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Zulu!

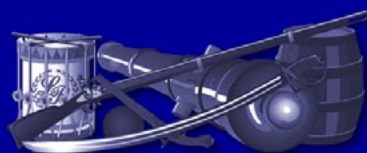


Inside:
FREE simple Zulu Wars
rules and show-tested scenario

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Lawks Drift

A complete Zulu Wars tricky escape game for all comers

by Henry Hyde

INTRODUCTION

Let me make it clear from the very beginning that the inspiration for this little escapade came straight from *Battlegames* contributor and friend Dan Mersey, whose original ideas can be seen in issue 14 which appears in print alongside this PDF special. I'd never really been much of a fan of colonial gaming, but in the last year or so, Dan has brought round his small collection of Perry Sudan figures and entertained me with a couple of cracking little games. The first has yet to breathe the air of publicity in print, and I don't want to spoil the surprise for what is a real corker of a game; but the second was a version of what appears as "The well of Tarka" in this issue.

It was this game that proved pivotal for me. Firstly, I suddenly 'saw the light' as far as colonial wargaming goes, and have now embraced it as part of my wargaming repertoire. And secondly, I realised that the basic idea would fit the bill nicely, with some amendments and additions, for a promise I had made.

What promise was this? Well, as a supporter of a wargames show that is local to me – the annual *To the Redoubt* gathering on Eastbourne seafront – I have been keen to do my bit, helping to publicise the show, attend as a trader and, this year, by volunteering to stage a small participation game. Trouble was that, at the time of making the said promise, I hadn't got a clue what I was going to do! Then, in assembling the material to go into the latest issue, I came upon Dan's article. Problem solved!

Unlike Dan, I had no Sudan figures. However, I remembered that a couple of years ago, I had bought a Zulu Wars 20mm army pack from Sean of Newline Designs at this very show. So, out came the paintbrushes and Zulu Wars reference material, and I set to work. You can see how the project progressed on the *Battlegames Blog* at <http://battlegames.wordpress.com/>. Not everything went entirely to plan, but enough was accomplished to see the game played very successfully half a dozen times at two different shows (it was also taken to the *Whiff of Grapeshot* show in Woolwich on August 10th). The results were two British wins, two draws and two Zulu wins: you can't get any more balanced than that!

Here, then, are the full details of the scenario, the full set of rules we used, a clutch of photos from the 'live' games and some thoughts about the experience.

BACKGROUND

1879. The heat rises on the South African hillsides.

A detachment of the 24th Foot has managed to escape from the disaster at Isandlwana and retain some semblance of order. Men from different companies have been gathered together under Captain Grant and Lieutenant Quarrie, with the help of Colour Sergeant Barker and Sergeant Featherstone. Other than himself, none of the men of Captain Grant's own company survived.

Grant remembers seeing a small mission station called Lawks Drift marked one of the colonel's maps, garrisoned by a small number of irregular but reliable troops, so this is where he has decided to head. As the small force winds its way up into the trackless hills, it is being watched...



GAME PLAY

Table layout

The game can be played as a participation game on a surface a mere 4 feet square. The British objective is to reach the mission in 12 turns.

The British enter in the southeast corner, and the mission, with its walls and comparative safety, is in the far northwest corner. Along the way, there are numerous areas of broken ground and a few trees, all of which can potentially provide cover.

The table features three hills, all of which have steep slopes and provide dead ground for hidden troops.

The British are impeded far more than the Zulus when attempting to climb these slopes, especially when in formation. There is also a large copse of trees in the southwest corner which may also provide cover.

If you are planning to be the umpire (in this instance, 'gamesmaster' might be a better term), then you might like to ration the amount of information you give to your British player 'opponents'.

Forces

British

The British force in this game consists of: 30 regular infantry, commanded by 2 sergeants, 1 lieutenant and 1 captain. The men and NCOs are all armed with the standard Martini-Henry single shot, breech-loading rifle and socket bayonet. The officers have Webley service revolvers and swords. They are currently somewhat short of ammunition, having been told that further supplies are located at the mission.

Each section of 10 men, commanded by a player, must dice to see how much ammunition they have over 6 rounds, counting the dice score as the number of extra rounds available. A record should be kept of

ammunition expended. Players would be ill-advised to divide their forces into anything smaller than the sections described, so it should be easy to keep track of ammo used. If required, use your umpire's discretion.

Zulus

Controlled by the gamesmaster, there are potentially many units of Zulu warriors and one general. They are all armed with the classic assegai and shield. You can choose to enable the Zulus to make use of short-range throwing spears, rather like Roman *pila*, if the British seem to be having too much of an easy time – see the rules later.

In fact, I managed to run the game with a total of 34 Zulu figures which were judiciously 'recycled' after becoming casualties. If you have more Zulu figures at your disposal, then by all means make use of them, but the point is that you don't need to worry if you don't have 'fahsens' of them!

Player briefings

Only read the relevant briefings for your own character(s) and keep them secret until you're analyzing the game afterwards. Captain Grant's player should brief the other players on the overall battle plan at the start of the game – he is in charge, after all.

Captain Grant of the 24th Foot (2nd Warwickshires)

A soldier's soldier, your only thought is to get your men to safety and avoid annihilation by the Zulus, though you wouldn't mind exacting revenge to restore the Regiment's honour if given the chance. You have seniority over the other officers, so must take over control, and ultimately, responsibility.

Your mission: get your men to the relative safety of the Mission within 12 turns. You have seniority over the other officers, so at

the start of the game give general orders to the other players for how your force should proceed.

Lieutenant Quarrie

Most of the survivors are from your own company, and

you hate to think of them taking another hammering. Proceed with haste – and caution (you don't want to lose any more chaps, after all) – to the mission, but try to do this within the confines of the Captain's orders. He's a good fellow, but you wonder if he'd have a greater sense of urgency if it was mostly his own men in danger.

Your mission: Make for the compound at best possible speed, without getting your unit wiped out or incurring (too much) wrath of Captain Grant.

Colour Sergeant Barker

Captain Grant is the regiment's hero and you'll follow his orders to the letter. The other NCOs would make

a pariah of you if you return to the column alive whilst dear old Grant lies dead, so make sure you're on hand should the old chap find himself in too tight a corner.

Your mission: Follow your orders. And without disobeying orders (too badly), make sure that Captain Grant survives if you do!

Sergeant Featherstone

If it wasn't for these blasted Zulus, your brother Harry would still be with the regiment. Instead, he's buried under a pile of stones with a dirty great spear wound in his back. Maybe the heat of the sun has turned you a little squiffy, but you want revenge; but don't dash in to fights with no chance of survival – it would break mother's heart if both her sons were to remain in Zululand forever.

Your mission: Engage the enemy whenever possible, but don't charge in against silly odds (outnumbered yes, but



The game in full swing at the Woolwich "Whiff of Grapeshot" show. Scott Duncan (in the red T-shirt) and Steve Dix push the British towards the objective whilst Roger Smith, our Fantasy & Sci-Fi Editor (white Battlegames T-shirt) and Steve's father keep an eye on proceedings. The Zulu 'regeneration' tray can be seen at bottom left, where our casualties were transferred before magically reappearing elsewhere! The terrain was deliberately kept very simple – the long grass of the Veld was left to the imagination. Note also the speakers on the left-hand table edge, connected to an iPod which had the theme music from "Zulu" blaring out at appropriate moments.

All together now, "Men of Harlech..."



The climax of the game above: move 10, and the British are assailed from front and rear. The sole survivor of Lieutenant Quarrie's squad fights on alone, whilst the men under Colour Sergeant Barker and Sergeant Featherstone are about to combine their firepower and deliver a monstrous volley which rendered the entire Zulu group at top left hors de combat. Assailed from the rear at the same time, however, and forced to turn and fight, Featherstone's men were critically weakened and delayed.



Dan Mersey tries his hand on a recent visit to Battlegames HQ.

no suicide missions – dear old mum would be very upset!).

Reaching the Mission

To count as a success, the British need to have at least 25% of their initial forces, or one section at 75% or more of its original strength, within the compound by the end of Turn 12. There should be no Zulu warriors between the British and the wall.

I used my discretion to award a 'draw' to British

players who managed to get a figure too few to safety, but who might reasonably have expected to achieve the requisite numbers within a turn or two. It's up to you!

Special rules and rule modifications

The special Zulu rules should ideally be read only by the gamesmaster. The general rules that follow can be read by all.

Zulu deployment

At the beginning of the game, no Zulu units are visible on the table. They're out there somewhere, however! Zulu forces arrive on the table randomly, triggered by British movement. Every time any part of the British force moves closer to the compound in its movement turn, roll on Table 1 while the British are actually moving (this creates great tension!) and deploy any arriving Zulus right away, as though they have just popped up out of the long grass or over the brow of a hill. (Do not, however, roll if the only British left are within short rifle range – 6" – of the mission. The defenders are keeping the Zulus at bay so no new Zulu units appear here). If no Zulu units are available (because they're all in play or have been permanently removed from the game), treat the dice roll as a score of 1 or 2 (no Zulus appear).

As always with programmed rules, use common sense to know when to tweak deployment, movement, and so on – these tables give you enough ammunition to play a different game each time and to be surprised by your 'opponent's' moves, but if there's an obvious manoeuvre for a Zulu unit to make, then by all means go for it. Personally, I tried to gauge the experience and tactical expertise of the British players, and play the Zulus accordingly, being tougher on the older, better players than the youngsters. Making children cry is not good PR for your game!

Roll a d20, or two d12, or four d6, to determine the strength of the Zulu unit as it appears. Minimum strength is six figures. In addition, roll a d6 to determine the quality of the Zulus that have just arrived:

- 1 or 2 = novice, inexperienced
- 3, 4 or 5 = regular, competent, experienced
- 6 = veteran, highly skilled

In addition, to add spice, for every third Zulu unit created, add a distinctive leader figure (he can be 'recycled' from previous appearances, of course) who has higher mêlée abilities (see below).

Table 1: Zulu deployment

d6 roll	Outcome	Positioning *
1, 2	No Zulus this turn.	Too far away to be placed on the table... for now!
3	One Zulu unit appears at long rifle range from the British.	Roll another dice: 1,2, 3 = In front of the nearest British 4 = To the left of the nearest British 5 = To the right of the nearest British 6 = To the rear of the farthest British (behind the column, as if pursuing)
4	One Zulu unit appears at short rifle range from the British.	As above
5	Two Zulu units appear at long rifle range from the British.	As above
6	Two Zulu units appear at short rifle range from the British.	As above

* If placement is within 1 Zulu move of a different British sub-unit, fudge the positioning to be just outside this distance or roll again for suitable placement position.

Zulu tactical movement

When on the board, use Table 2 to determine Zulu movement. Dice at the start of their movement phase and follow the Outcome listed below, keeping within the rules of your game.

Table 2: Zulu movement

d6 roll	Outcome	Movement
1, 2	Slink away	Remove from play. (Yes, a unit that has just appeared, as if they have just popped up to take a look, can suddenly disappear again. It really rattles the British players, who wonder where they've gone!)
3	Act with caution	Move <i>no closer</i> to the nearest British unit; generally mill about on the spot unless easy pickings are spotted elsewhere on the table. May fire if rifle armed (a possible game variation) or throw assegais (twice only per unit).
4	Advance	Move towards nearest British unit, contacting them if possible. If rifle/throwing spear armed, may fire instead of or as well as moving.
5	Charge!	Charge at full speed towards nearest British unit.
6	Ch-a-a-r-ge!!	Charge towards nearest British unit at full speed; if no contact is made, add a further 50% to the charge distance, contacting the nearest British unit if now possible.

Modifiers:

- +2 if within charge range.
- 1 if retreating or failed a morale test last turn.
- 1 if outnumbered by target unit.
- 2 if outnumbered by target unit 2:1 or more.

Zulu morale

Test when a Zulu unit takes 25%+ casualties based on its starting strength, and then each 25% thereafter, roll on the following table.

Table 3: Zulu morale

d6 roll	Outcome
1, 2	Bye bye! The unit disperses. Remove the unit from the game.
3, 4	Gone but not forgotten! The unit routs to the nearest table edge but may re-enter the game at a later time; dice for their next entry as normal (see Table 1).
5	The unit retires one Zulu move at the start of the next turn and then may move as it wishes again.
6	Bring it on! The unit carries on as desired.

Modifiers:

-1 for novice Zulus (black shields)*

+1 for veteran Zulus (white shields)*

+1 if the unit won a previous round of mêlée.

* In general terms, the more junior the unit, the darker its shield colouring; veteran units tended to carry shields that were all white, or close to it. Some units carried shields that were made from a bright tan colour cowhide, generally referred to as 'red' in most sources.

Note: British morale is deemed to be 'heroically stiff upper lip' for the purposes of the game, and will be determined by the courage of the players!

THE GENERAL RULES

NB: British may fire twice, or move normally or about turn 180° and fire once, or move and change formation, or fire and change formation, or any other reasonable combination of **two** actions per turn, but they may not *move* twice! British infantry may double on *alternate* moves, and they may not charge immediately after doubling, or vice versa.

Table 4: Movement

Troops	Movement
British infantry skirmishing (bases at least one base width apart)	4" + d6"
British infantry formed (bases touching)	4" + d3"
British infantry formed at the double (may not double or charge in consecutive moves; may not double whilst skirmishing)	6" + d3"
British infantry charging into contact (may not charge or double in consecutive moves)	8" + d3"
British infantry on hill, difficult terrain or in square	Half speed + d3"
Zulus <i>anywhere</i>	9" + d3"
Zulus charging	12" + d3"
Any troops jumping linear obstacle	-3" and roll d6 per figure: 1 = fallen, can't shoot, -2 in mêlée

Table 5: Shooting

Weapon	Range		
	Short	Medium	Long
Martini-Henry	0-6"	6-12"	12-18"*
Webley revolver	0-2"	2-6"	n/a
Throwing spear (Zulus only)	0-4"	n/a	n/a

* Long range shooting is *only* permitted to troops in skirmish order.

The British can either volley fire, or fire at will as individuals. To volley fire, at least two sub-units must be in direct base-to-base contact and all must shoot at the same target. The officer/NCO commanding each section will decide which type of fire to use if the sections are separated by more than 3"; if sections are kept together, then the senior officer/NCO present will decide for the whole body firing.

Roll a d6 for each man firing:

Short range 3, 4, 5, 6 kills

Medium range 4, 5, 6 kills

Long range 5 or 6 kills (skirmishers only)

Modifiers:

Units firing volleys +1 (see above)

Target in cover -2

Target began charge at long range two shots permitted, delivered at medium range

Target began charge at medium range one shot only permitted, delivered at close range

Target began charge at close range no shooting permitted

Hand-to-hand

Mêlées take place immediately when opposing figures come into base-to-base contact. They are decided by a modified man-to-man d6 vs d6 die roll. Highest score wins.

Modifiers:

Any troops charging +1

Young Zulu -1

Regular Zulu unmodified

Veteran Zulu +1

Zulu leader +2 (allocate one for every third Zulu unit generated)

British NCO or officer +2

Defending obstacle +2

Uphill of enemy +1

2:1 or 3:1 (max) fight compare highest scores. If lone defender wins, he is considered to have parried the other attacks and felled one opponent.

ENDPIECE

By all means adapt, tweak or change the rules to suit your particular circumstances, or your historical interpretation of a particular battle or encounter. You may wish, for example, to include cavalry in your games: I would suggest they move at the same speed as Zulus; suffer -1 if firing from the saddle; and gain +1 in mêlée when fighting enemy on foot. Have fun!



Captain Grant (centre left, sand-coloured base edge) leads the survivors of the 24th Foot across the table in a game played by the Editor and Dan Mersey, only to find themselves assailed immediately from front and flank. Sergeant Featherstone and his section have the dark brown base edges, Colour Sergeant Barker the mid-brown, and Lieutenant Quarrie's section, already reduced to ruins, the black edges. Early Zulu attacks from the hill fatally held up Dan's advance. The figures are Newline 20mm, painted by the Editor. The little dice are from EM4, and were used to track ammunition expenditure, one per section. The pips began by showing the number of extra rounds allocated above six, and were then used to count down from the initial six allocated.



Poor Dan's British are surrounded and annihilated only halfway to their destination in the second game played at Battlegames HQ. Sergeant Featherstone (just visible with raised arm in the left-hand group) and Colour Sergeant Barker (top right) put up a suitably heroic fight, but in vain. Interestingly, the British hardly fired a shot in this game: as luck would have it, they were assailed by Zulus who had popped up out of the long grass at short range on several occasions, leaving them no time at all to fire at their attackers. In previous games played at the Redoubt show in Eastbourne and Whiff of Grapeshot in Woolwich, several British sections had run out of ammo, after delivering frequent long-range volleys, which just goes to show that anything can happen!