

BEER AND PRETZEL SPACE MARINES

SPACESHIP SCENARIO B

The independent cargo ship "Wilma" was on a typical job (ie- completely illegal) transporting a shipment of fairly large, well-sealed containers. The huge payment promised and the obvious great value attached to the cargo by their client led the more curious of the crew to take a peek inside the containers (with an eye, perhaps, towards "lightening the load"). Soon after, the surviving crew decided that a few years in prison for smuggling was preferable to violent dismemberment, and they dialed "911". Battling nasties the entire way a handful has managed to fight its way to the hanger bay deck, and the cavalry (in the form of Federation Shock Marines) has just arrived.

Looks like they might just make it after all...

GOOD GUYS: Shock Marines = Pilot (with Pistol), Sarge (with Rifle), Smart Gunner, and 4 Rifles (with Hand Flamers / Grenades).

Mercenaries = Flamethrower (with 10 + 2d6 ammo tokens), and 5 Rifles (with 2 Grenades amongst them).

BAD GUYS: Bugs = Warriors (infinite supply)

SET-UP: The Mercs are in the elevator shaft. The Marines are inside their ship in the hanger bay. All doors are closed.

BUG REINFORCEMENTS: Roll 2d to determine how many (halve the roll, rounding up). Roll 1d for each figure to determine its location. If more than one figure arrives at the same spot, they are considered to be lined up behind the first.

MOVEMENT: Figures may move diagonally when there are squares on both sides of the move. Bugs may not move through other figures.

COMMAND POINTS held by the Sarge cannot be given to / used by Mercs. The Mercs may pick one of the rifle figures as their leader: the figure receives two Command Points for use by the Mercs. To choose a leader, ALL Mercs must remain inactive for an entire turn --no movement or actions allowed. A replacement leader may be chosen at any time in the game.

DOORS cost one point to open from an adjacent square (not diagonal). Marines / Mercs may close doors during their move from an adjacent square at no cost --however, this closing counts as movement and so may not be done after an action. After all figures in a phase (either Marine / Merc or Bug) have moved, doors without adjacent figures are closed.

AIRLOCKS can have only one door open at a time. A Marine / Merc inside an airlock may operate either door.

ACTIONS: In addition to attacks or declarations of cover fire, Marines may weld doors.

WELDING DOORS may be done from an adjacent square: place one point of weld per 2 Points spent. A maximum of four weld points may be placed on a door. Airlock doors may not be welded.

A Bug will attack a welded door (though it must know the door won't open, ie: it has an unspent point when it reaches the door), removing 1 point of weld per turn (2 points for Leaders). Once all the weld points are gone, the door is removed from play.

LINE-OF-SIGHT: Doorways block L-O-S for all figures outside the line of squares directly in front of a door. A figure in a doorway has L-O-S to squares in the adjacent room within a 45-degree arc, but blocks all other L-O-S through the doorway. L-O-S up into a ventilation shaft may only be traced from an adjacent square (Exception: grenade-fire need not be from an adjacent square.).

COVER FIRE: Examples of target squares would be doorways, corners, ventilation shaft openings, and other spots where a previously unseen Bug would come into view.

GRENAD CONCUSSION may knock figures down: All figures must roll less than or equal to their distance (doubled for Bugs and Marines) from the impact square on 2d6 (closed doors block the blast). Figures in front of a wall subtract two from the roll, those in corners subtract four. If they fail the roll, they are knocked down (the Sarge loses the ability to give Command Points). On its next turn (the same or following, depending on if it's moved before the grenade shot), a figure must roll to stand up, using ½ d6 points, before continuing with its normal move.

GRENAD MISSES hit somewhere: Determine random direction from target square (d8), then place impact at a distance equal to the difference between the hit number required and the roll made, and resolve any damage made.

MORALE CHECKS: If at the beginning of the turn a Bug is 1 or 2 squares away from a Merc the Merc must roll 1d: on a result of 1 or 2 the Merc freaks out and fires at the Bug. This counts as that figure's move and action for the turn. If the Bug is killed other Mercs need not check morale.

PLAYING THE BUGS: The Bugs will move toward/attack the nearest Marine / Merc regardless of tactics, closed doors, or deadly cover fire. Whenever choices present themselves to a Bug (eg: movement direction or target to attack) roll a die to determine which it chooses.

SO YOU THINK YOU'RE TOUGH, EH?

Add any number of the following optional rules to make the scenario more challenging:

BUG LEADERS: If 5 or 6 Bugs are called for during reinforcements, one of them will be a Leader (up to two may be on the board at any time). Leaders are smarter than normal Bugs: they know everything any Bug on the board sees / knows, and may direct the other Bug figures in tactics (such as surrounding, avoiding known cover fire, bypassing known sealed doors, or directing --or killing-- wounded Bugs out of the way). They're still Bugs, though, and must move to attack: treat them as intelligent berserkers. If a Leader is in play, reinforcement rolls may be modified to either "low or high" (only spaces 1,2,3 or 4,5,6 are used) or "odds or evens" (only spaces 1,3,5 or 2,4,6 are used).

DOORJAMS: Marines / Mercs can't move through a door if another is in one of the two door squares.

STUFF IN THE WAY: Place console/equipment blocks in rooms. Short blocks may be climbed at no cost, tall ones for one extra point, and black-topped ones are impassable. All count as obstacle squares that block diagonal moves. Squares with short blocks count double for firing range, and give 2-points of protection for figures immediately behind them (subtract from damage roll). Tall and black-topped ones block L-O-S completely.

SPACESHIP SCENARIOS - BOARD

There have been four different ships used over the years for these scenarios. The latest version (pictured below) is a cardstock / tagboard affair using wall and floor patterns from "First Light" :



The rooms are all separate pieces so that I can make different arrangements (This is the setup I use to run a "best game during the Con"-contest.) and the wall thickness is minimal to allow assembly of, say, two rooms on one side of a hall and three on the other: thus the rather feeble, wobbly look (made no better by a humid basement...).

Whatever setup is used for the game should have lots of routes / choices available for the player, and my personal feeling is that most (if not all) rooms should be small enough for a Bug to reach any point in the room in a single move: nothing like having the Bad Guys in your face to create the proper claustrophobic terror that is the hallmark of these sort of games.

Adding consoles and/or equipment clutter can turn a cakewalk into a real challenge.

Here's a sampling of what I use:

I went for simple, easy-to-game-with block-pieces --the artwork is also from First Light.

