

RETRO Solo Rules

Version 1.0

by Mark Chapman

The following solo rules are utilized for Retro (currently in its 6th ed.). These are unofficial and have been developed by me without permission of the designer/creator. Download for free and enjoy!

I am a retired Canadian infantry officer, a historian, and a huge war gamer. I have played both Squad Leader (SL) and Advanced Squad Leader (ASL) all of my adult life. However, lately I have been on the lookout for something "ASL light". As we have all experienced, the ASL "lawyer" rulebook minutiae can easily clog up a session (you know what I'm talking about - OBA, overruns, CC vs vehicles, routing, etc). I wanted something more streamlined that would still maintain the complexity of my favourite tactical WW2 game, and allow me to utilize the thousands of dollars I have put into this hobby! Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, I wanted such a system to easily allow solo play. I love SASL, but it's a separate game in itself - you just can't take the hundreds of ASL scenarios out there and easily convert them to SASL.

Recently, I discovered Retro. I was amazed by what I subsequently termed its "brilliance through brevity" game play. I also enjoy it because you can pick and choose rules from the host game (ASL) if you wish. Some good examples of picking and choosing rules from the host game are terrain hindrances and acquisition, which I use with Retro. Additionally, Retro was fantastic for adapting to solo play.

If you are starting a solo Retro game from scratch then I highly recommend Mark Mathews Solitaire 1.1 rules. I also discovered some great rules developed by Franke Clarke (particularly armour rules). However, I still wanted a ruleset where I could take a published ASL scenario and just go with it. I also wanted to take the solo rules a step further and add some more detail to cover more "what if" situations, especially differentiating the attacker from the defender.

Years ago, I developed a set of solo rules for OST (Old School Tactical) that are also published on BGG, so I dug those out and dusted them off. I adapted them for Retro/ASL while also using bits and pieces from the aforementioned gentlemen. I also put my own spin on many solo rules. Hopefully I have cranked out a reasonable ASL solo play set of rules for Retro.

I have put hours of thought into these rules and have extensively play tested them for Retro/ASL. I have fought many battles (AI vs AI and AI vs me) in an effort to create a realistic tactical experience. I'm not saying they are perfect, but they should give you, the player, more of a challenge than just arbitrarily moving your opponent around. They will not solve every issue or every situation - your use of common sense or an occasional die roll will sometimes be required to do what is best for the AI.

You can use these rules to play solo against an AI opponent, or like I have done extensively, use them to have both sides play off against each other. The ultimate aim is to enjoy the Retro/ASL experience as much as you can, without a human opponent.

Many thanks to Gary Graber for bringing Retro to our tables.

1.0 SET UP

1.1 **BALANCE:** The AI will always be awarded the scenario balance on the ASL scenario card (exception: AI vs AI)

1.2 **LEADERS:** AI leaders will always be attached to a unit at the start of a scenario unless otherwise dictated by the scenario special rules. Leaders will always lead the best troops with the best SW. Armour leaders will always be in the best AFV.

1.3 **VEHICLE PASSENGERS:** AI squads/leaders entering the board at start (as well as any reinforcements later on) will always be passengers transported in *half-tracks and trucks* if the scenario provides them. No one likes to run to a battle unless you're a Zulu warrior.

1.31 If tanks and other AFVs are present that *may* carry passengers, allow the *option* for AI passengers to be loaded onto these vehicles; roll a dr for each AI squad/leader: 1-4 they are loaded, 5-6 they begin dismounted.

1.4 **OBJECTIVES:** Objectives (obj) are the reason why your soldiers are fighting at this place and time. They are obviously paramount to success (or failure) and should be treated as such. Before any force is set up, simply mark each obj with a counter (I like to use the ASL location counters with axis/allied markings). Keep the counters on the board during play and simply flip them when ownership changes sides. These counters draw the eye at the start of a scenario - how do you or the AI defend them? Attack them?

1.5 **AI ATTACKER:** Before the DEFENDER sets up their forces, the attacker will do a quick estimate of the terrain/objs and quickly formulate 4 plans: left and right flanking, up the middle, double envelopment. This isn't supposed to take a lot of time - nothing detailed or intricate at this point.

1.51 Once the DEFENDER's forces have been set up, randomly select one of the four plans to initiate contact with the enemy. Position the ATTACKER's resources to execute the plan selected. Of course, as the battle evolves this may all change.

1.52 Place AI ATTACKER forces as far forward as you can. AI squads/leaders must be set up in non-open hexes unless they are either out of range of the enemy, behind terrain that blocks LOS, or they are being transported in vehicles. Vehicles will set up to take advantage of their mobility and speed, so they will enter the board via roads if they can. *No Hesitation* on turn 1 when entering from off board.

1.6 **AI DEFENDER:** When the AI is the scenario DEFENDER, squads/leaders will ***always*** be placed in non-open terrain. Note that units positioned behind walls/hedges, or in cover/fortifications, or who are placed on the crest of higher elevation will fulfill this requirement, as they all receive defensive bonuses in such areas.

1.61 Additionally, if there are obj hexes controlled by the AI DEFENDER at the start of the scenario, at least one AI squad must occupy each such location (*all obj locations are considered to be controlled by the AI DEFENDER at start unless the scenario instructions state otherwise*). If the obj location is an open ground hex(es), the defender gets a *free* foxhole counter placed on it per open ground hex.

1.62 No AI defending unit will be placed more than 10 hexes from an obj location hex, unless specified otherwise for "at start" placement.

1.63 AI defending units should either be stacked together or positioned adjacent to each other whenever possible so that they can take advantage of forming deadly fire groups.

1.64 AFVs and other vehicles are treated differently, as some terrain prohibits them from being placed there. AFVs enjoy using their mobility, so open hexes are normally better, although positioning behind walls/hedges offers them good defensive protection.

1.65 On a final note, set up the AI units so that they have good lines of sight/fire and can take advantage of ranged weapons. Have them block likely approaches.

1.7 HIDDEN AI DEFENDERS: Hidden initial placement (HIP) units are somewhat difficult to simulate in a solo game. These units are always specified by the scenario; ordnance will always start as HIP. During AI DEFENDER setup, divide all HIP units/SMC/SW into groups and place them in a line for random selection (see below).

1.71 AI HIP units in a solo Retro game become triggered by enemy movement that is *near* obj locations. Whenever an enemy unit moves within 4 hexes of an obj marker/location controlled by the DEFENDER at the **start** of the scenario (*important*: and **still** in control of the AI DEFENDER), one hidden unit with any accompanying leader/SW (selected randomly) will be revealed. Use the obj marker as the centre and roll dr for the revealed unit(s). On 1-2, the hidden unit is placed in the obj hex (unless this violates stacking limits, in which case consider it an automatic 3-6 result). On 3-6, the hidden unit is not in the obj hex, but it is nearby. Roll DR: the black die indicates the direction (with a "1" being north). The white die indicates the distance from the obj location (1-2 = 1 hex, 3-4 = 2 hexes, 5-6 = 3 hexes). If that hex has LOS to the triggering enemy unit, place the hidden AI unit in the indicated hex. If it doesn't have LOS, redo the rolling process again until it does. If the hidden unit is placed in an open ground hex, place it in a free foxhole. NOTE: when rolling for distance, HIP units must be placed on a legal start up board.

1.711 If the ATTACKER unit is within four hexes of an obj location but it cannot possible be seen from that obj hex or its six surrounding hexes (for example, if the ATTACKER is moving through a gully/stream) then no HIP placement roll is made.

1.72 Every obj hex will be used to reveal only ONE HIP unit/stack (and any SMC/SW with it). Once it has been "used" it no longer functions as a revealer. This simulates the defending force setting up defence in depth instead of siting everything up front in one hex. Use a marker to indicate "used" obj hex locations.

1.73 The ATTACKER unit(s) that revealed the hidden unit immediately halts. The revealed AI DEFENDER *cannot* be engaged by *any* ATTACKER during the current turn, including close combat. Ambush and confusion!

1.74 The revealed DEFENDER *must* engage the unit(s) that revealed them - immediately. This is a special "out of defensive fire phase" engagement. In this case, defenders may violate the normal 3-hex range. ROF applies but only against the attacking units that revealed them. The ambushing units may not fire in the defensive fire phase.

1.741 Exception #1: If the hidden unit cannot possibly damage the triggering unit (such as a squad without AT weapons being triggered by a tank) then the hidden unit remains hidden (ignore the roll). Therefore, AFVs will only reveal hidden units that: (1) are armed with AT weapons, (2) are being moved through by the AFV (3) are adjacent to the AFV once it has completed its move.

1.742 Exception #2: A hidden unit will not be revealed until the enemy moves into its *normal* weapon

range. For example, a German rifle squad moves and it is now 4 hexes from an obj marker. But, the hidden AI DEFENDER is a lone Russian 5-2-7, so it will not reveal until the German squad moves within two hexes of it. However, for example, if the 5-2-7 squad was carrying an LMG (range 6), then the ambush occurs as normal.

1.743 Exception #3: Hidden AT guns will **not** be triggered by infantry unless the ATTACKER attempts to move through its hidden location, since the purpose of AT guns is to destroy AFVs. However, if there are no remaining enemy AFVs left after battle casualties, or there is only one obj hex remaining uncaptured, then AT guns will be triggered and revealed by enemy infantry as normal.

1.744 Exception #4: If an enemy unit makes a close combat advance and it happens to be 4 hexes from an obj, the hidden AI defenders will *not* reveal. They will only reveal during the enemy movement phase.

1.75 In some scenarios there are more HIP units than obj hexes. In such a case, simply designate non-obj buildings surrounding the obj(s) as "pseudo-objs" for HIP unit reveal and placement.

1.8 **MEETING ENGAGEMENTS:** When there is no ATTACKER or DEFENDER in a scenario, when forces clash over control of objs between them, and when both forces usually start off map at opposite ends of the board maps, you have a meeting engagement.

1.81 Consider both sides as the AI ATTACKER. Place obj markers as normal. If the battle is AI vs AI, each side should have the usual four plan options as a regular scenario. Simply random select a plan for each side. If a human is playing, he should set up forces first as a scenario ATTACKER would. Then the human would randomly select an AI plan. Begin the battle!

1.9 **FORTIFICATIONS:** If there are no instructions for the initial placement of AI roadblocks, wire, bunkers, etc, then use your best judgement. But ensure that the fortifications help protect the obj location(s) - usually they should be placed near these objs.

1.91 Mines: Of course, mines cannot be recorded secretly by the AI in a solo game. If the AI DEFENDER is allocated mines for a scenario, use the following method: whenever an ATTACKER unit is moved, roll DR, *once*, after its entire move (not for every hex moved through). If the unit begins its move **greater** than 10 hexes away from the nearest obj location, a DR=2 indicates a mine strike as per the regular rules. Place the mines randomly in one of the hexes traveled through by the unit who triggered them (the unit will have to be moved backwards onto the mines). If the moving unit begins its move **10 or less** hexes away from an objective location, then mines will be triggered on DR=2-3 instead. Note that the mine reveal check is always made before any hidden initial placement reveal roll!

2.0 **AI ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES**

2.1 No matter the phase, AI units will *only* fire if they can achieve a result on the Infantry Fire Table (IFT) or the Armour Combat Table (ACT).

2.2 AI units will use fire groups whenever possible and will always use their support weapons.

2.3 If AI units begin their turn adjacent to unbroken enemy unit(s), they will *always* engage them in the Fire Phase and will not move. Exception: units carrying DC will place DC in the movement phase if the enemy in the target hex is suitable for such an explosive (ie. wouldn't waste the DC on a half squad).

- 2.4 An AI unit with AT capability will always engage AFVs in range. Then vehicles. Then infantry.
- 2.5 AI AFVs will always try to engage other AFVs in normal range (1-18 hexes, ACT columns C-E) first, nearest AFV first. Remaining targets in priority are: AT guns, infantry with AT weapons, units in obj locations, all others.
- 2.6 All SW/ordnance/vehicles that are able to/have acquired targets (*see 12.0*) will continue to have a FIRE order in future turns on that target until that target is either destroyed, broken, or moves out of LOS.
- 2.7 AFVs that are outclassed by enemy AFVs in LOS (*see 2.1*), or that have malfunctioned/disabled main armament, will move out of LOS of that enemy AFV.
- 2.8 AI units will not move to engage in close combat unless they at least have 1-1 odds. Exception: if the enemy forces are located in an obj hex, they will engage regardless of the odds.
- 2.9 AFVs that find themselves in melee will always have a Move Order to evade.
- 2.91 AFVs that are both immobilized and without functioning weapons will be ignored by the AI.

3.0 **OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE POSTURE**

3.1 In general, the AI will behave similarly whether they are the ATTACKER or the DEFENDER, based on Retro rules. However, there are some key nuances that differentiate between an offensive or defensive AI posture. Note: both sides of a meeting engagement scenario (AI vs AI) will adhere to an offensive posture.

3.2 **OFFENSIVE AI POSTURE:** AI ATTACKER forces have many more variables than the defender. Movement to an obj(s) is fundamental, but so is covering fire and hand-to-hand combat. "Exit the board edge" scenarios are also offensive posture.

3.21 *Automatic MOVE* - AI ATTACKERS who have no LOS to an unbroken enemy unit will *always* have a MOVE Order. AI ATTACKERS who are in LOS of a DEFENDER but are outside normal range of that DEFENDER (not including SW) *also* receive a MOVE Order (representing the urgency of the ATTACKER to move and take objs). Finally, if AI ATTACKERS are in LOS of an unbroken enemy but those DEFENDERS have >+3 TEM/Hindrance combination, then the ATTACKERS have an automatic MOVE Order (this prevents the attacking force from hopelessly engaging a well protected enemy, and thus prevent them from moving). Place a MOVE counter in the Rally Ph on each of these units (I use the MOVE counters from SASL).

3.22 *Automatic FIRE* - AI ATTACKER units who start the turn adjacent to unbroken enemy units automatically receive a FIRE Order. AI units who have previously gained acquisition (*12.0*) will also have a FIRE Order (*2.6*). Place a PREP FIRE counter in the Rally Ph on each of these units (use counters from ASL).

3.23 Remaining units will roll DR on the AI ATTACKER Move/Fire table to see if they attempt smoke, move, fire, or generate a random event. Place appropriate MOVE and PREP FIRE counters in the Rally Ph. At this point, all units will have one counter or another on them.

3.24 AI ATTACKERS will always move toward locations with the following priority: (1) *enemy* controlled objs or exit hexes (2) enemy within LOS (3) nearest enemy outside LOS. *Exception:* there may be enemy

units directly between an enemy obj location and AI ATTACKER units. The AI ATTACKER will attack and clear unbroken enemy units on the way to the objs.

3.25 AI ATTACKERS who fire in the Fire Ph have the following priorities: adj enemy units, units in obj locations, AFV targets (2.4). For all others, choose enemy that are closest. If there is a tie for distance, then enemy with highest FP, followed by lowest TEM terrain.

3.26 AI ATTACKERS will seek to overwhelm the enemy and advance into close combat whenever possible.

3.27 See the AI ATTACKER Move/Fire Table below.

3.3 **DEFENSIVE AI POSTURE:** AI DEFENDER forces are more static - there will be little movement other than to possibly reinforce or recapture obj locations that were lost. They will usually remain in their defensive positions and defend the obj locations at all costs. Moving is secondary with the exception of exit scenarios, where the exiting force IS the objective (5.0). Counterattacks may be necessary to regain obj locations, and AFVs are free to try and outflank the offensive opponent for an advantage. AI DEFENDERS roll on the AI DEFENDER Move/Fire table with the following restrictions.

3.31 *AI DEFENDERS in Obj Locations* - those units placed in an obj location at start will remain there to defend it. DEFENDERS will always have an automatic FIRE Order (unless 2.1) They may move to reposition within an obj (ie. move within a building). They will never leave the obj unless they are required to counterattack to recapture another obj. *Exception:* SMCs who find themselves alone (due to unit casualties) will vacate an obj in order to take command of other units.

3.32 *AI DEFENDERS not in Obj Locations* - these units will only have an automatic FIRE Order if enemy are within *normal* range and 2.1 exists. Otherwise, roll on AI DEFENDER Move/Fire Table.

3.33 AI DEFENDER AFVs are *not* restricted by rule 3.31 or 3.32.

3.34 If any obj location(s) has been captured by the ATTACKER, ignore 3.32 and roll on AI DEFENDER Move/Fire Table. This also applies to all exit scenarios (5.0).

3.35 AI DEFENDERS who fire in the Fire Ph use the same target priority as they do in the Defensive Fire Ph. Rules 2.3 & 2.4 apply here.

3.36 AI DEFENDERS who are **concealed** will *only* fire (and hence reveal themselves) in any fire ph if the enemy unit(s) is within *normal range of the defending unit, excluding SWs*. Example: a DEFENDER German 4-4-7 squad with a LMG (3-8) is concealed. An enemy unit ends its move exactly 5 hexes from it. The German squad will not fire at this unit in the Defensive Fire Ph because it is outside of the 3-hex range (Retro rules). However, during the following Fire Ph, the concealed German squad will not engage the unit either, because it is outside of its unit range of 4, *regardless* of the 8 hex range of its LMG. Concealed DEFENDERS will remain concealed as long as they can, until they can bring the full power of their weapons to bear.

3.37 AI DEFENDER units will never make a close combat advance (other than a repositioning within the obj or to recapture an obj). Additionally, they will *only* engage in close combat if enemy units occupy an obj location (see 2.8) or if the enemy units are actually the obj (ie. exit scenarios).

3.38 During the enemy Movement Ph, AI DEFENDER *infantry* will engage enemy infantry units moving in their first *open* hex that are within LOS and *normal* range (including SW) of the DEFENDER. If the

DEFENDERS are in a stack or multi-hex fire group, at least one unit must fire (but not necessarily all, depending on the situation) Hindrances, walls, hedges and crests all cancel this rare ability to fire against an enemy in its Movement Ph. DEFENDERS who fire during the enemy Movement Ph cannot fire in the Defensive Fire Ph unless they have maintained ROF.

3.39 Reinforcements: AI DEFENDER reinforcements have an urgency to race to the front to recapture obj(s) or reinforce those that have not yet been captured. Reinforcements will always maximize their move value. They will move towards the following objs in priority: 1) the nearest captured obj (to recapture it) 2) the nearest controlled obj in order to reinforce/defend it. Due to the urgency of their mission, they will *ignore* all Hesitation checks and have an automatic MOVE Order until they are in LOS of enemy units. Once that happens, regular Hesitation checks and rolling on the AI DEFENDER Move/Fire table will begin on the *following* turn. Reinforcements are more aggressive and mobile and are therefore NOT constrained by 3.37. Reinforcements will engage enemy units that are between them and an obj.

4.0 AI ATTACKER & DEFENDER MOVE/FIRE TABLES

4.1 There are situations where the AI's options are not variable. For example, if an AI ATTACKER unit doesn't have an enemy in LOS, it will have an automatic Move Order. And another, if a unit is adjacent to an enemy unit then they will automatically engage it. However, when the AI has options, we turn to the Move/Fire tables, roll a DR, and execute the AI's best option at that point.

4.2 Both tables represent the posture (offensive or defensive) of the units in question. Naturally, attacking units will place more emphasis on moving, rather than firing, in order to seize objectives. The opposite is true for defenders.

4.3 On a DR12, the result of both tables is a random event for all units in the same hex. Some are good, some are bad. They are not meant to be game changers. But they do add "flavour". Apply the result of the random event (if applicable) and then simply roll again on the Move/Fire table. If a second random event occurs during this reroll, ignore it and roll until you get another result on the table.

AI ATTACKER MOVE/FIRE TABLE

<u>DR</u>	<u>AI ACTION</u>
2-3	<i>SMOKE</i> Inf with smk exponent will attempt smk if possible (see 7.21-7.22) Unit will also fire in Fire Ph. If 7.22 is not satisfied, this is a Move Order instead. Inf without smk has Move Order with a -1 bonus to Hesitation dr. AFVs with smk ammo: will fire smk in Fire Ph (if no smk ammo then Move Order). AFVs with smk dischargers will Move & attempt deploy smk during their Movement Ph where favourable.
4-5	<i>DOUBLE TIME MOVE</i> Hesitation check (if/when applicable) Inf & AFV add "1" to their move value. Move as per 3.24. Retro: Inf unit must end movement if they move adjacent to enemy. AFV must end movement in enemy hex (exceptions: overrun & vehicle stacking) Vehicles will try to avoid bog terrain; but if they move through it see bogged rules 13.2-13.3 Immobilized AFVs will have a Fire Order instead AFVs that move ≤ 3 MP, have LOS to enemy ≤ 6 hexes away will stop & fire with 3-column right shift (see 14.1)
6-8	<i>MOVE</i> Hesitation check (if/when applicable) Move as per 3.24. Retro: Inf unit must end movement if they move adjacent to enemy. AFV must end movement in enemy hex (exceptions: overrun & vehicle stacking) Vehicles will try to avoid bog terrain; but if they move through it see bogged rules 13.2-13.3 Immobilized AFVs will have a Fire Order instead AFVs that move ≤ 3 MP, have LOS to enemy ≤ 6 hexes away will stop & fire with 3-column right shift (see 14.1)
9-11	<i>FIRE</i> If no enemy in LOS or if TEM/Hindrances > 3, then Move Order Units will engage enemy units in Fire Ph as per 2.1-2.6 Target priority 3.25
12	<i>RANDOM EVENT</i> Roll once on the Random Event Table, dr10. The event applies to every unit in the hex. Apply (if applicable) and re-roll the Move/Fire table. If the event does not apply then re-roll on the AI ATTACKER Move/Fire Table.

AI DEFENDER MOVE/FIRE TABLE

<u>DR</u>	<u>AI ACTION</u>
2	<i>SMOKE</i> Inf with smk exponent will attempt smk if possible (see 7.21-7.22). Unit will also fire in Fire Ph. AFVs with smk dischargers will attempt to deploy smk during their Movement Ph where favourable.
3-8	<i>FIRE</i> Units will engage enemy units in Fire Ph as per 2.1-2.6 <i>Exception</i> : concealed units (see 3.36) & HIP units (see 1.7) Target priority same as Retro defensive fire phase in rulebook, pg. 8 AFVs without targets will Move instead. <i>Exception</i> : unless they were originally deployed in an obj location
9-11	<i>MOVE</i> Hesitation check (if/when applicable) Defenders are limited by 3.31-3.34 & 3.39 Move as per 3.3. Retro: Inf unit must end movement if they move adjacent to enemy. AFV must end movement in enemy hex (exceptions: overrun & vehicle stacking) Vehicles will try to avoid bog terrain; but if they move through it see bogged rules 13.2-13.3 Immobilized AFVs will have a Fire Order instead AFVs that move ≤ 3 MP, have LOS to enemy ≤ 6 hexes away will stop & fire with a 3-column right shift (see 14.1) Reinforcements move differently, see 3.39
12	<i>RANDOM EVENT</i> Roll once on the Random Event Table, dr10. The event applies to every unit in the hex. Apply (if applicable) and re-roll the Move/Fire table. If the event does not apply then re-roll on the AI ATTACKER Move/Fire Table.

RANDOM EVENT TABLE

<u>dr10</u>	<u>AI ACTION</u>
1	The Art of Disguise. Gain concealment at the end of the current turn
2	Friendly fire...isn't. Conduct area fire against nearest friendly AI unit
3	Bugger! One SW/gun/MA/CMG/BMG malfunctions or one is repaired
4	Booby Trap! One unit is casualty reduced.
5	Charge of the Light Brigade. For this turn, ignore the hesitation check. MOVE order
6	Must be a Dodge. Vehicle bogs. Immediately roll dr: 1-2 unstuck, 3-5 stuck (roll again next Rally Ph), 6 immobilized
7	The King of Battle. Arty Strike! Random 100mm drops on the hex. "12" column on IFT. TEM applies
8	Fierce warriors. One unit is battle hardened
9	Shell Shock. Morale checks. Pass = OK. Fail = Panic. Not broken but cannot do anything this turn
10	"Billy, Don't Be a Hero". One hero is created in the hex if a MMC is present.

5.0 EXIT SCENARIOS

5.1 Exit scenarios are a form of offensive posture operation. This type of scenario usually requires more movement on the part of the ATTACKER. Usually, units will gain more VPs from exiting the board than inflicting casualties.

5.2 Passengers will remain in/on vehicles as long as possible, and will **only** dismount if absolutely necessary to protect the exiting force.

5.3 AI DEFENDER treats the exit board edge as obj locations for movement purposes so that it may try and intercept exiting enemy units. Enemy units are also an obj - destroying them to prevent exiting.

5.4 If it is clear that the AI DEFENDER is being outflanked with no enemy in LOS, then they have a MOVE order.

6.0 SOLO ORDER SELECTION/PROCESSING FOR AI

6.1 Selecting the order for AI units is very important so that units are not forgotten. Those of you who have played SASL will recognize this method. This order of selection method is used whenever the AI is rolling on the Move/Fire tables, or when processing actions during the movement, fire, defensive fire and close combat phases.

6.2 To select which AI units go first, second, etc, simply begin on the north edge (or top) of the mapboard(s) and work down, hexrow by hexrow, and from left to right along the hexrow, selecting every unit in order along the "path". This will always be done during the random action selection on the move/fire tables as well the actual processing of various orders.

6.31 **Selecting units to move/fire:** During the Rally Ph, use the selection method above for each unit. Place an automatic MOVE counter (from SASL) or an automatic FIRE counter (Prep Fire from ASL) on those units that apply (see 2.3, 3.21-3.22, 3.31-3.32). For those units who are not restricted, roll randomly on their appropriate table. If they are attempting smoke this turn, place a smoke grenade counter (from ASL). Place MOVE and FIRE on remaining units selected by the random DR on the tables.

6.32 At the start of the Movement Ph, those units selected to attempt smoke will be the first units to proceed. Whether they succeed at placing smoke or not, subsequently place a Prep Fire counter on them (Retro pg 12). Next, process all move actions in order, removing the MOVE counter after each move (this keeps track of which units have already moved). During the Fire Ph, remove the Prep Fire counters from those who fire, again to keep track.

7.0 SMOKE (Retro pg. 12-13)

7.1 It is always a difficult decision to use smoke - you forfeit a move opportunity with no guarantee of making smoke at all, since unit smoke exponents are typically low.

7.21 Infantry - the decision to use smoke has been cooked into the AI Move/Fire orders DR, and it is rare. Infantry units attempting to lay smoke are the first units to act during the movement phase. Only one unit in a stack will make the attempt (usually one without an SW). Success or failure means that the unit will not move, but will fire in the Fire Ph.

7.22 Additionally, an attempt to create smoke by infantry units will *only* occur if there is an enemy unit in LOS and normal range (including SW) of it, AND the hex closest to the ATTACKER is an open one. Otherwise this is a MOVE order.

7.3 If successful, smoke is created normally - same hex or an adjacent one. Place it so that the AI is afforded the best situational protection. Remember: smoke lasts three turns!

7.4 Only the AI ATTACKER is permitted OBA smoke rounds (*see 8.0*).

7.5 Armour/Ordnance - like infantry, the attempt to use smoke is a rare one, and it is placed within the AI Move/Fire Orders table. If the unit possesses smoke ammo, it will attempt to fire it for situational protection. If an AFV possesses devices like smoke dischargers and a smoke roll is made on the table, this is considered to be a Move order instead. The AFV will attempt to launch a smoke device at some point during its movement to benefit it or other friendly forces.

8.0 **OBA** (Retro pg. 20-21)

8.1 AI DEFENDERS will *always* use HE for OBA. AI ATTACKERS will roll dr: (1-4) use HE or (5-6) smoke. The roll is made just prior to the OBA mission to keep the human player guessing.

8.2 The AI isn't going to use one of its most important resources to engage a lone squad. An OBA mission blast area affects 7 hexes in total, so the AI will call arty down on as many units as possible.

8.3 If the spotter can see three or more enemy units that can be affected by a mission, the mission will be called on top of them. Exception: if there is a *defended* obj location that can be seen by the spotter, the AI ATTACKER will always use the mission to soften up or smoke out the obj location(s).

HOUSE & OPTIONAL RULES

I use all of the Retro 6th edition house and optional rules. In addition, I have used other house rules designed either by myself or others in the BGG forums. It is up to you which ones you implement or not. As Gary Graber says: "If one of your favourite "old rules" is unmentioned, you may presume that it was left out deliberately. You can always reintroduce these, or come up with interpretations of your own that suit your playing style." Retro 6th edition. Pg. 4

9.0 TERRAIN

9.1 *Hindrances* are in effect and act as they do in ASL.

9.2 Multi-level buildings are in play as per ASL.

9.3 In urban scenarios where there are Debris hexes (ie printed on the map (HASL)), distinguish between normal and heavy debris. A normal debris hex is considered an Open hex, is subject to Hesitation rolls, and has a TEM of 0. Heavy debris is treated like debris hexes, except a -1 drm applies to all Hesitation rolls for units moving into them. The TEM is zero.

9.4 *Trenches* are treated like foxholes except:

9.41 Ordnance of 105mm or less (and any INF gun) may set up in trenches but must remain in the trench for the entire scenario (may change CA).

9.42 Infantry units may move to adjacent trenches without "leaving" the trench using 1 MP and are not required to roll for hesitation.

9.5 *Wire*: TEM is -1, not +1. How could it have ever been +1? Have you ever tried crossing a wire obstacle? Zero fun. Actually -1 fun.

10.0 HESITATION

10.1 I really like the hesitation (hes) rule. However, while play testing I quickly noticed how incredibly powerful it is. In a scenario with substantial open ground and lots of enemy MGs, a regular squad would get a +1 to its hes roll for MG (normal range), and another +1 for MG/MMC (closer than half range). The squads were halting 50% of the time. Squads were failing hes checks multiple turns in a row. It was a disaster for the ATTACKER. So I have made two adjustments to the hes rules.

10.11 *Adjustment #1*: all leaders that are stacked with units (including 7-0 and 8-0 leaders) give a -1 to the dr. So an 8-1 leader would give a -2 to the dr. Leaders have become even more substantial, and they should be.

10.12 *Adjustment #2*: a unit(s) that fails a hes check gains a -1 labour counter (essentially a -1 to its next hes check). If the unit(s) fails the next hes check as well, it gains a -2 labour counter. As soon as a hes check is successful, remove the labour counter.

10.2 To make hes even more simple, a natural dr of 6 always results in a halt, with the exception of elite units. An elite unit would roll a second dr in this case, and halt on a dr of 5 or 6.

10.3 Place a NO MOVE or PANIC counter on all halted units.

10.4 Units are not required to make a hes check while moving to a hindrance terrain hex. Additionally, if the hex being moved to is a non-open hex by virtue of walls/hedges, crests, etc, then a hes check is not required.

10.4 No hes checks are required for the ATTACKER on the first turn of entry, if they arrive from off board. This applies to reinforcements on later turns as well.

10.5 DEFENDER reinforcements will *ignore* all hes checks (even on multiple turns) until they are in LOS of enemy units (3.39). Once that happens, regular hes checks will begin on the *following* turn.

11.0 **SUPPORT WEAPONS (SW)**

11.1 Use the breakdown and repair numbers on actual counters.

11.2 **Mortars.** May fire at a target without LOS providing that a friendly leader is within 3 hexes of the mortar, and the leader has LOS to the target. There is a +1 modifier to the roll for this, and a natural "2" is still a KIA result.

11.21 Mortars that acquire a target gain a -1 or -2 on the IFT DR directly.

11.3 **DC.** In order to place a successful DC, the placing unit must pass a special hes roll as if they were moving to an open hex. No modifiers apply: fail on a "6". On an unsuccessful DC placement the unit still retains the DC and may try again next turn.

11.4 **Flamethrowers.** The TEM of the target hex is disregarded. *Exception:* open ground is still a -1 modifier.

11.5 **Molotov cocktails.** Only exist by scenario SR. A unit with MC capability and a FIRE order must be adjacent to the target and roll an unmodified dr of 1-3 to use one. If unsuccessful, the unit may still fire. If the check is successful, first make a DR on the Fire-Susceptible table (Retro pg. 26) and place a Fire marker if the check is made. Additionally, if the target is infantry, the unit adds 4 FP to their attack. If the target is a vehicle, a DR of 2-6 destroys it. Halftracks get -1 modifier, trucks/jeeps get -2 modifier. AFVs with an armour factor >6 cannot be destroyed by Molotov cocktails but immobilization will occur on a natural 2.

11.51 A unit with MC capability and a MOVE order may move and then throw a MC at a target in an adjacent hex. Like DC placement, a special hes check is made, exactly the same way. If unsuccessful, the unit may not fire. If successful, first make a DR on the Fire-Susceptible table (Retro pg. 26) and place a Fire marker if the check is made. Additionally, if the target is infantry, make a special 4 FP attack on the IFT (but in this case not added to squad's FP, as they cannot attack with small arms during a move). If the target is a vehicle, same as 11.51.

11.6 **SW AT weapons vs vehicles.** Like ATRs, use Bazookas, Panzerschrecks, Panzerfausts and PIATs on the Armour Combat Table (ACT). Each of these weapons has a min/max range in Retro, so I use those. Simply use the HEAT to kill number in ASL for each weapon as the gun factor. Gun factors for these weapons are: Baz43 (13), Baz44+ (16), PSK (26), PF (31), PIAT (15). Baz have max range of 5, PSK has max range 4, and PF/PIAT have max range 3. Use the following table and the range to the target to assign a letter column on the ACT:

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Gun Factor</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>ACT Column Letter</u>
Baz 43/Baz 44+	13/16	1	A
		2	B
		3	C
		4	F
		5	H
PSK	26	1	B
		2	C
		3	E
		4	H
PF	31	1	B
		2	F
		3	H
PIAT	15	1	B
		2	E
		3	H

You will note how the effectiveness/accuracy of these weapons drops off significantly at longer ranges. Also, all AT weapons attack on table H at their longest range. The PF, for example, is the best AFV killer, but it also has the shortest range and is the least accurate, as it should be.

11.61 Using gun factors and ranges for these SW AT weapons, apply them to vehicle hesitation like any other gun.

11.62 Against infantry targets, use the method in Retro, pg 12.

12.0 **TARGET ACQUISITION (TA)**

12.1 Retro does not use target acquisition. But I believe that adding it makes sense, as the gunner adjusts his aim, be it mortars, AT guns, AFVs, etc. Also, there is little actual bookkeeping involved - simply use the ASL counters as usual. There is a -1 DRM to hit for the first acquisition marker (not a column shift!), and a -2 DRM to hit for the second acquisition marker on the ACT. If mortars are firing with TA, then the subtractions are applied to the DR directly on the IFT table.

12.2 As per 2.6, units that have acquired a target will continue to fire at it until it is destroyed, broken, or it moves out of LOS. Other situations may occur, like an enemy unit moving adjacent to the unit that has acquisition, that will also cause a change in priority for the firer.

13.0 **AFV/VEHICLE MOVEMENT**

13.1 AFVs may pivot freely in their starting hex during the movement phase, to fire in the Fire Ph. This is not considered moving. They may fire in the Fire Ph with a +2 right-column shift penalty after a pivot.

13.2 Bog Check. When a vehicle enters a hex with woods, building, stream, or wire, it must make a bog check DR. *Exception:* unless the vehicle passes through the hex on a road. A vehicle will be bogged as follows: Tracked AFV (DR 2-3), Half-track (DR 2-4), AC/Truck (DR 2-6).

13.3 Bog Removal. During the owning player's Rally Ph, roll dr to remove bogged status: 1-4 (freed), 5 (mired, must try again next Rally Ph with a +1 to dr), 6 (immobilized).

13.4 Overrun. The AI will seek opportunities to overrun lone SMC (broken or not) as well as broken MMC to eliminate them.

14.0 AFV FIRE

14.1 An AFV that expends 3 movement points or less in the Movement Ph and has an unbroken enemy in its LOS ≤ 6 hexes, will stop and engage it in the Fire Ph (see 3.25) with a penalty. Place an Adv Fire counter (from ASL) on it and it will fire after all the regular Prep Fire units do. The penalty is a +3 right-column shift on the ACT. Gain -1 acquisition. AFV MGs may fire with a +3 penalty on the IFT.

14.2 Turreted armour may fire outside its CA during any fire phase with a +1 right-column shift on the ACT. Turreted armour may not fire at more than one target outside of CA even if ROF is maintained but may fire at the same target multiple times if successfully maintaining ROF. Non-turreted AFVs will pivot to fire but must apply the penalty in 13.1.

14.3 Retro does not use turret counters, but I enjoy using them for more realism. And besides, they aren't difficult to manage. When a turreted AFV fires outside its CA, place a turret counter. While the first shot will have the penalty in 14.2, all future shots (including any ROF) through the new CA will not have a penalty.

14.4 ***Example of play:*** a Mk IVA panzer (75*mm) moves 2 MPs to an open terrain hex and suddenly has LOS, at 4 hex range, to a normal sized Polish 7TP tank (37Lmm) with frontal armour factor of 2, behind a stone wall. The 7TP is positioned to the left of the Mk IVA. The very first thing that happens is vehicle hesitation for the Mk IVA (*Retro pg 16-17*). The gun factor of the 7TP is 9, and the side armour of the Mk IVA is 1. The VHV is $9-1=8$. The panzer rolls a "10", so it does not halt.

14.41 Next, it appears that rule 14.1 applies immediately for the panzer. However, the very first thing we have to determine is whether the Mk IVA will simply ignore the 7TP (because the tank may be too protected to hit) and just keep moving (see 3.21). The Polish tank has a +2 TEM from the wall, so the Mk IVA will stop and engage it. If the panzer had to fire through an additional two hexes of grain (+2 hindrance), it would have ignored the 7TP and kept moving.

14.42 This Mk IVA decides to leave the hull orientation forward and instead places a turret counter facing the 7TP. Place an Adv Fire counter on it and it will fire last in the Fire Ph. When it does fire its first shot, it will suffer a +3 penalty for moving, +2 for TEM, and a +1 penalty for rotating its turret (14.2) for a total of +6 right-column shift on the ACT for its first shot (column I). The difference between the gun factor and the armour factor of the 7TP is $13-2=11$. The Mk IVA needs a "3" to hit. It misses, but maintains ROF.

14.43 The second shot from the Mk IVA will still have the moving penalty but not the rotate turret penalty. It also gains a -1 TA DRM to hit. Therefore, the second shot has a +5 right-column shift (column H). The Mk IVA needs a base "4" to hit but gains the -1 TA DRM for the second shot, making it a "5" to hit/kill. It misses again, but luckily maintains ROF a second time.

14.44 For the third shot (and more) the 5+ right-column shift remains (column H), meaning a base "4" is needed to hit, but now there is a -2 TA DRM to hit, making a "6" to hit/kill. If the Mk IVA still failed to hit, lost ROF, and then survived the shot from the 7TP on the next Polish turn, it would then lose the moving penalty during the next German Fire Ph **and** TA is maintained.

14.45 If the Mk IVA originally decided to pivot (instead of rotating its turret) and orient its hull facing towards the 7TP, it would have suffered a +3 penalty for moving, +2 for TEM, and a +2 pivot penalty (13.1) for a total of +7 right-column shift for its first shot (column J).

14.5 Incoming fire against a turreted AFV that has a turret counter on it will consider to hit the AFV in orientation of the *hull* and not the turret.

14.6 AFVs with a MG for its MA have a gun factor of 4.

14.7 When AFVs hit an infantry target on the ACT with a gun, make a second roll on the IFT based on calibre size (numbers on ASL IFT). For example, a 75mm hit would be resolved with 12 FP factors. This is a flat roll. There is no hindrance/TEM adjustment as this is already calculated in the to hit process.

14.8 **Example of play:** a French Hotchkiss H35 tank (37*mm) has been firing on a German squad (4-6-7) in a wooden building from three hexes away. The tank has missed twice, but now has a -2 TA DRM. It fires a third shot. It has right-column penalties of +2 (TEM), +2 (infantry target), +1 (firer not Ger/UK/US), so column H. The difference between its gun factor (8) and infantry armour (0) is 8. It normally requires a "3" to hit but the -2 TA DRM makes it a "5". The tank rolls a "5", modified to a "3". The infantry is hit!

14.81 In Retro, if the infantry are hit (as above) they are eliminated. However, by adding TA rules, the tank has had an easier chance to hit (it normally would have missed on that DR "5"). However, the calibre of the gun now factors into the calculation. We check the ASL IFT and discover that a 37mm gun is 4 FP factors. Use the Retro IFT (4 FP column) and keep the same modified DR of "3". The result is a "10" which breaks the squad. A higher calibre shot would have killed the squad instead.

14.9 **HEAT Gun Factor:** add 5 to the regular gun factor.

14.10 **HE vs Vehicle:** if a "Kill" is made on the ACT, make a subsequent dr: 1-2 = kill, 3-4 = immobilized, 5 = random weapon destroyed, 6 = no effect. Apply -1 drm for halftracks/armoured cars, -2 drm for trucks/jeeps.

15.0 **ORDNANCE**

15.1 Ordnance may pivot during any fire phase with a +2 right-column shift penalty.

15.2 360 degree ordnance may fire outside CA with only a +1 right-column shift. Rotate the counter to the new CA.

15.3 Ordnance may not fire at more than one target outside of CA even if ROF is maintained, but may fire at the same target multiple times if successfully maintaining ROF.

15.4 Infantry targets must first be hit on ACT, then resolve on IFT as per 14.7

15.5 Use target acquisition as per 12.0

15.6 HEAT/HE vs vehicle as per 14.9 and 14.10

15.7 Wheeled/mobile ordnance that is 105mm or smaller may move one hex during the Movement Ph. It cannot fire during the turn that it is moved.

16.0 **TRANSPORTATION**

16.1 If the AI is the ATTACKER, it will want to transport its infantry as close to an obj location as possible. Dismounting will always occur 2-3 hexes away from an obj location in order to capture it.

16.2 AI squads/leaders will always dismount in/move to protective terrain or dismount out of enemy LOS unless this isn't possible.

16.3 For exit scenarios, the AI passengers will remain with the vehicle as long as possible so they can exit for VP rewards, and will only dismount to protect AI exiting forces.

17.0 **OTHER VEHICLES**

17.1 **Horses/Motorcycles.** Horse/motorcycle counters are possessed in the same manner as SW and may be used by either side. Mounted units use the MP value of the horse/motorcycle counter. Horse mounted units pay terrain costs as infantry, while motorcycle mounted units pay terrain costs as trucks. Mounted units can never enter buildings/entrenchments/bunkers.

17.11 Units may fire while mounted up to three hexes and at ½ FP. Only motorcycle units may fire SW while mounted (LMGs only). Units mounted on horse counters receive a -1 modifier to close combat in open hexes.

17.12 Any fire against mounted units uses the -1 open ground TEM regardless of terrain.

17.13 All mounted units mount/dismount according to normal Retro rules.

17.2 **Horse drawn wagons.** Treated as unarmored trucks in all ways except that they may be used by either side in the same manner as a SW.

17.3 **Amphibious vehicles/boats.** Use movement factors, portage capability, and manhandling on the counter. Craft may be *beached* on a land/water hexside in the Movement Ph. A craft must be *beached* in order to load/unload it.

17.31 Units may load onto boats during the Movement Ph. Units may unload from boats into an adjacent land hex during the Close Combat Ph, after the boat has *beached* during the Movement Ph.

17.32 Boats may be carried one hex during the Movement Ph. If adjacent to a water hex they may become *beached* in the Close Combat Ph.

17.33 Fire from a boat is halved. LMGs are the only SW that may fire from a boat.

17.34 **Stacking.** Use Retro stacking rules for infantry. Just pretend the boats are not there.

17.35 Any AFV/ordnance gun fire against an amphibious vehicle/boat in an all water hex receives one shift to the left on the ACT. If a boat is hit (sunk), all units/SW in it are eliminated.

18.0 **ELR**

18.1 If a unit at the lowest quality level suffers special ELR reduction, it is broken instead.

RETRO Solo Sequence of Play

1. RALLY Phase

- a. Repair SW, MA, Veh MG
- b. Rally SMC/MMC
- c. Try to remove bog status from vehicles (13.3)
- d. Using order of selection of units (6.1-6.2), place automatic MOVE/FIRE counters (6.31)
- e. Using order of selection of units for remaining units, roll random DR (6.31) on respective ATTACKER/DEFENDER tables (4.1-4.3). Place SMOKE, MOVE, or FIRE counters
- f. Resolve any random events immediately and reroll (4.3)
- g. Remove SMOKE counters after third turn of existence (7.3)

2. MOVEMENT Phase

- a. Infantry with SMOKE counters attempt to place smoke; then place FIRE counters (6.32 & 7.1-7.5)
- b. AFVs with SMOKE counters & dispensers will use during move (7.5)
- c. Move units using order of selection (6.1-6.2) Units must halt if they move adjacent to enemy units; move to secure objectives
- d. Hesitation checks for infantry who move into first open hex in normal range of unbroken MMC/MG (10.1-10.5)
- e. Hesitation check DR for vehicles who move into first open hex within LOS & normal range of guns & AT SW (11.6-11.61)
- f. Infantry may load/unload onto/from vehicles (AFVs, trucks, boats, horses, etc)
- g. AFVs that move ≤ 3 MP, have LOS to enemy ≤ 6 hexes away will stop & fire with 3-column right shift (see 14.1); place Adv Fire counter (will fire last in Fire Ph)
- h. AFVs may pivot for free (not considered movement) and fire in Fire Ph (13.1) with +3 penalty
- i. AFVs may overrun if opportunity exists (13.4)
- j. Infantry may place DC after successful "special" hesitation check (11.3)
- k. DEFENDER infantry will engage enemy infantry units moving in their first *open* hex that are within LOS and *normal* range (3.38)
- l. Bog checks for vehicles when required (13.2)
- m. Mines - if present, moving units must check for mine strike (1.91)
- n. If HIP DEFENDERS, any unit that moves within 4 hexes of an objective hex will reveal one enemy unit (1.7-1.75)

3. FIRE Phase

- a. ATTACKER AFVs that rolled smoke (and have smoke ammo) fire first
- b. Leaders with radio counters will try and establish contact with OBA; if successful place counter on target hex (8.1-8.3)
- c. Resolve OBA from a previous turn request (Retro pg 20-22)
- d. Using order of selection (6.1-6.2), fire units with Prep Fire counters (2.1-2.6) including DC
- e. Resolve the routs of any broken units immediately (possible elimination), Retro pg. 8
- f. Fire AFVs that have Adv Fire counters (14.1)

4. DEFENSIVE FIRE Phase

- a. Using order of selection (6.1-6.2), fire units (max range of 3)
- b. Resolve the routs of any broken units immediately (possible elimination), Retro pg. 8

5. CLOSE COMBAT Phase

- a. Using order of selection (6.1-6.2), move units one hex (DEFENDER limitations 3.31 & 3.37)
- b. Boat passengers may be unloaded (17.31); carried boats may become beached (17.32)
- c. Using order of selection (6.1-6.2), resolve close combat (2.8 & 2.9)