



A WORLD AFLAME

Interwar Wargame Rules 1918–39

Paul Eaglestone

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INTRODUCTION

The following rules are written specifically with the years between World War I and World War II in mind, although they could very easily fit either conflict as well. The interwar years are a period that has fast become popular for wargamers looking to move away from games dominated by the carnage of trench warfare or by big tanks of World War II.

The interwar years were a period when many of the military lessons learned by 1918 seemed to be forgotten, almost on purpose, as society turned its back on the carnage and rejected the rational. It was a period that saw the destruction of empires and nations plummet into anarchy. It was a period when the old socio-political order was pushed aside and new ideologies such as Communism or Fascism were adopted.

All very heavy going and enough to put one off a good game of toy soldiers on a wet Sunday afternoon. Therefore let me explain the ethos behind these rules.

Originally designed with the imaginary British Civil War of the late 1930s in mind, the rules are written in what is nowadays often called a retro style, and pay homage to rulesets written by such wargaming legends as Charles Grant and Don Featherstone. Why? Well, to me, the style and mechanisms found in the rules written by these gentlemen in the late 1960s and early 1970s seem to suit the interwar period. Possibly this is nostalgia on my part, a symptom of my middle age perhaps, but it just feels right. These rules are intended to offer a challenging and fun game, so the retro style has been augmented with such things as Chance cards to add period flavour (and some tongue in cheek humour) to the game's character.

I am not a great lover of generic rules that cover long periods of history, as they are seldom successful in giving the player the right feel for the various conflicts covered. Weapons technology may be very similar for the Russian and Irish civil wars, but the natures of these two conflicts were very different. These rules are written with this in mind. While I have chosen

to focus largely on the Spanish Civil War (one of my personal favourites) to best explain the detail of the rules, players can easily tweak the rules. Therefore, many of the sections that follow are guides rather than hard and fast rules. For example, unit organisations can be tinkered with to suit a specific scenario or the players' own interests and interpretations.

Hopefully as one reads through, everything will be very clear and straightforward (I certainly hope so as I am always very critical of rulesets that suddenly explain in the middle of the book something that should have been explained at the start) – if not, you have every right to criticize me... and I know you will!

I sincerely hope that you enjoy these rules as much as I have enjoyed creating and play testing them.

Paul Eaglestone

Mounted battalion command

