Band of Brothers VASSAL Module

A short tutorial for version 3.X

March, 2021

This document collects a few basic information about the Band of Brothers game module for VASSAL, version 3. Version 3 contains some new elements and introduces some different mechanics with respect to the previous versions. These novelties are briefly reviewed here. It is assumed that the reader is already familiar with the game rules. The last version of the module can be downloaded from the [VASSAL webpage](#).

Complete list of commands

Table 1: Game Piece commands

| Ctrl-a	Ambush (Squad/WT in melee)	Ctrl-m	Moved (Vehicle)
Ctrl-b	Remove Ambush/Flanking	Ctrl-n	Remove Used/Op.Fire
Ctrl-c	Concealed	Ctrl-o	Mark Op.Fire
Ctrl-d	Displaced (Co. Hub)	Ctrl-p	Use Command Point
Ctrl-f	Fully Suppressed	Ctrl-r	Reduced
Ctrl-g	Good order (not suppressed)	Ctrl-s	Suppressed
Ctrl-i	Sustained Fire (MG WT)	Ctrl-t	Designate as target
Ctrl-j	Seishin (Japanese units)	Ctrl-u	Mark Used
Ctrl-k	Unconfirmed Kill (Vehicles)	Ctrl-Left	Rotate clockwise
Ctrl-l	Flank (Squad/WT in melee)	Carl-Right	Rotate- counter-clockwise

Table 2: Main Map commands

Alt-f	Fire/Op.Fire	F5	Set zoom factor
Alt-o	Check LOS	F6	Zoom out
Ctrl-z	Undo last move	F7	Zoom in
F4	Hide all units		

Table 3: Basic Piece commands

Alt-c	Clone	Alt-m	Move status
Alt-d	Delete	Alt-l	Change label

Buttons Bar
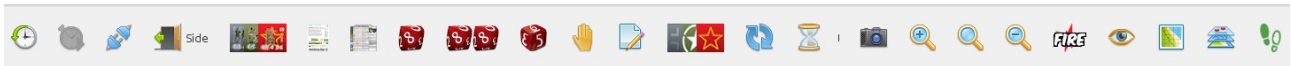
The button bars is used to perform several action and to access several features of the game, including the Operation Phase window, the Command Points window and the Units & Counters window. The icons in the button bar should be self-explanatory. When hovering with the mouse over them, a short message appears with the name of the button.

Context-sensitive menus

Be aware that the counters' right-click menu is context-sensitive. This means that you are not going to see all possible commands in any situation. Many commands become available only when it makes sense to use them. For instance, you cannot "Reduce" a concealed unit: before being reduced, the unit has to be revealed. Similarly, you cannot place a "Flanking" counter on a unit that is not in close combat with the enemy.

Select a scenario

Open the scenario using the "File → Scenario" menu. The list of available scenarios depends on the extensions installed. The base module contains all the scenarios of "Screaming Eagles". Once the desired scenario is loaded, inspect the scenario sheet using the "Show/Hide scenario window" button. The units in use could be already prepared for you on the scenario sheet. If this is not the case, open the collection of counters using the "Show/Hide units and counters window" button. Notice that some folders can be empty, depending on the extensions installed. Before deploying units on the board, remember to select the appropriate side using the "Take/Change side" button.
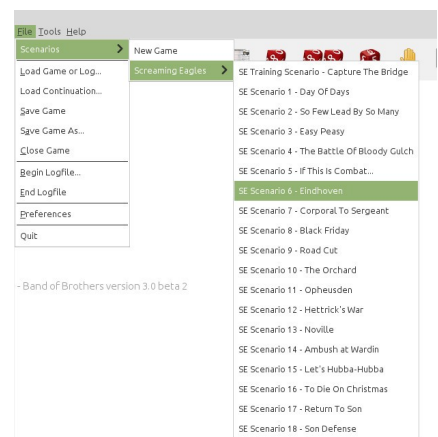
Figure 1: Select a game from the menu

Moved units and Movement Trails

Figure 2: Set trails on/off and reset moved status.

When units are moved on the board they are automatically marked moved with a yellow footsteps icon and, if the option is activated, a yellow movement trail appears that tracks their movement across the different hexes. You can decide whether or not the movement trails appear on the main map using the "Set trails on/off" button. With this button, you can also reset the movement status of all units on the board.

Fire & LOS thread

When firing, you can designate the firer and the target with the fire thread. The thread is activated using the "Fire" button or Alt-f command. Click on the firer and drag the line to the target hex. The selected firer and target hexes are reported in the chat. When firing to

Figure 3: Fire thread

a vehicle or attacking with planes, you have to designate a specific unit inside the target hex. In this

case, use the "Ctrl-t" command or the right-click menu. To check the Line of Sight (LOS) without performing an attack, use the "Show LOS thread" button or the Alt-o command.

Operation Phase

Before beginning the game, you might want to prepare the Operation Range window to keep track of the number of activated units. Use the "Operation Phase" button to open the window. With the right-click menu toggle "Inactive" the counter of the side that moves second in the turn. The "Inactive" counter is grayed out. Using the right-click menu you can set an appropriate background for the two counters and insert the OP range in the label below as a mnemonic aid.. These counters will automatically keep track of the units activated during the Operation Phase: when a unit is marked Used or Op. Fire, the number on the relative counter is

Figure 4: Operation Phase window

incremented accordingly. When the active player changes, use the "<>" button on the counters or use the right-click menu to reset the counters and switch the active side. Sometimes special scenario rules or special counters can require an expenditure of CPs. In this case, use the "+" and "-" buttons to manually update the relative number.

Spent Command Points

Command points are spent on units using the "Ctrl-p" command, or using the unit right-click menu. The command points spent by each side can be inspected from the "Used CP" window. The window reports the units on which a command point has been spent. Clicking on a unit in the list will automatically refocus the main window on that unit, so that you can easily see where the points have been spent. The list of units is erased at the beginning of a new turn. To keep track of the spent CPs, it is important that units are not deleted. I suggest moving eliminated units back on the scenario sheet instead of deleting them. Alternatively, you can set the "Drop CP" option (see below).

Figure 5: Spent Command Points window

Game Options

The module has a few options you can use to customize its behavior. You can find these options in the "File → Preferences" menu. "Report unit suppression…" increases the verbosity of the messages that the module displays in the chat. "Show movement trails…" automatically activate the movement trail when units are moved on the main board.
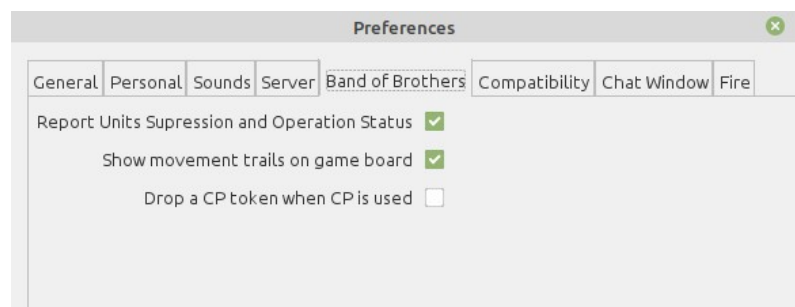

Figure 6: Game options

"Drop a CP token…" is useful for players who want to delete units that are eliminated. When a unit is eliminated on which a CP point has been spent, a CP token is dropped to keep track of the spent CP. The tokens are deleted at the end of the turn. Feel free to explore the other general options of VASSAL. They can significantly improve your experience with the game interface.

Terrain and Units Labels

Despite all the prevision for the various units condition in the context-sensitive menu, sometimes it is necessary to record something about a game piece or a location on the map. In the "Terran → Markers" tab of the unit windows there is a special counter that can be used to write text labels on the board and/or position colored dots inside hexes. This might be very handy for keeping track of which side is controlling one particular hex or group of hexes. In addition, each game piece can be assigned a label using the right-click menu or the "Alt-l" command.

Figure 7: Terrain and units labels

Off-Board Artillery markers

Each army has its own specific OBA marker. You can find them in the Artillery section of each army, in the Counters and Units window. When positioned on the main map, the OBA counters posses a reddish area-of-effect "halo" of one hex around them. Using the right-click menu you can select the size of the battery or fill the blast area with smoke counters. Remember to mark the OBA counter Used. When replaced by smoke or at the end of
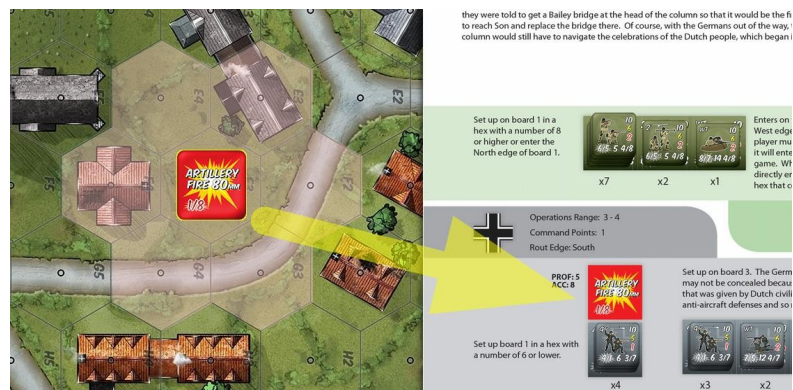

Figure 8: Artillery auto re-positioning

the turn, when the Recovery Phase button is pressed, all OBA counters are re-positioned on the scenario window, in the approximate position they occupied originally, for a later use. Some manual adjustment to the position of the OBA counter might be required. If a scenario window is not available, or an appropriate zone has not been set up to accommodate it, the module does not know where to move the OBA counter and a warning message will appear in the chat. The message is issued only the first time this situation is encountered in a game. You can safely ignore this message and move the OBA counter manually.