

“MAGDALA TO MAFEKING” OLD SCHOOL COLONIAL RULES BY **ANDY CALLAN**

Disclaimer: *These rules make no pretence at either historical accuracy or political correctness. The idea is simply to produce a fun game where both sides have a chance to win (not necessarily an even chance!). Games run best with an Umpire to keep things civilized and rule on any dodgy points at issue – otherwise roll dice to decide whether you can do something, then agree on a “house rule” for the next time it comes up. Imperial troops should usually be outnumbered by natives by at least 2:1. See Appendix 1 for some suggested army lists **by Roy Boss**. Order of play is by alternate turns (IGO/UGO). All measurements are in inches (Imperial!). You need lots of standard 6-sided dice (D6).*

1. ORGANIZATION

Base your troops according to personal taste. Regulars might be in 1 or 2 ranks and Irregulars in swarms on multiple bases. You can keep track of losses either by removing figures or using special dice or other markers.

Regular Infantry Unit = c20-24 figures.....(it may send out a Detachment of 5-6 figures (or c ¼ strength)
 Regular Cavalry Unit = c12 figures..... Detachment = c4 figures
 Boer Kommando (mounted Infantry) = c 12-20 figures.....Detachment = 4-6 figures
 Artillery = Field Gun & 3-4 crew (Machine Gun or Pom-Pom or Mountain Gun or Rocket = 2-3 crew)
 Native Warband etc = 30-40 figures.....Detachment = c10-12 figures
 Native Cavalry = 15-20 figures.....Detachment = c4-6 figures

2. MOVEMENT

Regular Infantry : close order = 6 inches, skirmish order = 8 inches.
 Regular Cavalry : walk or trot up to 12 inches or charge 18 inches (may not charge from the halt)
 Mounted Infantry : walk or trot up to 12 inches. Cannot charge. To mount or dismount takes ½ a turn.
 Field Artillery : in good going can operate at infantry, skirmisher or cavalry trot rate.
 Limbering and unlimbering takes a full turn
 Native and Irregular Foot : 2D6 +2 inches
 Native and irregular mounted : 4D6 + 2 inches
 Supply wagons : 6 inches, pack mules : 8 inches
Detachments may operate no further than 2 moves from their parent unit.
Depending on the scenario, the Umpire should reduce moves in bad going for formed Regular troops – but not necessarily for Skirmishers, Irregulars or Natives

3. FIRING

All troops may fire at half effect then move (or vice-versa).
 European Sharpshooters (eg Boers and Skirmishing Regulars) roll 1D6 per 2 figures firing.
 Volleying European Regulars roll 1D6 per 3 figures firing or per 4 figures firing for any other Regulars
 Native Irregulars roll 1D6 per 6 figures firing or per 4 figures firing if specialist Snipers (eg Afghan jezailchis)
 Artillery roll 2D6 per crewman (A pre-Maxim MG jams if 2 or more 1s are rolled. Clear next turn for 4/5/6)
Add 50% to the number of dice rolled if firing magazine rifles.
 Halve it if vs skirmishers or a target in cover/rough going or pinned/prone (cumulative).
 So vs Boers in skirmish order in rough going and prone roll half x half x half (one-eighth!) the number of dice.
 Halves round up for European Regulars, Boers and Snipers. Ignore all fractions for other troops.

Ranges:

Breechloading Rifles Short = under 12 ins, Long = 12-24 (Sharpshooters add 6ins)) **All roll 5/6 to hit**
Other Small Arms = under 9, Long = 9-18 (Snipers add 6ins)) **at Short Range**
Field Artillery Short = under 12, Long = 12-48) **or 6 at Long**
Heavy Artillery (e.g.4.7 inch Naval Gun). No short range fire but unlimited long range. **Roll 6 to hit**
Machine gun 0-24 (no short range) **roll 5/6 to hit at any range.**
Mountain Gun or Pom-Pom 0-36 (no short range) **roll 6 to hit at any range**
Rocket 0-30 (no short range). **Roll 6 to hit.** If more 1s than 6s are rolled the hits fall on the friends nearest the target instead!

Clear fields of fire at Long Range (as at Omdurman) should be the exception rather than the rule...

Ammunition

Most units of Infantry and Artillery usually start with enough ammunition for 6 turns of firing at full effect. Depending on the scenario they could start off with more or less ammunition and it might be possible for regular units to be re-supplied from a supply wagon or pack mule.

Show each unit's current ammunition state using a special coloured dice placed beside it.

If you choose to fire a volley at ½ effect roll a dice: for a 4/5/6 this doesn't deplete the ammunition supply, for a 1/2/3 lose half a point (put a special chit next to the unit's ammo dice).

Once they have used up their 6 turns worth of firing Regular Infantry units are reduced to one "last stand" volley at ½ effect, to be used only if they are charged. Other troops and Artillery can't fire at all.

Ignore the ammunition rule whenever detachments fire (*their job is to make the enemy waste his!*).

4. MELEE

Units moving into contact always take the defender's fire first (but at only half effect if the attackers moved less than 9 ins).

Count up the figures in contact and fight one-third of that number of combats. Count all of the defenders who are in contact in the case of a flank attack.

For each individual combat a Roll D6 vs D6: a difference of 2 or more is a kill. Anything else is indecisive. British Infantry always +1 (!), Regular Cavalry +1, Zulus or Mahdists +1 except against British cavalry.

The Umpire may rule an extra +1 or -1 according to special circumstances (e.g +1 for Lancers in the 1st round of a Melee, -1 for any troops attacking fieldworks).

A unit which is outnumbered and overlapped must fight up to two extra combats (at a straight D6 vs D6, with 2no adjustments) for each flank which is overlapped – it cannot inflict kills if it wins these extra combats, but it will take them if it loses. In a 2nd round it fights 4 extra combats, in a 3rd it fights 6 etc, etc.

The overall loser of a melee must **test Morale** (see below) and if he passes the test the melee continues next turn. It also continues next turn if there was no overall winner in the fighting.

If the enemy is broken and routed (see Morale) victorious Regular Infantry will rally on the spot. Any other troops must roll a D6: for anything but a 6 (5/6 for Regular Cavalry) they will **Pursue** and destroy a routed enemy. Regular Cavalry halt and rally after two moves of pursuit. Other troops chase the enemy off the table and never rally.

5. MORALE

Any **advancing infantry unit** that suffers **more than 10%** fire casualties in a turn is **automatically halted** by that fire and is pinned in position for at least one turn, during which it may only fire at ½ effect.

Otherwise **a unit taking two or more fire casualties in a turn** (1 or more for detachments/Cavalry/Artillery) **Or a unit which has lost a round of Melee must test its Morale.**

Roll 2D6 for Infantry, D6 +2 for a Kommando, D6+1 for Cavalry or Artillery, D6-1 for a detachment).

British Regulars (or equivalent e.g. Foreign Legion) +1, Any Regulars in square or behind defences +1, Advancing Fanatics (eg Ghazis, Mahdists) +1.

Inferior quality troops -1 (or -2 in some extreme cases!), each successive round of melee lost -1

"Inferior quality" is a subjective assessment which can vary according to circumstances. Boers might be considered Inferior if attempting to charge but not if firing from cover. Egyptian Conscripts might have no adjustment if defending entrenchments, -1 if advancing under fire and -2 if testing after losing a Melee!

The Umpire might keep such variations secret in the game scenario, only to reveal them in the action.

An unadjusted roll of 11 or 12 is always a pass for Infantry (or a 6 in the case of other troops).

If the score is **equal to or more** than the total number of casualties it has sustained so far the unit will continue to advance under fire or continue to fight a Melee or continue to fire at full effect.

If the score is **less than** the total casualties sustained so far a unit must halt (if not already halted) and may fire back at only half effect next turn. A unit halted by fire may then choose to retreat OR test its morale again (after at least 1 turn) to advance under fire or fire again at full effect. If this new test fails it falls back half a move and halts again losing 1 extra casualty (= troops slinking off).

Note the need to keep a halted enemy under fire – artillery is particularly useful for this.

A unit which fails a morale test after **losing a melee** is broken and routed.

NB: British Infantry and Foreign Legion always fight on rather than rout but unless in square they must fall back half a move and lose an extra casualty.

At 50% casualties Regular units or detachments must retreat back on their supports (if any).

Otherwise, any troops down to half strength or less must always attempt to retreat off the battlefield.

Reaction Test:

A unit must take this test whenever it sees fellow countrymen or ANY friendly Europeans retreat or rout past within 12 inches. Test by rolling 1D6: British troops and Foreign Legion always +1, any troops not engaged or under fire +1, if a General is with the unit +1, poor quality troops -1, friends **routing** past -1. 4,5 or 6 = Carry on, 1,2 or 3 = Retreat one turn then test again. Two successive retreats and the unit routs!

6. GENERALS & NATIVE COMMANDERS (one per Player or no more than 2 per army)

An unwounded General with a unit may try to **rally** it by re-rolling a failed Morale, Reaction or Pursuit test.

Risk to Generals: if a unit with a General takes more than 2 hits roll 2D6: 2 = killed, 3 = wounded.

7. FORTIFICATIONS AND FIELD DEFENCES

Zareba: Gives no cover. Attacker in Melee minus 1 on all his combat dice rolls.

Wagons or Sandbags etc: Cover vs small arms fire. Attacker in Melee -1.

Earthworks: Cover against small arms and artillery. Attacker in Melee -1.

Sangars: Cover against small arms. No advantage in Melee. Detachments or skirmishers in suitable rocky terrain can build sangars for themselves if they are not under fire.

Roll 5/6 to complete on any move after the 2nd spent in construction.

APPENDIX 1: ARMY LISTS by Roy Boss

Tel El Kebir 1882

British

4 x24 figure battalions of regular infantry single shot rifles.
2 x12 cavalry, carbines.
2 field guns 4 crew.
1 Nordenfeldt MG three crew.

Egyptians

4x20 inferior regular battalions single shot rifles, in fieldworks.
2x 20 Retif battalions irregulars single shot rifles, in fieldworks.
3x Krupp field guns 3 crew, in fieldworks.
2x 10 cavalry, inferior regulars, one with lances.

Suakin 1885

British

4 x24 regular battalions single shot rifles.
2 x12 regular cavalry, carbines one with improvised lances.
2x field guns 3 crew.
1x Gatling gun 3 crew.

Army of Osman Digna

2x12 cavalry mixed melee weapons.
2 x 12 Camel mounted infantry melee weapons.
2x 12 skirmishers single shot rifles.
6 x30 Fuzzies, natives melee weapons.

NW frontier

British

4 x20 British or Indian battalions single shot breech loaders.
1x20 scouts Irregular skirmishers single shot rifles.
2 Mountain guns, 3 crew.
1 field gun 3 crew.
1 x12 regular cavalry, lances, carbines.

Pathans

Swordsmen 4x24 tribesmen, fierce (adds 1 in melee).
Musketeers 4x 24 irregular tribesmen each can detach up to half as skirmishers.
3x10 cavalry, melee weapons.
In addition to 2 Generals this army may have one imam who adds a +1 to any unit testing morale within 6 inches of his position.

Atbara 1898

Dervishes

Ansar. 4x24 tribesmen single shot rifles poor shots, in fieldworks.
Ansar 4x24 tribesmen melee weapons, in fieldworks.
Baggara 3x12 cavalry, melee weapons.
Baggara 2x12. camelry. mounted infantry melee weapons.
Artillery. 1 Krupp gun 2 crew, in fieldworks.

British

4x 20 regular infantry breech loading magazine rifles.
2x 20 Sudanese or Egyptian regular infantry breech loading single shot rifles.
1x12 regular cavalry, lance, carbine.
2x field guns 5 crew.
1 x riverboat, equivalent to one field gun crew 4 and one Nordenfeldt type MG crew 3.

Boers versus the Empire, Colenso, Spion Kop, Paardeberg 1899-1900

Boer

6 x 16 Kommandos Mounted Irregular Infantry with breech loading magazine rifles. Sharpshooters.
Special Boer "Bug out" rule, A Boer Kommando with its horses within 8 inches of the unit may withdraw to its horses and carry out a full mounted move in the same move.

1x Pom-pom 3 crew.

1x Field gun 4 crew.

1 x ammunition wagon.

British

6 x 24 Regular British infantry breech loading magazine rifles.

1x 12 British cavalry , lancers.

1x 16 British mounted infantry Breech loading magazine rifles or 1x12 Regular Colonial cavalry, breech loading magazine rifles.

2 x field guns 4 crew.

1x 4:7 inch Naval Gun 4 crew, or 1x Pompom or Maxim gun, 3 crew.