THE
FOG OF WAR

A GEOFF ENGELSTEIN GAME

Loose Li...

VASSAL
USER GUIDE

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the User Guide for the Vassal module of the board game 'The Fog of War'.

The User guide to the Vassal system is also available under the Help Menu (or from the Vassal website) and explains the standard Vassal commands, if you are unfamiliar with Vassal then start with that document as some of this guide assumes knowledge of how Vassal itself works. So, for example there are standard buttons in this module to Zoom the map in or out, or Undo a move but they have been given a different 'look' to fit in with the button theme used in this module. This module also makes a lot of use of the various right click menus that are fairly standard in Vassal.

The module has been designed to follow the original board game as closely as possible but has had some changes and extra facilities added to make it work online and to cater for some of the unusual mechanisms associated with the information hidden at times from each of the players.

The best way to learn the module is to follow through the next few sections of the guide that cover the setup and the turn sequence. However, 'The Fog of War' does not lend itself well to solitaire play due to the nature of the game's hidden information and 'bluffing' elements, a solo option has therefore not been included in this module. Nevertheless, the sequence can still be followed by a single player using the expediency of switching between the Axis and Allies sides.

Players will find that during play they will normally have at least three windows open (Main Board Screen, Player Mat and Player Tableau) to facilitate the movement of cards between them. The opponents Tableau will also be frequently open to check on his pending Operations.
The module is therefore best used with large or multiple monitors that can accommodate these windows at the same time but is still playable on a single screen switching between the various player windows.

Enjoy the game!

2 GAME SET UP

After choosing sides and starting a new game the module will open showing the main map board as per figure 1 below.

Figure 1 - Main Map at Start Up – Axis View

The view you actually see will of course depend upon the resolution of your screen and can be changed using the various Zoom options and the whether the 'Combined Application Window' has been set in the Preferences option of the File Menu.

The message area will show the following text;

"- The Fog of War version 1.0
****** Neutral Cards dealt randomly to neutral provinces ....
*............3 Victory cards dealt to Victory Choices window.......
*..................Axis Player now chooses 2 provinces in that window *****"

The game board is set up exactly as it is in the physical board game with the exception that the Province Decks are not held on the main map. These along with the respective starting provinces for each side are held in each players 'Tableau' window; this will be described later.
The province deck areas on the main map have been used in this module to hold the Advantage token and the reference cards that hold various game sequences and help information.

- The correct number of cards are dealt to each of the Neutral provinces, these are random and different at the start of each new game.
- Intel tokens are placed in the relevant areas of the board; 7 for the Allies, 5 Axis.
- Control & Neutral markers have been pre-placed on the board.
  Note that these cannot be moved and are described later.
- Three Victory cards have been automatically placed in the 'Victory Cards Choice' window; Once again these dealt cards are random and different each time the game is started.
- USA & USSR decks are ready to be deployed from their spaces on the board and the Axis player starts with the Advantage token (bottom left).

3   REMAINING SET UP STEPS

Once the module has started and performed the initial set up there are a few manual steps as per the board game before the main game sequence starts.

3.1   AXIS PLAYER CHOOSES HIS VICTORY LOCATION

Only the Axis player has access to the 'Victory Cards Choice' window. Once the matching button is clicked he will see the three cards initially dealt and should flip them over to reveal the provinces as in figure 2.

Figure 2 – Axis player revealed view of Victory choices.

After making the decision as to which two provinces to keep as victory locations the Axis player should then Delete the unwanted card. This will remove the card from the game and the 'Delete' function will be removed from the remaining Victory cards.

The message;

* Axis Player has chosen his Victory Locations *

Is displayed in the message area.

The Axis player need not flip the cards back over as the Allies player never has access to this window. At the end of the game the Axis player should drag the two remaining cards to the main map area to reveal them to his opponent.

3.2   CHOOSE INITIAL ACTION CARD PLACEMENTS

Both players should now look at their player mats.

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Let's take a look at the Allies Mat as he will be the first to place. Figure 3 shows the initial view that the Allies player will see on pressing the **ALLIES MAT** button.

Figure 3 – Initial view of the Allies Mat.

All of the starting action cards are laid out for the Allies player to make his initial choice of up to three cards to place in provinces that he currently controls. The cards are in stacks of the same type in this window currently so there are, for example, five Strength 1 Ground cards under the top Ground 1 card.

There are a couple of ways to select the required cards and players are encouraged to experiment before an actual game to determine their preference. Bear in mind that there are a few actual 'Deck' spaces in this window and dragging and dropping directly above one of these can mean that the card disappears face down into the deck (although the 'Undo' button in the Main window will put the card back to where it was). This is especially important with there being existing cards in the 'Op Loss' deck as these are for later use.

Two options are;

1. Expand the stacks so you can choose individual cards to drag each one directly to a province.
2. Drag the three selected cards to the '**DRAW INTEL CARDS HERE**' space as this is not an actual deck, then take each one to its respective province.

Whichever option is chosen remember that all of the cards in the window are currently unmasked so flip them over (CTRL F) before you move them to the main map.

Once the three cards have been placed then select all of the other 'START' cards and right click to send them to the Discard deck. From here right click again to send the Discard pile to the Draw deck (you can't normally send straight to the Draw deck during the game so this is not shown as an option).

The Axis player should then follow the Allies in placing up to three cards on controlled provinces and move the Start cards to his Draw deck.

Both players now draw three cards from their respective Draw decks to the 'Action Cards' area and we are ready to start with the 1940 turn. The Allies Mat will look something like figure 4.

Figure 4 – Allies Mat Ready to start the game.

Note the Draw Deck shows the number of cards available so the players can compare at the start who has the largest number for purposes of the first turn each year and also to give the players an indication of how near Winter and End turn are.

4   TURN SEQUENCE

4.1   ROTATE OP WHEEL

The Operations wheels are in the respective 'Tableau' windows along with the starting controlled provinces. Note that both players can see each other's Tableau's so it is important that you keep the cards on the actual Op's Wheel masked at all times. Figure 5 shows the Allies Tableau window at game start.

Figure 5 Allies Tableau at game start.

This shows the Wheel area on the left and the controlled provinces on the right along with the USA/CANADA card denoting the resources accruing to the Allies each year.
The control of provinces is open knowledge and is also marked on the main map so the cards in this area can remain unmasked. The Allies Province deck is at the bottom centre of this window.

Right click anywhere on the centre hexagonal portion of the wheel to select the command to rotate it one operation space clockwise.

4.2   ACTIONS (ANY ORDER)

4.2.1   PROVINCE DEFENCE

To accomplish this action simply drag the relevant card or cards from the Action Area in the player mat to the required controlled or neutral province around the main map.

Remember to check that the cards are showing 'Masked' otherwise your opponent will be able to see their type and value.

4.2.2   NEW OPERATIONS

This action consists of at least one Action card from the relevant players mat Action Area and a Province card from the Province deck in the players Tableau.

Action cards can be dragged across to the current space identified by the 'New Op' segment of the dial (see figure 5 above for an example of this) or you can use the right click menu to select 'Send to Op Wheel' as shown in figure 6 below;

Figure 6 – 'Send to Op Wheel' right click option.

The Province deck in the Tableau has a right click option to allow specific cards to be selected.
Use this to choose the required province then drag it to the right of the province deck.
From here you can either drag it straight on to the Op space or as with the Action card there is a right click menu option to send it to the required operation.

4.2.3 ADD TO OPERATION

This is exactly the same as moving an action card from the player mat to the ops wheel for a new operation. Either drag it manually or use the right click menu to send it straight to the required Op space.

4.2.4 ADD TO A QUAGMIRE

Drag the Action cards to the province as in Province Defence above. If you are the attacker then resolve the Quagmire.

4.2.5 DISBAND OPERATION

Drag the cards back to their relevant decks (Discard for Action cards and the Province deck for Provinces) alternatively use the right click menus to accomplish the same task.

4.2.6 LAUNCH OPERATION

Select all of the cards on the Ops wheel space to be launched, the easiest way to do this is to click and drag a selection box around them then drag them on to a convenient space on the main map near to the contested province.

(Note that only the cards will stack with each other so you don't need to worry about placing them over the control markers.)

Unmask your cards to reveal target and strength then resolve the battle; your opponent can unmask his own cards in the province or that of any neutrals. Send any Dummy cards immediately to the correct Discard deck.

After combat resolution use the right click menu to send the cards back to Discard, Win & Loss decks depending upon the result.

If a quagmire has occurred then mask all of the cards on each side, stack them and then allow the opponent to randomly select the cards to go to the Loss deck.

4.2.6.1 PROVINCE CAPTURE

If a province is captured then carry out the following steps;

- Return the card on the defeated players Tableau to the Province deck, drag or use the right click menu,
- The victorious player should drag his province from the main map to anywhere on the right-hand side of his Tableau, it will snap to the hidden grid in this area of the window.
- If the province was neutral then right click on the Neutral Marker to change control and place an actual Control Marker. This will default to an axis marker but can be changed with another right click.
- If a Control Marker was already in place then simply right click and select to change control.

If an operation fails then return the province card to the Province deck.

4.3 INTEL

The use of Intel is one of the most crucial aspects of the game, whether this is to determine what your opponent is up to or to deny him such information from yourself.

It is important to always ensure that your own cards are masked after a battle but also that you re-mask any cards that you have been fortunate enough to glean information from so that your opponent is unaware of what you have just seen.

All Masking and unmasking activity is reported to the message window so that although you can't see what is being unmasked by your opponent you can count that only the correct number have been viewed.

Having said all of that it is easy to unmask a card on your Intel space and then return it to where it came without re-masking it, mistakes will occur so it is prudent to try and follow the Intel process as it is built in to this module.

4.3.1 INTEL TOKENS

The Intel tokens work just as they do in the board game just drag them between the Available and Used Intel Token Areas, the module will automatically flip them to the correct side. There is a right click menu to do this manually.

Additional tokens are available via the **+PIECES★** button when more are purchased during the year end Production phase.

4.3.2 INTEL TARGET STACKS

Once a stack has been the subject of a successful Intel action;

- Select the whole stack (cards can still be sent individually should you miss one by mistake).
- Right click the cards and select the Intel option this will read either
  'Send to Allies Intel'
  or
  'Send to Axis Intel'
  and will appear on all such cards that can be the target of an Intel action (Neutral cards show both options).
- The cards will then appear in the appropriate player mat in the space denoted as
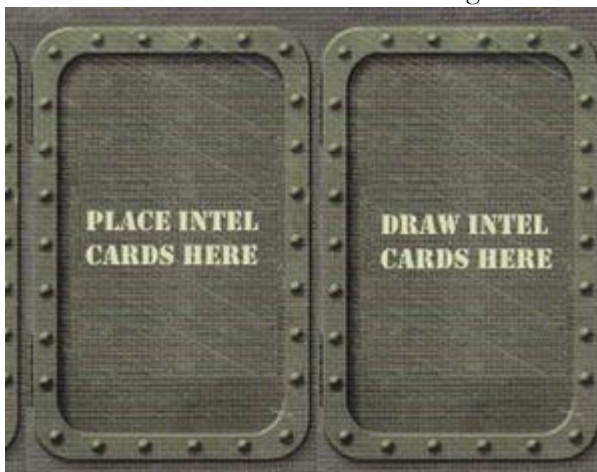 **'PLACE INTEL CARDS HERE'** as in figure 7 below;

Figure 7 – The Intel areas in the player mats.

- The cards in this space are then treated as a deck, they will be face down and the player can draw multiple or single cards as required. The number below the space indicates the number of cards in the deck and the player can draw half this number rounded down (minimum 1).
- Whichever method is used the drawn cards should be dragged to the area marked
  'DRAW INTEL CARDS HERE' as shown above in figure 7
  at this point the cards will still be face down.
- The player can then unmask the selected cards and a message will be sent for each card so unmasked.
- Once seen the cards should then be dragged back or sent via right click to the Intel card deck as this automatically masks them again.
- Once back in the Intel Deck a right click command exists to 'Send cards back to Province/Op' and a message is displayed to that effect. (Note the unchosen Victory cards also respond to this command.)

4.3.3 RE-MASK FUNCTION

Due to the way Vassal works the last player to Un-Mask a card also becomes the owner of that card, albeit temporarily. This means that when the stack of cards is sent back from the Intel Deck to the original Province or Operation space, they appear to the original owner showing the full card back instead of the 'Masked' view.

There is therefore a 'Re-Mask' right click option that will return the cards to this 'Masked' view.

4.4 DRAW THREE CARDS

In the player mat drag three new cards from the Draw deck to the Action Area ready for your next turn.

5 OTHER GAME FUNCTIONS

5.1 PIECES

Game pieces are available by using the Pieces button from here Intel Tokens and markers for Out of Supply and Quagmire can be found.

5.1.1 NEUTRAL AND CONTROL TOKENS

There are no separate pieces for these tokens as they are 'built' in to the board, each has a right click menu to change control between the sides and reports to the message window.

These tokens also do not stack with any other game pieces so you can lay cards on top of them perhaps to resolve a battle and they cannot be picked up when the cards are returned.

5.2 ADVANTAGE TOKEN

The Advantage token starts with the Axis player and starts in place at the bottom left of the map. When used the owning player should right click on the token and send it to the other player.
It will appear at the top right of the map when held by the allies.

5.3 END OF YEAR

The End of Year processing is not much different from the board game, the tracks are in the same place on the board and all markers can be dragged and dropped along their respective tracks. The Year marker has a right click function to flip it to Winter and back.

Cards should be dragged from the Win deck alternatively to the Discard and then the Loss deck as in the board game.

The Loss deck has a right click function to allow specific (or multiple) cards to be drawn during the Production phase, these should be dragged to the Discard deck. Once all production has finished the Discard deck also has a right click menu to send all cards into the Draw deck.

5.4 USA & USSR ENTRY

When the USA or the USSR are due to enter simply right click on the card stacks on the board to send the cards to the correct places, the action cards will go immediately to the Allies Draw deck and the Urals card to the Allies Tableau.

When the USSR enters the Control Tokens are automatically placed upon the map.
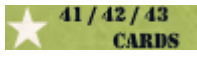
5.5 ALLIES REINFORCEMENTS

At the end of the 1940, '41 & '42 years the Allies player should open the Reinforcements window by clicking on the [41 / 42 / 43 CARDS] button, the window in figure 8 below will be shown.

Figure 8 – Allies Reinforcements Window

In this window the Allies player should right click on the appropriate deck to send the reinforcements to his Loss deck.

So, at the end of 1940 send the '41 deck and so on, a message will be sent to the message window.

6 CREDITS

The Fog of War © 2016 Stronghold Games www.StrongholdGames.com

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