

The Professional Use of Recreational Games

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19th Century

No difference between hobby and professional games



Fred Jane Game (1906)



A MEETING OF THE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL WAR GAME SOCIETY IN THE NELSON ROOM AT THE "GEORGE," PORTSMOUTH.

The Naval War Game and How it is Played.

Overview

- Use case studies to highlight some issues using hobby games for professional use
 - Fletcher Pratt/ SPI Firefight/ Decision Games
- Mention 3 commercial computer games used for training
- Finish by noting use of boardgames for leadership training
- Hopefully, within 15 mins, said something interesting

Credibility

The Fletcher Pratt Naval Wargame

Model ship combat 1930-45



Photo of a game on Pratt's floor. See Curry J. (2011) The Fletcher Pratt Naval Wargame

Hobby game with kudos

Civilian game, but similar to
Naval War College

Regular participation of naval
staff

Admiral for South Atlantic
played in game

Pratt seen combat in Pacific

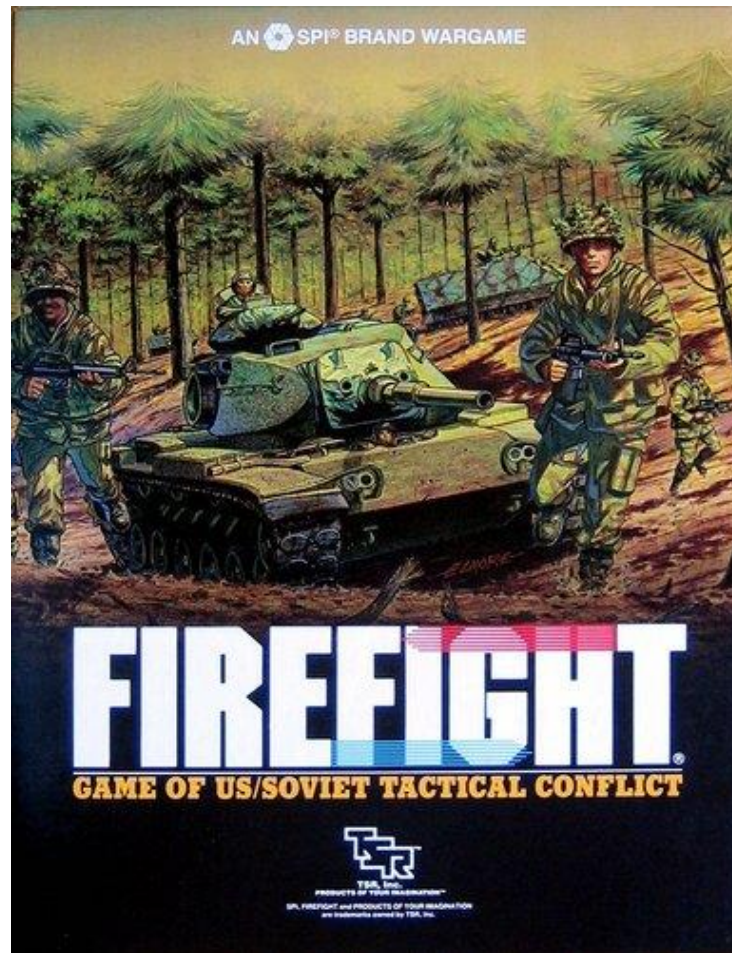
Players included Isaac Asimov,
Sprague de Camp, Doc Clarke,
Hollywood actress...



Professional Games *roll back* moves with Active Umpires



SPI Firefight (1976)



<https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/8833/firefight> and discussion in Curry J. (Ed) (2009) *Thomas Allen's War Games modern professional wargaming 1945-1985*

Firefight- the empty battlefield



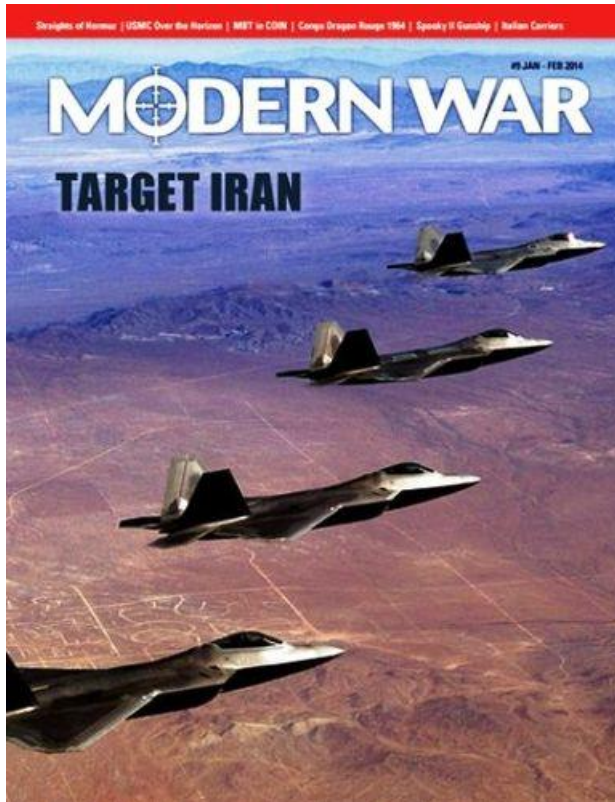
Designed by James Dunnigan

- Small unit trainer for US Army 1974
- Published as hobby game 1976
- Maps of training area in West Germany and US Fort Benning (less swamps and other LOS blocking terrain)
- No doctrine rules
- No morale rules as USA troops always obey orders
- Military jargon, accurate delay for artillery, military procedures

Modern Boardgames

- Decision Games- produce 3 board game magazines including *Modern War*
- Analysis, maps and graphics.
- Wargames rotate among:
 - Cold War (1948-89),
 - Modern (1990 to present)
 - Near-future /potential conflicts

Target Iran



Solitaire simulation of a hypothetical on Iran to destroy weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and other critical targets

Target Iran

Strategic- consider bases, forces, attack routes

Commercial games can deal with sensitive subjects

Innovation e.g. cyber

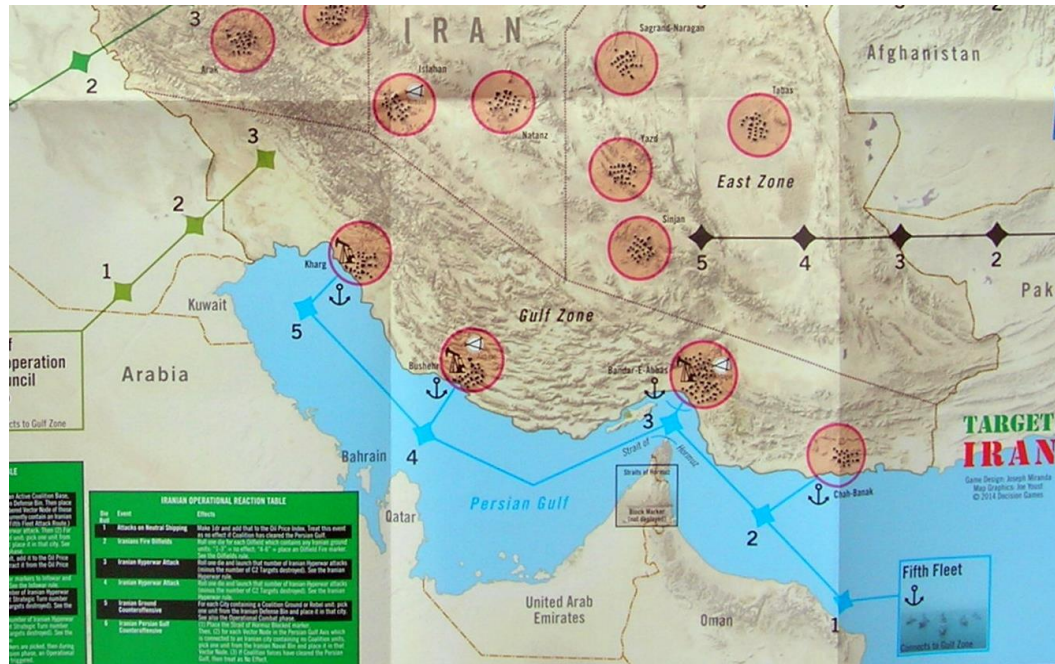
Cyber could be used to conduct info war (to influence)

Start revolt in Iran

Crash units

Epic success/ epic fail

But even destroy a unit???



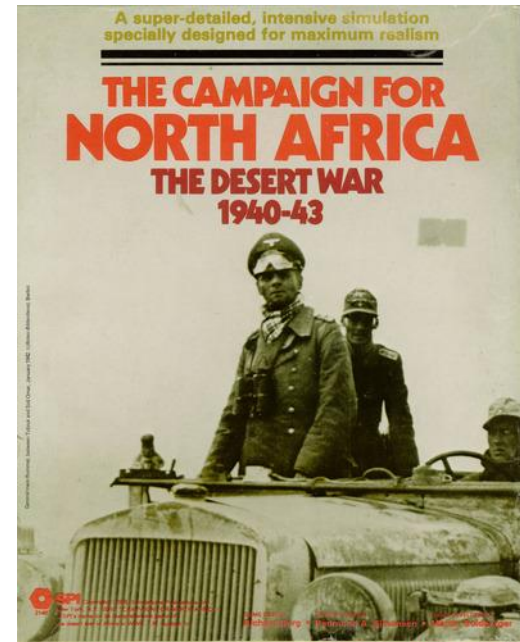
Red Dragon/ Green Crescent

- War v China/ Iran
- Only 1 task force moves at time



Complexity and Time

- SPI The Campaign for North Africa CNA (1979)
- 1800 counters
- 5 maps
- 400 pages rules



CNA- Logistics orientated game

- Commander-in-Chief:
- Logistics Commander: supplies. Accepts supply requisitions, keeps all informed of supply shortages. supply dumps, Third line trucks and some second line trucks and maval convoys.
- Rear Area Commander: Gets supplies to front. In charge of security, reserves, prisoners and construction.
- Air Commander: planes and pilots, planning air missions and deployment of air bases.
- Front-line Commander: Executes all attacks and troop movements in front line. Helps with coordinating defensive efforts.

Hobby games

- Imagine playing the CNA?
 - Hobby wargamers?
 - Professional use?
- Too complex?
- Too long to play?

Commercial Computer Games 1 of 3

- VBS3- first person shooter
- Civilian version Arma 3

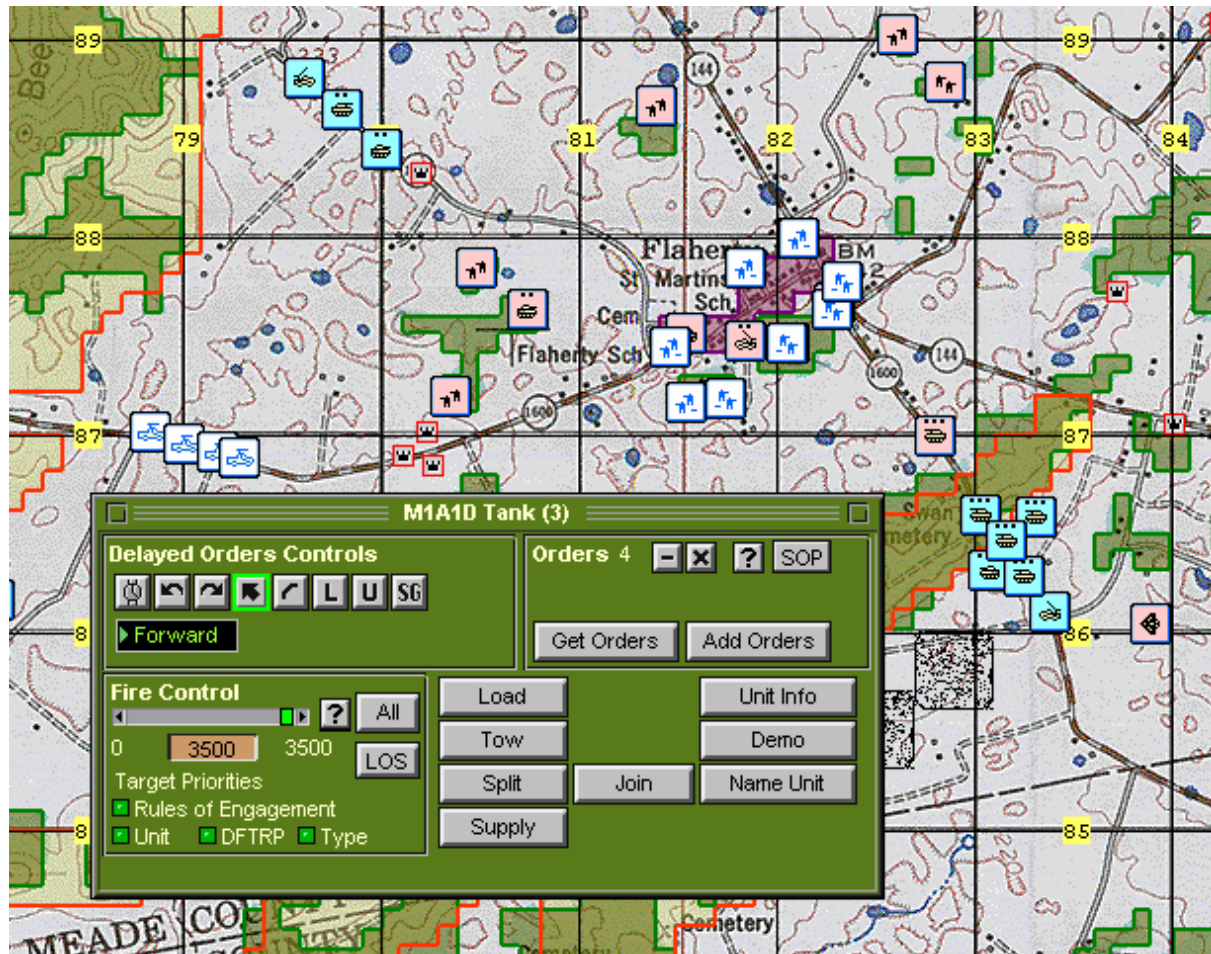


VBS: The dismounted infantry combat simulator of the British Army

- There are key differences between hobby FPS games and military training games
 - Need Safety Catches- ctl + left shift
 - Realistic Skins & Equipment
 - Realistic Weapon Sights
 - Realistic Weapon Dispersion
 - Realistic Falling Damage
 - Realistic Location Based Damage
 - Realistic Fratricide

Commercial Computer Games 2 of 3

TacOps (last updated 2006)



Commercial Computer Games 3 of 3

Close Combat (Modern)



Hobby Games can be used, but...

- Clear learning objectives
- Scrutinise rules- do they make military sense?
- Simplify
- Shift focus to planning and analysis
- Role of dice
- Duration
- Active umpiring- allow roll back?

Need for games for professional use

Gaps include

- Urban tactical
- Peace keeping/ COIN
- Land based tactical (board and figure)
- Training apps using paragraph game book method

Use wider pool hobby wargamers

- E.g. gamers in military/ defence related industries/ MSc in Conflict Studies

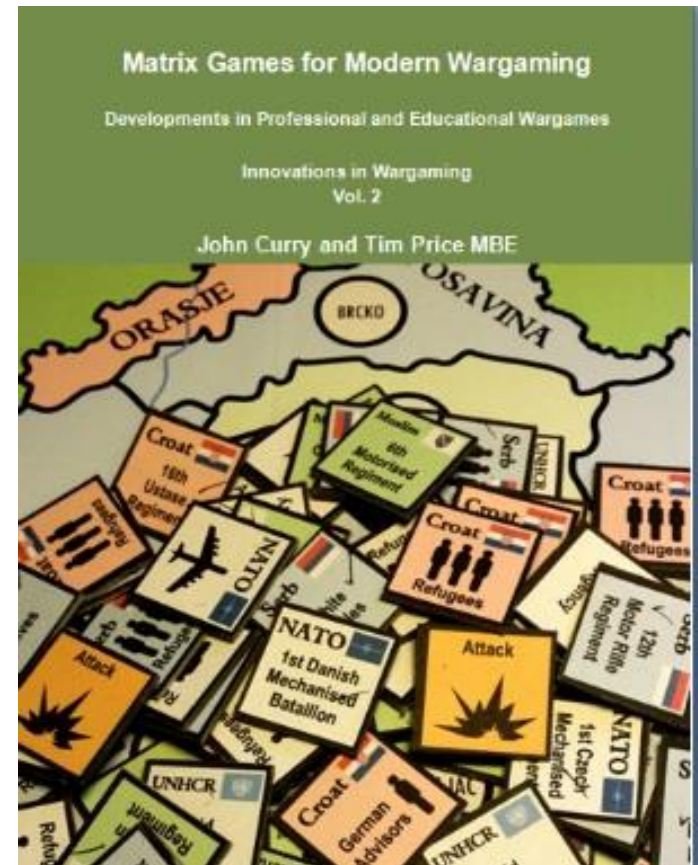
Publish!

- Help game creators better define their game
- Wider professional audience input
- RCAT
- Mech Bn
- Kestrel's Hover
- Aldershot Skirmish

Hobby is still producing *useful* innovations

Matrix games-
narrative based wargaming

Other new methods on way



Now for something completely different

Use of military board games to develop leaders

- Colonel Uwe Heilmann e.g. Connections UK (2013)
- Joint Air Power Competence Centre (Kalkar, Germany)
- Uses commercial board games
 - Not modern games
 - Analyse command decisions

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