« Argad ! »

The "friendly simultaneous" game system

"Friendly simultaneous" is the best (or the worst?) name that we could find to describe the *« Argad ! »* move system (first edited in 1996), which has sometimes been described as "unusual" or "too simple" although it has nothing extraordinary!

It allows very fast moves (as all players move together and without preparation) so it is possible to play on very large tables and to do many daring actions during a game.

Note than in these rules we don't talk about "miniatures", but about "characters" (even if dealing with large groups), to encourage players to consider them as real people, not game pawns.

Principle

All moves are **simultaneous**. At the beginning of each movement phase, all players say to each other what they intend to do with their soldiers or groups of soldiers. We suppose that, as in real life, the characters look at each other to decide what to do and can react to the apparent actions of their enemies.

The players ask: "What will you do if I move?" or "What will you do if I don't move?" or, most often: "What do you do there?"; they listen to what their opponents say, and they can change their mind accordingly (and their opponents too). After this **quick** talking, the players move their soldiers by mutual agreement; they must agree on all movements.

An example

Picture: in the early 18th century, on the coast of a Caribbean island, a patrolling Spanish cavalryman sees a pirate!

What can they do?

The cavalryman could decide to fire with his musketoon; or to come closer to fire one of his pistols; or to charge with his sabre (or to wait, or to go away).

The pirate could decide to run behind the wooden logs (left of picture) where he will have some protection before his opponent can reach him; or to stay immobile and receive his charging enemy on the point of his spear.

What would happen in real life?

If they were real living people, each of them would look at his enemy and quickly decide what to do.

How does it work in a "friendly simultaneous" game system?

Each player quickly understands his tactical options and reacts with his own feelings. If the pirate player is cautious, he will run for the logs whatever his opponent can do; in that case the soldier can fire his musketoon, or come closer and fire with one of his pistols. If the soldier says that he stays immobile, it means

that he will probably fire with his musketoon: the pirate has better run for partial cover. If the soldier says that he charges, the pirate has a real choice: run for the logs, or receive the attacker on his spear; if he says he runs, the cavalryman cannot charge him behind the logs and will probably shoot at him (after moving, or still immobile).

When the players have understood the system, this conversation goes **very fast** in practice.

Possible problems (and their solution)

Opponents who cannot agree

player A: "I do that."

player B: "OK. If you do that, I do this."

player A: "Oh? Then, if you do this, I don't do that."

player B: "Um... If you don't do that, I have no reason to do this."

player A: "Ah? But if you don't do this, then I do that."

player B: "If you do that, I do this!" (etc)

It could happen sometimes; in that case, explain the following rule and it will not happen again:

"If players cannot agree very quickly, we consider that all the characters involved in this situation are also hesitating. This is very realistic, it could happen in real life: they stay looking at each other and they cannot do anything (they don't move, don't shoot, don't work, etc)."

Do not worry, if the players want these characters to be of any use they will find something else to do with them in the next game turns (or they can declare that they stay immobile and watch the enemy: this will allow them to shoot their weapons in the shooting phase, if need arise).

A cunning IGOUGO player

Some players wrongly believe that they should not speak first. If a player is often waiting to see his opponents moves before deciding himself, insist on the "What do you do?" question at the beginning of each game move, to make him understand that his conduct is against the spirit of the rules and does not give him any real advantage: his enemies can always change their mind after he takes a decision, so what he is doing is only slowing the game.

An objection

"In real life, you cannot change your move once you have started it!" Um. You are right to object that in real life, if you begin to run you cannot stop and wind back as if nothing had happened; but in the game, if your really want your characters to run you will not change your mind either. Most of the time, in real life, you would cautiously raise your head, look at your opponent's reactions, and he would do the same, before any of you do anything; and when you start doing something you could quickly change your mind after only a few steps when you see what your opponent is doing; so our system is quite realistic too.

Anyway, it is a game, and this is our rule. In many game systems you must stay immobile while your enemies are moving, it doesn't happen in real life either. Each ruleset has its own flavour and allows a different kind of gaming.

A slow player

If a player takes too much time to study every possibility and to calculate the dice modifiers of all the future melees before each move, tell him that he can certainly find elsewhere some wonderful wargame rules that have been specially written to allow people to spend 40 minutes for every 20 cm move, and kick him out. :-) This is a fast movements ruleset; players must believe in the adventure, not make too many calculations.

http://www.argad-bzh.fr/argad/en.html

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Éditions