

## WARGAME FIRST REVIEW

<b>Manila – The Savage Streets</b>	<b>★★★</b>
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<b>Period</b>	WW2	<b>Publisher</b>	Revolution Games
<b>Conflict/Battle</b>	Manila, 1945	<b>Designer</b>	Michael Rinella
<b>Force Size</b>	Corps	<b>Date</b>	2024
<b>Mvr Units</b>	Bn	<b>Grid Size</b>	Area map, 37 areas, 1" ≈ 1000m, so ~ 1km x 2km per area
<b>DOWNness</b>	3 DOWN	<b>Map Size</b>	~20km x 20km
<b>Players</b>	1	<b>Turn Dur.</b>	3 days
<b>Player Roles</b>	US Corps Commander	<b>Playing Time</b>	~3-4hrs
<b>BGG Link</b>	<a href="https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/11289">https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/11289</a>		

### Introduction

<b>Subject of the game</b>	US attack on Manila in 1945
<b>Scope</b>	All ground aspects from one US were at the northern perimeter of the city and had secured a bridgehead/airhead in the south
<b>Components</b>	17" x 22" mounted map – good One sheet counters One double sided PAC 16pp rules (8pp actual rules)
<b>Presentation – Good</b>	Nice board, counters, clear set up Found using the AV/DV chart to set base numbers+DMs, then throw dice worked well Pretty clear rules layout
<b>Presentation - Bad</b>	Just minor point that space by the AV/DV for the various -1 Event type counters would have been useful – good place to remember them
<b>Designer's focus/objectives</b>	Not stated, although has strategy and historic notes
<b>Overall system description</b>	Evolved Storm Over... system, more or less identical to the designer's Cities of the Damned – Aachen
<b>Real Battle Notes</b>	Pretty much a hard slog from S and especially N, forces joining around 10th Feb, before hardest push into city centre, and final hold-outs into first days March around legislative and agricultural building. Very high level of destruction from both sides and Japanese demolition as they withdrew. A big issue was the water system which had been wired for demolition and was a 1 <sup>st</sup> Cav Div objective. (Wahlman)

### The Game System

<b>Principal areas of reality represented in the game</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The slog, persistent Japanese hold outs against Div level forces</li> </ul>
<b>Important abstractions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires and CAS as support counters</li> </ul>
<b>Types of decisions required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not really a lot as build a 6 unit stack, and its then just where to allocate the support elements as you take on each area. Narrow margins mean its not really worth attacking with less than 6 units, as losses eat morale.</li> <li>Gamble on which unit to lead with if playing that optional rule</li> <li>Could do with odds table of chances of winning on 2x2D6 given gap.</li> </ul>

<b>Effects of the game system's mechanical requirements on the player's decision making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As above. Just need to points max with the 6 unit stack limit (but each extra only +1 so doesn't matter what).</li> </ul>
<b>How well do game decisions map to real life decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not at all, other than SP allocation, but still very hard with optimum strategy to get operational (34/37 areas) let alone outright (all 37) victory</li> </ul>
<b>Likes/Good Elements (inc ease of play; really good below)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very slick system once you know it, but no surprises.</li> <li>Banking of supply pts and unused, but realistic?</li> <li>Bloody Streets roll for engaged units</li> </ul>
<b>Contributions to the wargaming state of the art</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None, same as earlier Aachen</li> </ul>
<b>Deficiencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None within the confines of the system very professional</li> </ul>
<b>Improvements? (beyond fixing above)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation of the system's success at achieving the designer's goals</b>	Hard given no goals but as an entertaining solitaire game not bad, but not sure you get too much flavour of Manila beyond the map and names.

## Overall Evaluation

<b>Evaluation of the player's experience</b>	Slick and fun game
<b>Does the game work? (Veracity/Internal Validity)</b>	Yes, very professional, no bugs
<b>Is the game engaging?</b>	Yes, but could be a bit of a grind, but fixed 9 turns length just about right. Balance might be a bit in Japanese favour as never felt victory was in reach.
<b>Is the game useful – for what?</b>	Not really, just to learn the map. Even rubble flavour is abstracted as assumed to be there and just have to add Engrs in to remove effect.
<b>How valid is the game? Is the game realistic?</b>	Not really. Might give the right sort of outcome but from a very generic system. No focus at all on water system as objective.
<b>Does it provide any special insights</b>	No
<b>Replay value</b>	Not a lot, maybe once more having learnt lessons, but that's probably it
<b>Who would be most interested in the game?</b>	Solitaire gamers interested in urban, WW2, both. Could though be a reasonable introductory game. Possibly PME if support by discussion about Manila.
<b>Is the game good value?</b>	At £66.95 not really!
<b>Overall Impressions</b>	Professional and could work in some respects as an introductory (not urban) wargame, but little beyond that.

<b>Third Party Reviews</b>	<p>Someone done the table (Leo Paulo @iadrang @ BGG)</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Delta</th> <th>Success %</th> <th>Stalemate %</th> <th>Repulse %</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>-3</td> <td>14.5</td> <td>9.5</td> <td>76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>-2</td> <td>24</td> <td>9.5</td> <td>66.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>-1</td> <td>33.5</td> <td>11</td> <td>56.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>44.4</td> <td>11.3</td> <td>44.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>56.5</td> <td>11</td> <td>33.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>66.5</td> <td>9.5</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>76</td> <td>9.5</td> <td>14.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>“a great and engaging game!” – Peterc1985</p>	Delta	Success %	Stalemate %	Repulse %	-3	14.5	9.5	76	-2	24	9.5	66.5	-1	33.5	11	56.5	0	44.4	11.3	44.4	1	56.5	11	33.5	2	66.5	9.5	24	3	76	9.5	14.5
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<b>Interesting Expansions</b>	None
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## MECHANICS (relative to Urban/PhD)

(include Intricacy of the system, and the mechanical ease of play)

Aspect	Mechanic
Activation/C&C	Area Impulse, automatic
Comms	None
UxV	N/a
CEMA	N/a
Other ISR	None
Movement	MP, with extra cost adjacent to and on to and if hidden
Damage	Single step, but only lead unit, and regenerated easily from SP
Direct Fire	Not modelled
Assault	Compare CF+DM+2D6 on both side
Indirect Fire	Artillery as +1 asset/enabler
IEDs/Engineering	Engrs as +2 asset/enabler
Casualties	None
Logistics	4D6 roll for SP, spend on regeneration, artys, engrs, CAS
Morale	Major tracker for US. Game over if hits 0, which is likely as -1 per turn and per repulse, and for some bloody streets, and DM+1 replaced by DM-1 once below 10.
Opinion	None – but ROE on use of CAS and arty initially til see how tough the fight is
Victory Condition	Secure all areas for outright, else 32 for marginal. Lose if Morale = 0.
UTZs	Clear (=2), urban (+3), Fortified (+4)
Building Damage	Assumes already rubblised, so needs Engrs to obviate loss of CA bonus
Civilians	Random roll, -1DM on all new attacks
Subterranean	None
Other Urban Specifics/Notable	Nothing

## Triad Representation

	Challenges		Solutions	
	Elms	Comment	Elms	Comment
Civilian Population	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Random event, Passive NPC</li> </ul>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ROE on use of Arty and CAS</li> </ul>
Civilian Infrastructure	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
3D Man-Made Terrain	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UTZs</li> <li>Rubblisation assumed</li> <li>Variable Log/SP, but can carry over</li> <li>Hidden units til attacked</li> <li>Water terrain separates areas by sea</li> <li>Urban ambush strategy</li> <li>PV from UTZ</li> <li>US Morale reduces each turn</li> </ul>	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CA bonus if inf+tanks + arty or engrs</li> <li>Sniper strategy</li> <li>Engrs to counter rubble and give +2</li> <li>Fortified areas (SPs)</li> <li>Artillery assets</li> <li>CAS assets</li> </ul>

[Per scenario/run through]

<b>Date</b>	5 Jun 26	<b>Scenario</b>	Main + all optional
<b>Players</b>	DB	<b>Constraints</b>	None

## SET-UP

As per standard

## HOW IT PLAYED

- Turn 1
  - Good progress in N, but barrage at Race Course delays, and Elites holding Nichols Airfield.
  - Frederick KIA
- Turn 2
  - 37th Division paused
  - Bloody Streets on airfield, all spent nd morale -1
  - ATtack on Mailbay Estate repulsed, morale -1
  - In N: Balara taken, nd Quezon City, over-run into water supply line - and taken. Good job 1st Cav!
- Turn 3
  - Iwabuchi breakoit at Cocomo island
  - attempt to retake stalemates
  - Race course taken
  - Camp Murphy taken, overrun, take Marakina but culminated
  - Combined effort to take Nichols Airfield
- Turn 4
  - Artillery restrictions lifted
  - Civilians
  - Malibay estate taken with combined effort
  - 1st Cav total vs Rosario Heights, barrage, taken, just
  - Bloody streets at Comco
  - Attack on Quezon Institute repulsed
  - US Morale down to 11
  - Whitcombe KIA
- Turn 5
  - More civilians
  - Pasay attack badly repulsed, ditto McKinley
  - US Morale shaken
  - stalemate in San Juan due to fanatics
  - Quezon taken
  - Cocomo retaken
- Turn 6
  - 44th TR goes, 2 replacements
  - Only 10SP
  - Pasay badly beaten off
  - San Juan beaten off, really feeling lack of SP
  - Quaipo taken
  - Morale down to 5!
- Turn 7
  - More civilians
  - Essentially just 4-5 task forces, no finesse

- Bringing in the air support
- Only up to 13 SP
- Bloody streets yin San Juan, -1 morale
- Seriously whipped at Pasay, and only -2 on CAS
- Big effort needed to take Tondo, -2 on CAS again
- Ditto San Nicholas, but taken
- Most of core city N of river taken
- Morale down to 2!
- Turn 8
  - more civs!
  - 18SP!
  - Bloody streets in Pasay drops Morale to 1
  - Overrun at Pasay at last
  - San Juan Isl taken, overrun
  - Take Provisor Island Power Plant, +1VP
  - Lost trying to take US Hospital as no support, -1VP
  - Morale hits 0 but at end of turn, so get Turn 9!
- Turn 9
  - 11th Airborne dodges pause
  - 18SP
  - Bloody Streets at Hospital, Morale -1 > 0 😬
  - US HOspital taken
  - beaten back from Fort McKimley, Morale now -2 in theory!
  - Overrun against fanatic in Post Office,

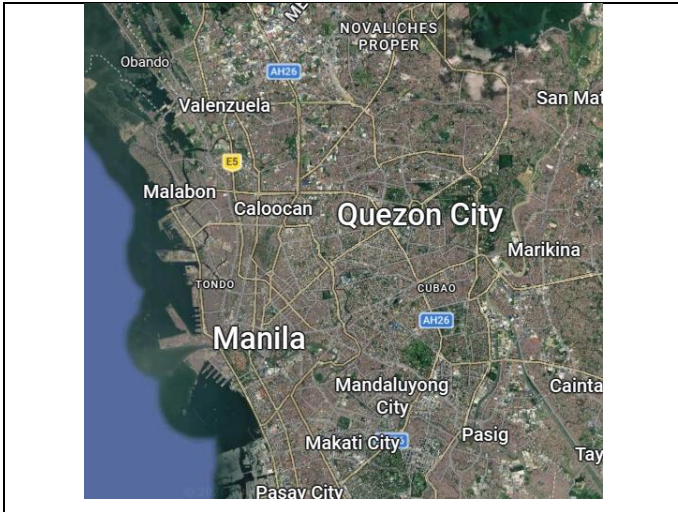
## RESULTS

- Automatic Victory for Japanese as US Morale = 0
- US haven't got Intramuros, and have only 25 areas, not 34. About 1/2 left are forts.

## THOUGHTS (c.f. RL AND URBAN, only for subsequent plays)

Nothing beyond above

IMAGES



Real Terrain



Set Up



Turn 3



Turn 6



Detail



ENDEX (Turn 9)