YEAR OF THE RAT
Vietnam, 1972

Year of the Rat is basically a two-player simulation of the documented operations during the thirteen weeks Of the Communist Offensive in the Spring of 1972. Besides the Historical Game, which utilizes the actual historical dispositions, two further options are presented. These are the Standard Game with a Player-selected deployment, and the Variable Order of Battle Options. These are included to provide Players with greater game potential for variety and surprise.

GAME SCALE

Each hexagon on the map sheet represents ten kilometres from side to side. Each Game-Turn equals a week of real time. The units represent the actual divisions, brigades and regiments that fought in the offensive.

GENERAL COURSE OF PLAY

Year of the Rat is played in sequenced turns called Game-Tums during which each Player moves his units and engages in combat in an attempt (for the Communist Player) to occupy territorial and political objectives, or (for the Allied Player) to deny these objectives to the Communist Player. The Communist Player controls both the NVA (North Vietnamese Army) units and the NLF (National Liberation Front) units of South Vietnam. The Allied Player controls the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam). ROK (Republic of Korea) and USA (United States of America) units. The Communist Player wins the game by accumulation of Victory Points. These Points are awarded to him for occupation of various cities and Regions in order for Allied victory to occur, the Allied Player must prevent Communist accumulation of these points.

HOW TO READ THE RULES

The rules have been organized into major categories of activity or effect. Each category usually has its basic meaning expressed in terms of a Genera/ Rule. This General Rule will often be modified and expanded by short, specific game rules called Cases. Players should skim over the General Rule sections first and then return to read the detailing cases. Players should note that much of the information in the game is to be found printed directly on the map.
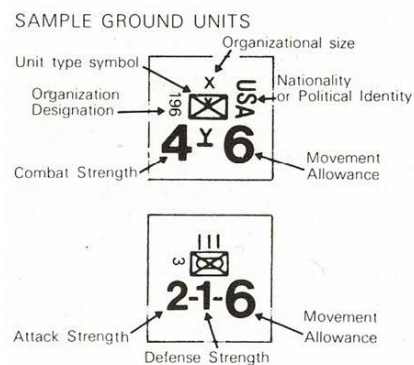
Game Equipment

The Game Map: the 22"x34" map sheet portrays the area of South Vietnam and nearby areas of Cambodia, Laos. and North Vietnam in which the actual campaign is taking place. A hexagonal grid is superimposed upon the map sheet in order to regulate the movement and position of the playing pieces. In order to make the map lie flat. back-fold it against the direction it is creased. Small pieces of masking tape on the four corners may also be used. In addition to the usual hexagonal grid dividing the map into areas for movement and placement, the hexagons are grouped into Regions. These Regions are used primarily for Victory Point purposes (see Victory Conditions). However, they also restrict certain units' movement (see Movement, Case S).

Game Charts and Tables

Various visual aids are provided for the Player to simplify and illustrate certain game functions. These are the Combat Results Table, the Bombardment Results Table, The Turn Record/ Reinforcement Chart, the Terrain Effects Chart, and the Initial Forces Chart.
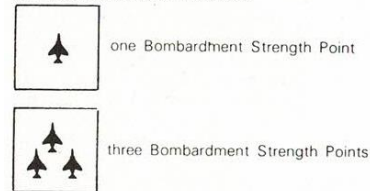
The Playing Pieces

Two differently coloured sets of playing pieces (henceforth known as units) are supplied. They represent the opposing armies in the campaign fighting in the actual war. The playing pieces are distinguished by type, strength and mobility. as represented by the various numbers and symbols printed on their faces.
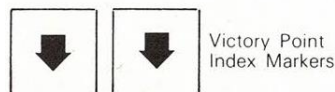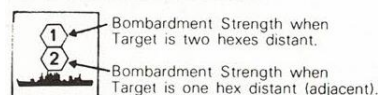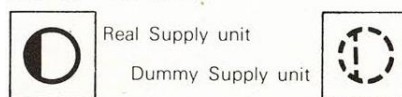

NATIONALITIES
ALLIED UNITS

USA units: All units with green fields and black markings, and the abbreviation "USA". ROK units: All units with green fields and gold markings. and the abbreviation "ROW' ARVN units: all units with light green or muddy green fields and black markings. with no nationality abbreviation.

COMMUNIST UNITS

NVA units: All units with gold fields and black markings, and no nationality abbreviation. Note that the gold 2-1-6 units are a composite of NVA and NLF troops.

NLF units: All units with black fields and gold markings. and the political abbreviation "NLF".

GROUND UNIT TYPE SYMBOLS

- ⊠ Infantry
- ⊠ Guerilla Infantry (NLF)
- ⊠ Ranger
- ⊠ Marine
- ⊠ Airborne
- ◯ Armor
- ⊠ Mechanized Infantry
- Ⓜ Militia (NLF)
- **Dummy** Dummy Combat Unit

IMPORTANT NOTE: all units with the small "Y" symbol between their Combat Strength— Movement Allowance numbers are capable of airmobile movement (even though many of these units are not true airmobile organizations). See Movement Rules.

ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE SYMBOLS

- XX — Division
- X — Brigade
- III — Regiment
- II — Battalion
- (BG) — Battlegroup
- (BG)+ — Reinforced Battlegroup

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Combat Strength — the basic offensive and defensive power of a unit quantified in Combat Strength Points.

Notice that some units have a single, over-all *'Combat Strength", while others have their strength separated into two values: an "Attack Strength" and "Defence Strength'

Attack Strength — the basic offensive power of a unit quantified in Attack Strength Points.

Defence Strength - the basic defensive power of a unit quantified in Defence Strength Points.

Movement Allowance — the basic movement ability of a unit quantified in Movement Points. In most cases a unit expends one Movement Point of its total Movement Allowance in order to move one hex.

GAME EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

A complete game of Year of the Rat should include the following parts: one Game Map (22" x 34") one set of

Game Rules one set of die-cut counters (200 pieces)

If any of these parts are damaged or missing, please write to:

Simulations Publications Inc.

Customer Service Dept.

44 East 23rd Street

New York, NY 10010

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The Game is played in sequenced turns called Game- Turns. Each Game-Turn is composed of two Player-Turns. Each Player-Turn is composed of a number of Phases. The Player whose Player-Turn is in progress is called the Phasing Player.

Players must follow the Sequence of Play in strict order. Any play-action performed out of sequence is a violation of the rules.

SEQUENCE OUTLINE

A. COMMUNIST PLAYER TURN (the Communist Player is always first to engage in play regardless of which version of the game is being used).

1. Reinforcement Phase:

The Communist Player consults the Time Record/Reinforcement Track and places any newly arriving units on the map at either the Tchepone or Panhandle Supply Centres.

2. Movement Phase:

2a. Supply Determination: the Communist determines which of his units are considered in "Attack Supply", "General Supply" or "Isolated" for the Movement Phase (see Supply rules).

2b. The Communist Player moves his units (see Movement rules).

3. Combat Phase

3a. Attack Allocation: the Communist Player indicates which of his units will attack which Allied units. All Communist units participating in attacks are turned face-up 3b. Attack Resolution: the Communist Player resolves all attacks against Allied units. Individual attacks may be resolved in any order than the Communist Player wishes. Results are applied immediately, as they occur. Supply condition is determined at the instant of combat. 4. Disruption Recovery Phase:

All Pinned markers are removed from Communist units. The Communist Player rolls the die once for each Of

his units in a Disrupted state: a die-roll of "1" or "3" means that that unit is un-disrupted. Note: All throughout his Player-Turn the Communist Player should keep track of Victory Points scored or lost by his actions (see Victory Conditions).

B. ALLIED PLAYER-TURN

1. Reinforcement Phase:

The Allied Player consults the Time Record/ Reinforcement Track and places any newly arriving units on the map at Hue, Danang, Long Binh, or Saigon.

Movement Phase:

2a. Supply Determination: the Allied Player determines which of his units are considered Supplied or unsupplied for the Movement Phase (see Supply rules).

2b. The Allied Player moves his units (see Movement rules).

3. Bombardment Phase:

3a. Targeting: the Allied Player places the desired number of available Air Bombardment Strength Points on the Communist occupied hexes he wishes to bombard. Participating Naval units are also assigned. 3b. Bombardment Resolution: Bombardment attacks are resolved in any order the Allied Player desires (results are applied immediately, as they occur).

4. Combat Phase:

4a. Attack Allocation: the Allied Player announces which of his units will attack which Communist occupied hexes (Communist units are not turned face-up at this time).

4b. Attack Resolution: The Allied Player resolves all attacks against Communist units. Individual attacks may be resolved in any order that the Allied Player wishes. Results are applied immediately, as they occur. Supply condition is determined at the instant of combat. Communist units are turned face-up at the instant of attack. If the hex being attacked contains Dummy units, remove them immediately. If real Communist units survive the attack. they are immediately turned face-down again.

Note: throughout the Allied Player-Turn, the Communist Player should keep track of Victory Points scored or lost by the Allied Player's actions.

C. GAME-TURN INDICATION The Communist Player moves the Game-Turn marker one step on the Time Record Track. and a new Game-Turn

is begun. Repeat the Sequence of Play until all thirteen Game-Turns have been played (the game may end before thirteen Game-Turns if the Communist Player scores a Decisive Victory; see Victory Conditions).

MOVEMENT

GENERAL RULE:

During the Movement Phase of a Player's turn, the Player may move as many or as few of his units has he wishes. Each unit may be moved as many hexes as desired within the limits of its Movement Allowance, the Terrain Effects Chart, and the Zone of Control Rules. Note that the Air and Naval Bombardment markers are governed by different rules (see Air and Naval Bombardment).

PROCEDURE:

Move each unit individually, tracing the path of its movement through the hexagonal grid.

CASES:

(A) Movement is calculated in terms of hexagons. Basically, each unit expends one Movement Point Of its total Movement Point Allowance for each hex entered. To enter some types of hexes, more or less than one Movement Point is expended. See the Movement Section of the Terrain Effects Chart for a full list of these different "entry costs."

(B) In any given Movement Phase of a Player Turn, the Player may move all, some, or none of his units. Movement during the Movement Phase is never required; it is voluntary.

(C) Units are moved individually. in any direction or combination of directions. A unit may be moved as many or as few hexes as the owning Player desires. as long as its Movement Point Allowance is not exceeded in a single Movement Phase. Unused Movement Points, however, may not be accumulated from Phase to Phase, nor transferred from unit to unit.

(D) NO Enemy movement is permitted during a Player's Movement Phase.

(E) No combat (Enemy or Friendly) may take place during a Movement Phase.

(F) Units may never enter or pass through a hex containing Enemy units

(G) In a given Movement Phase, once a unit has been moved and the Player's non-controlled hex and then they may enter the Enemy controlled hex hand withdrawn from the piece. it may not be moved again, nor may it retrace and change its move.

(H) Units may move over different types of terrain hexes in the same Movement Phase as long as they have enough Movement Points to expend as they enter each hex.

(J) A unit may, unless otherwise indicated, always move one hex per Friendly Movement Phase, even if unable to expend sufficient Movement Points. Moving directly from one Enemy Controlled hex to another is forbidden.

(K) Movement during the Combat Phase is not considered part of normal movement and does not require the expenditure of Movement Points.

(L) Units are affected in their movement by supply; see Supply rules.

(M) HIDDEN MOVEMENT: all Allied units are placed on the map face-up. They remain face-up throughout the game. All Communist units are always placed on the map face-down. They remain face-down during the entire game except for any instant that they are engaged in combat. whether offensive or defensive. (See also the Dummy Counter rules.)

Since all Communist units have an identical Movement Allowance (six Movement Points), the problem of honesty in hidden movement is avoided.

(N)STACKING: A player may have any number of units in a given hex; there is no stacking limit.

(P) ARVN units may never enter Rough Terrain or Swamp hexes except when moving along Road or Trail hexes. Other (non-ARVN) Allied units may do so, at the appropriate terrain Movement Point cost (see the Terrain Effects Chart).

(Q) ROAD MOVEMENT: Moving along a road or trail is defined as moving from one Road or Trail hex to another through a hexside crossed by the Road or Trail symbol. Thus, in Rough terrain, if a unit moves from one Road or Trail hex to another through a hexside not crossed by either of these symbols, it is considered to be moving through Rough terrain; It pays the appropriate Movement Point cost (or, in the case of ARVN units, may not make the move at all).

(R) See the Terrain Effects Chart for the Movement Point "entry costs" for the various types of terrain and units.

(S) SPECIAL MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS: no units may move off the map hex field. No Allied units may enter any hex of North Vietnam. NO ROK or NLF units may move at any time out of the Region of their initial placement. No USA units may move at any time, except to retreat, as dictated by the Combat Results Table. Units which are forced to retreat due to combat in violation of any of the above restrictions are eliminated. Exception: USA units forced to retreat from a Base hex due to combat are instead removed to any Other Friendly controlled Base hex on the map (see Airmobile retreat explanation in Combat Results). If no Friendly controlled Base is available for the US retreat, the US unit is removed from the game.

(T) AIRMOBILE MOVEMENT: certain ARVN and a/t USA units are considered airmobile. Airmobile units have the ability to transfer from one Friendly South Vietnamese town hex to another, paying an additional Movement Point penalty of three points, within certain restrictions. A Friendly town is defined as any town that does not have any Communist unit occupying that hex. When employing airmobile movement, the moving unit must pay all normal Movement Point costs in the same fashion as if it were moving by ground. Thus, a unit moving by air out of a town hex in a Communist Zone of Control would expend three Movement Points for the air transfer and three for leaving an Enemy controlled hex. It can move no farther during that Movement Phase.

The number of units engaging in airmobile transfers is unlimited in a given Game-Turn. The number of units engaging in airmobile transfers into or out of a given town hex which is not an Enemy controlled hex (see Zones of Control) is unlimited. However, if a town hex is "besieged," that is, it is in an Enemy Zone of Control. no more than one airmobile unit may transfer in or out of that hex in a given phase. (Exception: airmobile retreats due to combat may always be made, regardless Of Movement Phase activities.) See the Combat Results Table explanation of retreats of Airmobile units in town hexes.

ZONES OF CONTROL
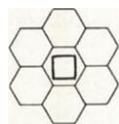
GENERAL RULE:

The six hexes immediately surrounding a unit constitute that unit's Zone of Control. Friendly units must stop their movement upon entering an Enemy controlled hex; they may move no farther in that Movement Phase.

CASES:

(A)   Friendly Zones of Control have no effect upon Friendly units.

(B)   For the purposes of Movement, Enemy Zones of Control extend into hexes occupied by Friendly units.

(C)   For the purposes of tracing Supply Lines, Enemy Zones of Control do not extend into hexes occupied by Friendly units.

(D)   In the case of retreats mandated by the Combat Results Table, Enemy Zones of Control do not extend into hexes occupied by Friendly units (which means that a Friendly unit may retreat onto or through another, adjacent Friendly unit even if that hex is adjacent to an Enemy unit).

(E)   Units which begin their Movement Phase adjacent to Enemy units, may leave the Enemy controlled hex in which they started. They may not, however, move directly into another Enemy controlled hex — they must first enter a non-controlled hex and then they may enter the Enemy controlled hex.

(F)   Certain units have their Zones of Control restricted, i.e., their Zones do not always extend into all hexes adjacent to them

1. Zones of Control of all units never extend across river hexsides, whether bridged or unbridged.

2. USA units have no Zone of Control until any one of the USA units has been attacked. Thereafter, all the USA units have a full Zone of Control (regardless of the outcome of the attack).

3. ARVN units' Zones of Control do not extend into hexes of a terrain type (ignoring the effects Of roads and trails) where they cannot move. Thus, their Zone of Control never extends into any Rough Terrain or Swamp hexes, regardless of the presence of roads or trails in that hex.

All other units have full, unobstructed Zones of Control.

(G) Units entering or leaving an Enemy Zone of Control must expend additional Movement Points, above and beyond the normal Movement Point cost of entering that hex's terrain type. The number of Movement Points expended depends on the owning Player and whether the unit is entering or leaving the controlled hex. A full summary Of these "entry and exit costs" is found on the Terrain Effects Chart.

Allied Player units expend two additional Movement Points to enter a Communist Zone of Control, and three additional to leave. Communist Player units expend one additional Movement Point to enter an Allied controlled hex, and two additional to leave.

(H) Enemy Zones Of Control interfere with Friendly units which are retreating due to combat. See the Combat Results Table explanation of effects

COMBAT

GENERAL RULE:

Combat takes place during the Combat Phase of a Player's Turn. The phasing-Player is considered to be the Attacker and the non-phasing-Player is considered to be the Defender (regardless of their overall strategic posture).

These combat rules apply solely to ground combat between ground combat units. See the Air and Naval rules for Bombardment combat rules.

PROCEDURE:

Total up the Combat (or Attack) Strength of the attacking units involved in a specific attack and compare it to the total Combat (or Defence) Strengths of the defending unit(s) in the hex under attack (modifying the respective Attack or Defence Strengths for any effects Of the Terrain Effects Chart or Supply Effects Chart). State the comparison as a probability ratio: Attacker's Strength to Defender's Strength. Round Off the ratio downward to the nearest "whole" number, to yield one of the simplified odds found on the Combat Results Tables, roll the die, and read the result under the appropriate odds column for that die result. Apply the result of the combat immediately before going on to resolve any other combat.

CASES:

(G)   During the Combat Phase Of his Turn, a Player may only attack those units to which Friendly units are adjacent. Only those Friendly units directly adjacent to a given Enemy unit may participate in the attack upon that Enemy unit.

(H)   Units adjacent to Enemy units are not compelled to attack, nor does the attacking Player have to use every adjacent unit if he does decide to attack. Attacking is completely voluntary.

(I)   No unit may attack more than once per Combat Phase. No Enemy unit may be attacked more than once per Combat Phase.

(J)   More than one Enemy-occupied hex may be attacked by a given attacking unit (or group of attacking units) at the same time, that is to say. different defending units on different hexes may be treated as Objects of attacks which might be made by a one-hex group of attacking units if the attacking units happen to be adjacent to two or more Enemy-occupied hexes.

(K)   An Enemy-occupied hex may be attacked by as many attacking units as can be brought to bear. Conceivably, as many as six stacks of units could be brought to bear against a single Enemy-held hex.

(L)   Defending units stacked in the same hex must be attacked as a single combined Combat Strength, i.e., you may not individually attack individual units which are stacked together. There is no limit to the number of units that may defend in a particular hex.

(M)   Combat odds are rounded off in favour Of the Defender. For example. an attack of 26 Strength Points against 9 Strength Points would round off to a two-to-one combat odds situation.

(N)   If one unit in a stack is used in an attack, the other units in the stack need not participate in the

same attack nor in any attack at all during that Combat Phase.

(J) Units may never split their Combat or Attack Strength and use it in two or more attacks in the same Combat Resolution Segment. The Defence or Combat Strength of a unit may never be split or attacked in piecemeal fashion. All Combat Strengths must be used as integral quantities.

(K) Attacks may be made in any order that the Attacker desires. The result of each attack must be applied immediately after the attack is executed. Advances after combat must be executed immediately as the opportunity is presented (see Case L).

(L) ADVANCE AFTER COMBAT OPTION: Attacking units which have completely retreated or eliminated all defending units have the option. before resolving any other combats, to advance some. all. or none of the attacking units into the vacated defender's hex. This must be done immediately after resolution of combat, before resolving any other combat. This optional advance does not expend any Movement Points.

(M) (M) There are a variety of terrain and supply effects on combat, which are detailed on the Terrain Effects Chart, and the Supply Effects Table.

(N) All units may attack into any adjacent hex, regardless of any geographical boundaries (national or regional), or terrain type. Thus, NLF and ROK units may attack out of their initial placement Regions. and ARVN units may attack Communist units in Rough Terrain or Swamp hexes. However, all units must Obey movement restrictions in advancing after combat (Case L).

(P) HIDDEN UNITS: as stated in Movement Case M, all Communist units are usually face-down on the map sheet, and all Allied units are always face-up. The Communist Player also has a number of Dummy Counters (see Dummy Counter rules) which are used as if they were real units in order to fool the Allied Player. Thus, when the Allied Player is attacking Communist units in his Combat Phase. he must first announce all of his attacks before resolving any of them. In this

allocation, the Allied Player specifies which Allied units are attacking which Communist units (whose Strength is yet unknown). Only then does the Allied Player begin to resolve each combat, in any order he wishes. As each attack is to be resolved, the Communist Player turns the defending units face up, the Allied Player rolls the die for the combat, the combat result is applied, and the unit is re-placed, face-down. That unit may not be attacked again in that Combat Phase. If a Dummy Counter is revealed in this manner, it is removed from the map. and the allocated attacking units may not be used in the same Combat Phase.

When the Communist Player attacks, he reveals his attacking units at the beginning of the Combat Phase. and hides them again after combat results apply. Otherwise, the procedure is the same.

(O) NVA BATTLE GROUPS: Whenever NVA units at their original Combat Strength (four, five or six) receive an elimination result due to ground combat, the unit is instead replaced with a Battlegroup unit (1-6). Thus, if an NVA 5-6 unit was unable to retreat due to a combat result. the unit would be replaced by a 1-6 unit, which would not be forced to retreat. If an already existing Battlegroup is the subject of an attack. it suffers the result in exactly the same fashion as a regular NVA unit The destruction of a Battlegroup (or groups) does not result in the formation of additional Battlegroups.

DUMMY COUNTERS
GENERAL RULE:
The Communist Player receives a certain number of Dummy Combat Counters at the beginning of the game, as indicated by the scenario he is playing. In all ways. except combat. these counters function as real combat units. They are placed initially, may block supply lines, have a Zone of Control, pay ordinary Movement

Point costs, etc. Only in combat are Dummy Counters revealed.

CASES:
(A) Dummy Counters have a normal Movement Allowance of six Movement Points, and move in the same fashion as ordinary NVA combat units.

(B) Dummy Counters may capture South Vietnamese towns with a zero intrinsic Defence Strength just by moving through them. as any combat unit may.

(C) Whenever a Dummy Counter is exposed due to Allied ground attack (see Combat. Case P). it is removed from the map. It may never be replaced on the map, i.e., it is permanently lost.

(D) Beginning on Game-Turn Three, the Communist Player must remove one Dummy Counter per Game-Turn at the end of his Player Turn. These removed pieces are permanently lost. This continues until the Communist Player has no more Dummy Counters to be removed. The Communist Player chooses which Dummy Counter will be removed.

TOWNS AND MILITIA
GENERAL RULE:
Certain hexes on the map are town hexes. The town hexes in South Vietnam have an intrinsic Defence Strength (representing the ARVN militia) printed on the map: it is not represented by counters. The Communist Player receives Victory Points for taking and/or holding the town hex.

PROCEDURE:
When the Communist Player attacks a town hex which has an intrinsic militia Defence Strength, any combat result affecting the defender, "eliminates" the intrinsic Strength. The Communist Player then places an NLF militia (0- 1-0) counter on the town hex to denote Communist control of that town. This counter should not be treated as a combat unit. as it is merely a marker showing Communist control and the intrinsic militia Defence

Strength of the town under Communist control.

CASES:

(A)   All towns in South Vietnam begin the game under Allied control.

(B)   Only the towns in South Vietnam are counted for Victory Points and have an intrinsic Strength. Town hexes outside South Vietnam are merely terrain features and have no intrinsic Strength or Victory Point value.

(C)   By themselves Town hexes with militia (whether ARVN or NLF) have no Zone of Control. This is true even for the NLF militia counters placed on the map. The militia Strengths do. however, give the same effect to their hex as if it were occupied by a Friendly combat unit. This hex may not be entered by Enemy units (until attacked and defeated), nor may supply lines or Enemy retreats be directed through that hex.

(D)   The intrinsic Strength Of these towns may only be used defensively. It may never be used offensively, whether by itself or in concert with other units.

(E)   When combat units are stacked with militia Strength Points (NLF or ARVN), the militia Strength is added to the combat unit's Strength for the defence, but not for the offense. The combat unit, of course, retains its full Zone of Control.

(F)   Bases also have an intrinsic militia Defence Strength. When defending, the combat unit(s) in a base hex first doubles its Strength for the defence, and then adds the undoubled intrinsic Strength to that total. Bases are identical to towns, except for their ability to double combat units' Strength for the defence.

(G)   The intrinsic militia Defence Strength for the Allied controlled towns and bases varies from zero to three. Regardless of the ARVN intrinsic Strength of a town, the Communist Player always replaces it when taken with a single 0-1-0 NLF militia counter. Thus, all NLF militia Strengths are "one," while the ARVN Strengths vary.

(H)   In the case of towns with a zero Defence Strength. the Communist Player must only move into or through that hex (assuming the absence of other Allied units) to gain an NLF militia counter. The town need not be attacked.

(J)   To control a Region. the Communist Player must have all the towns in that Region currently under control.

(K)   The Communist Player receives a certain number of Victory Points for each town hex currently controlled (occupied by an NLF militia counter), and somewhat fewer Victory Points for every town hex that was once occupied and has been retaken by the Allied Player (see Victory Conditions).

When a town hex is controlled by the Communist Player. the NLF militia counter should be left face-up to signify this control. If the town hex is retaken by the Allied Player, the NLF militia counter should be left on the map but placed face-down. This signifies former control of the town by the Communist Player. This Will simplify computation of Victory Points at any given time.

(L)   Militia Strengths (ARVN and NLF) are never affected by supply considerations. nor are they affected by any Bombardment results (see Bombardment Results Table).

(M)   Each time control of a town hex changes hands from one Player to another, the identical militia Defence Strength is restored intact. Thus if a town is taken by the Communist Player (who places an NLF militia counter therein). and retaken by the Allied Player. the original printed militia Defence Strength is restored to the Allied Player in f (Ill. It the Communist Player were again to take the town. the NLF militia counter would be restored to a face-up position.

(N) BESIEGED TOWNS: when the Communist Player has a unit adjacent to an Allied controlled town, that town is said to be "besieged." This affects airmobile movement (see Movement, Case T), and supply (see Supply Procedure). No Victory Points are received for besieged towns.

SUPPLY

GENERAL RULE:

Combat units are determined to be in a certain state of supply by being able to trace an unobstructed line of supply through the hexagonal grid to a Supply Source. Each Player has different states of supply for his units, and the effects of supply vary for each Player, and for certain sub-divisions Of the Player's units. (See the Supply Effects Chart.)

PROCEDURE:

COMMUNIST SUPPLY - the Communist Player has three states of supply: Attack Supply, General Supply, and Isolation.

- A given Communist unit is in Attack Supply if it can trace a supply line of eight hexes. or fewer. to a real supply unit. which is expended (removed from the map) at the end Of the Combat Phase in which it is used.
- A given Communist unit is in General Supply if it can trace a supply line of eight hexes. or fewer. to a Supply Centre hex.
- A Communist unit is in an Isolated supply state if it has neither Attack nor General Supply.

   ALLIED SUPPLY - the Allied Player has two supply states: Supplied and Unsupplied.

- An Allied unit is in a Supplied state if it is able to trace a supply line to an unbesieged Town or Base hex: or if it is in a town or Base hex, besieged or not. The supply line may be as long and as devious as necessary.
- If an Allied unit is not in a Supplied state, it is considered Unsupölied.

CASES:

(A)   All Communist units are in Attack Supply for the first two Game-Turns, automatically, without regard to their position on the map sheet and without expending any supply units.

(B)   NLF guerrilla units, and NVA "2-1-6" Battlegroup units and the intrinsic Militia Defence Strength (ARVN or NLF) of towns are always in a state of Attack Supply (or "Supplied" in the case Of ARVN Militia).

(C)   SUPPLY OBSTRUCTIONS: supply lines may not be traced through Enemy occupied hexes or Enemy controlled hexes. Supply lines may not be traced to a particular unit through terrain which that unit could not enter. Thus, ARVN units may not trace supply lines through hexes of North Vietnam, nor through non-

Trail/Road. Swamp, or Rough Terrain hexes. ROK units cannot trace supply lines through hexes outside of their province of initial placement, etc. Units may never trace supply lines through unbridged river hexsides or all-Sea hexes.

(D)   Supply Centre hexes, as designated on the map, each have an intrinsic Defence Strength of two Strength Points. similar to town hexes, except that they are Communist controlled at the beginning of the game. These hexes have no Victory Point value. Supply Centre hexes, when attacked by ground units. are destroyed as normal units when a "De" combat result is obtained against them. However. "Dr I" and "Dr? • combat results never affect Supply Centre hexes unless that hex is completely surrounded by Allied units and/or Zones of Control. In this case, the Supply Centre is eliminated. Note that, since most Supply Centre hexes abut Rough Terrain hexes, they are usually never affected by these "Dr" results when only ARVN units are attacking them. If the Supply Centre hex is eliminated, the Allied Player receives no ' •militia" counter: the hex is permanently out of the game and may not be used for General Supply. The Communist Player may no longer use it as a source of General Supply (even if retaken). Any supply units in that hex are also destroyed. and the Allied Player may see them before they are removed from the map.

Each Supply Centre hex also has a quota number printed on it representing the number of supply units (real and/or dummy) that must be placed on that hex in the initial deployment. There are two types of supply units: real and dummy. The dummy supply units are used for the same reason as the Dummy Combat Counters: to fool the Allied Player. Supply units may never move and have no Strengths; they are placed initially on the Supply Centre hexes and are never moved thereafter. Supply units exist to put Communist units in Attack Supply after the first two Game-Turns.

(E)   ATTACK SUPPLY: in addition to the initial two free Game-Turns of Attack Supply for the Communist

Player, he may place units in Attack Supply in any given Friendly Combat Phase by revealing a real Supply unit, which is removed at the end of that Phase. All Combat units within eight unobstructed hexes of that Supply unit are considered in Attack Supply for that Combat Phase.

(F)   Units are determined to be in supply for movement at the beginning of the Movement Phase. Units are determined to be in supply for combat purposes at the instant of combat. Thus. for example, if a unit were not in supply (due to an Obstructing Enemy unit which is retreated or eliminated during the Combat Phase) it might attack in that Phase after the obstructing unit's removal.

(G)   Units may remain out of supply indefinitely, i.e., units are never lost solely due to being isolated or unsupplied.

(H)   Any number of units may be supplied from a single supply source.

AIR AND NAVAL BOMBARDMENT

GENERAL RULE:

Only the Allied Player has Air and Naval markers. They are used to bombard Communist units. The Allied Player receives a number of Air Bombardment Strength Points at the beginning of the game. This is augmented during the course of the game (see the Reinforcement Chart). Air Strength Points are never lost; they may be re-used once each Game-Turn throughout the game.

PROCEDURE:

Available Air Strength Points are kept in the indicated section on the map. In the Bombardment Phase, the Allied Player may place these Strength Points on the hex to be "bombed." After all Air Bombardment Points have thus been allocated to the attack, the Allied Player consults the Terrain Effects Chart. adjusts the Bombardment Strength Points as indicated and rolls the die. The die result is matched to the line on the Bombardment Results Table. cross-referenced with the adjusted number of Bombardment Strength Points, and

the indicated result is applied to the Communist unit in the hex under attack. The air units are then returned to the "Bombardment Strength Available" area on the map sheet.

When there is more than one Communist unit in the hex under attack. the full number of Air Bombardment Strength Points is applied to each in succession, separately rolling the die for each Communist unit. Each result is applied separately to the attacked units.

The Naval marker may be placed on any all-Sea hex at the beginning of each Bombardment Phase. It has a Bombardment Strength of "two" when attacking adjacent hexes, and of "one" when attacking hexes which are two hexes distant (one hex intervening). These are the only hexes it may fire into, and it may not split its allocation among different hexes. The Naval Bombardment Strength may be used either by itself, or in concert with Air Bombardment Strength. It resolves attacks in the same fashion as air units.

CASES.

(A)   NLF militia counters are never affected by any bombardment results; the Allied Player does not roll the die for attacking them when bombarding other units in a Communist controlled town.

(B)   The Combat Strength of units in the hex being bombarded has no consequence. Combat resolution is based solely on the number Of Bombardment Strength Points, adjusted for any terrain effect.

(C)   Air and Naval Bombardment markers do not move as combat units do. They are merely placed from the Bombardment Strength Available area to the appropriate hex at the beginning of the Bombardment Phase. They ignore the presence Of Enemy units or controlled hexes. Moreover, they can never be adversely affected by combat results. They may not be attacked. For all practical purposes. they are indestructible in the game.

(D)   Air markers may bombard anywhere on the map. They are not restricted by geographical boundaries or terrain features.

(E)   Air Strength comes in denominations, like money. The total Air Strength available at any point in

the game is expressed as the number of Air Bombardment Strength Points. The Allied Player may break this down into as many different air markers as he wishes. Thus, at the beginning of the game, the Allied Player has thirteen Air Bombardment Strength Points. For instance, he might choose to use this as thirteen one-point Air markers, or two five-point and three one-point air markers. At any time, the Allied Player may break down into smaller denominations, or create larger ones, without penalty, so long as the total number of Strength Points remains the same. There is no limit to the number of Air or Strength Points that may be placed in a single hex (exception: Case F).

(F) In a given Bombardment Phase, the Allied Player may not allocate more than one-half (eliminate fractions) of his Air Bombardment Points to attack a single hex. Thus, on Game Turn 1. with thirteen Strength Points available, no more than six could be allocated to attack a single hex.

(G) Supply units and supply centres are not affected by bombardments. They may not be attacked in this manner, although combat units on the same hex may be bombarded.

(H) REMEMBER: Air Strength Points are never lost or expended. They may be re-used every Bombardment Phase. The total number of Air Strength Points available increases throughout the game as the Allied Player receives additional Air Strength on the Reinforcement chart.

VICTORY CONDITIONS
(How the Game is Won)

The winner of the game is determined by the number of Victory Points achieved by (he Communist Player during the course of the game. The Communist Player achieves Victory Points by seizing town hexes and entire Regions while the Allied Player wins by denying and retaking these Communist objectives.

As the Victory Points are scored (or lost), the Players adjust the current number of Victory Points indicated by Victory Points Index on the game map to the new current total.

At the end of Game-Turn 13 (the last Game Turn), the Victory Points Index

is adjusted a final time. This score is then compared to the Level o/ Victory table to judge the importance of the victory for each player.

COMMUNIST DECISIVE VICTORY

If at any point in the game the Communist Player achieves 40 or more Victory Points, he has won a Decisive Victory. The government of South Vietnam is overthrown. All play ceases immediately; the game is over.

LEVEL OF VICTORY TABLE

Victory Points	Level of Victory
4 or less	Allied Substantive Victory
5 through 8	Allied Marginal Victory
9 through 14	Draw; neither Player wins
15 through 24	Communist Marginal Victory
25 through 39	Communist Substantive Victory

POINT SCORING

In order to score points, the Communist Player must seize towns in South Vietnam. Different towns are worth different amounts Of Victory Points (these different values are related to the Intrinsic Defence Strength of the towns). As the Communist Player seizes a given town. a certain number of Victory Points are awarded to him (immediately). If the Allied Player should retake that town, a certain number Of Victory Points are subtracted from the current total (immediately). If such a retaken town is again seized by the Communists, the subtracted Victory Points are restored. Towns may change hands any number of times during the course of the game and the Victory Points index is always adjusted to reflect these events.

TOWN VICTORY POINTS

Intrinsic Strength of Town	Victory Pts. Awarded for Seizure	Victory Pts. Subtracted if Retaken.
0	1	1
1	2	1
2	5	3
3	8	5

Next to each Town symbol on the map will be found two small numbers separated by a slash. The first number

is the Victory Point Value Of the town when seized and held by the Communists; the second number is its reduced value when retaken by the Allies.

REGIONAL VICTORY POINTS

Whenever the Communist Player seizes all the towns in a given Region and holds them simultaneously, he is awarded the Victory Points for that Region. Regions are worth varying amounts of Points (from four through twelve) depending upon the Region. These values are printed directly on the map next to the name of each Region. Whenever the Allied Player retakes one or more or the towns in a Communist dominated Region, the Regional Victory Points for that Region are subtracted from the current Victory Point total (immediately). The Communist Player may regain these subtracted Points by once again seizing the lost towns.

Region	Victory Points A warded
Quang Tri	12
Quang Nam	7
Central Coast	4
Central Highlands	4
Cham Coast	4
Darlac	5
Tay Ninh	6
Rung Sat	6
Saigon Region	10
Mekong Delta, East	6
Mekong Delta, West	9

Note that the Regions on the map are delineated by the tints of grey and blue colouring the regional areas.

SAIGON ISOLATION VICTORY POINTS

The Communist Player receives five Victory Points if all four road hexes directly adjacent to Saigon (those hexes with roads leading directly into Saigon) are occupied by Communist units or withing the Zone of Control of a Communist unit. The presence of an Allied unit in any of these four road hexes negates the effect of a Communist Zone of Control for this purpose.

If the Communist Player controls (has face-up Militia units in) both hexes of Saigon, he does not receive these five Victory Points (he would instead receive the ten Regional Points for Saigon).

These five Victory Points may be lost and regained as Saigon is relieved or re-isolated.

Note that if the Optional Orders of Battle are being used. the Victory Conditions may be modified by a Special Rule. The Allied Player may, at any time. demand a verification of the current total of Victory Points showing on the Victory Point Index. It is good practice to verify at the end of every Game-Turn.

HOW TO SET-UP AND PLAY THE GAME

There are basically three games of Year of the Rat. The first game is the Historical Game which shows the historical forces and restricts their placement to the historical areas in which they were originally deployed. The second game, the Standard Game, Free Deployment, is similar to the first in that the forces are identical, but the Players have the option of placing their units without strict regard to the historical deployment. Thus, they may choose a whole different strategy from that which was originally planned. In the third game, the Order of Battle Options Game, the Players secretly choose at random which Order of Battle (mix of forces) they are to use from the six provided for each Player. (See the Order of Battle Descriptions.) These options are some of the more likely historical possibilities which could have varied the campaign's course and action. TO begin playing the game, the Players first decide who will be which Player, and which game they are going to play (see How to Use the Orders of Battle).

It is recommended that the Communist Player sit on the west map edge, and the Allied Player at the east map edge. The Players then sort out the units allowed them by the Initial forces of the game. Each set of initial forces has certain instructions on how the units are to be placed. If the Order of Battle Options Game is being played, there may be special rules and/or a modification of the Victory Conditions which the Players should be aware of before initiating play. There are general instructions dictating the sequence of unit placement to be followed in all games; this is found in "How to Deploy."

N.B.: Players should be extremely aware that in all the games there are certain units which must be placed in specific hexes.

Play begins (after deployment of units is completed) with the Communist Player-Turn, in accordance with the Sequence of Play. Play continues until the end of Game-Turn 13. with both Players introducing additional units during the game as dictated by the appropriate Reinforcement Track. Players must keep in mind the requirements of the Communist Decisive Victory; if at any point in the game these are satisfied. the game immediately ends.

At the end of Game-Turn 13, all play ceases and the number of Victory Points achieved by the Communist Player is totalled. This total is compared to the Level of Victory Table to determine the winner of the game.

How to use the Orders of Battle

Note: the term "Order of Battle" as used in these rules, refers to a specific combination of Initial Forces, Reinforcements, and Special Rules being used by a given Player in a given game. There are six Orders of Battle available for each Player. A complete "read-out" Of an Order of Battle can be had by using the Order of Battle Description, the Initial Forces Chart, and the Reinforcement/ Turn Record Track.

In the Historical Game: use Order of Battle "A" with Historical Deployment for the Allies and Order of Battle "G" with Historical Deployment for. the Communists.

In the Standard Game: use Order of Battle "A" with Free Deployment for the Allies and Order of Battle "G" with Free Deployment for the Communists.

In the Optional 0B Game: use any one of the six Orders of Battle available for each side. The Orders of Battle to be used may be arrived at by mutual agreement, or the Limited Strategic Intelligence method may be used.

LIMITED STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

Each Player writes the code-letters of his six Orders of Battle on a piece of paper, secretly assigning each letter a different number from "one" through "six." The die is rolled once and each Player uses the Order of Battle indicated by the die number. The Allied Player immediately reveals which Order of Battle he is using. The Communist Player keeps his Order of Battle a secret throughout the game. His letter-number combinations should be placed in an envelope, sealed, and turned over to the Allied Player to be verified at the end of the game.

Example:
Allied List:
 A = 2, B= 4, C=1, D=6, E = 3, F = 5

Communist List:
 G= = 6, H = 3, J = 4, K = 1, L = 5, M= 2

The die is rolled and a result of "2" is obtained; the Allied Player uses Order of Battle "A" (Historical Forces, Free Deployment), and the Communist Player uses Order of Battle "M" (Stronger NVA Offensive).

Note: When setting up Communist units on the Reinforcement Track in a Limited Strategic Intelligence game, place the counters facedown and use excess markers or counters to fill in any blank spots (in order that the Allied Player will not be able to deduce the Communist Order Of Battle simply by looking at the Reinforcement Track). None of these fake reinforcements may ever enter the game, of course, but they may be pushed back along the track (delay in their "appearance") in order to keep the Allied Player guessing.

How to Deploy

In all initial placement of units, all Allied units are placed on the map in a face-up fashion, while all Communist units are placed on the map in a face-down manner. In all games (and options), the Communist Player receives a total of twenty-one NVA combat units and Dummy combat units. five NLF units, and thirteen real or dummy supply units. THE DEPLOYMENT SEQUENCE [IN ALL GAMES] PROCEEDS AS FOLLOWS:

1.   The Communist Player places fourteen of his twenty-one Dummy combat units and Real combat units (any amount of either) on the map (see Deployment Restrictions), placing the remaining seven aside. Then he places the five NLF units.

2.   The Allied Player places all of his units on the map (see below for restrictions). The Air Bombardment

Strength Points are placed in the "available" box.

3.   The Communist Player places the remaining seven of his combat units and Dummy Counters on the map, and then places all thirteen real and dummy supply units on the Supply Centre hexes.

FREE DEPLOYMENT
All games except the Historical Game use Free Deployment. Free Deployment allows the Players a greater degree of discretion in the initial placement of their forces. Players must, however, obey the Deployment Sequence and the Deployment Restrictions in the Standard Game. In the Order of Battle Options Game they must, in addition, obey any modifications due to Special Rules.

Standard Deployment Restrictions
The following restrictions apply to ALL games except in the specific instances noted.

COMMUNIST UNITS
NVA REAL AND DUMMY COMBAT UNITS: All twenty-one NVA Real and Dummy combat units must be deployed outside South Vietnam. (Exception: see Special Rule "J.")

NVA REAL AND DUMMY SUPPLY UNITS: All thirteen Real and Dummy Supply units must be deployed directly on Supply Centre

hexes. according to the quota numbers printed on the Supply Centre hexes.

NLF UNITS: All NLF 2-1-6 units are always deployed in the following manner: one in the Central Coast Region, two in the Mekong Delta East Region. and two in the Mekong Delta West Region. NLF units may never be initially deployed in Town hexes or Road/Trail hexes.

ALLIED UNITS
USA UNITS: In all games that have US units as part of the Initial Forces, one USA 4-6 must be placed in the Danang base hex, and one each of the other two US units placed in the Long Binh and Vung Tau base hexes.

ROK UNITS: All ROK units must be initially deployed directly in the town of Qui Nhon.

ARV N UNITS: May only be deployed within the borders of South Vietnam (and, at the Player's discretion, directly in the Cambodian town of Svay Rieng). ARVN units may only be deployed in terrain in which they are normally permitted to move.

Historical Game Deployment
In the Historical game, the Allied Player uses Order of Battle "A" and the Communist Player uses Order of Battle "G." Both Players deploy their Initial Forces according to the Historical Deployment description and the Deployment Sequence. Units will be identified by their Combat Strength — Movement Allowance numbers.

ALLIED HISTORICAL DEPLOYMENT
USA UNITS: one 4-6 in Danang, one 2-6 in Vung Tau, one 2-6 in Long Binh.

ROK UNITS: three 3-6's in Oui Nhon.

ARVN UNITS: one and two 2Y6's directly in the Cambodian town of Svay Rieng. The remainder Of the ARVN forces will be deployed anywhere within the following indicated Regions, within the standard rules of deployment.

Quang Tri Region: two 2Y6, one 3-6, one 1-6, one 2-1-6.
Quang Nam Region: one 2-6.
Centra/ Coast Region: one 2-1-6.
Central Highlands Region: two 2Y6, two 2-6, one 2-1-6.
Dar/ac Region: one 1-6.
Rung Sat Region: one 1-6. one 2-1-6.
Tav Ninh Region: one 2-6, one 1-6, one 2-1-6.
Saigon Region: six 2 Y6.
Mekong Delta, East Region: one 2Y6, one 2-6, one 2-1-6.
Mekong Delta, West Region: one 2-6.
In Bombardment Strength Available box: thirteen Air Bombardment Points.

COMMUNIST HISTORICAL DEPLOYMENT:
NVA UNITS: NVA units are deployed outside South Vietnam (in Cambodia, Laos, and North Vietnam), on any hex within two hexes of the indicated South Vietnamese Region.
Outside Quang Tri Region: one 6-6, three 5-6.

Outside Quang Nam Region: one 6-6.
Outside Central Highlands Region: one 5-6, two 4-6.
Outside Darlac Region: one 5-6, two 4-6.
Outside Mekong Delta, West Region: two 5-6. one 4-6.
Anywhere outside South Vietnam: seven Dummies.

Directly on Supply Centres, according to Quota printed on Supply Centre hex: six Real Supply units. seven dummy Supply units.
NLF UNITS: NLF units are deployed directly in the given Regions of South Vietnam. They may be deployed on any hex in the Region except Road, Trail, or Town hexes.
In Central Coast Region: one 2-1-6.
In Mekong Delta, East Region: two 2-1-6.
In Mekong Delta, West Region: two 2-1-6.
In the Historical Deployment, no Communist units may be deployed in the Cambodian town Of Svay Rieng.

ORDER OF BATTLE DESCRIPTIONS
Allied Orders of Battle
A.   Historical Initial Forces, Historical Reinforcements. Use either Historical Deployment (in Historical Game) or Free Deployment (in Standard Game). Standard Victory Conditions.

B.   Historical Initial Forces, Historical Reinforcements. Use Pacification Deployment (Special Rule B). Standard Victory Conditions.

C.   Initial Force Variant "C" (Fulfilled Vietnamization), Free Deployment. Use Victory Modification P.

D.   Initial Forces Variant "D" (Less Vietnamization), Historical Reinforcements. Free Deployment. Standard Victory Conditions.

E.   Historical Initial Forces, Reinforcement Variant "E" (Increased Nava/ Reinforcement). Free Deployment. Standard Victory Conditions.

F.   Historical Initial Forces, Reinforcement Variant "F" (US Intervention). Free Deployment, with

Special Rule "F." Use Victory Modification "P."

Communist Orders of Battle

G. Historical Initial Forces, Historical Reinforcements. Historical Deployment (in Historical Game) or Free Deployment.

H. Historical Initial Forces, Historical Reinforcements. Free Deployment. use Special Rule "H" (Increased NLF Participation).

J. Historical Initial Forces, Historical Reinforcements. Free Deployment modified by Special Rule "J" (NVA Infiltration).

K. Historical Initial Forces, Historical Reinforcements. Free Deployment modified by Special Rule "J." Use Special Rule "H."

L. Initial Forces Variant "L" (Weaker NVA Offensive), Reinforcement Variant "L." Free Deployment.

M. Initial Forces Variant ' 'M" (Stronger NVA Offensive), Reinforcement Variant "M." Free Deployment.

SPECIAL RULES AND VICTORY MODIFICATION FOR THE ORDER OF BATTLE OPTIONS

Special Rule F: *US INTERVENTION*

This special rule provides for free movement (i.e., unrestricted by political boundaries) of all Allied units. Although the USA and ROK units must still be deployed in the same places, they may move freely and attack in the ordinary course of the game. Thus, the ROK units are not limited to the Central Coast province, and the USA units may move and attack freely.

Special Rule B: *PACIFICATION DEPLOYMENT*

This special rule assumes that the ARVN were more involved directly in the pacification program. Thus at least one Allied unit must be deployed in every town and base hex in South Vietnam in the initial placement of units. They may move freely at any time after that initial placement.

Special Rule J: *NVA INFILTRATION*

This special rule assumes that the NVA had successfully engaged in infiltrating their units prior to the launching of the offensive. Thus, in the Communist Player's second step of initial placement, when he deploys the seven combat units (or Dummy Counters), he may place them on hexes in South Vietnam. He is limited to placing them on non-road or trail Swamp or Rough Terrain hexes that are no more than four hexes from any non-South Vietnam hex. They may not be placed on hexes occupied by Allied units.

Special Rule H: *INCREASED NLF PARTICIPATION*

This special rule assumes that there had been better cooperation in training and preparation between the NVA and NLF. Combat Case Q, which states that full strength NVA units when eliminated are replaced with 1-6 combat units is changed. Rather, these units are replaced with a 2-1-6 NVA unit. Otherwise, Case Q remains the same. These "2-1-6" Battlegroup units are treated identically as NLF guerrilla units, except that they are not restricted in movement to any one Region.

VICTORY CONDITION MODIFICATION
In scenarios where this modification is called for. at the end of the game (not during, unlike the standard conditions), the number of NVA Strength Points within South Vietnam are totalled; the number of Strength Points above 70 are added to the number of Victory Points, or the number below 70 is subtracted from the Victory Point total. This net total is then compared to the Level of Victory Table to determine a winner.

This represents the political importance of driving the NVA from South Vietnamese soil, rather than merely resisting, in the cases Of Completed Vietnamization or US intervention.

How to "Read" the Initial Forces Chart and the Time Record/ Reinforcement Track

The Initial Forces Chart shows the quantity and type of combat units and other counters that each Player receives at the start of the game. Each box in the Chart shows a picture of a particular type of unit. Directly under this unit-picture, in the box. is a "multiplier" number which indicates how many of that type of unit the Player receives in the Historical Initial Force. For example, the ARVN 1-6 picture has a ' •x4" underneath it. This means that when using the Historical Initial Force, the Allied Player receives four of these units.

Note that some unit pictures (including the ARVN 1-6 in our example) have multiplier numbers outside the box as well. These outside multipliers indicate how many of that type of unit the Player receives if he is using the initial Force Variant of the corresponding code-letter. For example, if the Allied Player were using Order of Battle the "CxO" outside the 1-6 unit box would tell him that he receives zero 1-6 units in that Variant. If a Player is using a Variant Initial Force, and there is no Variant multiplier outside the unit-picture box (or a Variant multiplier with a different code-letter than the 0B being used) then the Player receives the number of counters indicated by the multiplier inside the unit-picture box. For example, no matter what Order of Battle he is using. the Allied Player always receives one ARVN 3-6 unit as part of his Initial Force.

HOW TO USE THE INITIAL FORCES CHART: After the Orders of Battle have been decided upon, place the proper number Of each type of unit directly on its picture (the Communist Player should place his units face-down and use his Dummy units to confuse the Allied Player as to how many real units are on the chart). After all appropriate units have been placed on the chart the Players should deploy them onto the map area as outlined in the How to Deploy section.

HOW TO USE THE TIME RECORD / REINFORCEMENT TRACK: The Reinforcement Track is read in exactly the same way as the Initial Forces Chart. Players should set-up their Reinforcements directly on the unit pictures appearing at various places along the track. Each of the boxes labelled "1" through "13" represents a Game-Turn. Use the Game-Turn marker provided to indicate which Game- Turn is being played. During their respective Reinforcement Phases. the Players may bring into the game those units whose pictures appear next to the Game-Turn being played.

In all games except the Historical Game, reinforcements may delay their appearance to some indefinite. future Reinforcement Phase. When delaying the appearance Of units, simply push them back along the Track, one Garne-Turn at a time, until the decision is made to commit them to play. Reinforcements may never appear earlier than indicated on the track. In the Historical Game, reinforcements must appear exactly as indicated on the track.

PLACEMENT OF REINFORCEMENTS:

COMMUNIST: All Communist reinforcements are placed directly on either the Tchepone or Panhandle Supply Centre hexes. Note that if the Tchepone hex is occupied by Allied units, the Communist Reinforcements must appear in the Panhandle Centre.

ALLIED: All Allied ground reinforcements appear at any following hexes: Hue. Danang, Long Binh, or either of the Saigon hexes. Allied reinforcements may not be placed on a hex which is under Communist control (i.e., a hex which is occupied by a face-up NLF militia unit).

Allied air and naval reinforcements are placed in the Bombardment Strength Available box.

The act of placing reinforcements on the map does not expend any Movement Points. Reinforcements may move and fight in the Game-Turn of their arrival.

DESIGNER'S NOTES
Making games about events still '*in progress" IS a chancey business. But, if games ("conflict Simulations") are to have any relevance they must be capable of producing results. A game's main claim on a person's time is its ability to simulate something. Simulate means a game that can re-create things as they happened. In the same manner that they happened.

This is what we have tried to do with The Year o/ the Rat game. We think it has been quite successful. Like any game, Year of the Rat (YOR), attempts to impart certain information in a certain way. In this case the information was the general outline of the North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam in early 1972. In doing this, we presented certain information about the two armies. their capabilities, organization and actual performance. Certain elements of the campaign, however, were not presented in an overtly recognizable manner.

Two of these ' 'hidden" elements are of major importance. The most important one was the political situation in South Vietnam. A close second in importance was the very subtle strategy pursued by the North Vietnamese. Both of these elements are also intertwined. The political situation in South Vietnam is assumed to cover not only the domestic political "war" between elements of the "legitimate" government but also the conflict between the Viet Cong power structure and the Thieu government. This is a rather hazy situation which no one seems to be able to unravel. All you could probably say about it is that the war is basically being fought in order to resolve this question of who actually holds (or "commands") enough support to maintain a government. This brings us to the Other important point: the North Vietnamese military strategy. Not just the strategy of moving military units and fighting battles, but the overall strategy of winning the war of ending it by destroying the other side's ability to put up a fight. In the game "winning" is reflected by the control of real estate. But what really is control? The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) has not made a "do or die" attempt to capture South Vietnamese cities. Instead, their ultimate strategy seems to be to hurt the South Vietnamese army as much as possible while taking over as much territory as possible. The South Vietnamese forces seem unable to hold ground as well as the NVA. But the Year of the Rat game covers only a small part of this campaign. They could have won in this thirteen-week initial offensive period. But they seem to have been anxious not to hurt their excellent long-range chances at the expense of a very high-risk early win. This is why the victory conditions in our game aren't the same as the long-range conditions of the NVA. A game covering that much time would be a different game. And we admit that our crystal ball wasn't up to that sort of thing. We bit off an early thirteen-week period that we were fairly sure Of handling.

— JFD

Joseph Miranda Variant Dec. 2022

John Prados' **Year of the Rat** (**YOTR**) is a very interesting design. The game was a snapshot of the Vietnam War during the big campaign of 1972. While the Indochina Wars are usually seen as guerrilla struggles, the conventional offensives were often decisive: notably in 1954, 1965, 1968 and 1972. This is what made playing the game interesting, it was a chance to turn the tide in Vietnam.

The **YOTR** system presented some interesting challenges, pitting two different types of forces against each other with a minimum of game complexity. There was, as we say today, real asymmetry. NVA forces were powerful on the ground, but ARVN had air mobility.

To give another example: the **YOTR** air system appears simplistic with only one mission available (bombardment, but no close support or interdiction of enemy supply lines). This works at the scale of the game as major NVA manoeuvre units are divisions. Airstrikes model the cumulative effects of airpower over a period of days and weeks causing the increased degradation of Communist combat capabilities. In the first phase of the offensive the NVA can make some real advances, but then as the game goes into its final innings they are fighting to hold on to what they have gained.

YOTR had some nice extras, to include various different setup and reinforcement options. The graphic presentation was very utilitarian, with initial and reinforcement units shown on the map. Lots of data there!

As usual for wargamers, I worked out some variants for **YOTR**. Both sides gain some additional forces to keep it balanced.

NVA tank regiments: these represent armour as well as sappers. Since these units have a higher attack factor than

defence, the Communists can weight selected attacks.

NVA divisional breakdowns: historically, the NVA was pretty good at switching around regiments among their divisions. The variant breakdown rule uses the existing **YOTR** NVA battlegroups (BG) as substitutes for divisions. One reason for adding this rule was that often in the game the NVA will take a town but the only way they can hold it (on top of the NLF militia) is by committing an entire division to the hex. The BG breakdowns are good for leaving a regiment or two in place and having the rest of the division available for other operations.

ARVN order of battle: ARVN receives a couple of River Assault Groups (RAG), representing riverine forces. These did much to secure the Mekong Delta in 1972 so RAGs become a moderately strong ARVN game force as well as having a mobility advantage (they can enter otherwise prohibited swamp hexes). There's also an additional ARVN airmobile unit for the 81st Rangers, accounting for various national level special forces.

ARVN base camps: these represent firebases, border rangers, and ARVN regional/local forces. Historical mission for these camps including covering the frontier and providing advance warning of NVA attacks out of Laos and Cambodia. The NVA overrunning of a number of these bases in 1972 did much to set up the later Communist victory in South Vietnam.

War in the Countryside: this is one more reason for having the ARVN base camps as well as a couple of extra NLF (Viet Cong) regiments in the variant. It's a way to move some of the fighting away from the towns and into the spaces in between which often are empty in a scenario! The variant shows irregular forces within the context of a conventional campaign. I did not want to overdo this sort of thing in order to keep the variant under control. You add too many rules, and they can sink a good design.

Overall, the **YOTR** variant is intended to stay within the spirit of the original game published by SPI way back when Vietnam was still a hot war.

Year of the Rat Variant Counters (Communist)

NVA Tank Regiments
The Communist player receives tank regiments (**2-1-6**) by the Order of Battle.

Tank regiments use ARVN ZOC effects and movement costs on the TEC.

Communist Additional NLF Regiments
The Communist player receives additional NLF infantry regiments (**2-1-6**) by the Order of Battle.

Design note: these units are mainly to balance the additional ARVN forces.

NVA Divisional Reorganization
The Communist player may exchange NVA divisions (XX) for three regimental sized infantry battlegroups (BG).

6-6 = 2 x **2-1-6** plus 1 x **1-1-6**
5-6 = 1 x **2-1-6** plus 2 x **1-1-6**
4-6 = 3 x **1-1-6**

Reorganization is performed at the start of the Communist movement phase. To breakdown or build up, the units must be located in a Communist base, or a town or Allied base in South Vietnam which can trace a line of supply to a Communist base.

Disrupted and Pinned units cannot reorganize.

Exchange the units in the hex. A division does not have to be rebuilt from the BG from which it initially broke down. Divisions and BG can otherwise operate normally in a turn of reorganization. Only NVA units can use this rule, not NLF. BG used to replace eliminated NVA divisions can also be used for this rule, but not tank regiments.

Design note. There are limits to where reorganization can take place to keep

this rule from going overboard. The idea here is that you have to be in a logistically supported objective position to make this happen.

Year of the Rat Variant Counters (Allied)

Allied Base Camps
Allied base camp units (**0-1-0**) represent various firebases, special forces camps and ARVN regional forces. They are static units. They have normal zones of control. They cannot attack. They defend normally but if forced to retreat they are eliminated. Additionally: Allied airmobile units can fly into and out of Base Camps in the same manner as towns. They are affected by the Siege rule.

Base camps are always in a Supplied state. Other Allied units in the same hex are Supplied, but a line of supply cannot be traced to a base camp.

ARVN 81st Rangers
ARVN 81st Ranger brigade (**2Y6**) is an additional Allied unit.

Design note: 81st Rangers were a high-level ARVN unit, employed as a strategic reserve and special reaction force. It was an over strength battalion, but I included it to counter some of the additional NVA forces in the variant game.

ARVN River Assault Groups (RAG)
RAG units **(3-2-6)** represent riverine craft and contingents of ARVN amphibious troops. RAG units function as standard ARVN ground units, with the following special cases. RAG units can move, retreat and advance only on hexes adjacent to rivers. The river hexes do not necessarily have to be connected as long as they are adjacent (for example, the rivers on both sides of Vinh Long; due to other waterways below the scale of the map.). They can also enter swamp hexes adjacent to rivers (unlike other ARVN units), paying one movement point; also, their ZOC extend into swamp hexes. They cannot gain a road movement bonus.

YOTR Variant Orders of Battle

Allied Initial Setup (all scenarios)
Vinh Long: 1 x **3-2-6** riverine (1 RAG). Any hexes in South Vietnam: 8 x **0-1-0** base camps. No more than two base camps can be placed per Region. Further, they must be placed either on clear hexes, or rough with roads or trails. They cannot be placed on bases, towns, rough (non-road) or swamps.

Allied Reinforcements (all scenarios)
Turn 2: 1 x 2Y6 (81 Ranger).

Order of Battle C. Fulfilled Vietnamization. Add 1 x **3-2-6** riverine to the initial force. Place on any hex adjoining a river hex side in Mekong Delta West or East. Also, ARVN airmobile units (**2Y6**) now can enter swamp and rough hexes (paying 2 MP); their zones of control now extend into swamp and rough. Design note. The special **2Y6** movement and ZOC rules represent increased ARVN ability to operate in the countryside.

Special Rule B: Pacification Deployment. Add 2 x **0-1-0** Base Camps to Allied initial deployment (per above).

Order of Battle: Stronger US Commitment
The Allies begins with an additional US 3 x **4Y6** brigades. These are deployed on any Allied bases in South Vietnam (these are the three **4Y6** normally received on turn 10). Using this option, all US units can move, fight, etc., starting with Turn 2 (regardless of whether attacked by Communists or not). Use victory modification "P".

Communist Initial Setup (all scenarios)

NVA Units
Outside Quang Tri Region: 2 x **2-1-6** tank regiments.
Outside Central Highlands Region: 1 x 2-1-6 tank regiment.

NLF Units
In Quang Tri or Quang Nam Region: 1 x 2-1-6 regiment
In Rung Sat, Darlac or Tay Ninh Region: 1 x 2-1-6 regiment

Order of Battle H. Increased NLF Participation. Add 1 x 2-1-6 NLF regiment to Communist initial deployment. Place per NLF units in any Region in South Vietnam (other than Saigon).

Order of Battle M. Stronger NVA Offensive. Add 1 x 2-1-6 tank regiment to turn 4 reinforcements.

Additional Musings

NVA 3rd Division
Here is another thing: the NVA 3rd Division was actually located on the Central Coast. I think this is what the NLF regiment set up in **YOTR's** Central Coast represents. However, there is a 3rd Division (**5-6**) in the game. Perhaps an alternative deployment **2-1-6** with a designator of "3"?

Communist Base Counters
The Communist bases tended to be underground areas, not fixed installations per se. Adding them to the map might change the nature of the game, shifting into guerrilla mode.

The Communists could place starting supply units on them if using scenario variants.

Use three to five bases (4 counters provided in the mix), depending on how you interpret their base structure in South Vietnam in 1972.

TERRAIN EFFECTS CHART

TERRAIN TYPE	MOVEMENT POINT (MP) COST TO ENTER HEX		EFFECT ON DEFENSE STRENGTH WHEN DEFENDER IS IN TERRAIN	
	Communist	Allied	Communist	Allied
Clear	1 MP	1 MP	Normal	Normal
Swamp Rough	2 MP	2 MP (ARVN Prohibited)	Doubled	Normal
Towns	NA	NA	Normal	Normal, add intrinsic strength
Bases	NA	NA	Normal	Doubled, add intrinsic strength
Supply Center	NA	NA	Normal, add intrinsic strength	Normal
Roads	1 MP	½ MP	NA	NA
Trails	NA	2 MP	NA	NA
River Hexsides	+3 MP	+3 MP	Doubled*	Doubled*
Bridge Hexsides	No extra	No extra	Doubled*	Doubled*
All Sea	Prohibited	Prohibited	NA	NA
Non-hex areas of map	Prohibited	Prohibited	NA	NA
OTHER MOVEMENT COSTS				
Airlift	Prohibited	+3	NA	NA
Enter Enemy Zone of Control	+1 MP	+2 MP	NA	NA
Leave Enemy Zone of Control	+2 MP	+3 MP	NA	NA

TERRAIN NOTES

*1. Defender is doubled due to River hexsides only when all attacking units are attacking through River hexsides.

2. "NA" (Not Applicable) means that the particular type of terrain does not need to be considered. Thus, if an "NA" appears under the Movement Cost column, it means that the terrain feature has no effect on movement, and the Player should calculate movement costs based upon whatever other terrain is in the same hex. The same is true for an "NA" indication in the Defense Strength column; ignore that terrain when calculating the effective Defense Strength of the unit.

3. Roads: Players may only move at the Road or Trail Movement Rate if they are moving units through Road or Trail hexsides. Entry into a Road hex via a Trail hexside is performed at the Trail Movement rate. Entry into a Trail hex via a Road hexside is performed at the Road rate. A hexside is considered to be a Road or Trail hexside when the Road or Trail symbol crosses the hexside.

4. A hex is considered to be a given type of terrain if all or part of the hex contains that terrain symbol. Defensive doubling effects of terrain are not cumulative; the Defense Strength of any unit(s) may never be more than doubled.

5. The effect of terrain on Bombardment Strength is completely different than the effect of terrain on ground combat. The Bombardment Strength is doubled if the Communist units are in clear terrain ("clear terrain" in this instance is defined as any hex which does not contain Swamp, Rough, Town, or Base, symbols). In non-clear terrain, the face-value Bombardment Strength is used.

6. Movement costs which have a plus-sign (+) in front of them are applied in addition to any other Movement costs.