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OGRE ONLINE

We have a large and growing web area devoted to *Ogre*. In fact, many of the articles in this book have been posted there for years, along with lots of other articles, scenarios, and commentary. Check it out: **www.sjgames.com/ogre/**. Thanks go to Richard Meaden for the site's great graphic design, and to Fish Flowers, who maintains the *Ogre* pages.

A few pages especially worth checking out:

● Richard Meaden's "Last War" pages at **www.sjgames.com/ogre/lastwar/**

● The checklist of available miniatures at **www.sjgames.com/ogre/miniatures/checklist.html**

● The ludography at **www.sjgames.com/ogre/resources/ludo.html**

For continuing online discussion of *Ogre*, there are two choices. *Pyramid* subscribers can access a message board devoted to *Ogre* (which we sometimes use to playtest rules questions or get other feedback about the game and game world). To subscribe, go to **www.sjgames.com/pyramid/**. And Henry Cobb has, for years, run an *Ogre* mailing list for general discussion – to subscribe, write to ogre@sjgames.com.

INTRODUCTION

When it was published in 1982, *The Ogre Book* was the first book entirely dedicated to commentary on one adventure game. The literature on chess and backgammon is immense, and I've seen one very good book on **Monopoly** strategy, but there was nothing devoted to the adventure gaming hobby. There have been others since then – most notably, dozens of books on **Magic** – but this volume was the first of its kind.

Certainly the interest is there. **Ogre** was released in 1976, and **G.E.V.** followed soon after . . . and within 5 years, more than 100,000 copies had been sold. The miniatures rules won the Origins Award in 1992, and so did the miniatures themselves. The game has always been in print since its first release, in one version or another; the miniatures were unavailable for years, until popular demand forced us (twist my arm!) to set up our own casting division to produce them. And now **GURPS Ogre** offers a roleplaying version of the **Ogre** world.

So it was time to reissue *The Ogre Book*. This second edition is much larger than the first; we've added 19 new items. I have written a brief introduction for each article just to add a historical perspective, as well as to point out non-canon elements in the fiction, or places where the rules or background were later changed.

Many of these articles originally appeared in various magazines; a few have appeared only on the web, and some are new in this book. Except where noted, all of the older articles have been re-edited (and re-playtested, where necessary) to conform with the most recent editions of the games.

Ogre was originally designed as a diversion . . . a simple science fiction game about giant tanks. The "conventional" units were there mostly to provide targets! In the second edition of **Ogre**, and even more in **G.E.V.**, greater effort went toward realism. Now it seems that many of the features found in the **Ogre/G.E.V.** units will actually show up in future combat vehicles.

How soon? Maybe sooner than we think. A few excerpts from recent U.S. Army publications:

On computer-controlled vehicles: ". . . People are slow movers . . . we must take advantage of technology to pre-insert judgments and let our machines fight for us."[1]

On the "missile tank" concept, from a description of a unit already (in mid-1980!) in production: "The MLRS is a highly mobile, automated rocket system that permits a 3-mm crew with minimum training to accurately shoot a complete 12-rocket load, quickly reload, and fire again . . . the onboard fire control computer does most of the work . . . the large 25-ton tracked vehicle is 6.9 meters long (almost 23 feet), 2.5 meters high (almost 9 feet) and 2.9 meters wide (almost 10 feet)."[2]

On fast armored vehicles – not GEVs, but for the same mission: "The HIMAG (High Mobility-Agility) II-A Test measured the effects of target mobility and agility on the hitting performance of antitank systems. In this test, gunners of M60-AI tanks and TOWs mounted on M-113s tracked and dry fired at highly evasive targets maneuvering on an airfield runway. Results indicated a definite and significant payoff for agility against tank gun systems . . ."[3]

Indeed (as Charles R. Bowles points out in "Tank: Present, Future, Ogre" on p. 9) the biggest flaw in the **Ogre** / **G.E.V.** predictions may be that they're set too far in the future.

Which is an interesting idea, if not particularly comforting. What's that rumbling sound I hear outside . . .?

– *Steve Jackson*

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1. "Artillery Fire: Fast or Massed?", LTG (Ret.) David E. Ott, *Field Artillery Journal,* January-February 1982.

2. "MLRS: The Soldier's System," Mary L. Corrales, *Field Artillery Journal,* July-August 1980.

3. "Developing Tomorrow's Combat Vehicles," Col. Lawrence B. Fitzmorris, *Armor,* May-June 1980.

ere's a far better approach to self-destruct than that given in the original rules. Having said that, I'm really not sure that it would often be worthwhile to build a whole Ogre just to carry a nuclear device. In the first place, the **Ogre** background assumes that many battles, if not most, are fought to capture an objective, not to destroy it and the surrounding countryside. And in the second place, wouldn't it usually do better to deliver your bomb by stealth, or by speed and numbers (i.e., firing a *lot* of missiles) than by mounting it in a huge clanking tank with a target painted on the side?

But once in a while, sure, this might work better than a volley of missiles or a traitor with a truck. And it makes a good game. (And imagine a roleplaying scenario that starts with a battered Goliath parked in the middle of an enemy city, just itching for an excuse to blow up if the local resistance gets out of line . . .)

One more note. I like the idea of the fallout rule described here, but all armor units and battlesuits would be NBC-sealed . . . only unprotected militia and civilian vehicles would be affected the moment the fallout hit them, even if it was very heavy and deliberately dirty.

THE SUICIDE OGRE: GOLIATH
By Tim Solis

Lieutenant Nugent watched the horizon. The sensors in his helmet were picking up something . . . something big. Then, along the curving, battered highway, a distant flurry of dust became visible.

"Delta Six," Nugent said into his microphone. "This is Victor Seven. I've spotted something at about two o'clock from your position. Relaying visual now. Over."

"Roger, Seven," Captain Phillips replied. "We've got visual now from a drone. Looks like an Ogre; Mark III, I'd say, moving directly toward us. No other units."

Another voice came in. "Delta Six, this is Tango Sierra. We have target acquisition from drone and ground triangulation."

"Roger, Tango Sierra," the Captain replied. "Commence firing.''

Safely off to the side, Nugent watched as the huge vehicle rolled toward the city skyline. It was as big as an Ogre, but it looked nothing like any Ogre he had ever seen before. It seemed more like some monstrous beetle, with the sun glinting off its smooth, rounded back. Then, suddenly, it disappeared in a veil of smoke and glare from Tango Sierra's howitzers.

The lieutenant looked at his men, who had now positioned themselves along the ridge, waiting for the order to attack. He spoke again into his headset.

"Delta Six, this is Victor Seven. We're ready to move in and close up the rear, over."

"Negative, seven," answered Captain Phillips. "Hold your position . . . Well, look at that! You oughtta see this, Victor Seven. This Ogre's got no weapons, least not any we can see. Between us and Tango, it'll be finished in no time."

Still the enemy tank pressed on, although now at a much slower pace, through the artillery barrage until it reached the outskirts of the city.

Nugent listened as the Captain's voice crackled over his headphones.

"Cease fire, Tango Sierra. The Ogre's within range of my tanks – a sitting duck. We'll take it from here, out."

"Acknowledged, Delta –"

Nugent saw a blinding flash of light from the city and heard a burst of static in his headphones. Then a wall of air, traveling over 450 kilometers per hour, crushed him in his BPC-armored suit and threw his lifeless body, along with other debris from the nuclear blast, away from ground zero.

* * *

Meet Goliath – a Mark III Ogre, stripped of all missiles, batteries, and antipersonnel weapons. Because of its lightened load, it moves a little faster than a regular Mark III. But with no weapons to protect itself, Goliath is incredibly vulnerable to attack, especially by infantry units in an overrun situation.
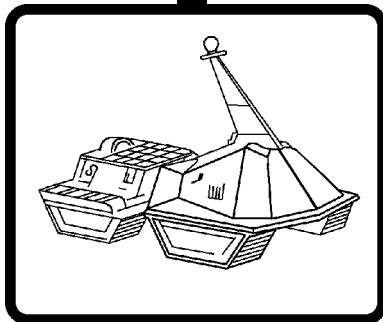
Goliath

40 Tread Units starting at 4 MA.
○○○○○ ○○○○○ (M3)
○○○○○ ○○○○○ (M2)
○○○○○ ○○○○○ (M1)
○○○○○ ○○○○○ (M0)

As you've probably guessed by now, Goliath is a kamikaze tank. Its mission is to get within range of its designated objective, and then self-destruct. It can also be used to approach a strong line of defense and detonate, opening a gap for friendly units to pass through. Goliath can even be used to probe for mines when players decide to use that option.

Rules for Goliath

Goliath is subject to the same rules of movement, ramming, etc., as other Ogres, except that it may transport infantry (up to three squads) in a manner similar to light and heavy tanks. It rams like a Mark III.

Goliath may self-destruct at any time its owner wishes, with the following results:

(1) Any Ogre in the same or adjacent hex is destroyed. At a range of two hexes, all of an Ogre's missiles and half of its remaining secondaries, AP, and treads (round down) are destroyed. At three hexes, half of the missiles and a third of its remaining AP and treads (again, round down) are destroyed.

(2) Other units are affected as per the chart on page 100. Count the distance in hexes from Goliath to each other unit, and apply the attack odds (or automatic result) indicated.

(3) All mines within six hexes are detonated.

(4) If Goliath detonates in water, add three hexes to the effective distance to each unit – except that anything in the Ogre's detonation hex is considered destroyed.

Note that the use of Goliath does not require players to give the same self-destruct ability to all Ogres in the scenario. In fact, if Goliath is used, other Ogres should be *denied* the self-destruct capability (unless extra armor units are "spent" to buy them the bomb to carry). The only way to render Goliath unable to explode is to score a critical hit on it, "cracking" it open. See "The Golden BB" on p. 101.

Goliath

NOMENCLATURE:
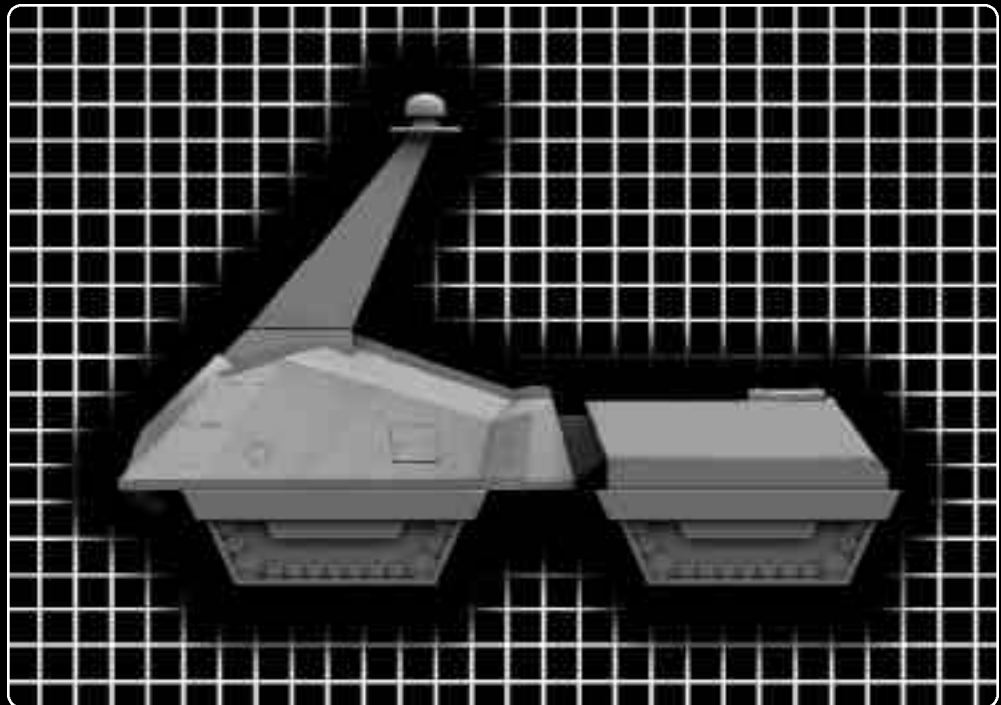   **COMBINE Mk III-G, "GOLIATH"**

LENGTH: 19 METERS

WEIGHT: 250,000 KG

OPTIMUM ROAD SPEED: 90 KPH

CROSS COUNTRY SPEED: 60+ KPH

MAXIMUM ARMOR: 3 METERS BPC

CREW: UNMANNED CYBERTANK

WEAPONS: SELF-DETONATING POWER PLANT EQUIVALENT TO 7.627 MEGATONS OF TNT

COMMENTS: ESSENTIALLY A SELF-PROPELLED NUCLEAR WARHEAD ON A MODIFIED MARK III CHASSIS, THE GOLIATH CYBERTANK WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 2083. IT MET WITH LIMITED SUCCESS UNTIL THE THIRD BATTLE FOR ROUM, WHERE A GOLIATH PENETRATED THE PANEUROPEAN LINES AND DESTROYED A LARGE PORTION OF THE ENEMY'S COMMAND CENTERS, RAILWAYS, AND ARMOR RESERVES.