hurt vehicles which have Huge armor. Flame weapons do the rolled damage for 1D6-1 additional rounds (a result of zero means that the target did not catch fire). The unfortunate target can try to reduce it with a new Luck check every round. Unless, of course, he's hit with a Huge bomb; in that case he'll be burned crisp without any possibility of survival. The above explosion rules apply to flame weapons that have an area effect.

Grenades: Hand grenades do Small damage. There are some armor-piercing models, that do Big damage to the target, but their fragments are still Small (as per Armor-piercing rules, below).

Gas Attacks: Gas does the rolled damage (depending on type) every round the character is in the cloud, and for 1D3 rounds after that. Gas attacks are resisted as any other attack, but normal armor is of no use. A makeshift protection (wet rags etc.) equals Small armor, a real gas

mask Big armor and a full-body protection suit Huge armor. Note that the damage class of any gas only depends on its lethality and not the size of the cloud.

Armor-Piercing Rounds: They do a great deal of damage to the target, but the secondary blast is usually less lethal. Thus all HEAT rounds and the like do one level less damage to surrounding targets. Their blast radius is also rather short. For example, a bazooka rocket can penetrate Huge tank armor (on a good day), but its secondary blast radius is very short and the fragments do only Big damage. Note that many Big cannons can be loaded with AP rounds that can penetrate Huge armor. (This rule reflects the fact that any anti-tank guns were smaller than 50mm, especially in the beginning of the war.)

Mines: They obviously only do damage if stepped on. Antipersonnel mines do Small damage and antitank mines do Huge damage (a human does not set them off... usually). Booby traps vary between Small (most often), Big (better ones) and Huge (usually quite bulky devices). The GM will determine the damage level as he sees fit. The same goes for explosive charges.

Effects of Damage

The final amount of damage is subtracted from the target's Ability. If it goes to zero, the target falls unconscious. If it drops below zero, the target is dead and beyond help. Note that the damage suffered reduces Ability for any checks made. People who fall unconscious from lethal wounds bleed to death in 2D6x10 minutes.

Non-lethal attacks that reduce the target's Ability below zero do not kill him. His Ability only drops to zero and he falls unconscious. If the attacker wants to do lethal damage using a non-lethal weapon, it is possible, but the target must be unarmored and the attacker must specifically declare his intentions before rolling. Some non-lethal attacks are incapable of doing lethal damage.

HEALING

First Aid: One damage point is a serious wound. Scratches are not calculated at all. Thus a first aid Skill check can only heal one point of damage, no matter how good a result is rolled. It also stops any bleeding. A first aid check takes 15 minutes, whether it succeeds

or not. A failed check cannot be rerolled; surgery is required. All first aid checks require some kind of equipment.

In the case of non-lethal damage, a first aid check heals the first point in 5 minutes. This means that an unconscious patient wakes up at the end of the treatment. However, it does not speed up the further recovery.

Surgery: If the character is in a hospital, battlefield ambulance or something similar, the healing check can cure as many points of damage as the character has taken. However, this takes 30 minutes per point healed. In addition to this, the patient must rest for 2D6 days or the wounds might reopen. If he stresses himself before that time has passed, roll a 1D6. If the result is equal to/smaller than the number of days he "skipped", the wounds begin to bleed again. The new operation takes half the original time and adds 1D6 days to the recovery time.

A failed surgery check can have drastic consequences. It can be rolled again, but only if the patient hasn't bled to death during the first attempt (which is very likely if his Ability was reduced to zero). If the first check is successful, the patient does not die even if he would have bled to death during the time spent. Blood transfusions and the like keep him alive.

Natural Recovery: Non-lethal damage heals one point every 15 minutes. Lethal damage is far more serious. It will not heal unless treated. A character who has received surgery heals as described above. If for some reason the character only receives first aid, the recovery will take much longer. A new first aid check can be made every 1D6+2 days. If successful, another point is healed. If not, the time has been wasted. During the recovery time the patient must rest. If he exercises himself, he must roll a Luck check. A failure means that the whole process must start from scratch: all points healed, except the one gained from the initial check, are lost. On a successful result the wounds are healed enough for him to function normally (with the reduced Ability, of course). The healing process can be continued when desired.

Examples: After the brief firefight everyone wakes up. Sarge explains what happened and then goes to see the medic. Corporal Roberts asks him to take off his vest and jacket, and tries to tend his wounds to the best of his ability. He has a Skill of 3. He just barely succeeds on a roll of 3; thus he has healed that one point of damage. (The rib is still broken, but the bandaging has set it properly and it will not bother Sarge too much. Besides, the morphine Roberts injected makes Sarge think he's 18 again.)

Some time later, Sarge gets himself into a barroom brawl. He is victorious, but in the process receives 2 points of non-lethal damage from fists, kicks and thrown items. He staggers out of the bar, wishing that Corporal Roberts would be by his side. Since he isn't, it will take 30 minutes until Sgt. Blues has fully recovered. The cold water he pours upon his head is not sufficient to speed up healing.

One week after the brawl, Sarge's squad is ambushed during a jungle patrol. A lone sniper manages to hit two of his men before Sgt. Blues throws a grenade into his hideout. Corporal Roberts rushes to aid the private who is lying in a rapidly expanding pool of blood. His check is successful, and the man's condition is stabilized. At the same time Sarge is attending to the other wounded man. He fails his first aid roll and the soldier doesn't feel any better. However, since his Ability wasn't reduced to zero, he's in no danger. After Cpl. Roberts has finished, they construct makeshift stretchers to carry the unconscious man. The other one can walk without help. The trip back is very taxing, but they do not encounter further enemies, and finally the wounded are delivered to the base hospital.

The more seriously wounded man, Pvt. McKenzie, is operated. It takes 60 minutes, and after that he must rest for 8 days. The other operation also goes well, and Private Salazar is back in shape after 6 days. They know better than to hop around during the recovery.

VEHICLES

There were many different kinds of vehicles on the battlefields of WWII. These simple rules try to cover all possible types, from cars to tanks, aircraft and battleships.

Every vehicle has the same attributes as the character piloting it. Thus a tank can take more damage if it has a more experienced driver. (This rule follows movie reality very accurately.) If there are more than one crew members, for example a pilot and a gunner, each respective character determines the attributes concerning him/her. A pilot would determine speed Ability, damage points Ability and of course piloting Skill. A gunner would determine weapon Skills, and so on.

Vehicles often have multiple weapons of a same type. If these are linked together, so that they can be used to attack the same target,

add one extra point of damage for each multiple (2, 4, 8...) of barrels. Thus a tailgunner of B-29, using twin .50 caliber machine guns, would add one point of damage if he hits. And if an low-class battleship aims all nine of its 16-inch guns at the same target, it would do three extra point of damage on a successful hit. (Since the guns already do Huge damage, this is a ridiculous overkill for most targets.)

Vehicles take damage just like people. When a vehicle has lost all of its damage points, it is a useless piece of (repairable) junk. Cars will stop, ships start to sink and planes start to lose altitude. If the points drop below zero, the vehicle is permanently destroyed. Any damage beyond zero is also inflicted on every character inside, though they can reduce it with a normal Luck roll.

If a vehicle is destroyed with an autokill result, every passenger takes 1D6 points of damage (rolled separately for each person or small group). This can be reduced with the normal Luck roll as well. Crash damage is determined by the GM; it varies from Small (low-speed car crash) to Huge (failed emergency landing). Bad enough crashes can be considered to be autokills even if the vehicle has Huge armor (a tank falls off a mountain).

Also, every time a vehicle takes more than one point of damage, it must roll a Luck check. Failure means that one random system was put out of action. Each vehicle will list the systems it has; GMs will determine them for new types. Most combat vehicles will have a radio. Other possibilities are radar, sonar and targeting systems. The last are mainly used in naval vessels, which have to engage targets beyond line-of-sight.

Vehicle's weapons are also systems that can be destroyed, as are its crew members. Each time a crew member suffers a random hit, he takes 1D6 points of damage, modified by weapon & armor scale as usual. Thus there are basically three systems for damage purposes: electronics, weapons and crew members. Each time a random system is damaged, roll 1D6. 1-2 means electronics, 3-4 weapons and 5-6 crew. In each case determine randomly which subsystem was hit. If there are multiple subsystems in the same place (like weapons in a turret, or crew in a cockpit), all systems of the same kind are affected if the attack uses explosive ammo.

Vehicles can be repaired "on the fly" or in a repair shop. The mechanic rolls a Skill check. A success means that one point is repaired in one hour. The mechanic needs equipment and parts to make this check. In a well-equipped repair shop there is no limit for the maximum amount of damage fixed

on a roll, though every point repaired takes two hours. The mechanic must keep rolling until the combined results are enough to fix all points of damage. Failed tries take 2D6 hours.

Here are some examples of possible vehicles. For an explanation of the "Speed" figure, see "Movement", below.

Example 1: Automobile

Big Armor
Crew: Driver + 4 passengers
Speed: 3 (varies)
Cargo: Whatever fits in the trunk
Systems: None

Example 2: Panzerkampfwagen IV (a German tank)

Huge Armor
Huge 75mm gun
Big machine guns (2)
Crew: 5
Speed: 2 (38 km/h)
Cargo: Not much, unless you strap it outside
Systems: Radio

Example 3: Messerschmitt Bf 109G (a German fighter plane)

Big Armor
Big 20mm autocannons (3)
Big 13mm machine guns (2)
Crew: 1
Speed: 5 (689 km/h)
Cargo: None
Systems: Radio

Example 4: Boeing B-29 Superfortress (a US bomber)

Big armor
Big machine guns (5 turrets with 2 guns each)
Huge bombs (variable load)
Crew: 11
Speed: 5 (573 km/h)
Cargo: If you leave the bombs out, there is plenty of room
Systems: Radio, bomb sight

Example 5: S 26 (a German torpedo boat)

Big armor
Huge torpedo tubes (2)
Big 40mm gun
Assorted Big machine guns
Crew: 30
Speed: 3 (39 knots = about 70 km/h)
Cargo: Not a lot
Systems: Radio

Enormous Vehicles

This chapter tries to give some guidelines for using really big vehicles like cruisers and battleships. They are rarely needed in typical scenarios, but every now and then the GM might get ambitious and decide to re-run the battle of Midway.

What exactly are enormous vehicles? Well, they are never ground vehicles or aircraft. In sci-fi worlds they might be both, but not in WWII. However, any water vessels which are not called "boats" are enormous vehicles. Thus the largest warships using normal rules are the various patrol and torpedo boats. They usually have crews of less than 50 and displacement of around 100 tons.

Vehicles of this size have a number of advantages. One of them is the ability to attack multiple targets if and when they have multiple weapon systems and gunners for all of them. For example, an Iowa class battleship might attack at least three targets simultaneously, since it has three gun towers. Though in practice that rarely happened. The large number of weapons also means that a hit that destroys one of them only reduces offensive capability a little. Secondly, all enormous vehicles have Huge armor simply because they are so big. No-one can sink a ship with a rifle.

These vehicles also take less damage from attacks. Each successful attack does only half damage, rounded up. This is calculated after the Luck check for damage reduction. This reflects the fact that enormous vehicles simply can absorb more punishment. It took a lot of hits to sink Bismarck.

The GM will likely have a hard time determining which crew members determine which attributes. That is the price of using vehicles of this size. Of course he can follow the Star Fleet logic and say that a few key people determine the fate of a huge ship...

Example 6: English Battle Cruiser "Hood"

Huge armor
Huge 380mm guns (8)
Huge 140mm guns (6)
Huge 102mm guns (14)
Huge torpedo tubes (4)
Numerous anti-aircraft weapons
Crew: 1341
Speed: 2 (31 knots = about 55 km/h)
Cargo: Loads of food, water, ammo etc.
Systems: Radios, radar, fire control

Example 7: Schiff 16/Atlantis (German converted cargo ship)

Huge armor
Huge 150mm guns (6)
Huge 75mm gun
Huge torpedo tubes (4)
Anti-aircraft machine guns
Crew: 350
Speed: 2 (16 knots = about 30 km/h)
Cargo: Lots
Systems: Radios, fire control

Even Bigger Vehicles and Weapons

The title refers to those few things that are beyond the scope of these rules. The best example is the Death Star from Star Wars. It is simply too big to be destroyed with normal weapons. The GM needs to determine, which (if any) vehicles in his universe are this big. He also needs to think up possible ways to destroy them (like that small exhaust port...). The players will someday want to try it. In WWII there were not any vehicles of this size, but you can of course change history and introduce mobile islands or something else...

There are also weapons which do such a massive amount of damage that rules are unnecessary. Death Star's planet-destroying beam is a good example. More common are the various nuclear weapons. The GM will have to determine their effects as he sees fit. Death Star could probably survive quite a few nuke hits. Most other things cannot.

MOVEMENT

All movement is handled in very abstractly. The vehicle's (that is, its pilot's) Ability determines its speed relative to other vehicles of same speed class. A vehicle with a better speed class can literally run circles around the slower one. Here is the speed class table:

- 1: People on foot
- 2: Slow ground vehicles (tanks, heavy trucks), boats and ships
- 3: Fast ground vehicles (most cars), fast boats: around 40 knots
- 4: Slow airplanes (cargo planes, bombers)
- 5: Fast planes: over 500 km/h (fighters, some bombers)

In a chase or similar situation where speed becomes important, vehicles of same class roll an Ability check. The winner can choose the relative position of the vehicles involved (i.e.

side by side, one leaves the other in its dust, one catches up with the other and so on). In a straight, non-combat chase vehicles of faster speed class will always leave the slower ones behind. They don't have to roll at all. Also see "Optional Rules".

Sometimes vehicular combat will require maneuver rolls to see who is in better position. In this case, the speed alone doesn't determine the outcome, since the faster vehicle must slow down a bit if he wants to hit the slower one. All pilots involved must roll a Skill check. The result, if positive, is multiplied with the vehicle's speed class. Whoever gets the best result is in the best firing position. Thus faster vehicles have the advantage, but sometimes the slower ones will beat the odds and be the first to fire.

Note also that this check takes the place of the normal initiative check. Maneuver rolls are made each round, and in some cases losing the initiative can mean that the losing vehicle cannot shoot at all during the round. For example, not many fighters have rear-mounted weapons. With tanks and other vehicles that have a 360-degree field of fire, losing the maneuvering only means the loss of initiative (which, of course, can be fatal too).

People are also considered "vehicles" for the purposes of this maneuver roll. It is used instead of normal initiative, if both men and vehicles are involved in the same fight. Note that humans still use their Ability, not Skill.

Examples: Two fighters are in a dogfight. Both pilots have attributes of 4. The first rolls 3, the second one -1. The first pilot completes a nice scissors maneuver and is now in a perfect six o'clock position behind the other plane. He triggers his machine guns and smiles when the enemy catches fire and begins to dive.

Our old friend, Sgt. Blues has gotten himself between rock and a hard place. His USMC squad is down to three men, and the enemy is regrouping for the final attack. As if that wasn't enough, his eyes detect an approaching Aichi, which obviously has some ammo to spare for the remnants of his squad. It drops close to earth and prepares to pepper the Americans with bullets.

Sgt. Blues has been a Marine too long to give up. He jumps behind their only Browning machine gun and turns it to face the attack. His "maneuver roll" results in 3. The enemy pilot is a bit too certain of his kill: his roll is -1, and since it is negative, it is not multiplied by his vehicle's speed class. Sarge holds the trigger down, aiming the fire with tracers; he sighs in relief when the burst connects and the plane is transformed into a large fireball.

OPTIONAL RULES

Task Modifiers

As explained above, the original WAR rules had no task modifiers at all. I have since had second thoughts, and thus they are now an optional rule, though recommended. In any case, they are so simple that they will not slow the game down, unless you are counting seconds.

Most tasks are average, or enough so for using the standard roll. However, there are some very easy or difficult tasks, like hitting a target from bench rest when you have time to aim, or alternatively flying a P-51 Mustang in a narrow canyon. In these situations the GM may tell the player to use a +1/-1 modifier to his roll. Note: in this game the negative modifier means an easier task.

Ammo Bookkeeping

The original WAR also had no rules for keeping track of ammo. You were supposed to reload during dramatic pauses. Since many WWII era firearms had small magazine capacities, I decided to add some simple rules for this purpose.

The most realistic way of doing this is naturally to count every round fired. This, however, soon becomes a real pain in the butt if there are more than a few combatants. Plus, with fully automatic weapons it is also rather difficult. So I advise you to forget it.

Instead, I suggest the following: Every round when your character shoots his gun, no matter how many times, write down one mark. Whenever the GM feels like it, he can yell: "Ammo check!" Then everyone who has used his weapon must roll a 1D6. If the result is lower than the number of marks written down, your gun is empty and you must spend one round reloading it. The same mechanism can be used for all kinds of firearms, but to be realistic it has to take into account the larger magazine capacities of SMGs, machine guns etc. The following table lists all modifiers you will need.

| Weapon Type | Capacity | Modifier |
|-------------|----------|----------|
| Single shot | 1-10 | None |
| Single shot | Over 10 | /2 |
| Full auto | Under 50 | None |
| Full auto | 50-99 | /2 |
| Full auto | 100-199 | /3 |
| Full auto | 200+ | /5 |

"Single shot" includes all firearms incapable of firing full auto, whether they are revolvers, pistols, bolt-action rifles or shotguns. The modifier is applied to the number of marks you have written down when it is time to make an ammo check, always rounding down. Thus a machine gun with a 250-round belt cannot run dry before the fifth round, and even then only on a roll of 1. If you get lucky and drop more targets than your weapon has bullets, assume that your character managed to reload without spending a whole turn.

This simulates the fact that not all enemies drop from the first hit. It also adds an element of uncertainty. Not all people can keep accurate track of spent ammo when in a heated firefight. (If you are a hero in John Woo's films, there is no need to do it.)

Optional Speed Rules

Because this game puts all vehicles in one of the five speed classes, many vehicles which were in reality very different become equally fast. This is especially true for naval vessels. They move so slowly when compared to most other vehicles that even small speed differences are significant. If the GM wishes, he can use real life top speeds to determine who will win a straightforward chase. In sea especially there are not many obstacles to crash into.

SAMPLE NPCs

The first five NPCs presented here come straight from Alistair MacLean's novel "The Guns of Navarone". IMHO it is one of the greatest classic WWII adventure stories, only rivaled by some of MacLean's other works and those of Jack Higgins. If you want to know why these people were put together, read the book. You will not be disappointed. Do not start with the movie, it is inferior compared to the original.

These NPCs could be used in any campaign set in Europe. However, they are not likely candidates for ordinary missions. As you can see by looking at their stats, some of them are probably better than any player characters. If they are used, the

PCs will probably also meet their boss, Captain James Jensen, who runs the long range patrol base in Cairo. He is very good at all forms of espionage, and justifiably famous because of his successes. Jensen is not above sacrificing a few men to save many.

Captain Keith Mallory (Skill 5/2, Ability 4, Luck 4)

Mallory is the greatest mountain climber in New Zealand (and one of the best in the world). He speaks Greek and German like a native. He is an excellent saboteur and a first class organizer. He survived one and a half years behind enemy lines in Crete. He is also a famous long range patrolman, who twice almost captured Rommel.

Lieutenant Andy Stevens (Skill 4/2, Ability 2, Luck 2)

Stevens is an excellent climber and a good boat handler. Because of his university studies, he speaks both ancient and modern Greek fluently. However, he is young and inexperienced.

Corporal Dusty Miller (Skill 4/2, Ability 4, Luck 4)

Miller is an American, who has mined silver in Nevada, built tunnels in Canada and put out oil fires around the world. When Hitler invaded Poland he traveled to England, and after various adventures he became a long range patrolman, who worked behind enemy lines in Libyan desert. Miller is skinny and gutsy. Unlike Mallory and Stevens, he has never climbed a mountain. However, he is a genius with all kinds of explosives, perhaps the best saboteur in Southern Europe. He is also a competent medic. Miller carries a silenced pistol.

Casey Brown (Skill 4/2, Ability 3, Luck 3)

Brown is a short and heavily built man hailing from Scotland. He is an excellent mechanic and guerilla fighter, and good with radios. Brown has been awarded two medals for his exploits in the Special Boat Squadron. He was a NCO of some sort, but the rank is not clearly stated in the Finnish translation, which was my source material.

Andrea (Skill 5/2, Ability 6, Luck 4)

Andrea, who has been a Lieutenant Colonel in the Greek army, is a giant of a man. He appears to be always smiling and full of jokes, but deep inside he still harbors the memory of

his dead family. He was chosen solely because of his combat skills. Andrea is infinitely patient, lightning fast regardless of his bulk and stealthy like a cat. He is a perfect fighting machine, and the group's insurance against failure.

The group had at least the following equipment when they began this mission: old clothes for disguise, food, pressure cooker and its fuel, boots with thick soles, various climbing gear, radio (and loader for its batteries), 2 Schmeisser SMGs, 2 Bren LMGs, 1 Mauser rifle and 1 Colt pistol (no models were specified), flashlights, mirrors, two sets of false ID papers, case full of wine and booze, and finally two cases of explosives (one contained hand grenades, dynamite and fuses, while the other was packed with small mines).

The last two are from the opposite side. They are ripped from Jack Higgins' great novel "The Eagle Has Landed". It portrays a German attempt to assassinate Churchill, which almost succeeded. In this case the movie version is a good watch, but I still prefer the book.

These NPCs can also be used in European campaigns. Liam Devlin may appear almost anywhere, but Kurt Steiner will have to be released before he is available. (In the book Himmler does just that.)

Oberstleutnant Kurt Steiner (Skill 5/2, Ability 4, Luck 5)

Steiner was born in 1916. His father was a German major general, and his mother a daughter of an American businessman. Since he went to school in London for some years, he speaks fluent English. In the army he volunteered for parachute training. When the war started, Steiner fought in Poland and Norway. Belgium and Greece came next. In May 1941 he was badly wounded in the airborne invasion of Crete.

Then Steiner was sent to the Eastern front. As a major he led a special unit, which rescued two besieged divisions near Leningrad. In that battle he was wounded in right leg, which caused a slight limp. Steiner was promoted to lieutenant colonel and sent to Stalingrad. There he lost half of the men in his unit. In January 1943 he and the remaining 167 men were dropped to Kiev to help a surrounded infantry division. The battle turned into a bloody retreat, and after 500 kilometers of fighting he made contact with the German lines in April. Only 30 of his men came back. While returning home, he and his men were arrested in Warsaw because of a conflict with the SS.

Heinrich Himmler characterizes him as "a very intelligent, brave, unscrupulous and excellent soldier - who then threw it all away because of

some little Jew." The surviving members of Steiner's old unit are extremely loyal to him. They are all experienced soldiers, more than a match to almost any unit of similar size.

Liam Devlin (Skill 4/2, Ability 3, Luck 4)

Devlin was born in Northern Ireland in 1908. His father was executed in 1921 for belonging to the IRA. The mother took the son with her and went to work for his brother, who was a Catholic priest in Belfast. This brother arranged for Devlin education. He graduated from Dublin's Trinity College majoring in English literature.

In 1931 Devlin was a first-hand witness to atrocities committed by protestants. They wrecked his uncle's church and beat the old man badly. From that point onwards Devlin was a supporter of the IRA. In 1935, for example, he successfully eliminated a police informer who had escaped to the USA. In 1936 he went to fight in the Spanish Civil War, but was captured by the Italians. He received a life sentence, but the German Abwehr arranged for his release, hoping to organize connections to Ireland. However, they soon found out that although he did not support communism, he was an anti-fascist as well.

Gradually Abwehr lost all hope of getting good contacts in Ireland. As their last act they asked Devlin to parachute to County Meath and to get their best agent, Captain Goertz, out of the country. The operation was doomed from the beginning, since Goertz was already arrested by the Scotland Yard Special Branch. Devlin avoided police for months, but he was finally arrested in June 1942. He escaped from hospital, got on a ship on its way to Lisbon and returned to Germany through Spain. After this event Abwehr put him into the University of Berlin to do translations.

Devlin is barely 170cm tall. He has dark hair, lively blue eyes and a somewhat sarcastic smile. There is a scar on his left temple. He has a strange, some say Irish, sense of humor. He speaks perfect German. Judging from the novel, Devlin is a good brawler and a good shooter. He can drive a motorcycle well. He is probably also quite adept at various shady skills, since he has survived so long.

One final comment: Both of these novels have a sequel. In the first case it is a good adventure, but it ignores some facts in the first book. In the second case, it is a terrific adventure and a great sequel as well.

