

VSF Rules For Black Powder

PJ 22-04-16 V1

1. General Points

Compared with a skirmish game, at the scale of a Battle most VSF innovations are not large enough to treat differently from the main rules, apart from Armoured Vehicles – Landships – and possible intervention by Aerial craft. Other VSF innovations (Lightning Cannons etc.) should be treated as their conventional equivalents.

For VSF battles the standard 'Unit' is Infantry company, Cavalry Squadron, Native Warband, Artillery Section (2 real guns) or single Landship of any size.

2. Landships

In VSF Landships come in a variety of sizes and forms. Most are armed with machine guns or cannons and are virtually proof against small arms fire, but generally move quite slowly.

1. Landships are either 'Light' (LLS) and may have MG armament only or 'Heavy' (HLS) which may carry artillery.
2. LLS move 7" per turn and may be included in a mixed command with Regular infantry and / or artillery, but not Cavalry or Native troops
3. HLS may only move 5" per turn, and may NOT be brigaded with infantry. They always have their own officer with a command rating of 7.
4. All Landships may fire and move, but will suffer an additional -1 to hit if they do. Fire arcs are measured using the location of the weapon on the model as a reference.
5. Landship Turrets are primitive and slow to turn. Regardless of the model, only 1 weapon may be turret mounted. They have a fire arc of 360° but suffer an extra -1 to hit (in addition to the -1 above if they move).
6. All Landships have a Morale Save of 2, with stamina based on its size. This is calculated using the armament it carries. LLS Stamina = 1 + 1 per weapon. HLS Stamina = 2 + 2 per cannon + 1 per MG. All normal Morale Save modifiers apply.
7. Landships are never disordered by fire and may recover stamina as normal.
8. When a Landship is 'Shaken' it must halt until it recovers at least one hit. Normal penalties for 'Shaken' troops apply.

Landship Hits & Damage

Hits on Landships are recorded as usual, but they do not take normal 'Break Tests'. Instead, in any turn in which at least one hit is taken they roll 1 x D6 on the Landship Hits & Damage table below.

+1 If any of the hits came from a Machine Gun or Artillery of any type

+1 If the Landship has excess hits

-1 If the Landship had no hits before this turn

HLS	LLS	Effect
4 or less	3 or Less	No effect
5	4	Reduce move for rest of game (Light 2", Heavy 1")
6 - 7	5 - 6	Possible weapon damage *1
8 +	7 +	Possible serious damage *2

*1 Possible weapon damage. On this result roll a D6. On a 1-3 one weapon is knocked out, choose at random it may be repaired in the command phase instead of recovering a 'hit'. 4-6 No Effect.

*2 Possible serious damage. If this result is scored, roll another D6 -

1 - One weapon is knocked out, choose at random. It may be repaired as above.

2 - Reduce move by 2" for the rest of the game.

3 - Power Unit Damage. The Landship is immobilised and any turret may not traverse for the rest of the game.

4 - If MG or small arms hit, No Effect. If Artillery - Internal Damage. The Landship suffers major internal damage and ceases to function. However it remains on table as a new objective to be captured by the opposition player. Roll another D6 and if a 6 is scored the Landship suffers a catastrophic explosion. ALL troops within 6 inches receive D3 hits as if hit by rifle fire.

5 - 6 No Effect

Close Combat

Once armoured vehicles have appeared on the battlefield, it is reasonable to assume that Regular Infantry would receive training and/or equipment to help to confront them.

1. Only Infantry with the 'Anti-LS' attribute may move into close contact with a Landship.
2. They move to contact and receive any Closing Fire as normal.

3. If any hits are received, the attackers take a break test with an additional -1
4. If the unit passes, they roll their normal number of H-t-H Dice, with each 4 - 6 scoring a possible hit.
5. The LS rolls to save any hits against a morale of 4 (not 2) and takes damage as usual on the above table.
6. If a Landship contacts a Machine gun or Artillery unit, the MG/Art are destroyed in the Close Combat phase – no dice rolls are required.

Armoured Troop Transports

(These were really used by the British in South Africa in 1899.)

A model Steam tractor and trailer can transport 1 company of infantry. The combined Tractor, Trailer and Infantry are one target unit (all fire measured to the trailer). The infantry unit is still the target if fired upon, but they have a Morale Save of 2. (Do Not Use The Landship Rules.) Troops may fire from inside at half dice from each long side. Dismounting is an action that has to be rolled for as usual. Once the infantry have dismounted, the tractor and trailer are removed from the table.

3. Aerial Vehicles

Aerial Vehicles are an essential part of VSF, but Dirigibles and large Aeronefs (which use liftwood or steam powered engines) are valuable assets not to be risked lightly. It is highly unlikely that either would allow themselves to be involved in a battle with ground troops except in the role of long range artillery. Therefore, large Dirigibles and Aeronefs are only available as off-table artillery assets. (Rules to follow).

Smaller craft and Ornithopters would be very useful in the scouting role, but still vulnerable to massed rifle fire from the ground. The following rules for small Aerial Vehicles suggestions reflect this situation -

1. Small Aerial Vessels consist of Small Dirigibles (SD) and Ornithopters (ON) which may function in a ground support role.
2. They may operate at Low altitude where they may attack ground troops and be shot at by them, or High altitude where they are safe from ground fire, but unable to attack any ground troops
3. Aerials at Low Altitude may be fired on by Regular Infantry with rifles at up to half range and an additional -1 to hit is applied.
4. Attacks on ground troops are as normal using the Forward MG and dice to hit as shown.

5. Standard characteristics for 1 man craft are -

Type	Move	Morale	Stamina	Weapon	Other
SD	6"	5	3	Forward MG 3D6, Bombs 3D6	90' Turn Max
ON	9"	5	2	Forward MG 3D6, Bombs 2D6	May move in any Direction

Bombing

Flyers may drop Bombs once while the craft is on table. It must either fly over the target or remain stationary with 3" of it for their entire move. In the shooting phase roll the number of D6 shown with a 5-6 needed to hit. Saves are normal as if under long range artillery fire, but even if all hits are saved a Break Test must be taken. (Native and mounted troops test at an extra -1)

SD and ON take hits as normal, but if after all saves they have excess hits they crash. There is no break test.

Personal Flyers (PF)

Having been tested on servants, some of these are making their way into military usage.

1. Up to one unit of Regular Infantry may be equipped with PF.
2. Troops so equipped may make a special move of 18" ignoring terrain instead of normal movement.
3. Any shooting by them or at them during the turn they fly is at -1 to hit.
4. Because of the weight of the flying gear, triple moves are not possible

4. Heroic Companies

Victorian Fiction (Science or otherwise) is replete with Heroes and their companions whose exploits have major influence on global events. To allow for this a single unit of heroes is allowed on each side. They self-command with a CR of 8 and have the following stats -

Move 6"	Fire Dice 4	Morale 3	Stamina 4	Sneaky. Extra -1 to hit if in cover	May use PF Devices. Anti-LS trained
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Heroic companies take Break Tests as usual, but do not -1 for being disordered.