

by Richard Berg

SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN™ GAME VARIANTS: MORE ZULU WAR BATTLES AT HLOBANE AND ULUNDI.

WELL, I SAY, OLD CHAP, GOOD SHOW! In this era of built-in mistakes, we came up with what looks like an almost errata-free game. Oh, yes, there was a minor blunder with the counters which most of you spotted and almost certainly did not affect play. There are two Jaalin camel units (Omdurman scenario) that should be tinted brown, not blue. And we did have another question about the Isandhlwana scenario in the game. Mounted cavalry, after avoiding melee, as in the last paragraph of Part 12, Section C of the rules, may not return to that vacated hex during the ensuing British movement phase. But aside from that, we've received no quibbles and few questions.

I know this should not be the place to say this, but it is rare that one gets the chance to thank his cohorts in print. And it is thanks well earned. I was especially taken with Keith Parkinson's rendering of Isandhlwana, considering the large amount of Victorian era, ready-to-wear paintings and prints that were already available. It is accurate and evocative.

In any case, not having any errata on which to dwell on at length, you folks might be interested to know that this project began as a highly complex version of Rorke's Drift. I had considered Rorke's Drift as the second game (to Isandhlwana) before lighting on Omdurman. The main reason for its exclusion was that it required more than 200 counters, even at the relatively simple scale and level that the SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN Game uses. You see, it would be silly to do the scenario by military units (at least for the British), because you'd only have one or two counters. Rorke's Drift is best on an individual basis in terms of a British order of battle. Zulu counters would probably be halved in scale but would still represent an aggregation of men.

The actual methodology for the game — combat results tables, movement, morale, firepower, and so forth — would all remain the same simply by assigning to each man a series of ratings similar to those assigned the companies in the SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN Game. What would have been different was that all movement outside the "compound" was to be area movement, including those positions directly adjacent to the walls, while movement inside the fortifications was to have been hexagonal. It all worked fairly nicely, but there were just too many counters needed, what with some 125 British soldiers contending

with about 75 to 80 counters (at bare minimum) for the Zulus.

Another problem was the battle itself, a problem that all fledgling Rorke's Drift designers must face up to: the Zulus can't win. Really, they can't. The British position is so good, so easily defended against native weapons, that you have a problem coming up with a "game."

Some better simulations from the Zulu War that might be tried are the battles at Hlobane Mountain and Ulundi. Jim Meldrum gives some gameable additions to the battle of Isandhlwana, within the restrictions of the counter mix and game map, that recreate other battles of the Zulu War.

Zulu Battles

by James Meldrum

MOST OF THE BATTLES OF THE ZULU WAR took place close together in terms of time: the Zulu victory at Hlobane Mountain occurred in late winter and the final British victory at Ulundi came in July. Using the game mechanics and equipment from the SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN™ Game, these battles can be simulated to some degree. Since the game map and units from the Isandhlwana scenario will be used it is obvious that there will be little historical accuracy; the major emphasis has been placed upon simulation of the tactical situation that existed during these engagements. Both scenarios here use a mini-game format, with setup, victory conditions, and special rules given. Play takes place on the Isandhlwana map side and is covered by all rules covering that scenario.

HLOBANE MOUNTAIN

In this scenario, a British column has chased a Zulu impi up on top of Hlobane Mountain and is in the process of attacking them. While strung out in an awkward tactical position, they are attacked by an approaching Zulu force and decimated as they try to move off the mountain.

Initial Forces

British: 1 × colonial infantry platoon (NNP), 10 × cavalry units, and 4 × British infantry platoons deployed at the British player's choice in hexes 1529, 1629, or 1730, subject to stacking restrictions.

Zulu: all units of the uKhltshe impi in hex 1630; all units of the uNokenke impi in or adjacent to hex 1125; all units of the iGbm-khshi impi in or adjacent to hex 1520.

Game Length: 10 turns.

Victory Conditions: The British win by exiting a minimum of four units of any type from the western map edge between hexes 1334 and 2134. The Zulus win either by eliminating all British units or by preventing their exit from the map. Any other result is a draw.

Special Rules

1. Play is confined to all hexes west of the xx17th hexrow (the mapfold half containing Isandhlwana Rock).
2. Isandhlwana Rock and the "spur" north of the Rock are considered to be Level 4 terrain. All British units leaving any Level 4 hex must make an immediate Morale check.



3. No British unit may enter the Nqutu Plateau.

4. The movement allowance for all British units is reduced to 3 and increased for all Zulu units to 6.

5. British units are considered to have unlimited ammunition.

ULUNDI

The last major battle of the Zulu War was the battle for Ulundi, the major Zulu settlement. Here a British force employing Gatling guns (similar to the Maxim gun) makes contact with the various Zulu forces and tries to enter the town.

Initial Forces

British: 12 × British infantry platoons, one unit each in hexes 2217, 2218, 2219, 2317, 2320, 2416, 2420, 2517, 2520, 2617, 2618, and 2619. Inside this circle, all colonial infantry units; 2 × Maxim gun units (from the Omdurman scenario); all leaders; all artillery units (except the rocket battery); the supply wagon; and 6 × colonial cavalry units (all units of the NMP, RNC, NMR, BBG, and Edendale units).

Zulu: The Zulu player deploys all units and leaders of the following impis anywhere east of the Donga riverbed: uVe, iGbmkhisi, umCijo.

Game Length: Indefinite (see below).

Victory Conditions: Play continues until all British or all Zulu units are eliminated or until the British player is able to exit the supply wagon and six infantry units from the eastern map edge between hexes 1501 and 2301.

Special Rules

1. Game duration is indefinite; see Victory Conditions above.

2. Neither player may enter the Nqutu Plateau.

3. The British player uses two Maxim gun (machine gun) units from the Omdurman scenario to simulate Gatling guns that were used in this action. At the start of each British Combat Phase the British player must roll one die to determine whether or not each Maxim gun unit may fire. If the roll is even, the Maxim unit may fire; if the roll is odd, the unit may not fire this game turn. To resolve Maxim gun fire, use the Omdurman Range Effects Table but resolve the results on the Isandhlwana Combat Table.

4. The Maxim guns may not fire through friendly units. ■ ■