

MOST IRREGULAR

Fast And Dirty pre-20th century warfare

Introduction:

Most Irregular (MI for short) is a set of amendments to use the FAD wargame rules to game conflicts set in the “horse and musket” era of cavalry, formed ranks and black powder weapons.

It may seem like a curious choice to draw on a set of science fiction wargame rules for a period already full of excellent game rules. If you are curious, read on.

Game scale:

Each figure represents one soldier. This means we are looking at relatively small affairs, such as opposing skirmishers clashing, or close quarter fighting where units start becoming fluid, and it comes down to local officers directing the action.

Game table:

As we are skirmishing, the table should be denser than what you would normally do for an 18th or 19th century action. Have lots of small pieces, such as trees, fences, boulders and similar, along with a few larger pieces. This will help the game flow better, and make the use of formations more interesting and demanding.

Troop types:

Units are rated based on one main factor: Quality. This governs their general training, experience and capability to get the job done.

In addition, units may have a number of traits applying to them, covering special abilities, advantages or drawbacks.

Quality can be one of four grades:

Rabble	5+
Conscript	4+
Regular	3+
Elite	2+

The target number indicated is used for all Quality tests. These are conducted by rolling a specified number of dice, and seeing how many roll equal or over the target number.

Turn sequence:

Initiative is determined each turn by rolling 1D6, the high roller getting to activate a commander first. The commander may activate a formed unit within 6” as well as any stragglers within 4”.

If the commander is rated as “charismatic” he may activate stragglers out to 8”.

Players then take turns to activate a commander, until all have acted.

Any given man may only be activated once during a turn. Some form of markers may be beneficial here for larger games.

Commander actions:

A commander may move 4” before activating a unit. If he is unafraid of enemy sharpshooters, he may elect to dash 8” but see the section on sharpshooters below.

If mounted on horseback, add 4” to these rates.

After moving, the commander may either activate units, as described above, or may choose to rally broken men to his position.

Unit actions:

When activated, a formed unit may choose two of the following actions:

Move
Disperse
Reposition
Fire
Assault
Regroup

When activated, a straggler may choose one of the following actions:

Scurry
Form ranks
Skirmish
Bail
Gather

Formation:

During small unit actions, men may find themselves lined up in a wide variety of formations. Some are well suited for this scale and type of fighting, while others may prove impractical. Formations are kept informal and allowed to form and change fluidly as the game goes on.

For the purposes of the game rules, a formation is any situation that finds multiple figures in base contact with each other, or with about half an inch dispersal between each other.

Men dispersed further than this are considered to be stragglers, whether they are so placed deliberately or by the events of the battle.

Actions permitted to units in formation:**Move:**

The unit may move up to 4" per move action. The unit may move part of its formation while another part remains stationary, or may turn by wheeling. At this small scale, it is assumed men may turn in place, allowing the unit to change facing before moving, or a column becoming a line for example simply by turning the men in place. This requires a move action, but does not use up movement in and of itself.

The move action must be performed in a relatively straight line, unless wheeling.

Moving two parts of a formation in separate directions would require two move actions to be expended.

Any obstacle will use up 2" of movement to negotiate.

Formed units move at half pace in any form of difficult or broken terrain.

Moving into woods or significant rubble automatically turns the unit into stragglers.

Disperse:

The formation spreads out, dispersing its men up to 3" apart, becoming stragglers. If this action is taken as the first action for a formed unit, it does not receive a second action.

Reposition:

The unit may change its formation and position as long as it maintains the same general position. As a general rule of thumb, draw a circle around the unit, and it may reposition anywhere within this circle. The unit must resume a new formation however.

Fire:

The unit opens fire against an enemy. Only one target is permitted. If both actions are spent firing, the unit is assumed to be rapid firing.

Any figure that can trace a line of sight to the target may fire. For units in formation, a figure may fire through one friendly figure in base contact. This permits, for example, a line of 2 ranks to all fire.

The unit may elect to fire at a specific enemy formation, or may fire generally at stragglers, targeting any in a broad 90 degree angle.

To determine the effects of fire, determine if the fire is Effective or Harassing by examining the weapon range:

Each weapon has a base range, indicated as a multiplier. This is multiplied by the base range of the unit quality rating, to determine the effective range.

Smooth bore musket	x3	Rabble	2"
Early rifle	x4	Conscript	3"
Advanced rifle	x6	Regular	4"
		Elite	5"

Example: A unit of conscripts with muskets would have an effective range of 9" while an elite unit with the same weapon could fire effectively out to 15" .

To determine the effects of fire, roll 2D6, and count the highest die for fire at effective range. At harassing range only roll 1D6.

Add any of the following modifiers:

Firer regular	+1
Firer elite	+2
Rapid firing	double the dice result before modifiers.
Rapid firing breech loaders	as above +3
Per 3 figures firing	+1

The result is the units fire effect. Against a formed target, every 2 points indicates a hit. If the unit is in cover or concealment, 3 hits are required.

Against stragglers, 3 points indicates a hit. This is raised to 4 if concealed and 5 if behind cover or entrenched. Figures must be in or directly behind cover to receive this benefit.

Example: 12 men with muskets are rapid firing at an enemy formation. The player rolls a 3 and a 5. To the 5 is added +4 (for men) and +5 (the die roll is doubled for rapid fire) indicating 14 points of fire effect.

Against a formation in the open, this would result in 7 hits.

In the worst case example (stragglers in cover) only 2 hits would have occurred.

The effect of hits:

When allocating hits to stragglers start with enemies closest to the firer and work your way outwards.

When allocating hits to formations, start with the part of the formation closest to the firer. For each hit, the firer rolls 1D6.

1-2 Shock

3-4 Wound

5-6 Fatal

Shocked figures immediately recoil 4" away from the firer. This will cause them to become stragglers if they came from a formation.

Wounded figures should be marked in some fashion. Anytime the formation moves, roll a number of D6 equal to the number of wounded. Any rolls of 1 remain in place, becoming stragglers.

When firing or conducting an assault, any wounded count as half a man.

Fatally hit figures are removed from play.

Assault:

The formation moves 4" more or less straight ahead, attempting to contact enemy troops.

Assaults are resolved slightly differently, depending on whether the enemy are stragglers or formations.

Stragglers:

Each straggler contacted by an assault rolls a Quality test. If successful, he inflicts 1 hit on the assaulting formation and may withdraw 4". On any failure, he is either captured or killed and can be removed from the table.

Formations:

To assault an enemy formation, the unit must take a Quality test on 3 dice. If at least 2 dice pass, they may assault normally.

If only 1 die is passed, the unit remains in position, wasting the action.

If all dice fail, the unit will withdraw 4" and must roll dice equal to its size. Every 1 causes a man to withdraw 4" extra, becoming a straggler.

If the enemy formation is contacted, it must likewise test on 3 dice. If they pass 2, they may fire at the approaching enemy as they close in, resolving the fire before fighting the assault.

If they pass only 1 die, they will receive the charge.

If all dice fail, they will withdraw 4", and must roll for stragglers as above.

If at least one member of the charge contacts the enemy formation, the assault takes place.

Each side rolls 2D6, picking the higher die.

Add any of the following modifiers that apply:

Higher quality	+2 per level higher.
Every officer	+1
Outnumbering enemy	+1 per 3 men outnumbering.

Low roll loses the assault.

Roll 1D6 for every figure, requiring a 3+ to inflict a hit on the enemy if you won, 5+ if you lost. Resolve the effect of hits as for firing above.

The loser must withdraw 8". Both units become dispersed after the assault.

On a draw, both sides roll 5+ to inflict hits, and then immediately fight another round of combat.

Regroup:

When regrouping, a formation may roll for every wounded man. A 5+ restores his status to normal. Any 1's are assumed to be too badly hurt to continue fighting, and are sent to the rear. Remove these figures from the board.

The formation may absorb any stragglers desired within 4", adding them to the formation.

Actions permitted to stragglers:

Scurry:

When scurrying, each man may move up to 8" , negotiating and circumventing terrain as he goes. Crossing an obstacle uses 1" of this movement allowance. When ordered to scurry, a group of stragglers must move roughly in the same direction but may spread out or move closer. They may not enter or create a formation however.

A man may not move within 4" of an enemy figure when scurrying.

Form ranks:

The stragglers in the group may move together to create a new formation, or move up to 4" to merge with an existing formation.

Skirmish:

Each figure may either move up to 6" to attack an enemy straggler in hand to hand, or may fire his weapon.

Stragglers fire as a formed unit, but never qualify as rapid firing.

Hits are resolved as follows:

1-3 Shock

4-5 Wound

6 Fatal

If attacking an enemy straggler in hand to hand, take a Quality test for each man. If both pass or both fail, they each fall back 4" . If only one succeeds, the opponent becomes a fatality.

Bail:

The stragglers abandon their current position. If there is a clear route of retreat behind them, they may reposition themselves up to 18" to the rear. Any wounded stragglers are removed from the field however.

In addition, when bailing, roll dice equal to the number of men. Every 1 causes a figure to be removed in the retreat.

Gather:

The stragglers may roll to recover wounded, in the same manner as a formed unit regrouping. In addition, each man may move up to 2" if this brings him in cover.

Being shot at:

Being fired upon can be a hugely disconcerting event. Any formed unit being fired upon must test Quality. On a failure, the unit gives ground, and for every point rolled under the target number, one man withdraws 4" and becomes a straggler.

An officer within 4" may attempt to rally the unit. This permits a reroll. The new result may be worse than the original. Sometimes, it's better to keep your mouth shut.

If the officer attempts this within 10" of an enemy formation or within 16" of enemy stragglers, the enemy may roll 1D6. On a 6, the officer is shot dead.