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Overview

Ground Pounders is a hex-based, turn-based strategy wargame. Inspired by classic strategy games like Panzer General, and steeped in the lore of the Sword of the Stars universe, Ground Pounders offers a new generation of gamers an updated taste of turn-based strategic warfare. Best of all, you can play it cross platform between desktop machine and mobile devices.

Ground Pounders lets players control an army from one of two factions. Each army is comprised of dozens of different unit types. You will lead your ground pounders across a variety of worlds, increase their experience levels and abilities over the course of two campaigns, and use them to unlock special action cards that can add special effects to single-player games, or to up the stakes in your cross-platform multi-player battles.

High Resolution Packs

The game looks amazing when using high resolution textures for the maps, but they are sizable and increase the download size, an on-device footprint of the game greatly. This is problematic for those with data caps, devices with smaller storage capabilities and makes the game a slower download for those who don't care. To that end, we offer the game with basic resolution maps, but if you would like the high resolution, you can download it for free, once you are on WiFi or home network.

Learning the Game

If you are reading this, you're the best. Not many people read manuals anymore. But, if you'd like to just jump into the game, you can play the game Tutorials and it will teach you the basics of the game by walking you through the phases and options of the game. However, there is a lot of depth to Ground Pounders, and for more details about the game and gameplay, you can also read this manual and look through the SotSDex, where you'll find not only information about the lore of the Sword of the Stars universe, but information about the game, phases, units, weapons, terrains, and more.

Don't Panic.

This manual is meant to give you the greatest amount of detail about the game in action, things that hardcore number-crunching wargamers love, but may seem daunting to most people. Play the tutorials – they will help you with the basics of playing the game. In time, as you become more comfortable with the game, you may wish to dig into all the values and modifiers and charts herein, but you don't have to right now.

Starting the Game

Once you have launched *Sword of the Stars: Ground Pounders* you will be presented with the opportunity to review several options before playing in the Main Menu.

Profiles

Create a new game profile and manage and switch between various profiles. Here you can see what campaigns you are currently playing, game card decks you have designed yourself, and any unlockable cards you have achieved (as well as how many of each you have unlocked through playing the game).

You will be prompted to make your first profile, but new ones can be added later using the New Profile button in Profiles. You can cycle between profiles using the arrow keys at the top of the screen. You can delete a given profile by viewing it and using the Delete Profile button (under your Active Campaigns list).

SotsDex

Selecting this allows you to explore more of the *Sword of the Stars* universe as well as specifics about the game. Sections include;

Units – A list of units, as you encounter or use them, for each of the three races currently featured in the game. See more on Units and the information on their cards later in this manual.

Planets – A list of planets you have fought on, with an overview on planetary details, such as terrain, development, etc.

Unit History – A list of special units and their unique history, but from the SolForce records.

Tactics – An overview of various forces in the game, yours and the enemies, and how they tend to fight their battles, or how they best fight their battles (if you're in control of them), giving you insight on how best to use and meet these forces in combat.

Rules – An overview of the game basics, covered in the Tutorials and this manual as well.

Combat Tech – Historical records of the types of equipment the various forces of the game, giving you a deeper sense of the Sword of the Stars universe and ground combat therein.

Tile Types – Battle maps are made up of tiles, which represent various terrain types. This is a list of those types and their effect on unit movement and combat.

Play

Choices about the type of game you wish to play start with this selection, access to the Tutorials, set up Multiplayer, load up saved games, or Continue the last game you were playing, as well as review and design your decks.

Options

In Options you can turn on and off various game settings and adjust the speed of the combat animations, adjust audio settings, and video options. You can also see the Game Credits, using the button at the bottom right of the Options screen.

Quit

Leave game.

Game Basics

Ground Pounders is a turn-based wargame, where you control your military units movement and actions to achieve an objective. Sometimes you are assigned units by the limitations of the scenario and sometimes you are allowed to choose the units you would like to take into battle. Once in the game, you move through a turn by a series of phases – within those phases you can affect the combat effectiveness of your units using a dice pool and special cards.

Game Phases

Placement – Place your units on the map. Where you can place them depends on the how much of the map you can see through the fog of war. The first unit you place will always be your Divisional Command unit – place this unit wisely, as the loss of your Command unit means defeat.

Orbital – Discard (Between 0 and 5 cards). These cards have an Orbital Superiority value that are added together and compared to your opponent. Whomever has the highest value has Orbital Superiority. More on the benefits of Orbital Superiority later in the manual.

Resupply – Draw new cards from your deck, manage your logistical supply lines, and reinforce your army.

Equip – In this phase, dice are rolled and then assigned to units to increase their attack rating in combat. You can assign dice to specific units and then let the game auto assign the rest if you like, for the sake of speed.

Combat – The final phase when you issue attack commands, move orders, build and repair structures, and defend against enemy attacks. After this phase ends and all attacks are carried out, the results are present to you and the game starts a new turn. Certain scenarios have a limited number of turns in which you need to achieve your objective, so keep an eye on the turn counter.

Game Interface

Here is an overview of your game screen in Command Mode. There is a button to switch to Info Mode, where the art of the game is replaced with concise, but less pretty, symbology.



1 – **Hand of Cards**. These are your active cards. You can click-slide or use the mouse wheel to move the cards up and down to see them all. Cards that can't be used in a certain Phase will move partially off-screen. You can click the Info icon at the top right of the card for more info on the card's effects. Click the center of the card to bring up the Play button. Press the play button to use the card. Some cards require you select a unit or map hex first.

To delete cards from your hand so you can draw new ones, click the Trashcan icon at the top, then select the cards to discard, then click the Trashcan again. New card will be randomly drawn from your deck at the start of the next turn.

2 – **Phase and Game Messages**. The top of the screen will always display what Phase of the turn you are in. Also, if the game needs to alert you of something (like you haven't selected a unit when trying to use a card) it will appear here.

3 – **View Level**. Units can operate on the surface of a planet (tanks, boats, etc.), above the surface of the planet (jets, helos, etc.), and below the surface of the (tunnelers, subs, etc.) This slider allows you to adjust the map focus to one level or another, which can be handy when dealing with lots of units in the same area at all different levels. Click the level to view.

4 – **Map Zoom and Recruitment Points**. The Plus and Minus buttons will move your camera view in and out of the map – you can do the same thing with your mouse wheel. Recruitment Points are the points available to you to spend on adding newly recruited units to the battlefield, either during the first Placement Phase of the first turn or during the Recruit Phase for the rest of the game.

5 - Friendly Units.

6 – **Fog Of War**. Areas your units are unable to see into yet. Moving closer or using certain Orbital Superiority cards will reveal these areas and any enemy units within them.

7 - Enemy Units.

8 – **Central HUD**. See more info on the various buttons below.



A – Card Limit. You start, usually, with a limit of five, but cards can be played by either player that can increase or decrease this limit.

 ${\sf B}$ – Cards To Be Discarded. If your card limit is affected and you must lose cards, this tells you how many. Game will not advance until you have.

C – Orbital Superiority. If it is highlighted, you have superiority.

D – Orbital Superiority Cards Locked. If you don't have superiority, you cannot play Orbital Superiority cards.

E – Cards Locked. There are cards your enemy can play that will affect your ability to play cards for a time. If this happens, this icon will be highlighted.

F – Objectives. If you need to check your goals and what objectives you've completed, click here.

G – Turn Number.

H – Phase. Besides the Phase being named at the top of the screen, the Turn Phase icon is highlighted here.

 ${\rm I}$ – Messages. In multiplayer games, this is how you can talk to your opponents.

9 – **Info, Advance, and Settings**. These three buttons, from left to right, let you toggle the Info Mode view of the game (in which a concise and labeled overview of the battlefield comes up) on and off, Advance to the next turn (you may be prompted to let the game automatically apply dice, defence, etc. for you), and Game Settings.

Cards & Decks

Cards are the means by which a wise commander can alter the outcome of any battle. In Ground Pounders you start with a selection of cards and one Start Deck. As you play the game you will unlock more cards and at any time you can build new decks to suit your play style or designed with a particular enemy in mind. You can access Deck Management in the Play menu.

Cards are also the currency of space superiority, the ability to control orbital space and the advantages offered by that. Their Orbital Superiority value can be found at the bottom-middle of the card.

Each card has a value assigned to it that is dependent on both the effectiveness of the card and also what restrictions are placed on playing the card.

Card Effects

Card effects vary from advantages in combat to allowing drop troops to land behind enemy lines. The greater the effect of the card, the more that card is worth when vying for space superiority.

You can review a card's effect in-game or in the Deck Manager by clicking on the Info icon at the top right of the card.

Card Restrictions

Most cards can only be played during specific phases of the game, only on specific types of units or even only by certain factions. Cards are color-coded for what phase they can be used in; Blue during Resupply, Yellow for Equip, Red for Combat, and White for Orbital. These are also noted by the icon to the left of the card's Orbital Superiority value.

The fewer restrictions there are on a card, the greater the value of the card when vying for space superiority.

If you do not have Orbital Superiority, you will not be able to play Orbital cards. If your opponent plays certain cards on you, you will temporarily lose the ability to play any cards. When these restrictions are in play, they will be noted in your bottom HUD.

Card Limits and Discards

You start with a card limit in each game. This is the maximum amount of cards you can hold in your active hand at any time. Some cards will increase your hand. Others will decrease it. Should you have to decrease your hand, you will be prompted to trash some of the cards in your hand.

Some cards will appear back in your deck to be drawn again later., but others, once used or discarded, will not return to your deck.

Reading Cards



The top of the card denotes when the card effect is applied during the game. Then comes the name of the card and card image. The area underneath the card image outlines the details of the cards use, from what units it can be used on, how long the effect lasts, and specifically what the card effect does.

At the bottom the card is the Orbital Superiority value of the card. The higher the value, the more powerful the card effect is, generally – meaning when you trade away a card for Orbital Superiority, while you're losing a powerful card, at least you're gaining a better chance at gaining Orbital Superiority.

Game Setup Phase

A Campaign, Skirmish Map, or Multiplayer Game is chosen.

In a campaign, the player takes control of one side in a series of battle's that make up the career of a historical military leader from the Sword of the Stars universe.

Unit selection is derived from an initial allotment of points to spend on units and subsequent additions due to victory points or campaign progression. As the campaign progresses, each player is awarded victory points for objectives met and battles won.

Between battles, each player is returned to the unit selection screen to allow them to spend victory points on upgrading units.

In a skirmish map, each player plays one side apiece through the set battle. Map and Unit selection is dictated by the scenario.

Once the game is selected, players choose their deck, with each player choosing a deck of cards consisting of 32 cards. A campaign or scenario may require specific cards to complete.

Once the combination of player / scenario / deck is settled, then the game moves to the first Phase of the first turn, which is the placement phase.

Placement Phase

In general you will select a unit from those available on the right, then select the hex you wish to deploy that unit to on the map. This will place the currently selected unit on the chosen hex.

Review your Deployment Zone, noting your Objectives for the coming battle. Can you position your units close to the objectives; will they be within reach of a logistics unit?

The first unit you should place is your Divisional Command Battalion (DCB). This unit represents your commander on the battlefield. Losing your commander will lose you the battle, so keep an eye on this unit.

If you decide that one of your units can be better positioned, select that unit on the map and it will return to the available units area to be placed again.

- The game determines Initiative, aka Who Goes First!
 - Defined by Campaign or Scenario (Always.)
- All decks are shuffled.
 - Placement is zoned, restricting where units can be placed.
- Once placement is finalised, dice are assigned to units on each side and play continues with the first turn of the player with Initiative.

Orbital Phase

During this phase, you will select the number of cards you wish to allocate to space superiority. Space superiority determines your ability to call on special cards like *Orbital Bombardment*. The price you will pay for space superiority is in the loss of cards for the remainder of the battle. Each card has a space superiority value which is tied to the inherent value of the card. You select how many Cards you lose in competing for space superiority, and thus lose the use of during the battle, but you do not get to choose which cards are selected. This is done randomly. Once you have selected how many cards you wish to use for space superiority and chosen to commit those cards, you will then get to see just which cards have been randomly expended while trying to obtain space superiority.

Resupply

In this phase, you will review the lines of supply available to your units and determine which units will remain unsupplied if insufficient logistical transport is available. Each supply phase generates a number of Logistics Points, determined by which logistics units are in range of supply zones. These logistics points denote the amount of transportation available to move essential supplies, equipment and personnel across the battlefield. Logistics points are used to bring units into the supplied state, reinforce units during the recruit phase or add dice to the divisional dice pool in the equip phase.

- Single Sided: The supply zone will only supply the designated friendly faction involved in the conflict. If an opponent faction captures this supply zone by any opposing unit ending their turn on the supply zone, they can prevent it from supplying the friendly faction, but cannot gain logistics points from it themselves. To recapture this supply zone will require a friendly unit. This supply zone will enable divisional supply for all friendly units within supply range of the supply zone. For example, a Transport hub connected to off map locations in partisan control
- Double Sided: The supply zone will supply whichever side controls it, but having a friendly unit move onto and capture the center of the supply zone, such as an Airport, Non-Partisan city hex (Central Admin Buildings), or District collection point.

Logistics units must be within their supply radius of an allied supply location in order to resupply themselves and their subordinate units.

Consequently supply zones are very important objective locations to capture or maintain your hold on.

As much as possible, the game automates the distribution of logistics points to ensure that units are in supply, with units closer to the logistics unit given priority over units further away.

The active player may elect to move the available supply status around for each unit under the command of the active player.

Cards can alter supply, for example;

- Adding more supply points to a logistics unit
- Bringing a unit into supply that was otherwise beyond the supply range of the logistics unit
- Restricting opposition supply points

Units with the Transport special ability have the ability to extend the range between the supply zone and any nearby logistics unit.

Units that remain out of supply at the end of this phase are flagged as out of supply. Units flagged as out of supply have their movement capability halved.

If this counter is above 2 at the end of the combat phase, the unit will suffer 1 readiness level of damage.

Equip Phase

In the Equip Phase, a dice pool is generated, which the player then uses to assign individual units to improve their combat values. Different units can have different amounts of dice assigned to them, from one to four. Units must be in supply to receive dice.

Every unit has a dice pool that it can call on for attacking and defending. Every attack or defence that a unit makes in combat uses 1 die from that dice pool. Units may only attack once per turn, but may be called upon to defend themselves multiple times. High die results are better than low die results in combat. Any unit that does not attack will automatically use the dice assigned to it to defend against opponent attacks. Units can still attack and defend if they have a blank die, they get a random roll. When they are out of blank dice THEN they have a result of 0.

Cards may be played that alter the amount of dice rolled.

Most units have two dice in their pool allowing them to attack and defend, or defend twice. Command units (Usually) have three dice, while your divisional commander (Usually) has four dice. Command units have three dice, while your divisional commander has four dice. Cards may increase the dice pool of a unit. Your division has a dice pool generated from your units and any logistics points that remain when entering the equip phase. Once the dice rolls have been revealed, you will be able to choose which die results are added to the each unit pool. For example, if you plan to have that unit support another during an assault, you might assign a lower die roll to the pool of that unit for the support attack, reserving the higher die rolls for defence during your opponent's turn.

Any unit which is in supply can have dice allocated to their pool during this phase. If you select a lower value than desired, use the red X on the undesired die result in unit's dice pool to return it back to the divisional pool.

At any time you can select Advance Phase to have the remaining dice in your divisional pool automatically assigned to the remaining unfilled pools of your units.

Cards may be played that alter the amount of dice in a unit's dice pool.

Assignment of dice

- Select an available unit to receive dice
- Select an available die value for that unit to receive
 - Die value appears in unit dice pool
- Active player can select advance phase to have the game automatically assign highest remaining die values to units without a complete dice pool

Combat Phase

Units may not stack in a hex, but may move freely through friendly units. Unit movement is restricted by the movement points available to each unit as well as the terrain types being moved through. Units performing tasks may not be able to move this turn in addition to completing the task assigned. Similarly, units that take part in an attack this turn may not move after doing so.

If a previously unseen opposing unit is sighted during movement, the moving unit will halt and allow you to alter the remaining movement instructions given to the unit. With that in mind, a wise field commander sends Recon units out first, whether they're dedicated recon elements or just your fastest units. Note that every unit has a Scanner Rating which reflects the ability of the unit to detect opposing units. Better Scanner Rating equals better Recon. All units have a Signature Rating which is used to defeat opposing scanner ratings. Associated with your scanner rating is the View Range of your unit. This determines at what distance your scanner rating becomes effective when trying to detect the enemy.

It is important to note that each unit has a Support Range, which is the distance at which the unit can provide defensive support to friendly units. Moving your units beyond the support range of each other is generally not recommended.

To move a unit, first select that unit. The hexes that unit can move into will now highlight. To move the selected unit to one of the available highlighted destinations, select the desired hex. If the unit halts on seeing an opposing unit, review the remaining movement options available and select either your original choice or a new one to order the unit to move on. Select the unit a second time to get it to stay where it halted.

Movement

Each unit has a set amount of movement points as one of their base statistics.

Moving into terrain decreases available movement points. If the unit does not have enough movement points to move into the terrain of the hex, then movement is halted at the current position of the unit.

Every unit can move a minimum one hex, allowing for units to move into terrain that exceeds their total movement point allocation. Units moving one hex still may not enter terrain that prohibits that movement type.

Cards and other considerations can alter the movement point cost of terrain. For example; a road between the current hex and the next will reduce the movement point cost of terrain to that of moving along the road, and will further allow units normally prohibited to move into a hex.

Movement Interrupts include:

- the moving unit encounters an enemy ambush / reaction fire
- the moving unit attacks an enemy Unit
 - this also expends all remaining movement points
- the moving unit spots a new terrain effect
 - example: bridge destroyed
- the moving unit spots a new opposing unit

A unit that has encountered a movement Interrupt:

- is halted at the point of the movement Interrupt
- has the movement points used to reach the Interrupt deducted from the unit's total remaining
- may continue to move for its remaining movement points once the interruption is acknowledged by the active player, provided the results table (if applicable) allows such movement

A moving unit involved in reaction fire combat does not halt movement except as mandated by the results table.

Zone of Control (ZOC)

Each unit in supply, with a readiness level above 1, exerts control over the hexes adjacent to them.

A unit at readiness level 1 is unable to exert sufficient control over the surrounding hexes. A unit without supply is also unable to exert sufficient control over the surrounding hexes.

Moving into any opponent ZOC from beyond the opponent's ZOC does not cost any additional movement points.

Moving from a hex in the opponents ZOC to another hex that is also in the opponents ZOC costs an additional two movement points.

Attack

Select Attack from the radial menu, then select the unit you wish to attack.

Other units may be set to support attack the hex being assaulted after the point unit begins the movement and before the active player confirms the attack.

Support Defence

A unit may be set to support the defence of one other unit during the opponents turn if set up to do so before the end of the active players current turn. This requires that the unit being set to support defence has not been involved in an assault this turn.

Support defence uses one die from the units dice pool. Unwary defenders may find themselves reduced to zero dice in supporting adjacent units before being attacked themselves.

Units can both support defence and reaction fire provided they have enough die in their dice pool.

Scanning

As a unit moves, it performs a scan for enemy units. This scan checks the moving unit's scan rating versus the signature rating of any dormant player units. If the scan check is successful, then the enemy units are displayed to the active player. Enemy units revealed in this fashion cause a movement interrupt.

Combat

Combat is broken into multiple sub-phases.

Reaction Fire (see above) Aerial Combat Surface Combat

Units rated for Attack/Defence/Movement

Unit Movement Types are; Foot, Grav, Hover, Rotor, Boat, Tracked, Wheeled, Winged, Ship.

Unit Movement Modes are; Ground, Air, Nap of the Earth, Liquid, Sub-Ground, Sub-Liquid, Super-Ground, Super-Liquid.

Command units have a Dice Available rating. The total combined Dice Available decides how many dice you get every round.

The active player gets to see the die rolls and place each die in order of desirability.

A unit use one die for every attack or defence, with the left most displayed die being the die next used. Units cannot attack more than once in a turn.

Each defence a unit is involved in, either defending itself or in support defence of another unit, uses one die from that unit's dice pool. Units can thus use multiple dice for defence in a turn, but can only use one die per defence.

When Dice Run Out:

- If an active player unit has no dice left in its dice pool, then
 - The unit is unable to attack.
 - The unit has only its modifiers to help it in combat.
- If a dormant player unit has no dice left in its dice pool, then
 - The unit is unable to reaction fire on active player units moving through its Zone Of Control.
 - The unit has only its modifiers to help it in combat.

Units within the support range of both an active player attacking unit and the opposing dormant player defending unit can perform a support function for the attacking unit by adding either their ATT value to the attacking unit's ATT value for purposes of determining combat odds.

Units wishing to perform this support function must have both one die of capability available as well as having not already attacked that turn.

The advance result is optional, requiring active player input. The retreat result is mandatory, but the active player may choose which adjacent empty hex to retreat into. If a unit cannot retreat, or moves into an enemy Zone of Control, then it loses a level of health.

A unit may be set to support defensively during the opponents turn if set up to do so before the end of the active player's current turn. Similar to supporting an attack, this requires that a die remains for the unit wanting to provide support. Unlike support attack, support defence is not deducted immediately, instead being deducted as each unit being supported is attacked. Unwary defenders may find themselves reduced to zero dice in supporting adjacent units before being attacked themselves.

An active player unit will use reaction fire against opponent units moving through its Zone Of Control during the opposing player's turn if the unit has both a die available and has not already attacked this turn. The use of a die indicates that a unit may either attack or reaction fire in its turn, not both, as only one attack is available for each unit.

An active player unit moving through an opposing Zone Of Control may be engaged by a dormant player unit in reaction fire.

There are no support modifiers in the ensuing reaction fire which brings the combat to an odds determination of unit versus unit, (unlike the usual Assault rule of the (Attacking Unit plus Supporting Units) versus (Defending Unit plus Supporting Units)).

Artillery does not fire independently, and is thus used only in support, whether support attack or support defence. Artillery can direct fire at half value, unless it is across rivers, in which case they retain their full attack value – the idea being that they have a protective barrier of water to their advantage.

Damage taken by Artillery units during support operations is deemed indicative of counter battery fire.

Reaction Fire

All units are set to use reaction fire during the opponents turn if they have not yet attacked. Reaction fire can only be triggered once for each opposing player unit, with further movement through that unit's ZOC being uncontested, though if the unit maintains a readiness level above one then the movement point cost remains.

If an active player unit moves from one hex in the Zone Of Control of a dormant player unit to another hex in the ZOC of the same dormant player, the dormant player unit may initiate reaction fire.

Reaction fire is reacting dormant player unit versus moving active player unit only, without support from any other units on either side.

Determining Odds

Odds are derived by comparing the active player unit's DEF Value versus the dormant player unit's ATT value. Modifiers include Tech, Level, Space Superiority, Terrain, etc.

3 / 6 = 2-1 Odds 4 / 6 = 2-3 Odds 5 / 6 = 2-3 Odds 6 / 6 = 1-1 Odds 7 / 6 = 1-1 Odds 8 / 6 = 1-1 Odds 9 / 6 = 3-2 Odds 10 / 6 = 3-2 Odds

11 / 6 = 3-2 Odds
12 / 6 = 2-1 Odds
13 / 6 = 2-1 Odds
14 / 6 = 2-1 Odds
15 / 6 = 2-1 Odds
16 / 6 = 2-1 Odds
17 / 6 = 2-1 Odds
18 / 6 = 3-1 Odds
19 / 6 = 3-1 Odds
20 / 6 = 3-1 Odds
21 / 6 = 3-1 Odds
22 / 6 = 3-1 Odds
23 / 6 = 3-1 Odds
24+ / 6 = 4-1 Odds

The odds result may be further adjusted by terrain, cards and technology level of the units involved.

Reaction Fire Results Table

The Reaction Fire results table (RRT) is an array of results intended to reflect the options available for dormant player units wanting to try and interdict active player units moving through their Zone Of Control (ZOC) without fully engaging those moving units in an all out assault.

Which result is arrived at is determined by;

Odds of the opposing units (2 to 1 et al) plus odds modifiers for horizontal movement within the array. Opposing (die rolls plus die modifiers) for vertical movement within the array.

Movement of the result beyond the bounds of the array should be halted at the array boundary both vertically and horizontally.

The precise RRT for initial testing only covers a limited horizontal movement, which is intended to be broadened during testing.

The vertical limits are currently absolute, though may alter with testing.

Sample Results Table:

Odds	2 - 3		1 - 1		3 - 2		2 - 1		3 - 1	
Dice	ATT	DEF								
6	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	2	0	3
5	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2
4	1	2	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	3
3	0	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
2	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	1
-1	1	0 A	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2
-2	1	1	1	0 A	0	0	1	1	0	1
-3	2	0 A	1	1	1	1 A	1	2	1	1
-4	2	1 A	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	2
-5	3	1	2	1 A	2	0 A	2	1 A	2	1 A

-6	2	0 A	2	0 A	2	1	3	1	2	2
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Aerial Combat

Aerial combat determines who has local air superiority and can thus apply aerial support to the battles being fought on the ground.

Aerial combat has two phases:

- Aerial Units Only
- Aerial Units versus Ground Anti-Aircraft Fire

During the aerial units only phase, the Active and Dormant Player fight to determine how much support the active player's air units can provide to the ground combat.

During the anti-aircraft fire phase, the remaining active player air units face AA fire from the dormant player ground units.

Only after both of these phases have been completed can any remaining active player air units provide support to the ground combat.

Determining Odds

Odds are derived by comparing the active player air unit's ATT value versus the dormant player air unit's DEF value. As only a single player is active at a time, odds should be presented from the point of view of the active player. Modifiers include Tech, Level, Space Superiority, Terrain, etc.

Odds are determined by comparing the attack values of the active player units versus the defence value of the dormant player units.

Obtain the ATT value from the attack values of the active player units involved.

Obtain the DEF value from the defence values of the dormant player units involved.

The equation used to determine Odds is (Active Value / Dormant Value), rounded down to the nearest ART odds determinant, so;

18 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 19 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 20 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 21 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 22 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 23 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 24+ / 6 = 4-1 Odds

The Odds result may be further adjusted by Terrain, Cards and Technology Level of the Units involved.

Aerial Combat Results Table

The Aerial Combat results table (ART) is an array of results intended to reflect the clash of air units in the skies above the battleground.

Which result is arrived at is determined by;

Odds of the opposing units (2 to 1 et al) plus odds modifiers for horizontal movement within the array Opposing (Die rolls plus Die modifiers) for vertical movement within the array

Movement of the result beyond the bounds of the array should be halted at the array boundary both vertically and horizontally.

The précis ART for initial testing only covers a limited horizontal movement, which is intended to be broadened during testing.

The vertical limits are currently absolute, though may alter with testing.

Odds	2 - 3		1 - 1		3 - 2		2 - 1		3 - 1	
Dice	ATT	DEF								
6	0	1 1R	0	1 2R	1	2 1R	1	2 3R	0	3 3R
5	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2 1R	0	2 3R
4	0	2 1R	0	1	1	1 1R	0	1 2R	1	3 2R
3	0	1	1	2 1R	2	2	1	2 1R	1	2 2R
2	0	0 1R	0	1	1	1	1	1 1R	1	3 1R
1	0	0	1	0 1R	0	0 1R	1	1	1	2 1R
0	0 1R	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	1 1R
-1	1	0	0 1R	0	0	0	0	2 1R	1	2
-2	1 1R	1	1	0	0 1R	0	1	1	0	1
-3	2	0	1 2R	1	1	1 1R	1 1R	2	1	1
-4	2 1R	1	2	1	1 1R	0	2	1	1 1R	2
-5	3	1	2 2R	1	2	0	2 1R	1	2	1
-6	2 1R	0	2 3R	0	2 1R	1	3 2R	1	2 1R	2

Sample Results Table:

Combat Results

The combat results table (CRT) is an array of results intended to represent the effects of committed assault by the active player forces onto the forces of the dormant player.

Which result is arrived at is determined by;

Odds of the opposing units (2 to 1 et al) plus modifiers for horizontal movement within the array Opposing die rolls plus modifiers for vertical movement within the array

Movement of the result beyond the bounds of the array should be halted at the array boundary both vertically and horizontally.

Determining Odds

Odds are derived by comparing the attackers ATT value versus the defenders DEF value. As only a single player is active at a time, odds should be presented from the point of view of the active player. Modifiers include Tech, Level, Space Superiority, Terrain, etc.

Odds are determined by comparing the attack values of all active player units involved versus the defence values of all dormant player units involved.

Obtain the attackers value by adding the attack values of all active player units involved in the combat together, including any artilley and supporting units.

Obtain the defenders value by adding the defence values of all dormant player units involved in the combat together, including any artillery or supporting units.

The equation used to determine odds is (attackers value / defenders value), rounded down to the nearest CRT odds determinant, so;

3 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds 4 / 6 = 2 - 3 Odds 5 / 6 = 2 - 3 Odds 6 / 6 = 1 - 1 Odds7 / 6 = 1 - 1 Odds 8 / 6 = 1-1 Odds 9 / 6 = 3-2 Odds 10 / 6 = 3 - 2 Odds11 / 6 = 3 - 2 Odds 12 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds 13 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds14 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds15 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds 16 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds17 / 6 = 2 - 1 Odds18 / 6 = 3 - 1 Odds 19 / 6 = 3 - 1 Odds 20 / 6 = 3 - 1 Odds21 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 22 / 6 = 3-1 Odds 23 / 6 = 3 - 1 Odds 24 + / 6 = 4 - 1 Odds

The odds result may be further adjusted by terrain, cards and technology level of the units involved.

Combat Results Table

The dice result down the left hand side runs from attacker's advantage at the top to defender's advantage below.

The odds result across the top runs from low number of attacker's forces on the left across to more attackers than defenders, taking into account tech level and other advantages.

-										
Odds	2 - 3		1 - 1		3 - 2		2 - 1		3 - 1	
Dice	ATT	DEF								
6	1 A	0 R	1 A	1 R	1 A	1 R	1 A	3 R	0 A	4 R
5	1	1	1	2	1	2	0 A	2 R	0 A	3 R
4	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	1 A	3 R
3	1	1	2 A	1 R	2	2	1 A	2 R	0	2 R
2	2 A	1 R	1	1	2 R	1 R	2	2 R	0	2
1	0	0	1 A	1 R	0	0	1	2	1	2 R
0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1 R	1	2
-1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	1
-2	1 R	1	2	2	2 R	2	1 R	1	2	1 R
-3	2	1	1 R	1	2	1	3	2	2 R	1
-4	2 R	1	2	1	2 R	1	2	1	3	2
-5	2	0	2 R	1	3	1	2 R	1	3 R	2
-6	3 R	0	2 R	0	3 R	1	3	1	4 R	1

Sample Results Table:

Combat Results Summary

The combat results summary is a screen that displays information about recent combats.

It displays the following information:

- Attacker
 - Name of attacking unit
 - Icon of attacking unit
 - Unit icons for units supporting the attacking unit
- Defender
 - Name of defending unit
 - Icon of defending unit
 - Unit icons for units supporting the defending unit
- Combat Location
 - Hex ID and graphical representation of the hex that the combat occurred in
- Odds
 - Actual attacking unit numbers used in odds calculation
 - Actual defending unit numbers used in odds calculation
 - Odds column used in combat
- Result Win, Lose or Draw
 - Win The opposing player unit is destroyed or retreats
 - Lose The active player unit is destroyed or retreats
 - Draw Neither opposing or active player unit is destroyed or retreats

Victory Conditions

Typically victory will be achieved by either taking all of the objectives, or destroying all opposing forces.

Objectives

Special Objectives are outlined in the Scenario and Campaign debriefing screens prior to the first turn. These Objectives allow for specific win conditions above and beyond simply overwhelming opposing forces.

Some objectives will be located within a hex, or may require the destruction of an opposing unit. Hex locations can be removed from opponent control by moving a unit on to or over the hex. Some locations can be captured (becoming the active player's) in this fashion also.

Some locations can only be captured by leaving a command unit (divisional or brigade) on the hex at the end of the turn. If the command unit is still there at the beginning of the next turn for that player, then the location is captured.

Some objectives may require holding a location for more than one turn to capture it.

During a campaign, successfully completing objectives earns victory points which may be spent on upgrading units between battles.

During a scenario, completing objectives may result in victory for either side, on top of or instead of the usual destroy all opposing units conditions.



Units

Your ground pounders vary according to ability, armament and sometimes temperament. Both in the game phases and in the SotSDex, you can review unit cards and study their details. The example card above shows a variety of information about how the unit moves, its combat ratings and abilities, weapon type, available dice, and so on. When you flip the card – using the button at the bottom right of the card – you get a list of specific values the game uses to determine how fast the unit can move, how far it can see, how easy it is to spot, level of readiness, and so on. Specifically; Tech Level, Max Readiness, Move, Attack Range, Support Range, View Range, Scan Strength, Signature, Supply Required, Anti-Air Rating.

Also listed are the special aspects of the unit.

Unit Types

Your units are arranged into roughly four categories as follows; Infantry, Armour, Artillery, Aerial.



Infantry includes not only combat troops but also support personnel such as medical staff, transportation drivers, engineers and recon elements. Generally, anything that has to pop out of a vehicle or hole in the ground to engage effectively in combat is considered Infantry.

Infantry may be foot sloggers, who march from one engagement to the next, or more mobile with vehicles that carry the troops between engagements and often act as mobile firing platforms and defences, to being their own mobile heavy arms platform courtesy of Personal Powered Armour. Basic Infantry are the only units that can be transported by Helo transports.

Armour ranges from light elements, who are less about engaging other armoured vehicles than area denial and scaring lightly armed enemies, through to main battle platforms that roam the battle field looking for similarly armed and armoured beasts to slay. Generally, anything that is vehicular in nature that does not have it occupants dismount to be effective in combat might be considered armoured.

Whether wheels, tracks, hover skirts or flying about on grav lifters

Artillery ranges from emplaced guns to self-propelled howitzers. These units are more about supporting other elements than entering directly into the fray themselves, thus tend to have less armour but more firepower.

Atmospheric units are primarily used to both deny the enemy their own aerial support and provide support to your other units. Primarily atmospheric designs, these units are commonly used in lieu of space forces simply because making them is easier and cheaper than making vehicles capable of vacuum travel. This makes them rather more common than might be expected due to their use by many planetary militias.

Unit Functions

Divisional Command Commander Medical Armor Infantry Engineer Artillery Transport Logistics Air Unit Air Superiority Air To Ground Air Transport Fortification Air Base Bridge Tunnel Supply Drop

Unit Aspects

Aspects are special abilities that Units may have available to them. These abilities are in addition to their basic attack value in combat. A unit's aspect, if it has one, is noted at the top-left of the unit picture on the Unit's Card. For some units, next to the Aspect icon, is a value, which denotes how much the ability can be used, depending on the ability. As this varies from ability to ability, the details are outlined below. Some aspects do not have a value that limits their use, rather they offer a single benefit to your army.



Anti-Tank

Units with the Anti-Tank aspect are more capable of defeating the defensive systems of armoured vehicles.

Armour units gain a +2 Odds Shift in their favour when attacking or defending. This inherent value is negated by an opposing unit with the Anti-Tank aspect.

Each level of Anti-Tank Value adds a +1 Odds Shift in combats against units of the Armour type.

Anti-Aircraft



Units with the Anti-Aircraft aspect are more capable of defending against atmospheric units attacking ground forces within the Support Range of the unit with the Anti-Aircraft aspect.

The Anti-Aircraft value determines how effective the unit is at deterring atmospheric units.

Artillery



Units with the Artillery aspect can use their Attack value to support units within support range.

The artillery unit Attack value is used whether the unit is doing support attack or support defence.

Command

Units with the Command aspect are able to connect units into an effective combat force. This allows units to better group for attacking or defending.



Divisional Command

Units with the Divisional Command aspect are able to connect units into an effective combat force.

This allows units to better group for attacking or defending.

Electronic Warfare



Units with the Electronic Warfare aspect passively grant the following benefit to adjacent units:

+1 Dice Mod advantage during defence.

A unit with the Electronic Warfare aspect grants the following benefit to the units it is set to Support Defend:

+1 Odds Shift advantage during defence.

The Electronic Warfare unit itself also benefits from having the Electronic Warfare aspect.

The Electronic Warfare Value acts as a multiplier for the benefits the Electronic Warfare unit applies.

Engineer



Units with the Engineer aspect are capable of building structures on the map.

Units with the Engineer aspect are also capable of damaging such structures more effectively.

Structures such as Airfields and Fortifications have a construction cost and the Num Dice value of the unit with the Engineer aspect indicates how much construction the unit can contribute per turn to repairing an existing structure or building a new structure.

Logistics



Units with the Logistics aspect provide the essential supply chain function of allowing a player to bring up the materiel and personnel required for war and distribute it effectively amongst the units in their command structure.

A Logistics unit draws from the supply chain, whether directly from a Supply Zone within Supply Range or from a Transport Supply unit connecting to a Supply Zone.

The supplies drawn from the supply chain are then used to keep nearby units within Supply Range in Supply.

Medical



Units with the Medical aspect passively allow a percentage chance to heal units within the supply range of the Medical unit that have been damaged during the current turn. The percentage chance of success is defined per Medical unit.

The check for healing is performed at the end of the combat phase, after the active player has selected to advance phase. Only units which have been damaged in the current phase are eligible for being healed in this fashion.

The Medical Value of the unit indicates how many Readiness Levels the Medical unit can heal per damaged unit.

While Humans have extensive medical capabilities when dealing with injuries to their own species, they do not have the literal centuries of experience in dealing with alien contagions,

exo planetary conditions and sundry related issues that the Tarka and Hiver have. This places their Medical aspect percentages at the bottom of the heap.

While the Hiver have extensive medical knowledge of themselves to the extent of being capable of astonishing biological diversity, they also exhibit a bias to the knowledge that while their mothers live, there will always be more sons. And triage takes on whole new meanings when the more difficult cases simply have their heads removed for transport back to mom. Thus they currently rest in middle place in medical capabilities, simply due to their centuries of experience in diverse conditions.

The Tarka currently hold the top place in medical technology in the game due to both their centuries of experience in diverse conditions and their willingness to go the extra distance in bringing people back from more extreme injuries.

Siege



Units with the Siege aspect are more capable of assaulting structures.

The Siege Value indicates how much damage is applied to any structure in the same hex as the defender. This damage is applied both when the unit with the Siege aspect is the actual Attacking unit and when the unit with the Siege aspect is using Support Attack.

Supply Transport



Units with the Supply Transport aspect are able to chain the lines of supply from supply zones to nearby units.

A unit with Supply Transport units can deliver supplies to the number of units indicated by their Supply Amount within their Supply Range.

If the unit being delivered to has the Logistics aspect, then this allows the flow of supplies to continue to units supplied by that logistics unit.

If the unit being supplied also has the Supply Transport aspect, then it can act as another link in the supply chain.

Where a Logistics unit can only distribute supplies to units, a Supply Transport unit can chain supply to additional units such as Logistics units or additional Supply Transport units.

The Supply Transport Value is not currently used.

Supply Zone

Units with the Supply Zone aspect are capable of providing supply to any Supply Transport or Logistics aspect in that remote unit's range.

The Supply Zone Value is set to the following similar to the Supply Zone Hex effect:

0 – Inherent Supply only

1 – Only fully supplies the Player set to own the Unit at Scenario start. Provides Inherent Supply to others.

2 – Supply capability is supplied fully to current owner of the unit.

Unit Transport



Units with the Unit Transport aspect are able to load another unit onto themselves for transport across the battlefield.

Nominally useful when bringing up slower moving infantry units, this also allows units with the Unit Transport aspect which have

hover or grav capability to move units without those capabilities across terrain that would otherwise prove difficult to pass.

The Unit Transport Value indicates how many points of carrying capacity the unit has. Each unit to be carried has a cost in points that is compared to the Unit Transport Value. If the carry cost is greater than the Unit Transport Value, then the unit may not be carried.

A unit with a large enough Unit Transport Value can carry multiple units if their combined points cost is less than the Unit Transport Value.

Unit Progression

One of the rewards given to the player for the successful completion of a campaign scenario is the ability to upgrade their units via the expenditure of Victory Points.

While units upgraded in this way gain useful improvements, it is not uncommon for such units to be unavailable in the next campaign scenario due to the upgrade process. Adapting to and training on new equipment often takes considerable time.

In game terms, any unit which is upgrading may accrue additional fatigue from the process, also preventing their deployment.

Unit Experience and Upgrades

Units in the campaign gain experience from every battle. If they destroy an enemy unit, they get bonus XP, but if they are given reinforcements during the battle some of that XP is lost.

Unit Pools

Each Commander in a campaign series has two unit pools that grow as the commander advances in rank. The two pools are the Core Unit Pool and the Unit Deployment Pool.

The Core Unit Pool is the total number of Core Units that the commander can keep as the campaign progresses.

The Unit Deployment Pool is the total number of units that can be deployed into the next campaign scenario from those available in the Core Unit Pool. Some scenarios have limits that will restrict a players deployment pool. As well, players are no required to fill their deployment pool if they choose not to.

Campaign Fatigue

Units accrue Fatigue either as a result of participating in a campaign scenario or while undergoing upgrading due to unit rewards. The default gain for participation in a scenario is 1 level of Fatigue.

Scenarios may alter the level of fatigue gained based on campaign and race, such as having to fight on a world considered alien to your faction (eg Hivers fighting on a Tarkas world). Any units fighting on an airless world gain 1 fatigue.

Fatigue can be reduced by scripted events occurring between scenarios, such as a particular unit not participating in a scenario, or between scenarios the campaign moves to a different planet, and your units rest up on the trip there.

The effects for the varying levels of Fatigue are as follows:

- 1) No detriment
- 2) No detriment
- 3) No detriment
- -1 effective Readiness Level. Any unit with effective Readiness Level of 0 is unable to participate in the scenario.
- 5) -2 effective Readiness Levels. Any unit with effective Readiness Level of 0 is unable to participate in the scenario.
- 6) -4 effective Readiness Levels. Any unit with effective Readiness Level of 0 is unable to participate in the scenario.

Fatigue level detriments will vary by Race.

Weapon Types

Units use one of three types of weapons; Ballistic, Energy, and Missile.

Maps & Terrain

Battles take place on a map made up of hexes, with each hex representing a type of Terrain.

There are six types of Terrain; Airless, Forests, Swamp, Hills, Mountains, Desert. Each type of terrain has a different movement cost for different types of movement. (Foot, Tracked, Wheeled, Burrowing, Hover, Grav, Flight, Boat, Ship)

Some terrain will give you a die modifier when attacking someone on that terrain, from -1 from hills to -3 for mountains.

Throughout a map you may find rivers, as well as un-natural structures such as Fortifications, Bridges, Airfields, and Roads.

Engineering units can build forts, bridges, and airfields, as well as destroy them – this is handy if you have no use for an existing structure and don't want the enemy to have it.

If you decide you want to take control of an existing unit, any unit can capture a fort or airfield. Move a unit on to the structure and you will automatically take it.

Combat Modifiers

Woods	-1 Die Mod
Swamp	-2 Die Mod
Hills	-1 Die Mod
Wooded Hills	-2 Die Mod
Mountain	-3 Die Mod
Jungle	-3 Die Mod
Light Urban	-1 Odds Shift
Urban	-2 Odds Shift
Fortification	-1 Odds Shift per level of Fortification
Across River	-1 Odds Shift
Across Large River	-2 Odds Shift
Amphibious Assault	-3 Odds Shift

Credits

LEAD DESIGNER

Martin Cirulis

DESIGNERS

Rowen Epp Shane Lazarus

ENGINEERING LEAD Darren Waine

ENGINEERS

James Goldthrope Nick Naso

ART LEAD

Chris Gerspacher

ARTISTS

Ryan Blanks Ken Lee

BUILD AND INSTALLER ENGINEER

James Goldthorpe

CROWDFUNDING LEAD Arinn Dembo

> **PRODUCER** Chris Stewart

SOUND AND MUSIC Power Up Audio

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About Kerberos

Founded in 2004 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Kerberos is made up of industry veterans that went out on their own in order to develop games as gamers, to revisit the roots of video games, to revive some old favorites.

Kerberos has released two games and four expansions to the 4X Sword of the Stars series, as well as the indie Fort Zombie. 2013 saw the release of the Roguelike Sword of the Stars: The Pit and its first expansion, MindGames, and now Ground Pounders, the third genre foray for the SotS-Verse brand. Stay tuned – we have much more planned.

For more information, please visit:

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