Introduction

« Fields of Strategy » (FoS) is a simplified version of the ESTH. It allows replaying historical battles according to voluntarily very simple and abstract rules that can be assimilated in several minutes. « FoS » lies thus between the classical mind games like Chess and the simulation oriented games. For the moment, FoS is limited to the Napoleonic great battles, but extension for other period and scale are in progress.

This help file constitutes the player manual of « FoS » and present the rules without any program/interface considerations. The players are thus free to use these rules with other tools, like a paper map with counters or figures. The use of the program associated to these rules is tackled in the user manual (UserManual.hlp).

We hope that this game will enjoy you as it enjoys us.

T. Pannérec

Overview of the game

In « FoS », each player has an army at his disposal. This army is composed of units placed on squares. The playing sequence is decomposed in turns. At each turn the first player programs moves for its units and these moves are then simultaneously resolved. Some fights can then occur with the enemy units. The second player makes then its own moves (and fights) and finally a new turn begins.

The games are played in a given number of turns and the goal is to destroy the maximum amount of enemy forces while preserving its own forces and to occupy geographical locations.

The units

In «FoS» a unit is defined by two pieces of information: the type and the force.

Four types of units are possible: infantry, cavalry, artillery and leader. The first three are called « fighting types » by opposition to leaders, which represent only a Head Quarter and not a fighting unit. Each type has different characteristics in term of movement and fight. These characteristics are describes in the rest of the rest of the manual.

The force of a unit is of 1, 2 or 3 and is initially defined in the scenario. This force represents not only the size of the unit, but also its quality, motivation, experience and moral. For example, a Napoleonic line infantry unit will normally have initially a force of 2 (normal) while a unit of the imperial guard with the same number of men will be of force 3 (elite) and a national guard unit will be of force 1 (inferior).
The force of a unit can decrease during the game according to the fights. When a unit comes to a force of 0, it is eliminated.

Particular case of the leaders
Leaders are unit that act often differently than fighting units. They can be stacked with other units and cannot fight (except by accompanying a friendly fighting unit). If they are in square without a fighting friendly unit and adjacent to an enemy fighting unit, they must withdraw (a leader cannot therefore prevent an enemy fighting unit to advance).

The terrain

The playing terrain is a draughtboard with three types of square: normal squares, forbidden squares (sea, river) and cover square (villages, forest). No unit can enter a forbidden square and only infantry unit can enter a cover square (exception: using a road). When an infantry unit is in a cover square, it has a defence bonus during the fights.

In addition to its type, a square is also defined by its high and unit higher that their enemy have a bonus during the fights.
Linear obstacles (streams, fortifications) can separate two squares. Crossing such an obstacle follows the same rule as entering a cover square (and the defence bonus applies also for infantry against enemies that cross an obstacle).
Roads can also be present and allow faster movements. It allow in addition to ignore a cover or a linear obstacle for movements (and only movements) purpose.

A unit is always in a square and there cannot be more than one fighting unit in the same square at the same time (leader can be stack without restriction).

The movements

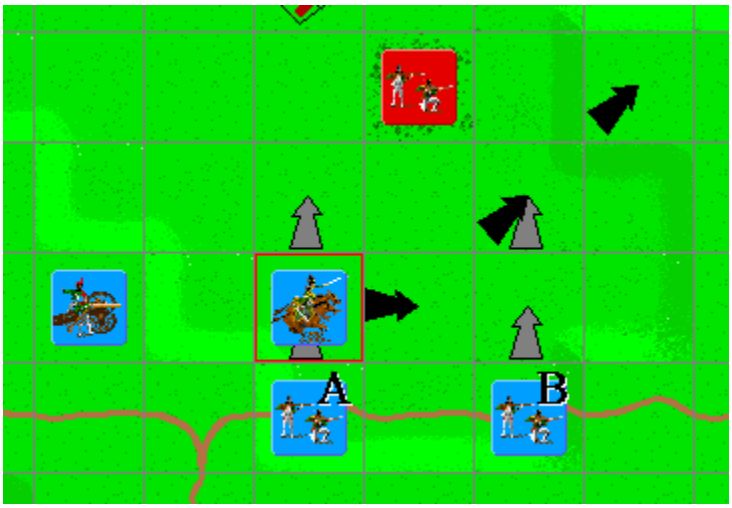
Programming movements consist in giving a path to each unit from its current location.

Programming movements
During each turn, the infantry and artillery unit can move of three squares, while cavalry and leaders can move of five squares. At each square the movements are possible in the eight possible directions. Moving on a road is twice faster if no fighting enemy unit is present in a 4 squares radius (strategic move). The roads also cancel effect of cover and linear obstacle for the movements.

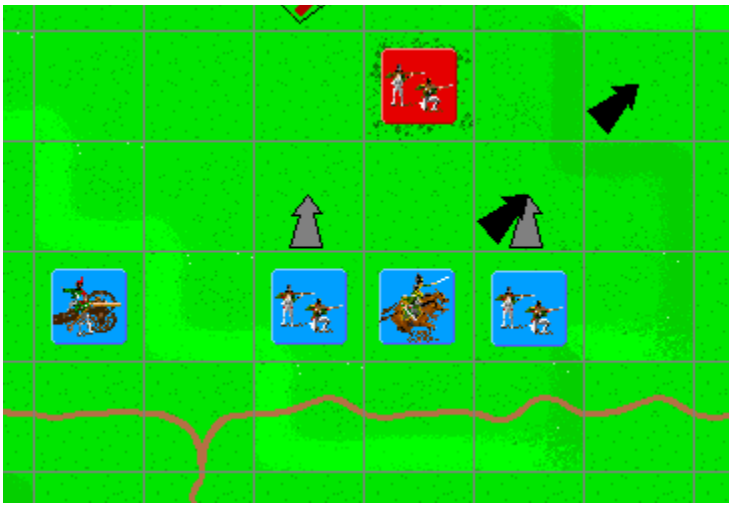
Resolving moves
The moves of the units are really made only after all moves have been programmed (for the player in phase). The moves are then simultaneously resolved: all units make their first moves then all units make their second move etc. If at any moment two fighting units want to go to the same square, we give priority to cavalry unit and then to the strongest unit. The unit that have not the priority must stay in its current square (and this can block another unit). When programming move, it is then necessary to avoid these cases.

When a unit come close to an enemy fighting unit during its move, it has stop without finishing its move.

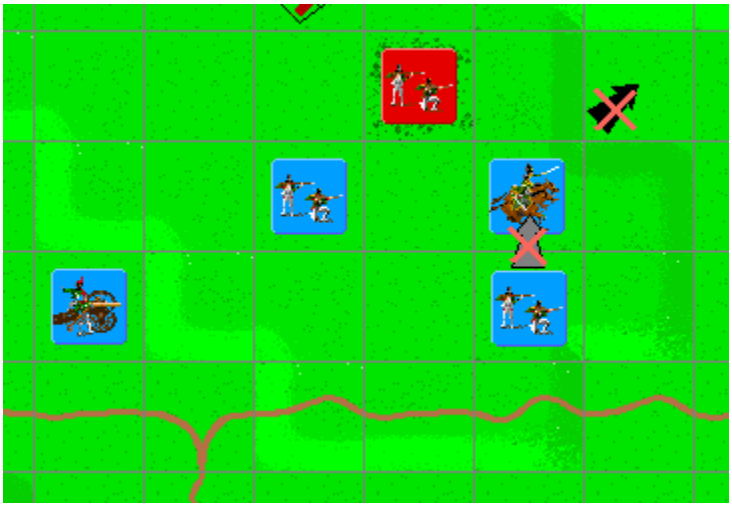
Example of movements:



Programmed movements for the blue player



1st move impulse



2nd move impulse: the cavalry unit is adjacent to an enemy fighting unit and cannot therefore go on with its movement. The infantry unit B cannot then advance.

The fights

At each turn, after having resolved the movements of a side, one computes the fights between enemy adjacent units (these units are said “engaged”).

Fires
The process starts first with the determination of the firing target for the artillery units. Non engaged artillery units can attack at distance engaged enemy fighting units that are at within a four square range. A clear line of sight between the two units is also required.
Each artillery unit can fire at only one target. If several targets are possible, the closest (in terms of real distance) is chosen. In case of equal distance unit not in cover are shoot in priority and then the strongest units are selected.

Mêlées
Once the fires are determined, a fighting factor is computed for each engaged unit by adding to its current force the following modifiers:

. Static artillery:	+1
. Mobil artillery:	-2
. Mobil cavalry:	+1
. Static infantry in cover:	+1
. For each suffered artillery fire:	-1
. For each adjacent enemy fighting unit:	-1
. Stacked Leader:	+1

Then, for each couple of adjacent enemy fighting units, we subtract their fighting factors and add a random factor of -1/0/+1 and eventually +1 for the highest unit. If this result is superior or equal to 2 (or inferior or equal to -2) the weakest unit loose the mêlée.

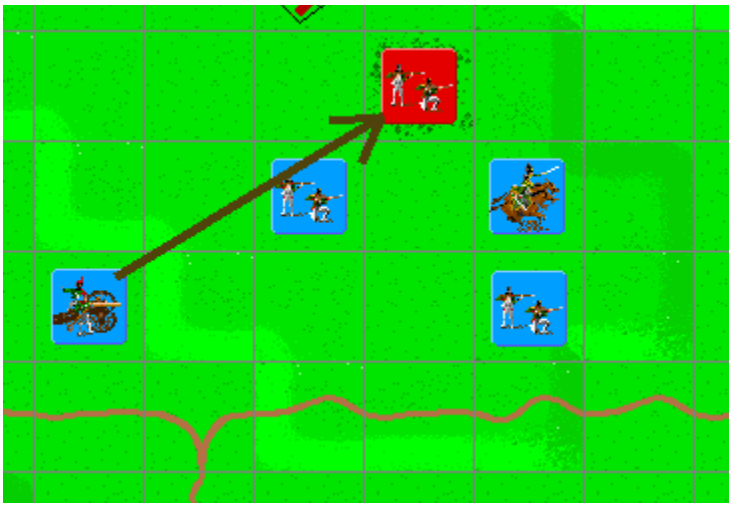
Once a mêlée is lost for a unit, it has to withdraw in a free adjacent square that is not adjacent to an enemy fighting unit. If it is impossible, it is removed. Else, it has also to make a moral test (rallying).

Particular case of mêlée: a moving cavalry or artillery unit always loose the mêlée against a unit in cover (or behind a linear obstacle).

Remark: The mêlées are simultaneous. The consequences of a loosed mêlée are applied after all mêlée have been computed.

Advice: it is often more simple to directly compute the mêlée differential between two units by focusing on their differences instead of computing their fight factors (cf. the following example).

Fight example:



Situation after the movements

An infantry and a cavalry blue unit (each one of force 2) attack a red infantry unit of force 2 in a cover. The blue artillery unit on the highs has a clear line of sight to the red unit and this unit suffers therefore a fire.
The cavalry unit automatically looses its mêlée because it attacks a unit in a cover. It withdraws and must make a moral test.
The two infantry units have the same force, but the red unit has +1 for the cover and -1 for the fire. The differential is therefore 0 before rolling the dice. Whatever the dice, the result won't be sufficient. The mêlée ends here in a status quo.

Moral Test (rallying)

The moral test

When a unit looses a mêlée, it must make a moral test. To this end, a random number between 0 and 100 is generated. The value (d-2)*10 + h is added to this number, where d is the worst mêlée differential suffer by the unit and h and eventually handicap for a side (for an unbalanced scenario or for player with different experiences of the game). If the resulting number is greater to the current rallying factor for the side, the test is missed and the unit looses a force point. If there was only one point left, then the unit is removed. If the test is successful, nothing happens.

Rallying factor of a side

The rallying factor of a side is equal to the percentage of controlled objective on the map. An objective is controlled by the side that has the closest unit.

Example

A unit looses a mêlée with a differential of 4. The random number is 58 and we add then 20 ((4-2)*10, no handicap) which gives 78. If the player who has got the unit controls less than 78% of the objectives on the map, the unit looses one force point.

Visibility

Fog of war
In FoS, the enemy units that cannot be detected by friendly units are normally hidden. To detect an enemy unit, the spotting unit must be within 8 squares and have a clear line of sight. If the distance is 7 or 8 squares, the unit is detected but not identified (its type and force are not revelled).
Units in cover can only detected at 1 square.
Leaders have a sighting bonus: they can see unit in clear terrain at 9 squares and units in cover at 2 two squares.

This rule is of course optional because it can be difficult to apply without the program (but in the program, this rule is systematically used).

Line of sight
For a unit being able to see another unit (for detecting or firing), there must be a clear line of sight.
If these two units are at the same high, no highest terrain or cover at the same high can exist between the two units. In addition, for firing purpose only, no unit on the same high can be on the trajectory.
If the units are not at the same high, no highest or equal level can be on the line and cover must be closest to the highest unit (covers square are assumes to have a high of half a level). Units do not prevent visibility in these conditions.

Linear obstacles have no impact on visibility.

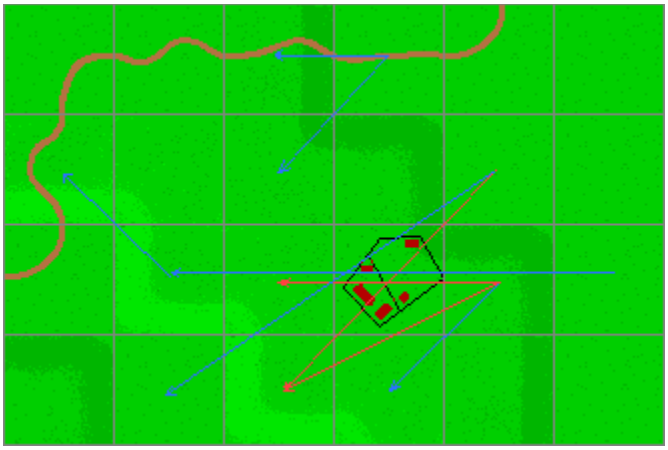


Figure 1: Example of clear (blue) and blocked (red) lines of sight

End of the game

The game ends after a given number of turns (defined in the scenario). At this moment, the percentage of remaining forces (in term of force points) is added for each player to the percentage of controlled objectives. If the difference is superior to 50% there is a strategic victory for the player with the best score. If the difference is only superior to 10%, there is a tactical victory. In the other cases, the game is a draw.

Notes

Conception notes:
FoS is not a war-game and also not a precise simulation of battles. Although it relies on history, its objective is to be a game of strategy abstract and simple. The rules can be assimilated in a few minutes and fights can be carried out in one's head. Playing a battle containing a hundred of units is possible in one hour rand without effort.

Differences between FoS and E.S.T.H.:
FoS is a simplified version of E.S.T.H.. Units are more roughly modelled and the fatigue and disorganisation levels have been removed. There are less unit types and types are identical for all nations (but the average initial force of the units can vary according to nations and scenarios). The mechanisms and results of fires and fights are more. Numerous possible options in E.S.T.H. are predefined in FoS or impossible (no full simultaneous mode for example). FoS is also limited in the game scale and period because it can only for the moment simulate Napoleonic great battles (but extensions for other period are in preparation). Finally, the victory conditions are generic and simplified in FoS.