



Fog of War Rules for the Horse & Musket Era

By Phil Johnston and Les Benoodt

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Introduction

The object of these rules is to provide a way to more accurately reflect the effects of visibility and scouting on command in the horse & musket era, particularly in scenarios where no umpire is available. The rules are based on the analyses of visibility found in *The Waterloo Campaign* by Albert Nofi and *Strategy & Tactics* No. 67. A distillation of these analyses (slightly modified) can be outlined thus:

<i>Distance from Observer</i>	<i>Observable Attribute</i>	<i>Indication or Conclusion</i>
6,000 yards	Darkened terrain or dust	Possible presence of troops
2,000 yards	Dark even line of troops Notched line of troops	Presence of infantry Presence of cavalry/artillery
1,500 yards	Distinctions between masses of troops/ relative alignment and presence of artillery pieces	Approximate strength of troops/possibly their discipline or experience (by the smartness of their alignment)
1,000 yards	Movements of arms & legs/general flag designs	Speed and direction of movement/ general ID by nationality, etc.
500 yards	Individuals can be distinguished	Exact numbers of troops, possible unit IDs, based on unusual headdress, other major uniform distinction (not cuffs and such)
250 yards	Details of flags and uniforms	Exact unit ID probable

It is also assumed that the commanders involved in the scenario have access to telescopes or similar devices. Otherwise, half the above distances.

Equipment Needed

The usual stuff – figures, terrain, a set of rules, dice, rulers, etc.

One grand tactical card for each grand tactical maneuver unit (where a player commands a corps this should be divisions, independent brigades and artillery battalions; where he commands divisions this should be brigades or regiments). Thus for *Empire* or *Legacy of Glory* or *Napoleon's Battles* or *Fire and Fury* a card should be designated for each division; for *Johnny Reb* or *House Rules Napoleonic* or *Warfare in the Age of Reason* one should be designated for each brigade, and for *Covered with Glory* or *Complete Brigadier* one should be designated for each regiment.

Please feel free to photocopy these cards for your personal use. If you game with 5mm figures either reduce the size of the grand tactical cards by 50% or make your own using 4" X 6" cards.

You will also need several sheets of blank paper (8.5" X 11") to cover the cards.

Using the Grand Tactical Cards

On one side of each card is a standard military symbol for infantry, cavalry or artillery. Use the former

two for maneuver units of infantry or cavalry with artillery units attached. Use the latter for independent artillery units, such as Napoleonic corps reserve batteries or Civil War artillery battalions/brigades.

On the opposite side is space to identify the unit to be represented by the card. It includes unit ID, superior attachment (i.e. to corps, etc.), number of constituent sub-units (i.e. battalions), number of attached batteries and the unit commander. Fill in as much data as you wish, but at least ensure that each card has enough information to identify the unit it represents.

The empty box on the reverse side of the card should be used to sketch out the deployment of the troops represented by the card. Be sure to indicate the position and ID of each component unit, including attached artillery.

Pre-Game Allocation of Grand Tactical Cards

Assign one card for each maneuver unit. Next, each side may have extra cards to use as dummies. These represent the ability of the army to employ deception to mask its true deployment. Use the following procedures to allocate dummy cards. Remember, only the skill of the supreme commander will be considered for this purpose.

1. Count the number of corps (or divisions for smaller level games) on your side. Find that column on the table.

Die Roll	Number of Corps								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15+	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
12-14	1	2	4	5	6	8	9	10	12
9-11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6-8	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3-5	0	1	1	2	3	3	4	5	5
0-2	0	0	1	2	2	3	3	4	4
<0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	4

2. Roll 1D10

3. Modify as follows:

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Superior or "AA"	+6
Excellent or "A"	+4
Good or "B"	+2
Average or "C"	0
Poor or "D"	-2
Despicable or "E"	-4

4. Find the modified roll along the left side of the chart and cross-index with the number of corps. This is the number of dummies that side is allowed to deploy. Obviously, they need not deploy all they are entitled to.

Deploying the Cards and Figures

In your usual manner, set out your terrain. Each side may now deploy their figures and cards, according to the following guidelines. Use your normal methods for determining attacker position, defender set on, etc.

If units are to begin deployed within 500 yards of the enemy, set on figures as normal.

If units are more than 500 yards but within 2,000 yards of the enemy, deploy using the grand tactical cards.

If units are more than 2,000 yards from the enemy, deploy the grand tactical cards *covered* by blank paper.

Optional rule: Instead of deploying units within 500 yards as figures, deploy them using cards. Then, following the order writing (or equivalent) phase of the first turn, deploy the figures.

Another option: If you really like to see the figures massed on the table and think the 500 yard rule is too restrictive, deploy any units out to 1,000 yards as figures. (We often use this option. After all, war gaming is a delicate balance between visual appeal and intellectual appeal. Some of our local gamers just can't stand not seeing all those figures.)

Yet a third option: If your rules incorporate arbitrary distances to reflect different classes of ranges, you may adjust the distances above to match those ranges. For example, *Legacy of Glory* uses 18-22 inches as engagement range and 9 inches as combat range. You could deploy cards for figures outside of combat range (or engagement range if you like the previous optional rule). Several other rules use similar range distinctions to regulate activity. Select the one closest to 500 yards (or 1,000) or the one that represents the boundary between grand tactical maneuvering and tactical combat.

Obviously, the above distances will be limited by line-of-sight. Units in or behind cover that blocks line of sight (as outlined in your rules) need only deploy as cards, covered with blank paper if over 1,000 yards or as uncovered cards if within 1,000 yards. (This distinction reflects the ability of pickets or scouts to ascertain rudimentary information about hidden units if close enough for some scouting.)

In woods or towns, use a spare board game counter or other small object, instead of laying a card over your trees or buildings. Exception: artillery on the edge of a woods or town must be deployed as figures if within 500 (or 1,000) yards of the enemy.

Sighting the Troops

Once units reach the agreed upon visibility range, players have two options. They may place the figures on the table following the order writing phase of the turn after the units become visible. (This prevents an immediate reaction to sighting information that must pass up the chain of command.)

Or, they may take a more complicated approach. Once a grand tactical unit moves into visibility range, measure from the sighted unit to the player/figure. This will determine the time taken for the information to reach the commander. It will take 5 minutes per 1,000 yards for the information to travel by courier, etc., from the visibility point to the commander, including stops along the chain of command. In most cases this will work out to a turn or two.

During the interval between the time the unit is sighted and the player is notified, keep the enemy card on the table, rather than deploying the figures. Alternatively, deploy the figures but do not allow the player to give orders in response to the sighting until the appropriate time has passed.

Maintaining Realistic Deployment Distances

It's imperative that players not use these cards to unrealistically mass their units for movement and then expand the deployment as figures are placed on the table. Thus, while the cards need not (cannot) usually cover the entire deployment area of the grand tactical units, adequate table space must be allotted for each card. Cards will normally have a large amount of space surrounding them, unless the grand tactical units are physically small.

This issue reflects one of the key activities of a general — deploying his troops. And, since generalship is what war gaming should be all about, we have to ensure that bad generalship — bad deployment — is suitably penalized. If, when the cards are replaced with figures, there is not enough room to properly deploy the figures in the space allotted — that is that one deployment area overlaps with another adjacent one — apply severe morale, movement and command penalties.

The rules will cite several examples of appropriate penalties, but obviously the actual penalties will depend on the rules you use.

For *Legacy of Glory* treat the overlapping and overlapped grand tactical units as confused and require each to conduct a panic check with a -3 modifier. If it passes the panic check, then the grand tactical unit must cease any forward movement until the component units can be redeployed into a non-overlapping fashion. If attacked during this process, the unit remains confused. No new orders may be given to the grand tactical unit until this mess is cleared up.

For *Empire*, halt the grand tactical unit for at least one turn to redeploy into something non-overlapping. For the duration of this process, consider all units as two morale grades lower than normal and disordered. The grand tactical unit may receive no new orders during this process.

For *Johnny Reb* also stop any forward movement until the units can be redeployed. Treat all component units as tactically surprised and in disorder.

For *Warfare in the Age of Reason* treat the units as disorganized, conduct any morale checks with an additional -2 modifier and halt any forward movement for at least three turns. Units may not move backward to create gaps in the deployment to overcome the overlapping. Rather, each unit may only move to the right or left. (Lines of battle were very important in their period. If a line became intermingled, the officers would have to halt and dress ranks, which involves lateral movement to recover spacing as well as shifting forward or backward to “straighten” the line. Also, units tend not to be dropped out of line because their place in line was a privilege of seniority.)

For other rule sets apply the following general penalties: stop forward movement, lower unit morale levels, treat units as disordered or disorganized, require that the offending grand tactical units redeploy, allow no change of orders while intermingled, if a grand tactical unit morale or similar check is provided for in the rules, conduct that with a negative modifier equal to the worst other modifier given.

In any case, the overcrowded component units may not be simply shifted beyond the deployment area. Rather they must deploy in the space allotted, with overlaps. This may create odd units out of lone or units in physical contact — nice artillery targets.

Option: The grand tactical units need not stop movement and redeploy. However, the other penalties will remain in effect until that redeployment takes place. This would allow a player to continue to press an attack in spite of the risks. If this option is allowed, and if your rules provide for it, allow the affected grand tactical unit commanders to pass a competency, skill or similar check and withdraw beyond artillery range before redeploying.

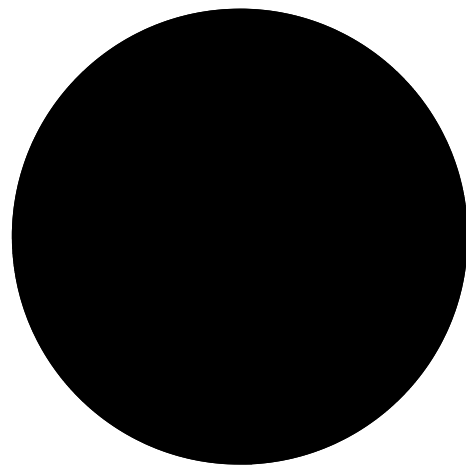
Artillery and the Cards

Obviously, while the cards are in play, the corresponding grand tactical units may be under artillery fire. Conduct such fire normally, according to your rules, using the front of the card as the front edge of the leading line of units. Note resulting artillery hits as tick marks on the top of the card or on a separate roster. Do not conduct morale checks until the cards are replaced with figures. At that point, allocate hits or casualties equally among units in the leading line or wave of the grand tactical units. If your rules provide for bounce through casualties, distribute 40 percent of the hits to the leading units equally among the trailing units. If there is a third wave, put 20 percent of the leading wave's hits or casualties on those units. (Some rules distinguish between "hits" on a unit and actual "casualties". Consider the artillery fire to inflict the more temporary of the phenomena.)

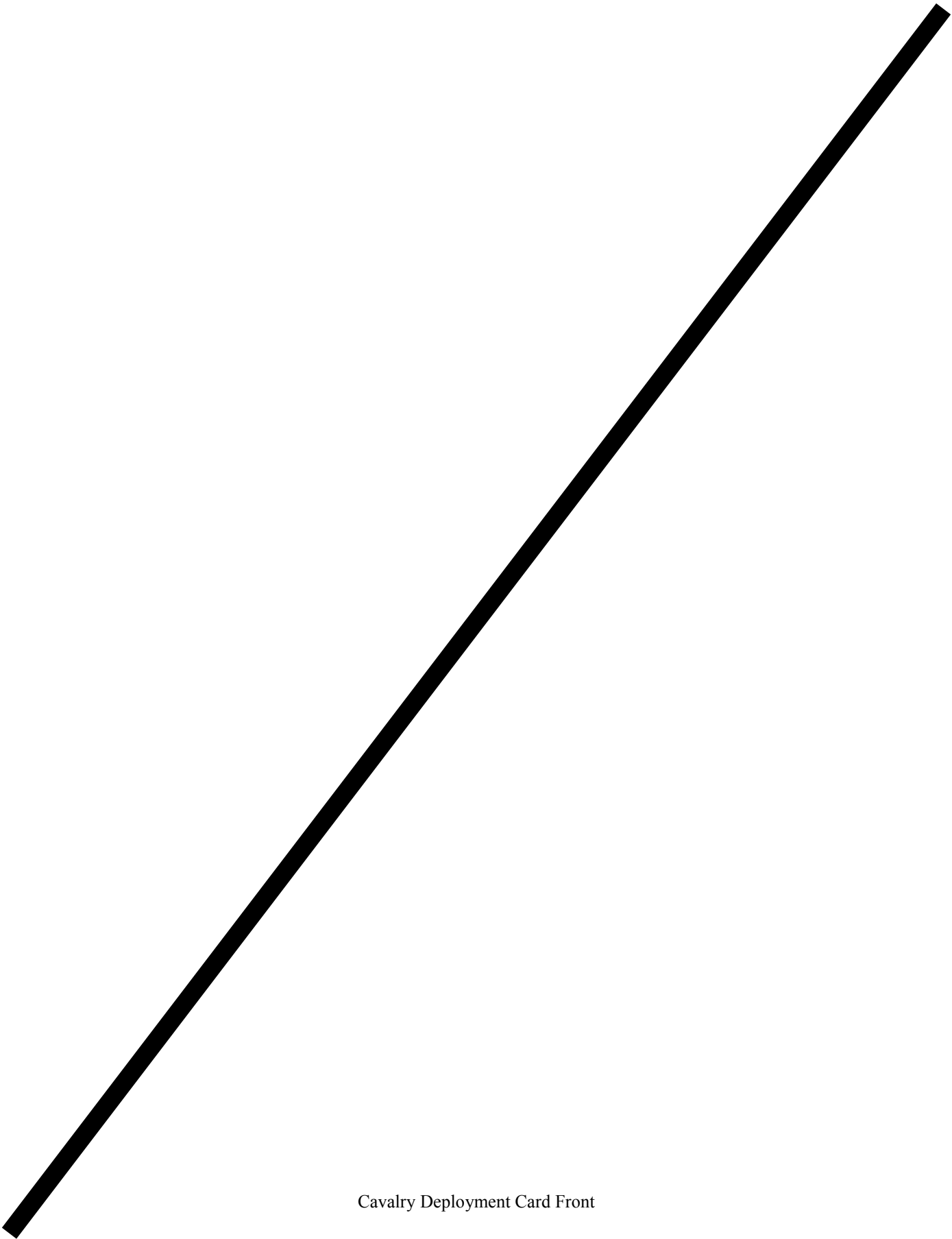
By not assessing damage and conducting resulting morale checks until after the figures are on the table, we prevent players from keeping too close an eye on the condition of their grand tactical units. Typically, a commander could not know the combat effectiveness of a grand tactical unit under fire until something good or bad happened — they carried the position or began to retreat or dissolve. He could see the amount of fire being directed on the unit, but he could not know the resulting effects on the unit's effectiveness until the battlefield crisis (the destructive act, according to Clausewitz) had arrived. By the time figures are placed on the board, the crisis point for the grand tactical unit will be so close, the commander usually cannot respond before the crisis is reached. Thus a good commander will note the volume of fire placed on his units, consider their quality and respond on the basis of an educated guess, much as the historical figure would do.

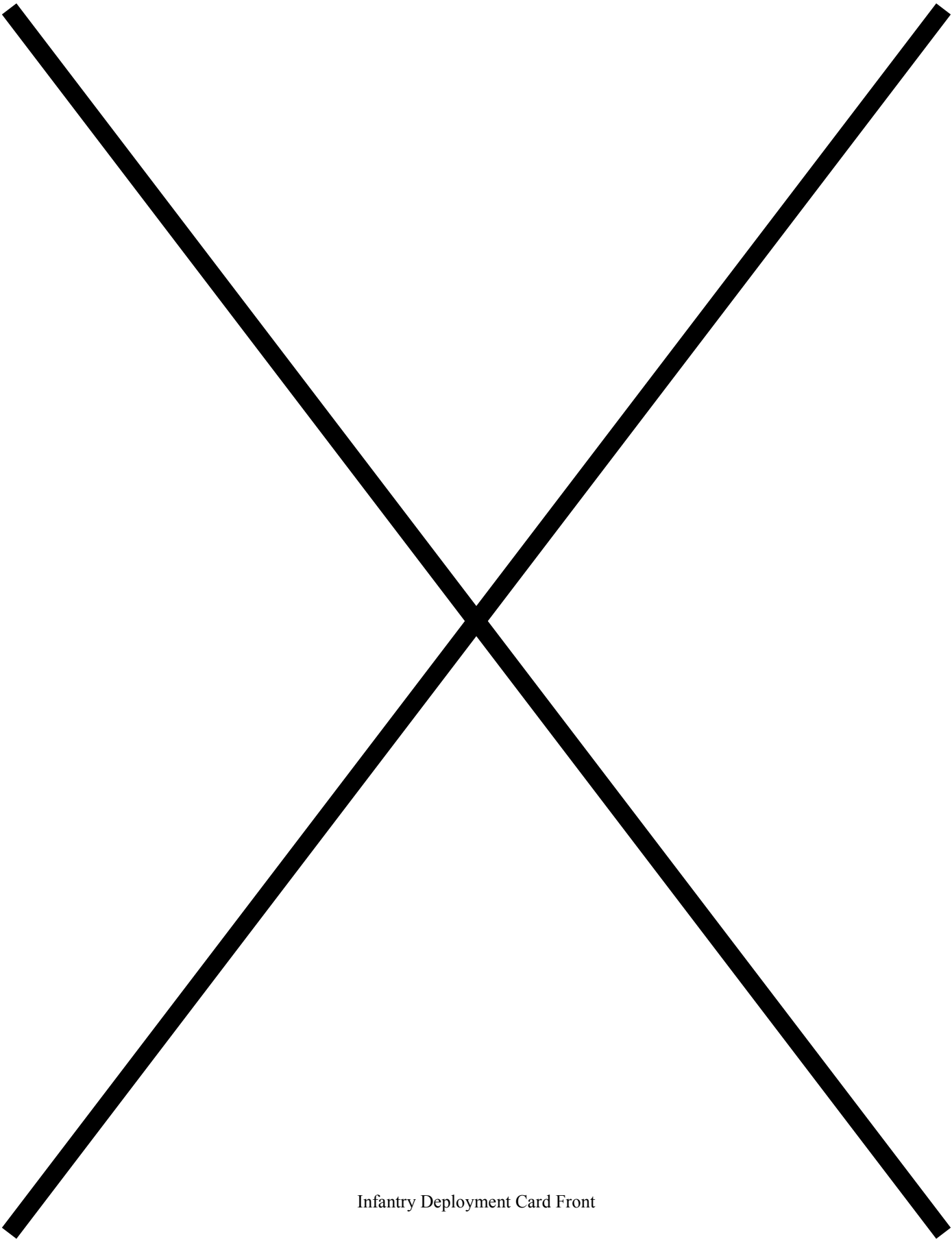
Conclusion

These rules are meant to be a jumping off point for fog of war. They represent the critical issues of visibility and deployment, knowing what's on the other side of the hill. We've found that the rules tend to encourage players to hold onto reserves, send scouting or local attacks to determine an enemy's dispositions and place themselves near where they think the critical actions are to take place. Pretty historic kinds of behaviors.



Artillery Deployment Card Front





Infantry Deployment Card Front

Unit ID _____

Superior Brigade/Division/Corps _____

Number of Battalions/Regiments _____

Number of Batteries _____

Commander/Rating _____

Unit Original/Current Morale _____ / _____

Other (_____) _____

Other (_____) _____

Deployment Sketch