

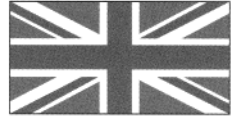
- c. The first fire opportunity occurs when an amphibious unit/stack enters a non-adjacent target hex. The player with the CD unit(s) declares bombardment, and amphibious movement is halted temporarily. Each qualifying CD unit may bombard the amphibious unit/stack using its printed Support Strength on the Bombardment Table.

Note: Even if an amphibious unit/stack enters more than one non-adjacent target hex, each qualifying CD unit may bombard only once.

- d. The second fire opportunity occurs when an amphibious unit/stack enters *any* adjacent target hex. Each time such a hex is entered, each qualifying CD unit may bombard at twice its printed Support Strength on the Bombardment Table.
- e. Bombardment Results
- 1) A numeric result results in a step loss (bombarding player's choice).
 - 2) The first "X" result causes a "1" numeric marker to be placed on the amphibious unit/stack. This marker indicates that the unit/stack loses its ZOC and has a +1 DRM added to any attack in which it participates.
 - 3) A second "X" result flips the numeric marker to its "2" side. This marker indicates that the unit/stack loses its ZOC and has a +2 DRM added to any attack in which it participates.
 - 4) A third "X" result aborts the landing and sends the amphibious unit/stack back to the port where it started its movement.
 - 5) A "XX" result is treated as an "X" result.
 - 6) Numeric markers are removed during the friendly Engineering Phase during the turn they are received.

Mastering Your Opponent Across the Tactical Matrix

in *SARATOGA* and *BRANDYWINE CREEK*



By Alex Ashton



GMT's **American Revolutionary War** series (*SARATOGA* and the recently-released *BRANDYWINE CREEK*) succeed in being simple enough to serve as an introduction to the hobby for first entrants, while containing enough subtlety and variety of options to provide a challenge to the most experienced of gamers. The game reminds me of some of the old classics with their low counter density and ease of play.

It is in the combat system that the subtlety of play comes into its own, through the use of tactic chits that are selected for every close combat encounter. Here, aspiring generals can gain an advantage over their opponent. The decisive edge in combat now turns on how well one can gauge the opponent's probable tactical maneuver and reply with an effective counter measure. Consistently gaining the edge over your opponent on the Tactical Matrix could be the difference between defeat and victory.

LEADERSHIP

Leaders can bring into play up to four extra tactical chits, thereby increasing your alternatives and causing your opponent to use his chits in a defensive manner in order for him to avoid those +2/2 die roll modifiers. You can not play the Frontal Assault, Commit Reserve, Turn Flank or Refuse Flank without a leader being stacked or adjacent to the unit involved in close combat. The Frontal Assault and Commit Reserve chits can be played automatically in the presence of a

leader. In order to bring into play the Turn Flank and Refuse Flank chits, there must be one empty hex adjacent to both player's units.

In order to obtain maximum advantage, your leaders should be positioned to influence as many close combat results as possible. Ideally, they should be positioned adjacent to, rather than on, the front line in order to reduce the possibility of a Leader Casualty from the close combat table.

The British have a distinct leadership advantage. From the outset they start with two leader counters where as the American's only have Arnold until Gates' release. On turn 2, von Reidesel arrives-though he only provides a leadership advantage to the German troops under his command. Thus, the Americans player has one leader facing three British leaders until at least turn 8 (unless Gates' wing is released earlier through the movement of British Combat units to within four hexes of hex 2410 or hex 1407). The British player needs to make this advantage tell early in the game through maximization of his tactical chit options to gain the victory points required to win.

The American player needs to combat the British leadership advantages through a proper understanding of the tactical matrices in order to minimize the effects on the close combat table. To nullify the British leadership superiority, the American should present, wherever possible, a continuous front to negate the

No Leaders Present

Defender	Attacker			
	Skirmish	Attack en Echelon	Stand Fast	Withdraw
Skirmish	0	-1	+1	NC
Attack en Echelon	+1	0	-1	-1
Stand Fast	-1	+1	0	NC
Withdraw	NC	+1	NC	NC

Notes: NC = No combat.

play of the Turn Flank tactical chit. It is the British player who must come to you and consequently you can position your units in such a way as to limit the exposure of your flanks.

The limited number of leaders should be used where a die roll modifier (DRM) would be most beneficial. When attacking at 4-1, a DRM of +1 may be less beneficial than in 1-1 or 3-2 combats. If the opportunity presents itself to threaten to play a Turn Flank tactical chit, then take advantage of the situation.

THE TACTICAL MATRICES

The presence or absence of leaders in combat means that there are four different matrices in play throughout the game.

1. No Leader Present

This matrix provides 16 possible results of which only eight will produce a DRM. Five results yield no combat at all. Unless your opponent uses the Attack en Echelon, you can Withdraw from combat, a very appealing strategy when outnumbered and you would prefer to give ground rather than lose men.

If you want to bring your opponent to battle then consider playing the Attack en Echelon chit. This will ensure that your opponent doesn't succeed in withdrawing, and it gives you a 50 per cent chance of a +1 modifier. The drawback is that

your opponent could counter your chit with a Skirmish chit and gain a DRM in the close combat.

Where it is unlikely either party would Withdraw, then the tactical matrix reduces to just nine squares. It is in this situation the matrix gives away very little. This is the time to punish your opponent for any recurring patterns.

2. Attacking Leader Present

Of the 32 possible results, eight result in Attacker DRMs and nine result in Defender DRMs. However, the Attacker has the possibility of a +2 DRM and can also ensure (with a Frontal Assault) that the defender is severely punished if he attempts to withdraw from combat.

In playing against an opponent with an exposed flank, a selector from the Frontal Assault chit and the Turn Flank chits will give you a chance of a +2 modifier. A counter measure against the Frontal Assault is no good against the Turn Flank tactical chit. The defender's Attack en Echelon limits damage to a maximum of +1 DRM, but the Stand Fast chit will counter the Frontal Assault chit, giving a -1 DRM (but gives away a +2 DRM to an attacker Turn Flank chit). The defender's decision comes down to whether or not he can afford to give away a +2 DRM in the hope of gaining -1 DRM. Are you a cautious player or cavalier player? If you can predict your opponent's pattern of chit play, you may well be able to second guess his move.

The attacker should **not** play the Commit Reserve or the Refuse Flank chits with this matrix. These chits are primarily used to counter chits your opponent can not play.

With the initiative, the attacker can break off combat more easily, because the defender is on the defensive. While the defender is looking to counter those potentially devastating +2 DRM results, the attacker can look to regroup by playing a Withdraw chit.

Attacking Leader Present

Defender	Attacker							
	Skirmish	Attack en Echelon	Stand Fast	Withdraw	Frontal Assault	Commit Reserve	Turn Flank	Refuse Flank
Skirmish	0	-1	+1	NC	+2	-1	-1	0
Attack en Echelon	+1	0	-1	-1	0	0	+1	-1
Stand Fast	-1	+1	0	NC	-1	-1	+2	0
Withdraw	NC	+1	NC	NC	+2	0	0	NC

Notes: NC = No combat.

Frontal Assault and Commit Reserve require Leader.

Turn Flank and Refuse Flank require Leader AND open flank.

Tactical Matrices: American Revolutionary War

With no open flank, then the attack is less effective, because the defender can more freely choose Attack en Echelon to effectively counter the attacker's best two methods of countering a defender choice of Withdraw (Frontal Assault and Attack en Echelon).

3. Defending Leader Present

This matrix is a mirror image of the previous matrix, except that the initiative falls to the defender rather than the attacker.

4. Both Have Leaders Present

In these circumstances you see the Tactical Matrix in all its glory, the way it appears on the SARATOGA Player Aid Card. There are 64 results with a DRM resulting on 56 per cent of the choices.

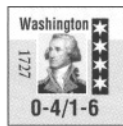
In contrast to the previous matrices, here you have less control of events. The opponent's possession of the Commit Reserve chit greatly undermines flank advantages. You must now consider whether you want to play cautiously, aiming to nullify the benefits of the matrix to your opponent, or aggressively, trying to maximize the benefits to yourself.

You must decide for whether it is beneficial to pull out of combat or to stay and fight-and likewise for the enemy. Having decided on those priorities, you need to guess your opponent's likely move. It is this combination of priorities and likely moves which will determine your best choices.

FINAL THOUGHTS

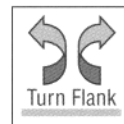
The tactical matrix provides a range of DRMs from -2 to +2-a total swing of 4. A brief look at the close combat table shows that there is a big difference between a result of 3 and a result of 7. Ensure you master your opponent across the tactical matrix and you will be one step toward victory across the battlefield.

Defending Leader Present



Defender	Attacker			
	Skirmish	Attack en Echelon	Stand Fast	Withdraw
Skirmish	0	-1	+1	NC
Attack en Echelon	+1	0	-1	-1
Stand Fast	-1	+1	0	NC
Withdraw	NC	+1	NC	NC
Frontal Assault	-2	0	+1	-2
Commit Reserve	+1	0	+1	0
Turn Flank	+1	-1	-2	0
Refuse Flank	0	+1	0	NC

Notes: NC = No combat.
Requires Leader.
Requires Leader AND open flank.



Both Sides Have Leaders Present

Defender	Attacker							
	Skirmish	Attack en Echelon	Stand Fast	Withdraw	Frontal Assault	Commit Reserve	Turn Flank	Refuse Flank
Skirmish	0	-1	+1	NC	+2	-1	-1	0
Attack en Echelon	+1	0	-1	-1	0	0	+1	-1
Stand Fast	-1	+1	0	NC	-1	-1	+2	0
Withdraw	NC	+1	NC	NC	+2	0	0	NC
Frontal Assault	-2	0	+1	-2	0	+1	+1	0
Commit Reserve	+1	0	+1	0	-1	0	-1	-1
Turn Flank	+1	-1	-2	0	-1	+1	0	+2
Refuse Flank	0	+1	0	NC	0	+1	-2	0

Notes: NC = No combat.
Frontal Assault and Commit Reserve require Leader.
Turn Flank and Refuse Flank require Leader AND open flank.

