

Bloodybacks

Introduction

The **Bloodybacks** rules (for battles of the American War of Independence) were authored by Stephen Jones. I don't know the date or even the year in which these rules came into being, I do know that they were being played (by Steve) at Salute in 2002. The demo game presented at Salute 2002 won an award for the "best painted" army...

I came upon the rules in 2004. As I remember things it was the 4th of July weekend and Mike Frank was visiting (from Visalia, CA) and I pulled out my copy of the rules and the four figures I had painted and showed them to Mike. From there we decided that these rules were promising and worth a further look. By the end of that holiday weekend we had decided to put on a game (using the **Bloodybacks** rules) at the local convention (ConQuest) in September. Over the next several weeks we fiddled with the rules and recruited Bob Henry to paint figures (Mike and Bob painted the vast majority of the 30mm AWI figures in my collection) so that we would be ready in September to present our game.

We started off trying the rules as presented by Steve, but soon determined that we wanted to make a few changes here and there – not that the game as presented by Steve was good, we just felt that we needed to make a few changes. One of our changes was to use eight figures for close order troops. This small change did not impact the rules at all and it made things feel right for the French and Hessian troops. Next we adopted the same figure count for Militia stands. This too works well – however I do think that we could revert to six figure stands and that nothing would be lost in the process. There have been many other small tweaks here and there – some have remained and are present here, other have been discarded, never to be seen again.

I have found this set of rules to be quite flexible and to this end I have been working on using the rules for other conflicts such as the French and Indian War and the Seven Years War in Europe. I've been playing (small) F&IW games with few (or no) changes to the rules and all "seems" to be working well. My next effort will be to apply the rules to the SYW in Europe. This may require a few more changes, but I do feel it will work quite well. The original rules as presented by Steve Jones assume broken ground and fairly dispersed formations. With the switch to European troop formations (Close Order) and mounting more figures to a stand we instantly get increased casualties as caused by denser formations without any rules amendments. As such I am very hopeful that the transition to European battlefields will be most painless.

Well, enough of my thoughts, ideas and plans and onto the rules! The rules presented here are our (Mike Taber, Mike Frank and Bob Henry) distillation of the rules devised by Stephen Jones. All credit for the original rules belongs to Steve – so please blame us for anything that we may have "screwed up".

Mike Taber – October 2006

Basing

The vast majority of the miniatures we use in our games are Jack Scruby 30mm figures. Along with these we use our current generation HistoriFigs 28mm figures with additional figures being from various manufactures 28mm lines.

Our basing should work for the majority of 28mm figures. If you plan to use smaller (or larger) miniature figures, simply adjust your base sizes so that they “look right” to you. Any base size will work, as long as figures are based consistently.

The **Bloodybacks** rules assume that each figure is equal to *about* 10 men. Notice we say “about” not “exactly” 10 men. The basing guidelines presented below match how we play the game; you may make additional changes should you feel so inclined.

	Width	Depth	Figures
Loose Order Infantry	2 ½”	2”	6
Open Order Infantry	2 ½”	2”	4
Close Order Infantry *	2 ½”	2”	8
Militia **	2 ½”	2”	8
Skirmishers (a) ***	2 ½”	1”	3
Skirmishers (b) ***	5”	1”	6
Cavalry	2 ½”	2 ½”	3
Artillery	2 ½”	3”	****
Mounted Officers	2”	2 ½”	*****

Figures are placed on Infantry stands in two equal ranks.

Figures are placed on Cavalry stands in a single rank.

* Close order formation is used by European troops only; French and Hessians

** Militia ranks need not be equal – alternately use a 2 ½” stand depth for “ragged”

Militia

*** Skirmishers may be mounted in one of two ways: on smaller, 3 figure stands or on longer 6 figures stands. In both cases the figures are placed in a single rank. If the smaller stands are used it is easier to combine two skirmish stands into a single loose order stand.

**** An artillery stand will have a single gun model and a varying number of crew figures. Use three (or fewer) crew figures for a light gun and four (or more) crew figures for a field gun.

***** Mounted Officers can be most anything you like, typically a single mounted Officer figure to a stand. However, you may add an addition figure or figures as desired – we often times add a “foot” figure or two to the stand.

Sequence of Play

I. Initiative

- Roll for initiative (CinC rolls d6)

II. First Player

- Panic Tests (within 4" of fleeing friendly unit)
- Declare Charges (opponent reaction)
- Move Chargers (opponent fires at chargers)
- Rally Fleeing troops (Morale test)
- Movement (roll for orders)
- Firing
- Melee
- Reform (remove casualties)
- Move (unattached) Commanders

III. Second Player

- Repeat as above

Initiative

In our game, each CinC rolls a d10 for initiative. The high roller chooses whether to move first or second in the turn. Originally the rules called for different types of dice to be used by the different nationalities. The original die types are listed below. While we prefer to use a single d10 you may wish to do something different.

Initiative Die:

American	British	French
d3	d8	d6

Panic Tests

- I. Unit within 4" of Fleeing Friendly units must test.
- II. Roll 2D6 – If Greater than Morale fails test...
- III. If Unit has Greater Morale (than Fleeing unit), then Pinned – no Move or Charge this turn – they may fire.
- IV. If Unit is Equal or Lesser Morale (than Fleeing unit), will flee – 2D6" Foot, 3D6" Mounted

Declare Charges

- I. Must **declare** (charge) to make Contact with Enemy.
- II. Infantry may charge up to 8" (terrain modifiers apply).
- III. Cavalry may charge 8d3" (8" - 24") – must move Full distance unless contact is made (terrain modifiers apply).
- IV. Artillery **Cannot** charge
- V. Skirmish & Open Order Infantry may only charge like units
- VI. Charging units may not maneuver except to make an initial wheel of up to 45°

Charge Reactions

- I. Stand & Fire (determine casualties immediately)
- II. Counter Charge – Cavalry may counter charge 8d3" (8" - 24") – must move full distance unless contact is made (units should meet at halfway point).
- III. Evade – Skirmish & Open Order Infantry may fall back in good order – 4D3"
- IV. Flee – Unit runs away in Disorder – 2d6" Foot, 3D6" Mounted
- V. Fire & Flee – Infantry may Fire and then Flee 2D3"
- VI. About Face and Fire – Infantry may turn 180° and Fire at ½ effect.

Chargers who suffer less than 25% casualties, or who pass any Morale test, are now moved into contact.

Rally Fleeing Troops

Test Morale – If successful, unit may choose any formation desired & may not Move or Fire this turn.

Movement

- I. Units that did not Charge may attempt Movement
- II. Movement requires an Order from a Friendly Commander – Roll Commander's Command rating or less on a d10. (Unit only gets one attempt per turn).
- III. Attached Commanders Move with unit to which they are attached.

See Movement and Command Charts for more information.

Firing

Check Range, total FirePoints add the roll of a D3 and then apply modifiers.

When firing, if some stands are over ½ range and others are under ½ range – player may choose to either fire all as if over ½ range or only count those under ½ range in the combat.

Note: Stands in melee (including overlaps) cannot be fired upon.

First Fire: Infantry only - if target is within ¼ range the first time a unit fires (during game) x2 hits to target.

See Firing Charts for more information.

- I. Calculate the total number of FirePoints directed at Target Unit.
- II. Add the roll of a d3.
- III. Apply any and all Modifiers (see Firing Charts for more information).

The result will be a number of Hits against the target. Mark these Hits against the unit until the end of the turn – the effect of Hits will be determined in the Reform Phase.

Determine fate of any Attached Commanders – See Commander Casualties.

An immediate Morale Test is required if a unit takes Hits equal to or greater than 25% of its strength in figures **or** is a militia unit in the open.

Artillery

Types of Shot:

There are two types of shot used by artillery; Round shot and Canister. For game purposes, a gun will have unlimited supply of round shot. However, at the beginning of the game roll 2d3 for each gun. The result being the number of rounds of canister shot available during the game. All guns are assumed to be loaded with round shot unless a canister shot marker is placed on the stand. Place a marker during the Reform Phase to indicate that canister has been loaded.

Artillery Actions:

Artillery can perform only two actions per turn:

Limber and Move (cannot fire)

Move and Unlimber (cannot fire)

Move and Fire (assumes man-handled guns)

Unlimber and Fire (cannot move)

Other combinations may be possible as long as only two actions are taken in a single turn. Actions are: Move, Fire, Limber, and Unlimber

Howitzers:

Most artillery must fire with a clear Line of Sight (LOS). Howitzers fire explosive shells with a higher trajectory so can engage targets even if other units block line of sight.

As communication was poor in the AWI, howitzers cannot fire over intervening terrain except for low walls and hedges.

To fire a howitzer: designate a target at least 8" away and no more than 36" distant. Place a 2" shell burst marker on the target and roll the scatter and direction dice (*from Warhammer*). If a hit is scored the marker is not moved, otherwise move the marker the number of inches indicated in the direction shown on the die.

Any unit under the template then takes 2d3 FirePoints (see "firing"). If more than one unit is covered, dice for which is affected.

Melee

See Melee Charts for details.

- I. As far as possible line-up units so 1 stand fights 1 enemy stand.
- II. Roll a number of d6 for the unit, counting figures on stands in contact or overlapping an enemy stand. To overlap, the stand must be in contact with a friendly stand in front-edge contact with an enemy unit.
- III. Each side counts up the number of casualties it has inflicted in the melee (determine fate of any Attached Commanders – See Commander Casualties) and applies modifiers to determine who wins. If Scores are tied, each rolls d6, higher score wins Melee by one (1) point. Re-roll ties.
- IV. Loser *immediately* checks Morale for each unit – modified by the difference in melee scores. Failure results in the unit breaking and running (2d6" Foot & 3d6" Mounted).
- V. Broken units move directly away from the attack, diverting only to avoid other units.
- VI. Any militia units within 12" of a friendly unit that fails its Morale test (and of the same type: horse or foot) must immediately take a Morale test (if failed break & run as above).
- VII. Victorious cavalry units must pursue 3d6" – If they contact or overtake the enemy unit it is destroyed.
- VIII. Pursuers are moved the full distance indicated, but after catching the enemy they may wheel up to 45°.
- IX. If Pursuers contact another enemy unit they fight a Melee in the next available Melee phase and count as Charging.
- X. Pursuers who leave the table may return on the Player's next turn. They are placed within 12" from the point of departure and may move no further that turn. If they **do not** re-enter on that turn (player's choice) they **may not return**, but do not count as being destroyed.

See Melee Charts for details.

Morale Tests

- I. Roll 2d6 (3d6 for Indians not in Woods).
- II. Subtract 1 from roll if Commander is attached – Subtract 2 if General is attached.
- III. If Roll is equal to or less than Morale Value, test is passed.
- IV. If failed, unit will run away (2d6” Foot, 3d6” Mounted).

Morale Values

Value	Units
11	British Flank Companies
10	British, European, Continental Elite
9	Continental, Loyalists, Indians*
8	Veteran Militia
7	Militia

* Indians roll 2d6 in woods, but 3d6 in other terrain

Reform

In Reform Phase each unit that has taken Hits (both sides) must determine the effect of these Hits.

- I. Remove 1 Infantry stand for every 6 Hits (8 hits if 8 figures on the stand) – 1 Cavalry for every 3 Hits.
- II. For each “spare” Hit roll a d6 – If any or all of the d6 result in a “6”, remove an additional stand from the unit – *do this even if there were not enough hits to remove a stand. Example unit received 4 hits, so roll 4d6 and if any come up a “6” remove a stand.*
- III. Units reduced to 1 stand are removed unless skirmishers, converged flank companies or if the unit started the game with fewer than 3 stands.
Note: Skirmisher stands consist of 6 figures, a three figure “stand” is only a “half-stand”
- IV. Units, which loose at least one stand in the Reform phase, Must test Morale, adding the number of lost stands to the die roll. Failure of Morale test, results in the unit breaking and running.
- V. Designate type of shot loaded in Artillery pieces. If not designated, round shot is assumed to be loaded.

Commander Casualties

From Firing: Roll d10 – on a score of 10 Commander is *killed*.

If Commander is Killed, unit takes Morale Test – failure = fall back 2d6” in Good Order.

American Skirmisher or Open order infantry may spend some FirePoints targeting Officers. For every FirePoint thus spent, roll an additional d10.

Command & Movement Charts

Command Values:

	Officer	General		Officer	General
British	8	9	American	7	8
French or Hessian	8	8	Militia	6	7

Command Modifiers: Apply the following to the d10 Command Roll...

Situation	Modifier
Unit & Commander do not have Clear LOS	-2
Each full 12" between Unit & Commander	-1
Untrained Unit	-1
Commander is Attached to Another unit	-1
Commander is Attached to this unit	+1
Unit is in Column	+1

Indians do not receive orders... Each turn roll 1d10 for each Indian unit and add the number of (6 figure) stands lost so far. On a score of 9 or 10 the Indian unit is removed.

Movement:

Unit Type	Movement
Loose order Infantry	6
Open order Infantry	8
Skirmisher & Indians	10
Close order Infantry & Militia	4
Light Dragoons	10
Artillery (manhandled/limbered)	3 / 6
Commanders	12
Wagons (cannot double move)	6

Movement distance may be doubled if a unit begins its move more than 12" from any enemy unit and doesn't come within 12" at any time during the movement.

Maneuvers :

Change Formation or Facing	½ Move
Reform from Skirmish	Full Move
Fall back facing Enemy	½ Speed
Sidestep, Oblique forward – up to 45°	½ Speed
Wheel	Full Speed

Facing changes must be 90° or 180°. The unit's front center stand must remain stationary or rotate about its center to the new facing. The other stands then form around it.

Terrain Effects:

Hills	½ Speed unless Skirmishers or Open Order or Indians
Woods	½ Speed unless Indians. Artillery cannot enter
Villages	½ Speed
Swamp	½ Speed if Skirmisher or Open Order. Full Speed if Indians
Walls	½ Move to cross. Artillery cannot cross
Hedges	Full move to cross. Artillery cannot cross
Fords	¼ Speed

Rivers may be crossed at Bridges or Fords. Bridges must be crossed in Column, Fords in Line or Column – dependent upon width.

Firing and Morale Charts

Firing

Range:

Musket	8
Rifle	12
Light Gun (round shot)	20
Field Gun (round shot)	30
Light Gun (canister)	6
Field Gun (canister)	9

Note: In woods, reduce all ranges by ¼



FirePoints:

One (1) FirePoint per stand, unless Skirmishers, then One (1) FirePoint per three (3) figures (or half stand). **Note:** *Be sure to add the d3 result to FirePoints before applying any modifiers – roll for each firing unit separately*

Fire Modifiers:

Target in Column or Enfilade (not Skirmishers)	x 2
Target is Skirmishing or Open Order Infantry or Artillery	x ½
Target is in Hard cover	x ½
Target is Skirmisher, Open Order Infantry or Artillery in Soft cover	x ½
Firer is Rifle-armed	x ½
Muskets at over ½ range	x ½
Canister	x 2
Militia or Indians being Charged (apply last)	-d6
Infantry First Fire (within ¼ range)	x 2

Note: Several factors may apply. Example: Rifle-armed unit firing at unit in Column is both halved and doubled, resulting in fire at “normal” effect.

Morale

Morale Tests

- Roll 2d6 (3d6 for Indians not in Woods)
- Subtract 1 from roll if Commander is attached – Subtract 2 if General is attached
- If Roll is equal to or less than Morale Value, test is passed
- If failed, unit will run away (2d6” Foot, 3d6” Mounted)

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Melee Charts & Tables

	Vs Foot	Vs Cavalry
Infantry with bayonets	1d6 per 4 figures	1d6 per 5 figures
Other Infantry	1d6 per 8 figures	1d6 per 10 figures
Cavalry	1d6 per 3 figures	1d6 per 3 figures

Modify dice as follows:

Unit has Higher Morale	+ 1
Charging Cavalry	+ 1
Attacking a unit in Soft cover	- 1
Attacking a unit in Hard cover	- 2

For each (modified) d6, determine outcome:

1	No Hits
2-5	1 Hit
6	2 Hits

Add to Total Hits:

Officer Attached to unit	+ 1 (+ 2 if CinC)
Unit is uphill of Enemy	+ 1
Unit is attacking in Flank	+ 1
Unit is attacking Rear	+ 2
Enemy Officer Killed in this Melee	+ 1 (+ 2 if CinC)
Outnumber Enemy by 2:1 or more	+ 1
Enemy in River	+ 1



- I. If Scores are tied, each roll d6, higher score wins Melee by one (1) point. Re-roll ties.
- II. Loser **immediately** checks Morale for each unit – modified by the difference in melee scores. Failure results in the unit breaking and running (2d6” Foot & 3d6” Mounted).
- III. Broken units move directly away from the attack, diverting only to avoid other units.
- IV. Any militia units within 12" of a friendly unit that fails its Morale test (and of the same type: horse or foot) must **immediately** take a Morale test (if failed break & run as above).
- V. Victorious cavalry units **must** pursue 3d6"
- VI. If they contact or overtake the enemy unit it is destroyed.
- VII. Pursuers are moved the full distance indicated, but after catching the enemy they may wheel up to 45°.
- VIII. If they contact another enemy unit they fight a Melee in the next available Melee phase and count as Charging.