

# ASCARI

## Index

### Introduction

### 1 - Playing pieces

- 1.1 Combat Units
- 1.2 Leaders
- 1.3 Informational Markers
- 1.4 How to begin. Set up

### 2 - Turn Sequence

### 3 - Movement

- 3.1 Terrain
- 3.2 Occupied hexes and Melée
- 3.3 Fire and Movement
- 3.4 Stacking
- 3.5 Hits on move
- 3.6 Moving artillery
- 3.7 Terrain Effects Chart (TEC)

### 4 - Fire

- 4.1 Combat Range
- 4.2 Line Of Sight
- 4.3 Opportunity Fire
- 4.4 Fire Phase
- 4.5 Fire Combat Table and Fire Die Roll Results
- 4.6 Rifle markers
- 4.7 Artillery Opportunity Fire
- 4.8 Artillery Fire

### 5 - Melée

- 5.1 Procedure

- 5.2 Combat Results
- 5.3 Die Roll Modifiers
- 5.4 Retreats

### 6 - Administrative Phase

### 7 - Victory conditions

## SCENARIOS

- S1. First Agordat
- S2. Agordat
- S3. Coatit
- S4. Amba Alagi
- S5. Metemma

## Historical Context

## Battles Historical Notes

## Bibliography, Web and Credits

## Example of play



## Introduction

This Company level wargame tells an epopea located in the first Italian Colony, Eritrea, the story of loyal soldiers who fought for Italy and depicts four main battles which saw them as protagonists: First Agordat, Agordat, Coatit and Amba Alagi.

A bonus Scenario which depicts the battle of Metemma, between the Dervishes and the Ethiopians, is also included.

The game scale is based on Infantry Companies, Artillery batteries and Cavalry Squadrons (dismounted/mounted) for the Italian Royal Army, Rubs for the Dervishes and Provincial Battalions for the Ethiopians.

**Dervish warriors** were organized in Corps, coming from a specific Province, named Rubs and led by Amirs.

**Ethiopian Empire** (also known as **Abyssinia**) had many armies, one for every territory and every chief (Ras), not by a single Imperial one. These armies were made up of volunteers and their numerical strength varied considerably.

**Game scale.** In this game design each infantry and cavalry unit contains between 125 and 180 men per Melée point, with Dervishes/Ethiopian cavalry units' strength being 100 horses per Melée point. Each artillery unit represents about 3–4 guns. A hex is around 250 meters.

**Ascari (Askari):** term of Turkish origin used to identify a soldier of Arab race.

**Game components.** Each game includes:

Two 59x41 cm maps (printed on two sided sheets)

A rules, scenario and historical background manual

216 die-cut counters 5/8" (15mm square)

A Player Aid Card

Players will need to supply a six sided die

## 1.0 THE PLAYING PIECES

Three types of counters are in the game: combat units, leaders and informational markers.

## 1.1 Combat Units.

Combat units are Infantry companies, Artillery batteries and dismounted Cavalry Squadron units for the Italians. For the Africans (Ethiopians or Dervishes) there are Cavalry and Infantry, which, furthermore, may have two types of counters representing Rifle or Spear units, Spear counters have a horizontal strip on them.

Each combat unit is rated for Melée Strength and Movement Allowance. Each counter also shows the unit's parent organization, usually its Battalion or Rub.

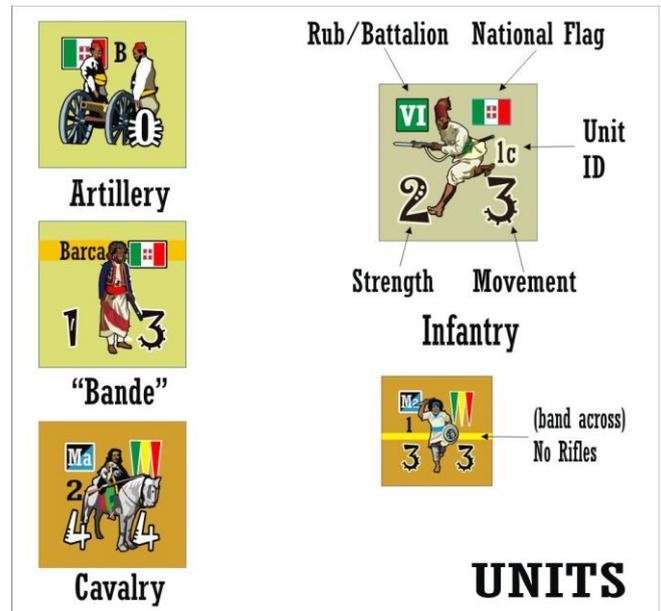
The individual units are badged or color-coded so that they can be identified by Battalion, Rub (Dervish Battalion) or by Ras name initial letter, according to the Scenario rules.

Most combat units are printed on both sides; the reverse side shows the unit's Reduced state; to be eliminated, it needs to receive two hits.

Units can receive double hits as well (see the Fire Combat Table and the Artillery Combat Table) and are eliminated immediately. If the unit receives a single hit, it suffers a step loss and must be flipped to its Reduced side; if it is hit again, the unit is eliminated.

For artillery, the reverse side can be its mounted version, depending on the battle.

Special Units can appear in some Scenarios.



## 1.2 Leaders.

There is one level of Leaders: Officers (Italians), Emirs (Amir-Dervishes) or Ras (Ethiopians).

In Ascari they have no Strength values.

Some leaders have the capability to add a DRM as printed on their counters (F for Fire; C for Melée combat) to the values of the accompanied unit.

Stacked Leaders have the ability to prevent Italian units or African units (belonging to their Rub/Ras only) from receiving certain Markers, except for Opportunity Fire and Fire. If stacked with an Artillery unit, Officers allow Artillery Opportunity Fire. They cannot perform Rifle Fire, Opportunity Rifle Fire or Melée, but may affect the results with DRMs and receive hits if stacked with friendly units.

Leaders units are printed on both sides (exception Toselli); the reverse shows the unit in its Reduced state; to be eliminated, they need to receive two hits.



## 1.3 Informational Markers.

These include markers for Movement, Retreat, Combat, Fire and Opportunity Fire.

They apply their printed DRM to the marked units. Use of markers is explained throughout the rules. Each unit can receive only one Informational Marker per type per turn (i.e. no two Combat markers together).

Other markers specific to the Scenario played are explained in the specific rules.

## 1.4 How to begin. Set up

Units can be deployed in the zones described in the Scenario rules. The flag in the box will record who is the Active/Inactive player during the Turn Sequence.

## 2.0 THE TURN SEQUENCE

### Sequence of Play

1. Flip the Game Turn counter on the Game Turn Box to indicate the active player (Flag).
2. Active player movement, immediate Melée resolution and possible Inactive player Opportunity Fire (Rifles and Artillery).
3. Active player Fire Combat Phase (Rifles and Artillery).
4. Administrative Phase. Remove all Opportunity Fire and Fire markers – then remove Movement, Retreat and Combat markers from the active player's units only.
5. Repeat this sequence, until the Victory conditions are met, or according to the Scenario specific rules. Some Scenarios use a Turn Track; the Turn counter is moved after each player has been Active.

See also the Scenario rules.

## 3.0 MOVEMENT

The active player moves his units one at a time from hex to adjacent hex. A unit may not exceed its movement allowance in any action.

### 3.1 Terrain

Movement Point (MP) costs depend on terrain type; see the Terrain Effects Chart and Scenario Specific Terrain. A moving unit must have enough MPs to pay the terrain cost of entering a hex; if it doesn't, it may not enter that hex, except for units with a Movement Allowance of 1, which can move 1 hex ignoring terrain costs.

### 3.2 Occupied hexagons and Melée

If a moving unit enters a hex occupied by an enemy unit, there is a Melée, which is immediately resolved (see rule 5); movement is interrupted by the Melée.

Leaders, stacked alone, do not block enemy movement and will be immediately eliminated; in this case movement is not interrupted by Melèe and the moving unit can continue its movement

### 3.3 Fire and Movement

A moving unit may be attacked in any hex within enemy fire range that it enters along its movement path (see Rifle Opportunity Fire 4.3).

During its movement, the inactive player must tell the moving player to stop moving, momentarily, so that he can conduct opportunity fire. Fire must be resolved before the unit enters a new hex. The firing player may not wait to see where the unit will end its movement before announcing Opportunity Fire. Opportunity Fire may not be conducted against units in Melée hexes or entering a Melée hex.

If moving units receive hits and suffer a step lossess, they must stop immediately and receive a **MOVED** marker.

**3.31 Moved marker.** This marker indicates that a Combat unit which can fire has completed its movement and has spent all its movement points. This gives a DRM penalty in fire combat. The marker will be removed during the next Administrative Phase.



Leaders stacked with their units (any officer for the Italians, leaders belonging to their Rub/Battalion only for Dervish/Ethiopian units) can prevent them from receiving this Marker.

### 3.4 Stacking

The stacking limit is one combat unit per hex. The stacking limit cannot be exceeded at the end of any friendly movement phase (or any melée phase). Game markers and Leaders do not affect stacking. Moving and retreating units can freely enter and pass through friendly units, but cannot stop in hexes occupied by friendly units.

### 3.5 Hits on move

If a moving unit is the target of enemy Opportunity Fire while moving through a hex with another friendly unit, and receive a hit and step losses, the moving unit must retreat to the previous hex in its movement path and end its movement.

### 3.6 Moving artillery

Artillery units have two sides: its battery side (ready to fire in the Active Player Fire Phase or in the Opportunity Fire Phase if stacked with any Officer) and its limbered side (ready for movement only).

**3.61 Changing Formation.** The unit can flip from one formation to the other by paying 1 MP; if the unit changes from limbered to its battery side, it will receive a Movement marker before firing. If the unit changes from battery side to limbered side, its residual movement allowance becomes only 1 MP.

### 3.7 Terrain Effects Chart (TEC)

Refer to the TEC and Scenario Specific Terrains for the Costs of the Terrain.

## 4.0 FIRE COMBAT

Fire and Opportunity Fire Phase may only be performed by Rifle units, not by Spear units (the counter with a stripe) or Cavalry units, which can perform Melèe only.

### 4.1 Combat Range

Units must be within range of their intended targets in order to attack them. Count the number of hexes between the firing unit's hex and the target hex. The number of hexes must be equal to or less than the firing unit's range, which is 4 hexes.

Italian Vetterli rifles targeted well at 1000 meters. The Remington used by the Dervishes had the barrel partially sawn off and were less effective. The Ethiopian fusiliers fired mostly at short range.

Count the hex occupied by the target unit(s) but not the hex(es) occupied by the firing units.

### 4.2 Line Of Sight

There must be a clear Line of Sight (LOS) between firing units and target units. LOS is blocked if it passes:

- through a hex that contains other combat units, but the LOS is not blocked by other combat units if the firer is at a higher elevation than the target;
- through blocking terrain like palmtrees, zeriba, fort, slopes and hilltop, see the TEC and Scenario special rules;

- along the hexside between two hexes that both contain blocking terrain;
- or through terrain at a higher elevation than the target units;

A LOS may enter a hex with blocking terrain, but may not pass through it.

### 4.3 Opportunity Fire



Inactive units which have not yet fired during the current turn may opportunity fire to attack enemy units within 4 hexes. Each eligible unit using rifle fire may conduct one opportunity fire per turn and will then receive the Opportunity Fire marker in order to record that they have already fired.

**4.31 Procedure.** The inactive player designates the firing unit(s) during the target unit's movement. Resolve the attack using the rifle fire procedure, place an Opportunity Fire marker on the unit after it fires to indicate that it can't fire again this turn.

**4.32 Targets.** A moving unit may be attacked in any hex(es) within enemy range that it enters along its movement path. During its movement, the inactive player must tell the moving player to stop moving momentarily so that he can conduct opportunity fire. Fire must be resolved before the unit enters a new hex. The firing player may not wait to see where the unit will end its movement before announcing opportunity fire.

**4.33 Melée hexes.** Opportunity fire may not be conducted against units in Melée hexes or entering a Melée hex.

**4.34 Die Roll Modifiers.** DRM's are:

**SUPPORT:** DRM+1 if another Italian unit is adjacent to the firing Italian unit (the Bande are not considered Italian).

**TERRAIN:** terrain DRM's, applicable for the terrain in the moving unit's hex and/or for the terrain in the firing unit's hex

**LEADER:** if a leader is stacked with the firing unit and has any DRM printed on its visible side for Fire (those with the letter F).

**SIZE:** if the firing unit has a Melée Strength equal to 0, apply a -1 DRM.

**OPPORTUNITY FIRE PENALTY:** -1 DRM to any firing unit.

### 4.4 Fire Combat Phase



Active units which have not yet fired during the current turn may make a fire attack against enemy units (within a range of 4 hexes) to

which they have an unblocked LOS. Each eligible unit using direct fire may conduct one fire per turn and will then receive a FIRE attack marker. This also occurs if they are stacked with their leaders.

**4.41 Die Roll Modifiers.** DRM's are:

**SUPPORT:** DRM+1 if another Italian unit is adjacent to the firing Italian unit (the Bande are not considered Italian).

**TERRAIN:** terrain DRM's, applicable for the terrain in the inactive player's hex and/or for the terrain in the firing unit's hex;

**MOVED:** DRM -1 if the firing unit has this marker;

**COMBAT:** DRM -1 if the firing unit has this marker;

**LEADER:** if a leader is accompanying the firing unit and has a DRM printed on its visible side for Fire (F);

**SIZE:** if the firing unit has a Melée Strength equal to 0, apply a -1 DRM;

*Note: Rifle units having a RETREAT marker cannot perform Fire or Opportunity Fire.*

### 4.5 Fire Combat Table and Fire Die Roll Results

The firing unit verifies range and LOS, locates the proper column on the Fire Combat Table, rolls the die and adds the DRM's to determine the result.

Fire Combat Table		
DRM (d6) for Opportunity Fire, Movement, Combat: -1		
DRM (d6) for Support Fire (Italians only): +1		
Rolls to hit		
Range	Italians	Dervishes, Ethiopians & Bands
1	3-4-5-6	4-5-6
2	4-5-6	5-6
3	5-6	6
4	5-6	6
<p><b>Note:</b> in <b>Black</b> Double Hit result; other Single hit result. Apply hit(s) and step loss(es) to the target unit.</p> <p><b>Leaders:</b> if the target has a Leader stacked and receives one/more hits, roll a d6; with a result of 5 or more the Leader receives an hit.</p>		

**Bold Black** are Double Hit results, all others are Single hit results. Apply hit(s) and step loss(es) to the target unit.

If moving units receive a hit, they must stop immediately, suffer a step loss and receive a MOVED marker.

If the target hit is an artillery unit, it is eliminated immediately;

If the target unit has a Leader stacked with it and receives one or more hits, roll a d6; on a result of 5

of more the Leader receives a hit and suffers a step loss.

If the target unit is a lone Leader unit, apply the result (a step loss or two).

#### 4.6 Rifle marker

Ethiopian Spear and Cavalry units can perform Opportunity Fire and Fire combat if holding a **Rifle marker**.

This represents the unique capability of Ethiopians Spear and Cavalry units to use abandoned rifles left on the battlefield.



Rifle markers are deployed on the map in the hex of every eliminated Rifle unit. If a Spear/Cavalry unit enters a hex containing a Rifle marker, the **unit will stop and can receive that marker, which will be then be attached** to the unit itself. The unit will receive a MOVED marker as well for that turn. Units holding Rifle markers will then act like Rifle units (i.e. they can then perform Opportunity Fire and perform Fire Combat and receive all the related markers). If such a unit is eliminated, the Rifle marker will be left in that hex.

#### 4.7 Artillery Opportunity Fire

Artillery units can perform Opportunity Fire only if stacked with an Officer. It can be any Officer as Artillery units do not belong to a specific Battalion. Resolve the attack using the Artillery fire procedure; the Opportunity Fire DRMs will be applied and the unit will then receive an Opportunity Fire marker. An Artillery unit which has performed Opportunity Fire will be able to fire during its next Fire Combat Phase.

#### 4.8 Artillery Fire

Active artillery units which have not yet fired in the current turn may fire enemy units within a range of 8 hexes to which have a LOS.

Each artillery unit using artillery fire may conduct one fire per turn and will then be marked with a Fire marker.

**4.61 Procedure.** The active player designates the firing unit(s) during the Fire Combat Phase. He then resolves the attack using the artillery fire procedure: Verify range and LOS, roll 1d6 die, apply any DRMs and check on the Artillery Combat Table for the results:

Artillery Combat Table		
DRM (d6) for Movement: -1		DRM (d6) for Opportunity Fire -2
Rolls to hit		
Range	Rolls to hit	Effect
1	2-3-4-5-6	Double Hit
2	3-4-5-6	Double Hit
3-4	3-4-5-6	Single Hit
5-6	4-5-6	Single Hit
7-8	5-6	Single Hit

**Note:** in Black Double Hit result, in White Single Hit result. Apply Hit(s) and Step Loss(es) to the target unit.  
**Leaders:** if the target unit has a Leader stacked and receives one/more Hit(s), roll a d6: with a result of 5 or more the Leader receives an hit.

#### 4.62 Artillery DRMs:

**MOVED:** DRM -1 if the firing unit has this marker;  
**LEADER:** if a leader is accompanying the artillery unit and has any DRM printed on the visible side for Fire (F).

**TERRAIN:** terrain's DRMs of the target hex and the firing hex

**OPPORTUNITY FIRE PENALTY:** -2 DRM to any firing unit.

DRMs are considered cumulative.

#### 4.63 Artillery Fire Results

**Bold Black** Double Hit result, or **White Single** hit results.

Apply hit(s) and step loss(es) to the target unit. If the target unit has a Leader stacked with it and receives one/more hits, roll a d6; with a result of 5 or more the Leader receives an hit and suffers a step loss. If the target unit is a lone Leader unit, apply the results.

### 5.0 MELEE COMBAT

If a moving unit enters an hex occupied by an enemy unit, that causes a Melèe combat, which is immediately resolved.

#### 5.1 Procedure

Each side calculates the Melèe Cumulative Value (MCV) of their respective unit(s): add together:

- 1 - the unit Strength
- 2- the DRMs (cumulative)
- 3- the result of a 1d6 die roll.

**5.11 Leaders:** Officers (Italians) or Emirs (Derivishes)/Ras (Ethiopians), caught alone in a hex are immediately eliminated (in this case the advancing unit's movement is not interrupted by the Melèe).

**5.12 Artillery:** Artillery performs normal Melèe combat.

## 5.2 Combat Results

Compare MCVs of the opposing force and apply the results:

1 - SAME VALUE: Active player retreats to his original starting hex;

2 - MCV superior by 1 or 2: lower MCV unit retreats 1 hex .

3 - MCV higher by 3 up to double the opponent's value: lower MCV unit retreats 1 hex and receives 1 Hit; receiving one hit means suffering a step loss.

4 - MCV difference more than double: lower MCV unit is overrun and eliminated.

**5.21 Markers:** Each engaged unit will receive one COMBAT marker the Melèe if it can perform Fire combat; in case of any retreat, the withdrawing unit will always receive instead a RETREAT marker (see 5.4).

Remember, leaders can keep units from being tagged with these two Markers.



## 5.3 Die Roll Modifiers

**HEIGHT:** DRM +1 for the player at the higher elevation hex (terrain) in the case that the active player enters the melee hex coming from a lower elevation level.

**RETREAT:** DRM -1 for the unit marked with a retreat marker (as just stated on the marker);

**TERRAIN:** terrain DRM in the Melèe hex, where applicable.

**LEADER:** if a leader is present in the melèe hex and has a DRM printed on the visible side for Combat (those with the letter C).

**BAYONET CHARGE!:** DRM +1 valid for the Italian units in Amba Alagi Scenario only.

DRMs are all be considered to be cumulative.

## 5.4 Retreats

If a unit must retreat 1 hex, the active player's unit will retreat to the last hex of its movement path; the inactive player's unit will retreat 1 hex chosen by the active player.

If it would be impossible to retreat, due to impassable terrain or presence of enemy units, the unit will be eliminated; however if there is at least one friendly unit adjacent, the unit can retreat a maximum of 2 hexes through that hex, in order to reach an empty hex, otherwise it will be eliminated. In case of the presence of more than one adjacent friendly unit, the active player decides the retreat path.



The inactive player's unit cannot retreat into or through the hex from which the active player's unit entered into Melèe hex.

Artillery units never retreat, batteries will be eliminated in case of a retreat result.

**5.41 Retreat markers:** Retreating units will receive a RETREAT marker, and therefore they will not be able to perform any kind of Fire (fire combat or opportunity fire) and will be penalized by the DRM printed on the marker. If units already holding one RETREAT marker get another Retreat result, they then receive one Hit and retain the RETREAT marker; another Retreat result, while holding the marker, will then lead to elimination.

**5.42 Victor advance:** After a successful Melèe, the active player's unit, which caused the retreat of the opponent's unit, if it still has available MPs, may continue to move, while being obviously subject to any Opportunity Fire and other Melèe combats, as the case may be.

## 6.0 Administrative Phase:

During this phase all Fire and Opportunity Fire markers (of both players) are removed and all other markers on the active player's units (i.e. moved, retreat and combat markers) are removed.

Markers (other than Fire and Opportunity Fire) on the inactive player's units are left in place.

## 7.0 Victory conditions

See the Scenario rules for the specific Victory conditions.

