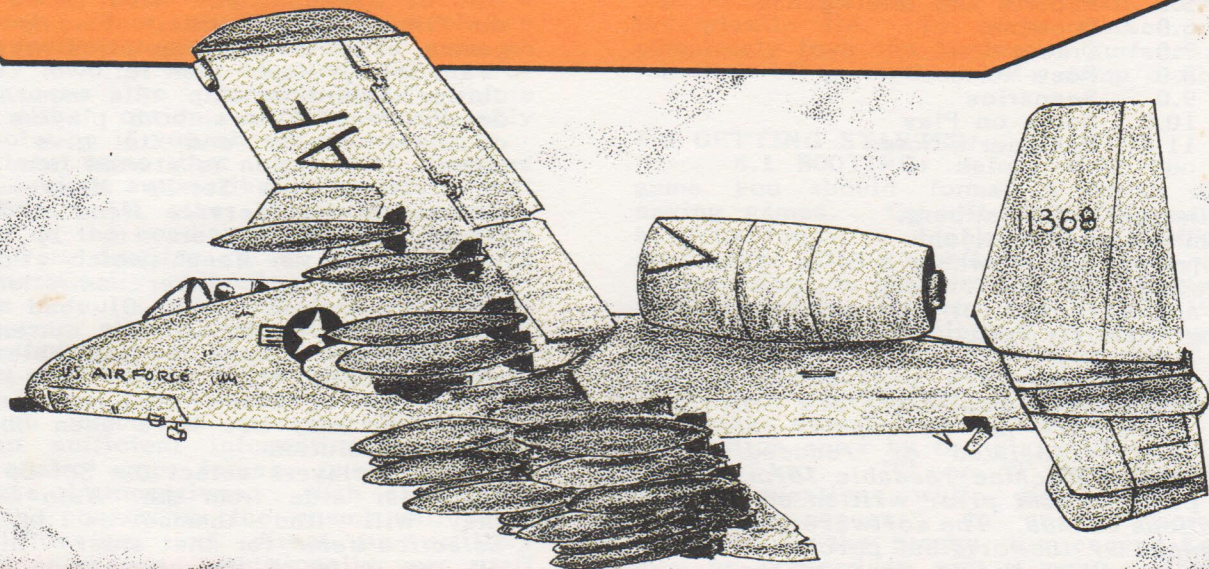
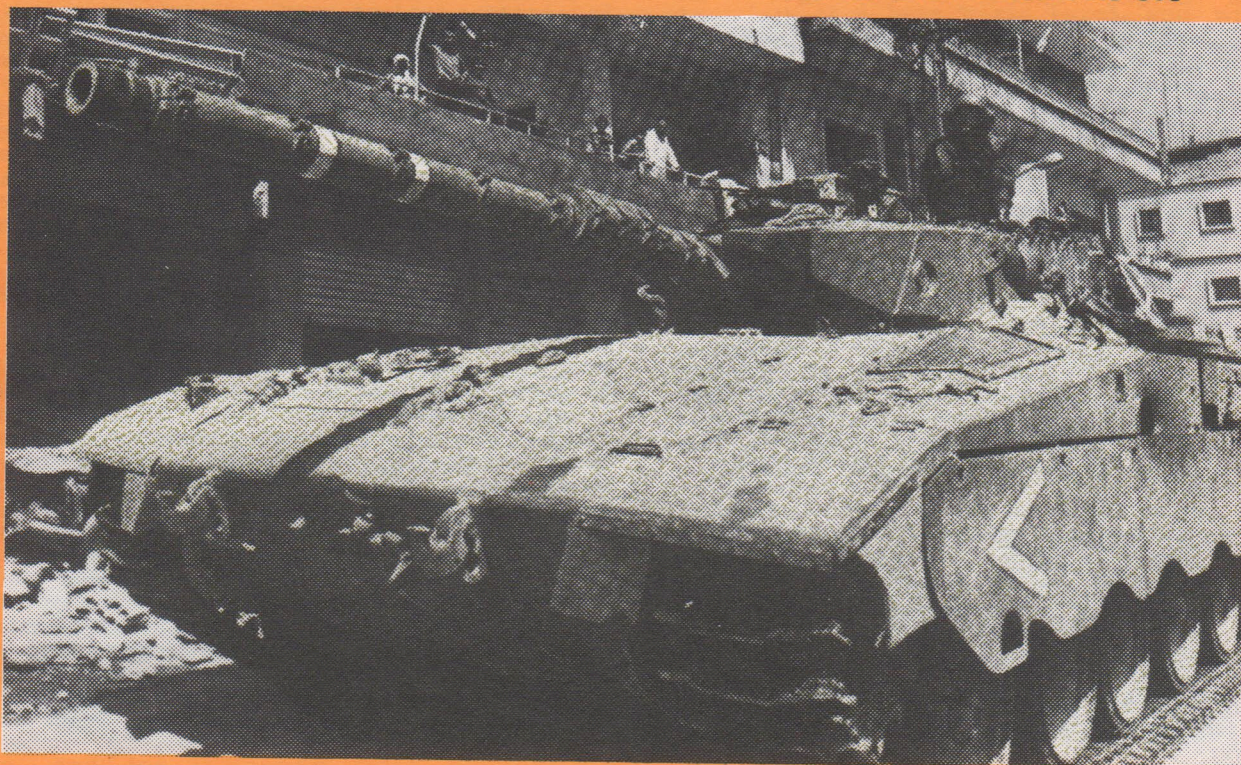


MAIN BATTLE TANK



MIDDLE EAST

Modern Grand Tactical Armoured Combat



Simulations Canada

MAIN BATTLE TANK: MIDDLE EAST,
Modern Grand Tactical Armoured Combat.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION: Turmoil in the Middle East is not a unique feature of our age. An historical constant of "the cradle of civilization" is war. Consequently all of the nations of the area are well armed, aggressive, and constantly in fear of their neighbors. In addition, the region possesses immense reserves of petroleum, making outside intervention a recurring feature of local conflict. The Middle East will not be blessed with peace in our times.

MAIN BATTLE TANK: MIDDLE EAST (MBT:ME) is a command orientated game of grand tactical combat. The largest force available to a player will be brigade sized. Your main maneuver elements will be companies. Some specialist elements, reconnaissance in particular, will be platoon sized. Whatever your resources, you will need to take or hold geographical localities at the minimum cost to yourself while inflicting the maximum damage possible upon your enemy.

2.0 GENERAL COURSE OF PLAY: MBT:ME is a menu oriented program. The introductory screen is followed by a query as to whether you wish to play a saved game. If you have a game that you had previously saved and now wish to restart answer yes (Y) here. Otherwise answer no (N). If you aren't playing a saved game you will be asked for a random number seed. Just enter any number between 1 and 999. Next, for both new and saved games, the "Computer Player Menu" will appear. This menu allows you to enter which side(s) the

computer will be playing. If you are playing a saved game you can just press the escape key (Esc) to keep the old settings. The next menu in new games is the "Scenario Menu". It allows you to select a pre-built scenario or to build a scenario of your own.

In new games, after having selected or constructed the scenario you wish to play, you will be asked if you wish to do set-up with the "limited staff" rule. For new games and games saved before resolution was begun, the "Main Set-Up Menu" then follows. Games saved during resolution skip this menu. The "Main Set-Up Menu" allows both players to do their doctrinal set-up and to give their initial orders. Resolution is started from this menu.

The "Main Set-Up Menu" also allows access to the "Service Menu". The "Service Menu" allows players to 1) access the "Computer Player Menu" (which allows changing the computer and player controlled sides), 2) save the current game, 3) read a previously saved game, or 4) end the current game. A "Post-Mortem Menu" is available before the game actually ends. The "Post-Mortem Menu" allows you to review what happened during the game that may not have been obvious during actual resolution.

If players select the Set-Up option for a particular side from the "Main Set-Up Menu", they will find themselves in the "Force Selection Menu" for that side. This menu lists all the units of the given side with their ID numbers to the left. You enter a unit's ID number and press return to select that unit (or force). Note that all the units of a battalion formation may be accessed through their HQ unit for the purposes of reports and orders. This "Force Selection Menu" is used at a number of different places in the game with slightly different prompts at the bottom of the screen. Here it allows you to select the "Unit Set-Up Menu" for any particular unit.

The currently selected unit is indicated in the upper right hand corner of the "Unit Set-Up Menu". This menu allows you to access a standard report on the current unit and to set its doctrine, that is, to set how often and when it will report during resolution and to set the rules under which it will engage the enemy. You will also be able to give the unit its initial orders for the upcoming engagement. The Reports, Doctrine, and Orders rules sections will discuss in detail how these things are done. When you have finished your set-up for the current unit, you return to the "Force Selection Menu" to select another unit for set-up. There are two ways of doing this. You can press the Escape key, or you can choose the 'Select Next Force' option of the "Unit Set-Up Menu". If, once in the "Force Selection Menu", you wish to end your set-up, simply press the Escape key. Having escaped the "Force Selection Menu" for unit set-up, you will be back in the "Main Set-Up Menu". From here you may choose to start resolution.

Resolution consists of a series of messages interspersed by unit reports. The most common messages are the 'tickover' messages which indicate the time every 5 minutes. Also, every 20 minutes, the current light and weather conditions will be given. Messages reporting the sounds of shellfire, weapons fire, and the detonation of mines will also be given. These messages, and all other short messages which come from units reporting losses or combat actions, are subject to being lost or distorted due to field conditions or opposing electronic countermeasures.

Full unit reports are in the same format as those in the set-up. They will tell you where a unit is, what shape it is in, whether it has spotted the enemy, and what the unit is doing. However, even full unit status reports can be lost in the same manner as noted above for contact and combat reports.

You will always have the option of giving an order to a reporting unit. After a full unit status report you will have a chance to either receive a general report or give an order to any another unit. You will always be able to access the "Service Menu" before exercising either option, or you may simply resume resolution if you should wish.

Artillery units that have just finished firing a mission automatically generate unit status reports. All other unit status reports will depend on the conditions you set for each unit during your doctrine set-up and whether or not you specifically ordered a unit to report. The pre-set defaults will provide a reasonable rate and pattern of reporting, but they are not mission optimized, so you should set them yourself as soon as you get a feel for what to do.

Though infrequent reporting will leave you without sufficient information and order points to control your forces, overly frequent reporting has disincentives. With each order you give, the possibility the enemy will learn your HQ's location and direct an artillery strike on it increases. Additionally your staff can only receive and process so many reports in a given period. About one report every few minutes can normally be handled, but higher report rates lead to delayed or lost reports.

Resolution ends automatically after either 36 hours of game time or after either side falls below 20% of its starting strength. Who has won, if anyone, is indicated. You will then be placed in the "Post-Mortem Menu". You may also end a game whenever you wish from the "Service Menu".

3.0 GAME EQUIPMENT: Two identical laminated maps representing a hypothetical piece of terrain 20 by 15 kilometers in size are included in the game. This terrain contains a variety of features typical of the Middle East. Of these, the greenish brown areas depict broken terrain, the yellow dotted areas represent sand dunes, the heavy green lines indicate wadis, and the dark brown hatching are escarpments. Built-up areas, cities, and villages are solid yellow. All of the terrain features impede movement to some degree, the escarpments the most. Engineers can be used to advantage in 'bridging' escarpments. Broken areas and built-up areas also provide some cover. Elevations are indicated by color, with the lightest being the lowest (that is, from white in the lowest terrain to dark brown on the highest hilltop). Note that differences in elevation can provide cover by blocking lines of sight. There are also 1st class roads (double thick brown lines) and 2nd class roads (single thickness brown lines). These enhance movement ability. There is a 40 by 30 square grid superimposed on the map. Each square location represents an area of about 500 by 500 meters. The map is further divided into quadrants (or sectors) which are sized to 10 by 10 grid locations. These quadrants are numbered 1 to 4 across the top of the map, 5 to 8 across its center, and 9 to 12 across its bottom. The quadrants are used in determining geographic objectives, the award of victory points, and for indicating force deployments when players build their own scenarios.

Two differently colored markers are provided for making notations on the maps. They can be sharpened to a good point for drawing fine lines. However, since the markers use a harder writing material, pressing into the map surface will eventually cause damage. Please mark lightly. You may find it useful to place the map under the clear plastic top of the box lid and then mark directly on the plastic lid. To erase marker notations completely from the laminated surfaces, simply rub them off promptly with a damp cloth.

4.0 GETTING STARTED:

4.1 BOOTING: Before first booting the game you should format a blank disk for saving games. Consult your DOS manual for how to format a blank disk. IBMPC users should use DOS 2.0 or later and boot the game by inserting the disk in the default drive of an already running system and typing 'MBT:ME'. Atari ST, Amiga, Macintosh, & Windows users should click on the MBT:ME program file to start the game.

4.2 ENTERING INFORMATION: The computer detects the completion of each information entry by the player the <RETURN> or <ENTER> key. 'Y' or 'N' are responses to Yes/No questions while digits are used for number responses. In cases where it is indicated by the prompt, the escape key (Esc) may be pressed to exit a menu. This is an exception to the need to press the <RETURN> or <ENTRY> key before the computer will accept an entry. Note that all entries should be made in upper case. Note also that the number of digits that can be entered is limited to the maximum reasonable for a particular entry. Unacceptable entries will result in an asterisk (*) being echoed to the screen at the cursor position. To continue you must backspace over the asterisk to acknowledge your error. There are numerous places where the game pauses until you press the escape key or space bar. A prompt at the bottom of the screen indicates these places.

At a less basic level, you will often be called upon to enter locations and times. Locations are indicated by (x,y) co-ordinates. The first co-ordinate to enter is the 'x' horizontal axis. You enter a number between 1 and 40 for it and press return. You will then be prompted for the location's 'y' co-ordinate. This represents the location's position on the vertical axis. Enter a number between 1 and 30 for it and again press the <RETURN> or <ENTRY> key. You will usually receive some acknowledgement of the location you have entered.

To enter a time you will have to first choose a day, Nov. 11th or Nov. 12th. The 'As soon as possible' option is a shortcut, but usually represents a hasty mode of action with possible organizational and morale penalties. If you have chosen a day and not the 'As soon as possible' option, you will next be prompted for what time on that day. This entry should be a 4 digit number representing the desired time on the 24 hour clock. (i.e 1:00 p.m. is '1300', 9:24 p.m. is '2124', and 3:53 a.m. is '0353'). Leading digits may be dropped, but the following ones are essential.

4.3 OPTIONAL LIMITED STAFF RULE: In new games, before entering the "Main Set-up Menu" players choose whether they wish this rule to be enforced. It limits the number of initial orders that can be given during the set-up part of the game. The limit imposed is variable, but not completely random. It is intended to reflect the premium placed upon

simple, carefully executed plans, due to lack of time and limited staff resources. The setting of doctrine is not affected by this rule.

5.0 REPORTS AND INTELLIGENCE:

5.1 GENERAL: MBT:ME is a game of command and control. Both of these functions are derivatives of information, both about the enemy and about one's own units. Reports are where this information resides, and the player must dig it out before it can be used. In the case of the prompt sighting or combat engagement report, this is simple. The involved friendly units will attempt to send a radio message with details of the enemy they have contacted. This is often your first intelligence on the enemy, and occasionally your last. But your staff will be monitoring all the radio nets and creating for you a number of consolidated reports, detailed below. Though not as prompt, these reports will often contain information of greater importance about many units, as well as more detailed information about individual units.

5.2 THE UNIT REPORT: This report is your basic source of information about your individual units. It has the time and day indicated in the upper right corner. It contains the name of the unit in the menu title. The first line indicates the unit's location, the second line the unit's strength and ammunition levels. The third line indicates unit's condition and the fourth line displays the locations of any enemy units sighted by the reporting unit. The next few lines contain the unit's current orders: the order it has been given, the route it is to follow if the order was a movement order, and the time it is to start carrying out the order. The report's last line indicates if the unit is independent or to whom it is subordinate. The unit report is accessed at two places, first from the "Unit Set-Up Menu", and second during resolution 'full unit reports'. In the second case a prompt at the bottom will inquire if you wish to give the reporting unit an order.

5.3 THE FORMATION REPORT: This report is an alternative to the unit report for battalion HQs. When battalion HQ units report you will be given the choice of a normal unit report for the battalion HQ unit itself or a formation report for the entire battalion. The formation report gives the location and condition of the battalion HQ and of each of its subordinate units. It also indicates sighted opposing units for each subordinate friendly unit that is reporting an enemy contact.

5.4 THE GENERAL REPORT: This report is available as an option following a 'full unit report' during resolution. It lists all friendly units and their current locations. The report also lists the location and type of any enemy units sighted for each friendly unit reporting a contact. After the unit listing, the results of any radio intercepts by your electronics section are given. You may learn the location of enemy HQs at this time if they have been picked up while communicating with their units. Keep in mind that your opposition will also be trying to locate you in the same manner and the more you send messages, the more likely it will be that an intercept will be made.

5.5 UNIT NAMES: The convention followed for line unit names (those organized into battalions) is first either 'how equipped' or 'type', second 'unit number', third 'battalion number', and fourth 'unit size'. Thus "M1 1/2 Co" is the U.S. M1 (Abrams Main Battle Tank)

equipped 1st unit of the 2nd battalion and of company size. The convention for HQ or independent units, and those units attached directly to Regiments or Brigades, is similar. HQ units tend to a pattern of 'type', 'commanded unit size', and finally 'HQ designation' such as "Inf Bde HQ". Battalion HQs also have their battalion number. So we have "T62 Btl#1 HQ". Independent units tend to have just 'type' and 'size', like "Inf Outpost". Brigade or Regiment elements tend to a 'higher unit size', 'type', 'unit's size' convention: e.g. "Bde Eng Co". In MBT:ME it is often not possible to identify a unit's nationality by its equipment due to many nations using gear bought from other powers, thus a unit's name will often be prefaced by the unit's nationality.

Numerous abbreviations are used in the unit names. 'Inf', 'Armd', and 'Eng' stand for Infantry, Armoured, and Engineer respectively. 'Cav' is Cavalry. 'Helos' are Helicopters. 'Recce' is Reconnaissance. 'Mech' is Mechanized, meaning infantry carried in armoured vehicles. 'R. Gd.' stands for Royal or Republican Guards. In either case these are elite, politically dependable units. The heavy weapons or combat support company common to most leg infantry battalions is designated 'Wpns'. 'AT' designates an anti-tank unit.

The 'M1' Abrams is currently the most modern U.S. Main Battle Tank (MBT). The 'M2' is their Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle. The older U.S. Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) is the 'M113'. It is also used by the Israelis and many Arab countries. This is also true of the older U.S. MBT the 'M60'. The 'T80', 'T72', and 'T62' are all Soviet designed MBTs. Again, they are used by many nationalities. The 'BRDM' is a scout car of Soviet origin. Also of Soviet origin are the APCs listed as 'BTR' and 'BMP' which come in a number of models, and which are additionally used to represent some locally produced equipment of similar design. Chinese tanks supplied in fair numbers to the Iraqis (and others in lesser quantities) are represented by the 'T55'. France is represented by the 'AMX30' Medium Tank and 'AMX10P' Armoured Personnel Carrier. The British supply the Ferret and Saladin scout cars, the Saracen (Scrn) APC, the Chieftain (abbr. 'Chft', a.k.a. 'Khalid') MBT, and the venerable Centurion (Cent.) MBT. The Israeli home grown MBT is the Merkava (Mrk).

In regards to artillery, most unit names begin with a number that is the calibre for the guns. 'SPH' stands for Self Propelled Howitzer. 'SPM' stands for Self Propelled Mortar. 'H' after a number means a towed howitzer of the number's calibre. The towed weapons are assumed to have trucks attached to their units for mobility. 'Bty' is the abbreviation for battery, the normal unit size for artillery. Players should be aware that an 'Air Bombardment' is a heavier form of air attack than an 'Air Strike'. 'Attack Helos' are more intense attack structures than 'Helo Strike'.

'Bde' is short for "Brigade". 'Regt' means regiment. 'Btl' means battalion. 'TF' means task force. 'Co' means company. For armoured units using British nomenclature, the equivalent to a company is a squadron, here given as 'Sqn'. 'Plt' means platoon. In British nomenclature armoured and recce platoons are troops. In the U.S. context a troop is a company in the cavalry. Either way troop is abbreviated 'Trp.'. 'Bty' means battery. "Supply Co" refers to an abstract consolidation of a force's supply and support elements.

'Gulf Arabs' are an abstraction that includes Jordanians, Saudis, and Kuwaitis, as well as units of the Gulf states, justifiable on grounds of military traditions, organization, and equipment usage.

6.0 DOCTRINE:

6.1 GENERAL: Doctrine is set for each unit during set-up. It can be changed indirectly during resolution by issuing orders, but cannot be changed completely or directly. There are reasonable pre-set doctrines for each unit that players may rely on if they wish, but keep in mind that they have not been tailored to a specific mission or scenario and are thus not optimum. Doctrine falls into two main areas: report frequency and engagement rules.

6.2 REPORT FREQUENCY: This is an option that can be chosen from a unit's "Unit Set-Up Menu". By using it, players can set how frequently a unit will attempt to report during resolution. Players can also toggle 'yes' or 'no' as to whether certain events, such as reaching an ordered objective, sighting the enemy, engaging the enemy, or experiencing a movement delay, should trigger an attempt by the unit to report. Only command changes, due to the destruction of HQs, will cause a change to report frequency doctrine during resolution. However, you may require a given unit to report when giving orders, without regard to its pre-set doctrine.

6.3 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: The menu for setting this doctrine item is also selected from the "Unit Set-Up Menu". There are basically two engagement rules for each unit: one covering movement and the other fire. Each has an aggressiveness and a range setting associated with it. For movement you may choose to have a unit treat the set range as a minimum distance to be maintained from the locations of any known enemy forces or as a range to be closed to in relation to such known enemy forces. For fire you may indicate whether a unit should return fire if it is fired on by enemy units, regardless of the range involved, and at what range the unit should initiate fire against opposing units, regardless of if it has as yet been fired upon by those units. Both of these doctrine settings may be overridden or changed by the unit having 'Attack', 'Retreat', 'Screen', or 'Fallback' orders and the tactical situation as the unit sees it. The 'Hold' order affects only the move rule. Please note that you may change the doctrine settings as often as you wish during set-up, but once into resolution you cannot directly alter doctrine any further.

7.0 ORDERS:

7.1 GENERAL: Orders are given through the "Orders Menu" with the sole exception of an artillery attack on an enemy HQ that has been too talkative and has had its location disclosed (such an attack will be arranged for you and you will only have to O.K. or veto it). You will use the "Orders Menu" to give orders to a specific unit and the ID of the unit being given an order will be indicated on the menu. The "Orders Menu" can be accessed at three places: 1) from the "Unit Set-Up Menu" during set-up; 2) from the 'Full Unit Report' during resolution for the unit currently reporting; and 3) again from the 'Full Unit Report' during resolution as the alternative to a 'General Report'. In this last case you will pass through the "Force Selection Menu" so that you can select the specific unit to which you wish to give orders.

7.2 STANDARD ORDERS: These orders are selected directly from the "Orders Menu" and apply to all units found on the map (on-map units).

7.21 REPORT: This is a specific order to a unit to report. It is the only order that a unit can have in addition to its other orders. It will not be shown in reports as the current order for the unit. You will be prompted for the time the report should be made. The 'As soon as possible' option for this order will not degrade the unit's performance, though you may also indicate a specific time for the report to keep your information flow regulated.

7.22 MOVE: This order requires a unit to begin movement. You will be prompted for a time for the movement to start and a route for the unit to take. There is a relatively short delay required if this order is to be carried out without adverse effects and the staff (as represented by the computer) will not allow a time to start movement too close to the current time, though you may, of course, order "as soon as possible" and suffer potential problems in the order being carried out. You have the option of selecting road movement, which will allow your unit to move more quickly, but only along roads. Road movement only allows you to set a final objective for the unit. With the default cross-country movement you may set up to two intermediate objectives. The 'Move' order should only be given to those units that you do not expect to encounter the enemy. Units with 'Move' orders will automatically switch to 'Screen' orders upon arriving at their final objective.

7.23 ADVANCE: This is a more tactically adept version of the 'Move' order. There is a longer delay before it can be implemented but it is often the only reasonable way to order movement. Since units ordered to 'Advance' will maintain some combat readiness, this order should be given to units that have a chance of meeting light or medium enemy resistance.

7.24 ATTACK: This is a highly aggressive tactical order. 'Attack' requires the longest delay of all the orders for effective implementation, the delay being in the vicinity of a half hour. Giving a unit this order overrides pre-set doctrine for the unit to force an aggressive attack on the enemy. It is the order to give when you expect heavy resistance to your taking a particular location. Units with an 'Attack' order will switch to 'Hold' orders upon reaching their final objective and clearing it of opposing forces, assuming that they are still relatively intact.

7.25 RETREAT: This is a tactical move order that requires the unit to be anything but aggressive. A 'Retreat' order requires only about a 10 minute delay to be implemented without risk of adverse effects. It overrides pre-set doctrine to require a unit to avoid the enemy. Retreating units will be given 'Screen' orders upon reaching their final objective. This is the order to give when it is necessary for a unit to break off an engagement and withdraw, while units that are not engaged can be shifted more safely by ordering an 'advance'.

7.26 SCREEN: This is a tactically neutral order. It takes effect immediately. Though 'Screen' is not actually a move order (in that you will not be allowed to give a destination), units with 'screen' orders will periodically move short distances on their own. This movement is tactical and intended to prevent friendly unit locations from becoming firmly identified by the enemy. 'Screen' is the order to give so that units will defend, but not in a manner that pins them to any particular

location. It is also a good order for rear area units that might be detected and subjected to artillery attacks.

7.27 FALLBACK: This is a tactically neutral order. It is a movement order and a time and route are required. Road movement is not an option. 'Fallback' orders require an intermediate degree of delay to be effective. The order overrides pre-set doctrine to favor long range engagement, and hence is not really a good order if trying to disengage. Units ordered to 'Fallback' will be given 'Screen' orders upon reaching their final objective. Use 'Fallback' if you must move, but still hope to cause the enemy some problems without suffering severely yourself.

7.28 HOLD: This is a highly aggressive defensive order. It mandates a dug in positional defense. As the units given this order will attempt to improve their current position by fieldworks, a relatively long delay is required for its effective implementation. You will be prompted for a time to begin to implement the order. Since units with this order will be occupied completely by the task, they may be less attentive to their surroundings and hence are more likely to be surprised by opposing forces. The pre-set doctrine for units with 'Hold' orders is changed for movement aspects so that units will neither close with, nor avoid, enemy units. This is the order to give if you want to stubbornly defend a particular location.

7.3 SPECIAL ORDERS:

7.31 FOR HELICOPTERS: Currently on-map helicopter units behave and take orders much like any other unit, though with much greater movement speed and heavy offensive power (and a somewhat weak defence). The exception is that they will automatically withdraw off-map after a couple of hours or if they run out of ammunition. The "Orders Menu" cannot be accessed for currently off-map helicopter units. Instead, players will be directly prompted for when and where they wish their helicopters to strike.

7.32 FOR AIR UNITS: Instead of being given access to the "Orders Menu" you will be directly prompted for where you wish these units to attack. The attack will normally occur about 20 minutes after it is ordered. Air units, like all other units, may suffer attrition while attacking. As with helicopters, aircraft are very fast and powerful, but fragile.

7.33 FOR ARTILLERY: On-map artillery units access the "Artillery Orders Menu" via the Special Orders option of the "Orders Menu". On-map artillery units can be given the standard orders. Off-map artillery directly accesses the "Artillery Orders Menu" instead of (and without selecting) Special Orders from the "Orders Menu". Consequently off-map artillery cannot be given standard orders, it can only use the Special Orders from the "Artillery Orders Menu".

From the "Artillery Orders Menu" you may choose one of the three general missions for your artillery unit: 1) to take immediate orders; 2) to directly support a given unit; or 3) to act as a dedicated counter battery unit. If you decide to have the unit take immediate fire orders, you will have to choose amongst the options for a type of fire. These include a conventional barrage, an Improved Conventional Munitions (I.C.M.) barrage, a chemical barrage, a smoke barrage, or simply placing the unit at a higher state of readiness for later orders.

If you choose a barrage you will be prompted for the time for the barrage is to be fired and the target location for the impact.

The battery will then attempt to fire as ordered. Picking I.C.M. results in an artillery delivered minefield being laid at the target location. The gas from a chemical barrage will effect all units in the target location or moving through the location and will persist in the target location for about five minutes. Smoke from a smoke barrage dissipates somewhat more quickly than gas and serves to block sighting through the target location. The selection of a direct support mission requires you to have used the "Force Selection Menu" to determine the unit to be supported. The battery will then fire automatically as required to support the indicated unit. The assignment of a counter-battery mission requires no further elaboration and will have the battery return fire at the next located opposing battery within firing range.

7.34 FOR ENGINEERS: The special orders for engineers are always accessed through the Special Orders option of the "Orders Menu". The "Engineering Orders" menu allows engineers to be ordered to lift mines, lay mines, build bridges, and destroy bridges. Engineers may lift mines in any location adjacent to their current one. They lay mines in their current location. Engineers build bridges from their current location to an adjacent location. They destroy bridges that they are located at one end of; that is, bridges allow road movement between two locations and to destroy a bridge the engineer unit must be in one of those two locations. Engineers will always attempt to report the completion of their tasks.

7.35 FOR SUPPLY UNITS: There are no special orders for supply units. Re-supply feeds and arms your forces and occurs automatically during the night for any units within about seven kilometers of an intact friendly supply unit. Forces will not always have a supply unit available in pre-built scenarios and picking a supply unit is optional in build your own scenarios.

7.4 FORMATION ORDERS: When accessing the "Orders Menu" for a Battalion HQ, you will be given the option of indicating that your orders to the HQ are for its entire formation. If you do so, your choice will be indicated by the addition of the word "Formation" to the "Orders Menu" title. Orders given from such a "Formation Orders Menu" will be passed on to all of the subordinate units of the HQ. Where movement is indicated, the objectives of the formation orders will be displaced somewhat from those that you give the HQ so that individual subordinate units will attempt to move in a tactical formation. You may later check the orders given the individual units of a formation and alter them if you wish.

8.0 POST-MORTEM: The "Post-Mortem Menu" allows players to review selected elements of the just concluded game resolution so as to gain a better picture of what actually happened during play. This feature is extremely useful in determining what tactical actions did and did not work well, since during actual play limited information, fog of war, and opposing activity will often make it difficult or impossible to really be sure what has occurred. The break down of victory points used to determine who won is also given here. Because of memory limits, post-mortems for very long games with a great deal of activity may be truncated.

8.1 EVENT LISTING: As the unfiltered listing tends to be quite long, the event

listing is accessed through a number of filter options. These will allow you to view all records except with movement filtered out, view the records of losses through combat, view only the records of orders given to units, or, view only the records pertaining to a selected unit. Each record has at least the time, the unit it pertains to, and the sort of event it is recording displayed. You have the opportunity of escaping from the event listing after the display of each page.

8.2 PLAYER UNIT REPORTS: This option of the "Post-Mortem Menu" cycles through the units of the selected side. It indicates which have been destroyed and gives unit reports for those that still exist. In effect it is like viewing the unit report on each of the units for the indicated side.

8.3 GRAPH MOVEMENT: This option graphically displays the movement pattern of the units selected by the chosen filter. Displays are in increments of about 15 movement events. Units are indicated by their unit ID numbers. The first player's unit paths are indicated by a '-', the second player's by a '^'. Destroyed units are indicated by unit ID numbers in inverse. Asterisks '*', indicate where units have incurred losses. For those of you with color the first player is red and the second is green. About every 150 movement events the displayed paths and ID numbers of destroyed units are erased. Only 22 lines of the 30 line map are shown at a time. You can scroll using the arrow keys to see the hidden lines. There are line numbers at the right end of the top and bottom borders which indicate the top and bottom map lines currently being displayed. The time of the latest movement event displayed is indicated in the center of the top border. You may chose to filter for the movement of a particular unit, for that of combat units only, or for that of HQ units only.

8.4 VICTORY POINT DISPLAY: This is a table indicating the victory points each side has earned. Each side has its points for its handicap, the quadrants free of enemy, the quadrants it occupies, and its losses displayed. The total of these is given for each side. The handicap includes a player's initial handicap, any bonus for reducing the enemy to 20% or less of their starting strength. A quadrant is considered clear of the enemy if it has no enemy units located in it when the game is ended. A quadrant is considered occupied only if there is a friendly force of a minimum size in it. This size is roughly half a battalion worth of units at half strength. Note that although unit sizes vary, this is accounted for when the computer judges for occupation.

8.5 VICTORY POINTS BY QUADRANT: This graphic shows in greater detail how the victory points for geography were awarded. For each quadrant the following information is shown for each side: 1) The number of steps (roughly equivalent to vehicles) a side has in a quadrant; 2) The number of victory points awarded for the quadrant being clear of the enemy and the number of points that could potentially have been awarded for this; 3) The number of victory points awarded for the quadrant being friendly occupied and the number of points that could potentially have been awarded for this.

8.6 SAVE POST-MORTEM: A variation of the normal save current game feature, this allows the players to save a post-mortem for further viewing and analysis at a later time.

8.7 ENDING THE GAME: Merely escaping (ESC) from the "Post-Mortem Menu" will give

you a courtesy message after which the game will end and the Post-Mortem will no longer be available (unless saved as in 8.6 above).

9.0 SCENARIOS:

9.1 GENERAL: The scenario, pre-built or custom built (own-built), determines the forces the players will have, what nationality they will be, their reinforcement locations, where their forces will be deployed, and last but not least what the victory conditions will be.

9.2 PRE-BUILT SCENARIOS: By choosing a pre-built scenario the player(s) are provided with a pre-set selection of already deployed forces. A pre-built scenario will usually have minefields already laid at a few key locations and the victory conditions will also be pre-set. The 9 pre-built scenarios provided with the game are detailed briefly below.

9.21 SYRIAN FRONTAL ASSAULT: A Syrian brigade of T80s attempts to overrun a battalion of Israeli Merkavas established on the rising ground in the map's south-west corner. Their approach is set to be straight forward.

9.22 SYRIAN FLANK ATTACK: Another effort by a brigade of T80s against Israeli battalion positions on the south-western heights. This one is a bit more subtle, and better supported as well.

9.23 IRAQ SURPRISES IRAN: A nasty surprise delivered by a well balanced Iraqi brigade to the Iranians. The Iraqis wish to defeat the Iranian forces in the field and then take the city in the map's north-east corner. Unfortunately it's possible the Iranians may be able to stage some surprises of their own.

9.24 EGYPT ATTACKS CROSS CANAL: The canal is represented here by the escarpment feature which runs from quadrant 2, through quadrants 3, 7, and 8 to quadrant 12. Its gaps are filled with minefields. A specially tailored force of Egyptians attempts to overcome this barrier in order to overwhelm the Israeli outposts on the other side of it. Having done so they must hold their bridgehead against the inevitable Israeli counter-attack.

9.25 EGYPTIAN CITY ASSAULT: A well supported Israeli mechanized battalion holds the city in the map's north-east corner. An Egyptian armoured brigade intends to take it from them.

9.26 ISRAELI PARATROOP ASSAULT: In this scenario it is the Syrians who are holding the high ground in the map's south-west corner. They have an infantry battalion bolstered by some commandos and engineers to do so with. The Israelis are attacking with a paratrooper battalion supported by aircraft and helicopters.

9.27 EGYPTIAN FIELD DEFENCE: The Egyptians are defending the area of quadrant 12 with a mechanized brigade entrenched behind extensive minefields. The Israelis, with a balanced brigade of armour and mechanized infantry, are attacking from the north-east.

9.28 U.S. ATTACKS IRAQI FIELDWORKS: Iraqi infantry is deployed in linear defences some 7 kilometers south-east of the city in the map's north-west corner. They are about to suffer the onslaught of an American armoured brigade. The mission of this armoured brigade is to cost-efficiently destroy the Iraqi troops and then take the city.

9.29 U.S. ASSAULTS IRAQI CITY: An American brigade of marines has been given the mission of securing the city in the map's

north-west corner. Iraqi opposition is mixed and includes elements of the Republican Guard.

9.3 OWN-BUILT SCENARIOS: In the own-built scenarios players choose the nationalities of the two sides (first and second) to be confronting each other in the scenarios. They may also set the reinforcement locations for each of these sides. Appropriate 'building blocks' of unit formations and some individual units are provided, dependant on the nationality chosen for a side. Players may use the supplied 'building blocks' to construct and deploy their own forces, within certain limits imposed by the program. They may then give these forces victory conditions as they wish. The construction of the forces for the two sides is partitioned so that an element of surprise regarding the compositions of opposition forces may be introduced. Between sizes of 10 and 30 units there is a one for one trade-off between the force size of the two sides. Between two human players the force size selected by the first player limits that which can be chosen by the second player. For this reason, between human players some pre-arrangement will be necessary. If the computer is playing a side, the human player has the choice of setting the size of the computer's force or of allowing the computer to do so. Since the side the computer is playing can be changed during the game (via the *Service Menu*) it is possible for a human player to set up both sides of a scenario and then give one side to the computer. The actual process of scenario construction follows a fairly rigid sequence which is described below.

9.31 BASIC PARAMETERS: Immediately after selecting the 'Build Your Own' option of the *Scenario Menu* players select the nationality of the first player from a menu of all them. They then select the nationality of the second player from a menu of the remaining nationalities. Next players choose who the computer will play (and act for during the Build Your Own module). The first player is then prompted for the quadrants he wishes to be able to deploy in, what quadrants he wishes to receive victory points for if they are cleared of the enemy, and what quadrants he wishes to receive victory points for if they are occupied by friendly forces. The first player is then asked to enter the size for his forces. The second player then receives the opportunity to make the same entries that the first player has just completed, but may be limited to some degree by the computer, depending on the force size picked by the first player (as noted above).

9.32 FORCE COMPOSITION: The second player goes directly from setting the basic parameters for his side to selecting the units of which his force will be composed. If his total force size is large enough, he may be, depending on nationality, prompted for what package of regimental or brigade assets he wishes to have. He can only choose one such package. When playing some nationalities such assets will be allocated automatically if his force is of a size to require it. Brigade or regimental assets having been allocated or not, the player then goes to the menu that allows the choice of battalion sized formations. After each selection, the player is cycled back to the force selection menu until he presses the escape key to leave it. Usually a player will be able to select several battalions. Players will then find themselves being prompted to select support units. Players will automatically exit from the support unit menu once they have chosen all the units

they are allowed. They may exit the menu voluntarily beforehand by pressing 'Esc' if they wish. Having exited the force selection menus, the player has the opportunity to cancel the force composition he has selected and start over. In all three of the above menus, the amount of space left in numbers of units is indicated at the top of the menu, and the amount of space each selection takes is indicated to the right of its line.

9.33 UNIT DEPLOYMENT: Having selected the units their force will be composed of, the players must next deploy them. At the beginning of this section the players will be asked if any of their units will be arriving as reinforcements. An affirmative answer to this question will produce a routine in which the player is asked for each unit if it is to be a reinforcement. If it is, the player will be prompted for its time of arrival. Otherwise players are asked to give the deployment location for each unit. This location must be within one of the deployment quadrants indicated in the basic parameters section. After having given a deployment location for each of their units, the players are then presented a with listing of their force deployment. They are queried as to if they wish to modify it. Such modifications are may be done to selected units and do not require cycling through the entire force again. After the second player is done, the first player selects his force composition and carries out deployment.

9.34 VICTORY POINT HANDICAP: Finally, the players may set the initial victory point handicaps for each side. This can be used to balance out unequal forces or terrain, as well as to handicap differing play skill between the players or between the computer and the player.

10.0 NOTES ON PLAY: Players should not wait until they engage the enemy before exercising their command. It will be too late. In fact, you should construct your action plan and give many of your orders before ever starting play. Combat doctrine and reporting structures cannot be changed during play. This reflects reality. Additionally, in modern combat a lot of destruction happens very quickly. There is often only a very short time for a commander to assess a situation, make a decision, and move formations once the shooting has started. The Napoleonic maxim of travelling dispersed and fighting concentrated should be carried to a point of maximum application in modern combat.

However true it may be that plans don't survive contact with the enemy, this fast pace of destruction requires that maneuver be carefully pre-planned. Traffic jams (only one maneuver element fits easily in one map location) are gifts to opposing air and artillery forces. Hostile helicopters love a large traffic build up and are incredibly effective in converting stalled formations into littered wreckage.

Shifting unit locations immediately and keeping units on the move can be crucial in practise, as players of this game system have been 'killed' in the first 20 minutes of internal game time. You can be decisively defeated within 60 minutes should the enemy learn your beginning locations and call in major strikes.

An exception to this rule is when a player is burdened with mainly leg infantry units. Such units are not particularly effective in modern warfare. A player employing them has often already lost the initiative to his

opponent and is depending upon that opponent's weakness or incompetence to achieve victory. Generally it is best for leg infantry units (other than elite units such as commandos or paratroopers making surprise attacks) to stay in their entrenchments and not to advertise their presence. Almost all Middle Eastern terrain is open, in sighting terms, and hence very dangerous for exposed infantry.

Despite the strong necessity for pre-planning, it is essential that flexibility not be sacrificed. You are unlikely to know exactly where the enemy is, what they have, or what their objectives are, during the set-up of the scenario while you are making plans. A good plan must include estimates of the enemy, but will not depend too crucially on those estimates, and will include methods to improve your intelligence on the enemy while denying him similar intelligence. Field reconnaissance will often result in the loss of the units performing the recon, so it is best to arrange that it is not performed inadvertently by valuable non-recce units.

Infantry units perform best when dug-in and in areas with plenty of cover. They never do very well against tanks if unsupported. Tank units, on the other hand, tend to do well against everything and are highly mobile. Sometimes this is a mixed blessing, as they are a bit fragile if surprised while moving in the open by units firing from under cover.

The finest of tactical events is to locate the main enemy units without being located one self, and then to call in the air force and artillery on them. The next most effective tactic is to ambush moving forces from behind cover. However, players should be warned not to set doctrine to initiate fire from too long a range. Modern weaponry will obtain kills at a distance, but often not enough to be decisive, and your limited ammunition will be depleted. Decisive ambushes can be obtained between 1000 and 2000 meters. If you get much closer you may not get in the decisive first salvo, and enemy return fire is likely to be very effective, even if the enemy is moving while you are still under cover.

To sum-up, the best command approach is to devise a general plan before the game starts and to set the doctrines and reporting orders of each unit to reflect their part in the general plan. Units should also be given direct orders during set-up, even if only to shift their current locations. Yet despite this strong necessity for pre-planning, it is essential that flexibility not be sacrificed. During actual play, constant evaluation of the developing situation must be made from the incoming radio traffic and generated reports. Rapid and coordinated use of unengaged assets and reserve formations must be made to exploit successful zones and to block off areas where enemy penetration threatens the overall tactical plan.

As a command viewpoint game, information is the center of all activity in MBT: MIDDLE EAST. It is necessary to manage both the inflow of reports and outflow of orders. It is wise to set frequent reporting doctrine for only a very few units and to rely on specifically ordering reports. Of course, it is a good idea to frequently move your HQ, as this cuts down the chances of enemy shells finding you at home. Your HQs are the central element in managing both reports and orders. Since they are often your most vulnerable units, you should try to keep them from being destroyed in silly places like minefields or open fields of fire. And keep in mind that

soldiers do not fight well when not under firm command. To reflect this, units that have either lost their HQs or are too far from them when engaged, will have somewhat fragile morale. In modern combat you cannot really lead from the front, but you still must lead.

11.0 DESIGNER'S NOTES: The main feature of this latest game in the **MAIN BATTLE TANK** game series is the presence of seven different nationalities, each of which may play either side and have been fully incorporated into the 'build your own' module. Indications of nationality have been worked into the resolution display and menus throughout the game.

Some comments on the nature of this particular simulation are appropriate. Basically, modern combat in the Middle East is just as fast paced and bloody as it is anywhere else. But given that, the place still differs from other locales (e.g. Europe) significantly, both terms of its terrain and the sorts of forces deployed there. First the terrain: it is open. This, with generally clear weather of the region, means long sighting ranges. Strangely enough this gives many actions a more straight forward (and often initially less bloody) complexion. It makes maneuvers and defenses dependant upon terrain concealment far less possible. Attritional fights over longer periods are common. However it also means situations where forces do surprise each other at short range they tend to beat each other up quite badly in a very short time.

As regard to forces, the diversity in organization, equipment, and quality within the same nationality, as well as between different countries, is just amazing. Pinning down the details of differences and figuring out which ones were significant was very time consuming. This was not helped by the recent war in the Gulf, which tended to close down the unclassified sources needed for the commercial version of this title. But by holding off publication and waiting for solid combat data to appear, we think we have managed to produce a very up to date simulation.

Forces in this theatre break down into three main groups: a) the U.S. and Israelis with professional, fully mechanized, and heavy structure forces of a comparatively uniform high quality; b) the Muslim countries of significant populations, that is Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Iran, with highly variable forces; and c) the less populated countries grouped together here as 'Gulf Arabs' with small but well equipped and professional forces of a uniform, but generally uninspired, quality. The last comment may be unfair to some particular individual units and to the Jordanian army in general, but none of these smaller forces have been in full scale, highly contested combat for decades. Given small, reasonably well off populations without recent militarist traditions, we feel this is an accurate overall assessment.

The armed forces of the more populated Islamic countries tend to have a tripartite structure. First there is a sort of Praetorian Guard of politically dependable and well motivated troops with the most, or close to most, modern weapons the world has to offer. The quality of these troops is hard to assess but often seems to be quite high. Next comes the professional regular standing army, which forms the bulk of the standing forces and tends to be moderately well equipped. Its

soldiers seem to be competent and brave but are not inspired or exceptionally enthusiastic. Lastly there are the conscripts and reservists organized into leg infantry units and armoured units with semi-obsolescent tanks. These units are occasionally enthusiastic, though not skilled, and serve mainly as cannon fodder. Their virtue is their numbers and expendability. None of the Arab nations seem capable of sustaining large scale combat operations for any length of time. Their air forces seem suited to raids rather than capturing air superiority or supporting ground actions in a sustained manner.

The Americans and Israelis are in an altogether different league. The Americans have the latest gadgetry and the Israelis make sure that whatever they do have will do the job effectively. Both in their own ways are well trained and well motivated. The Israelis literally are fighting for the survival of their country. The Americans are volunteers, convinced in an almost imperial fashion of their own innate superiority. Both have air forces accustomed to seizing air superiority and then using it in intense and well integrated support of their land operations. The Americans and, as far as can be told, the Israelis, have integrated units of the modern wonder weapon, the attack helicopter. Neither nationality spends men where it can expend ammunition. The only problems they have are that this is all very expensive. Strained finances and limited reserves of manpower probably means neither of them are capable of absorbing the sort of losses other nations might consider moderate. So far they haven't had to.

All this adds up to making the nature of ones own forces and the nature of ones opponents the primary consideration for the commanders whose viewpoints the players will be taking. Tactics that are both effective and efficient when employed against ordinary infantry in the field, will lead to a bloody nose if attempted against elite troops in a city. Still, you'll never have the resources to achieve much by being timid.

MBT:ME will be the last game of this series for a bit. We are not concerned about the program basics becoming outdated, but events in Europe and Asia are simply too fluid at the moment to effectively make any of the kind of predictions needed to come up with another title. We do want to get back to the system to cover more areas, but will have to wait until things stabilize a bit. In the meantime, we hope you will find MBT:ME interesting and educational.

S. Newberg & S. St. John

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MAIN BATTLE TANK: MIDDLE EAST

Modern Tactical Armoured Combat

The Middle East seems to forever be in turmoil. And if recent history is any indicator, this situation will not be changing in the near future. MBT:ME, our third MBT game (in design for two years and delayed to incorporate data from the recent Gulf conflict) provides the terrain of the Middle East deserts and the forces of the local powers, as well as intervention countries, in a command oriented simulation that allows for past, current, and future combat situations. Prebuilt scenarios and a "build your own" system are provided.

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