

# VOID II TRENCH WARS



Version 1.2 by [Philip Brennán](#)  
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## Introduction

Imagine what it would be like to fight in trench warfare with a Junker army against, say, the Koralon. Visualise the sheer blood bath as Convict Legionaries defend their positions against wave after wave of Koralon. How many Convict Legionaries would have to be summarily executed by Enforcers to keep the rest of the troops from fleeing the battle field? How would they survive planetary bombardment if they went up against one of the other Tripartite worlds in warfare.

As for the opposing general, just how many troops can he afford to sacrifice as they attempt to reach the trenches and engage the enemy? Once they were at the trenches, how would they go about rooting out the enemy from within their stronghold? What tactics can you use against the enemy should a planetary bombardment be unfeasible (maybe it is a dire emergency action where the necessary support spacecraft cannot be mustered in time, and you have to rely upon a purely ground based action to defeat the enemy)?

What I aim to do in this supplement is to lay out all the possibilities of playing a trench warfare game in Void, and to provide some “house rules” to act as a guide for making trench warfare games both realistic and playable.

## The Birth of the Idea

I was walking to Rochester in Kent, England, when I started thinking about building my own wargaming table in one foot sections of board made out of that foam used for insulating cavity walls. Then I had this idea: “Wouldn’t it be neat to have some trench sections that troops can hide in which will also provide them with some cover (thus giving a save roll to troops that are not equipped with armour)?” For a while I just thought of the practical implications of making such board sections, of which I will share later. Then it dawned on me that perhaps it would be kind of neat to actually play a full blown trench warfare scenario. I started thinking about how the rules for such combat would have to be written for Void, as the cover save rules are rather sketchy (deliberately). Close combat would have to be conducted in a different way to normal (trenches are not that wide so the fighting would have to be conducted within a total bottle neck). Hence the tome you are now reading, whether in book form, as a pdf file, or upon a web site.

## Chapter 1: Core Rules

The core rules will be from the Void 1.1 rulebook, from Battles with Miniatures, and from the Force Books (as and when they are released). The vast bulk of those rules will apply, with only minor modifications where needed. Also, there will be a load of new rules to deal with situations unique to trench warfare. These won’t alter the main rules, but compliment them to deal with new situations (if something happens outside of the trenches, then Void 1.1 rules take precedent). Because these are “house rules”, you can make alterations as you please. This is your hobby after all.

### **Movement:**

For the most part, movement will be unchanged. In open terrain the models can move their full MV rating, while in difficult terrain, they can only move half their MV. And impassable

terrain is still impassable. Where movement is in question, though, is in the area of moving in and out of trenches.

- Climbing in and out of trenches counts as rough terrain, which reduces your MV to half.
- Moving through trenches counts as rough terrain unless your squads have the Rough Terrain Specialist: Trenches skill.
- To jump into a trench rather than climb in order to Assault an enemy squad, roll against your unit's CD. If you fail the CD check you lose all Assault bonuses.
- Units may use any ladders found attached to the side of a trench instead of climbing the trench wall. This takes an inch off their MV, rather than being counted as moving over rough terrain.

## Rough Terrain Specialist: Trenches

You may buy this special ability for 2 points per model. In the case of squads, you must buy this skill for all or none at all, including any special characters added as part of that unit. This special skill enables troops to move within trenches without any movement penalty. It does not enable them to climb in and out of trenches without penalty – the movement rules still apply in this situation. This is to reflect that these troops are experienced in moving through trenches, and in the case of the defending side, of knowing where all the obstacles are.

### Cover:

Imagine that there is a Junker Convict Legionary in a trench, and an enemy (possibly a Tactical Arakton) is advancing on his position. At a fair distance from the trench, the Junker would be harder to hit, and the cover would also confer a save roll. But once the enemy soldier is right on top of the trench, such modifiers and save rolls would no longer apply. We shall set that “unsafe” zone as being 2 inches from the edge of the trench. That means once the enemy soldier is no further than 2 inches away from the edge of the trench, he will have a clear LOS to the Junker soldier, but the Junker will still get a soft cover saving roll (the old duck under the parapet thing).

The Void rules are rather vague about how cover confers a saving roll, and usually it is up to the players to decide how cover confers a saving roll before the game starts. But I feel that this situation warrants setting the saves for hard and soft cover.

Any bunkers built into the trenches provide hard cover, no matter how close the enemy is, unless, of course, they come round from the rear...

Distance	To Hit	Save
Over 2”	-1	6+ (hard cover)
Within 2”	-0	8+ (soft Cover)

- When firing into a trench from over 2” away, the enemy troop is in Hard Cover (-1 to hit), which gives him a saving roll of 6+.
- When firing into a trench from within 2”, the enemy troop is in Soft Cover, which gives him a saving roll of 8+.
- In the case of firing along a trench, the usual rules for cover apply (i.e., if the target is half obscured by a corner or other piece of cover, he gets a saving roll of 8+).



**Fig. 1: The white area represents the trench, red is the “unsafe” Zone and green the surface.**

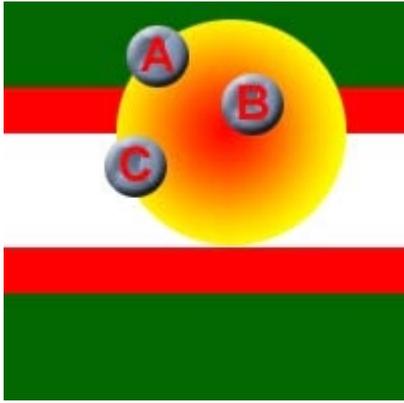
Also, how area effect weapons act within a trench will also change. As you probably know, there are two types of area effect templates in Void; ranged templates (the round ones) and directly placed templates (the teardrop ones). I will deal with each in turn.

## Ranged Templates

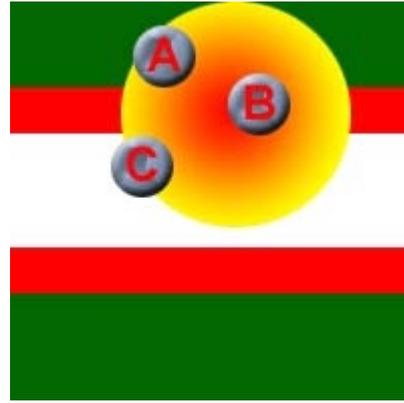
Ranged templates are usually the result of ordinance (bombs and grenades). Assuming that the bomb or grenade doesn't deviate, the bomb is going to land smack bang in the middle of the trench. Shrapnel is going to fly in all directions, but mostly within the confines of the trench.

- If the centre of the template lands within the trench, then anything covered by the template which is in the trench or within 2” of the trench will be hit as normal (usual armour/cover saving rolls apply). Any units that get hit which are not within 2” of the trench get a Soft Cover save roll (8+).
- If the centre of the template lands outside of the trench, but within 2” of the edge, then any units inside the trench get a Soft Cover save roll (8+). This is because we assume that the soldier had a chance to duck below the parapet of the trench when the ordinance went off.
- If the centre of the template lands outside of those two inches, then the soldier inside gets a Hard Cover save roll (6+).

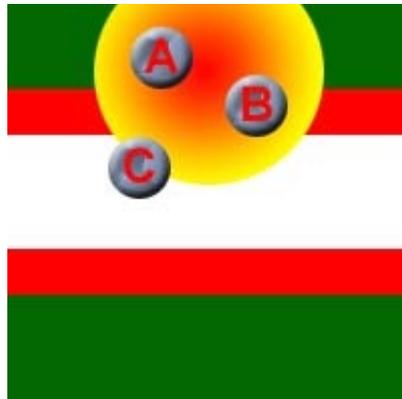
This includes ranged templates that are the result of speculative shooting.



**Example 1:** The centre of the template lands inside the trench. A gets an 8+ cover save, B and C get normal damage.



**Example 2:** The centre of the template lands within 2" of the trench. A and B get normal damage while C is inside the trench and therefore gets an 8+ cover save.

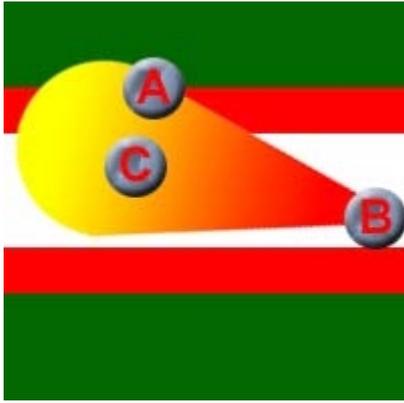


**Example 3:** The centre of the template lands outside the „unsafe“ zone. A and B get normal damage, C gets a 6+ cover save.

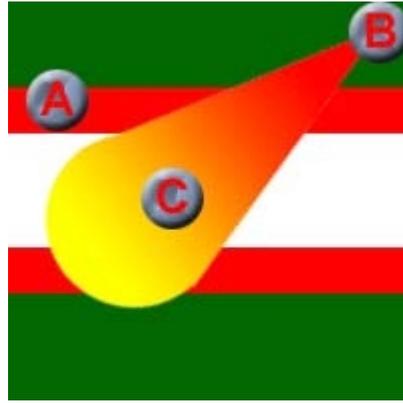
## Directly Placed Templates

Directly placed templates will work differently from ranged templates, as the former represents flame-throwers, etc.

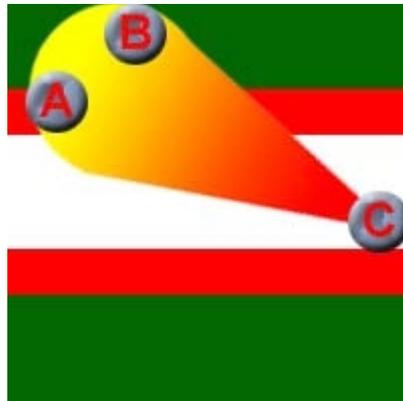
- If the directly placed template weapon is fired along the trench, then the area affected is strictly within the confines of the trench, even if the template itself overlaps the edge of the trench.
- If the weapon is fired from outside the trench and within two inches, then the target inside gets a Soft Cover save roll (8+). If further than 2", then the target gets a Hard Cover save roll (6+).
- If the weapon is fired from within the trench but aimed outside, then any target within two inches of the trench edge gets hit as usual. Any target further than 2" of the trench gets a Soft Cover save roll (8+).



**Example 1:** The directly placed template is fired along the trench, C is hit normal, A is unharmed.



**Example 2:** The directly placed template is fired from the surface into the trench. C gets a 6+ cover save. If A would shoot, C would only get a 8+ save.



**Example 3:** A is in „unsafe“ zone and is hit as normal. B gets a 8+ cover save.

## Close Combat

Close combat within trenches is a very dirty and drawn out affair due to fighting within a very confined space. In order to conduct close combat in this situation, both combatants have to be within the trench and in base to base contact.

- Models outside of a trench may not engage in close combat with models inside a trench. This includes members of an assaulting unit that still has members outside of the trench.
- Members of a unit in close combat that are outside of the trench may fire into the melee using the normal rules for firing into close combat.
- A model may only pass an enemy if there is a clear inch between the enemy model and the trench wall. Otherwise, the trench is effectively blocked in the melee.
- A model may pass a friendly model if the blocking model makes a successful CD check.

## Vehicles

Most vehicles will be unaffected by trenches because they can drive right over them. Grav vehicles and flyers will just fly over the trenches, and tracked vehicles are designed to deal with such terrain (remember that the tank was invented by the British during World War One as a vehicle that could cope with, and breach, trenches).

- Most vehicles can drive over trenches without penalty.
- Birds of Prey can move over trenches without penalty if the trench is no more than an inch wide. Otherwise, it counts as rough terrain. This does not apply if the Bird of Prey is making a jump move.
- Terrasaurs treat trenches as rough terrain. A unit of Terrasaurs may not be given the Rough Terrain Specialist: Trenches skill. This is because 'saur are harder to train than humans.
- Walkers (Behemoths, Terrasaurs, Birds of Prey, Tiger APC's and Korvi) may engage in close combat with models inside a trench, as they can stamp and kick.
- Track, wheel and grav vehicles may not engage in hand to hand combat with models inside a trench, but may be hit by those models if within an inch of the edge.
- Models within a trench get +2 to hit against vehicles in close combat (including 'saur). This is because they are probably hitting the underside of the vehicle or 'saur, which is not very well armoured.

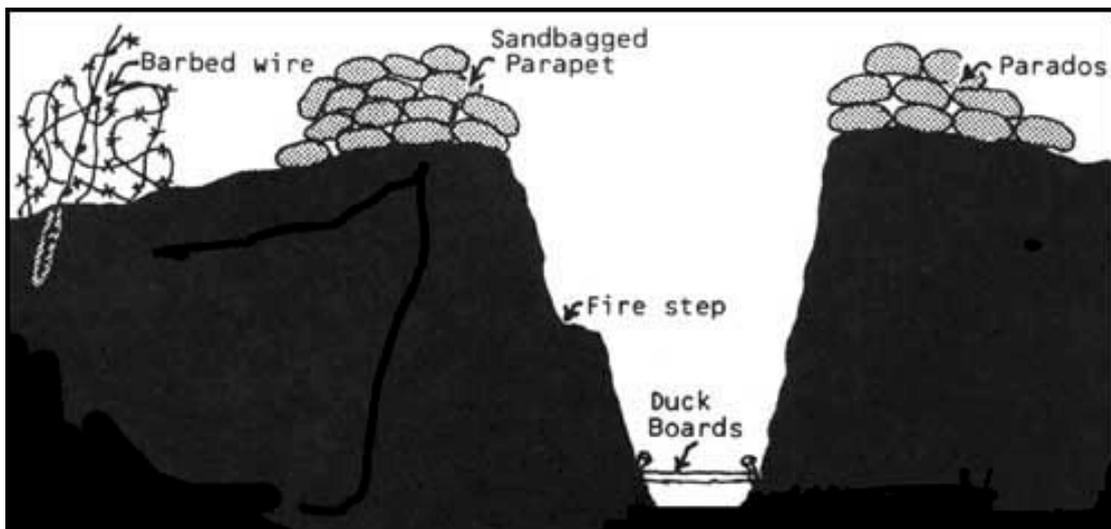
## Chapter 2: Scenery

Now we have sorted out some ground rules for fighting within trenches, we will have to represent them on the wargaming table. For those who do not have the time or the resources to make a modular wargaming table with trenches built in, then bits of brown felt will suffice. This may be a good solution as you can make trenches of any size for very little money, and of course you can make corner pieces and bunkers too. I would advise making lengths of trench no longer than 12" (30cm) and no wider than 2" (5cm), and corners 6"/2" by 6"/2" (15cm/5cm by 15cm/5cm). For t-junctions and crossroads, just lay one strip of felt trench against or over another.



**Western Front (1918) trench system just before the March 21<sup>st</sup> attack.**

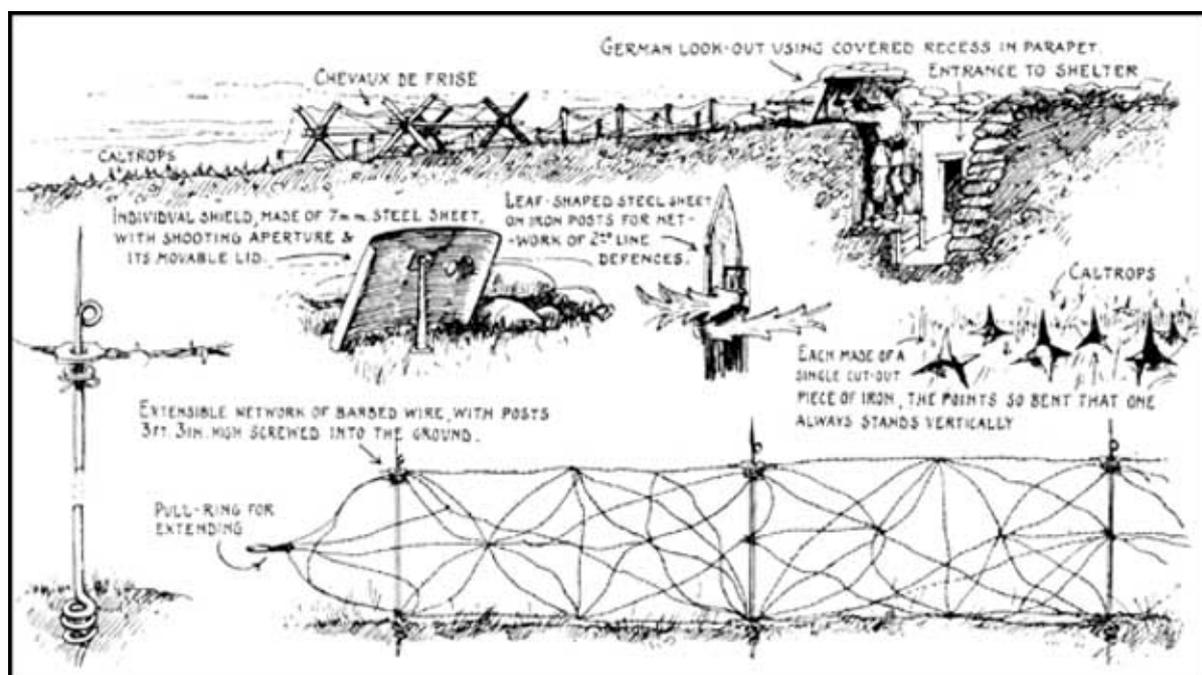
For those of you who are mad enough to go for it, you can make a modular wargaming table. To do this, you will need those 4' by 8' (240cm by 480cm) cavity wall insulation boards that are made out of compact foam, and hardboard / fibreboard. Cut pieces of hardboard into 1' squares – you will need 16 for a 4" by 4" board, and 32 for a 4" by 8" board. Take half of them and mark of trench sections down the centre of them that are no wider than 2" (5cm). You will need straight, corner, t-junction and crossroad sections. Also, dead ends that go about 3" (7.5-8cm) in and entry ramps that go 6" (15cm) in. Finally, you can make various bunkers too, and a central base. Some bunkers may be built into a straight trench section, going out about two inches from the side, or on the end of a dead end piece. And a central base could be a square area with walls that are no less than 2" thick with central entry points that meet up with other sections – three entry points is the maximum.



**Cut away diagram of a WW1 trench**

Once you have the sections marked out, you can use the foam board to make the walls. Just cut sections that are no wider than 5" (12.5-13cm), and then cut an angled slice off the side that faces into the trench. The angle should be very steep. Next you glue them onto the board sections using PVA glue and leave them to dry. You may need to pile books on top to weigh them down while drying.

With the other half of the 1' boards, you will make blank sections of terrain. Just glue with PVA 1' sections of insulation board.



**Diagram showing barbed wire and other defensive obstacles.**

To finish the boards, mix up a runny mixture of Polyfiller and add a couple of hands full of sand to the mix. Paint over the tops of all the board sections with a 1" brush (an old one used for the last home decorating attempt will do), making sure that you don't put too much within the trenches. Do not paint the outsides of the sections at all, just the tops and inside the trenches.

Once this is dry, you will need to paint the sections. My advice would be to only paint the tops and trenches, unless you seal the outsides with PVA glue and let it set for 24 hours. This is because enamel and celluloid paints will melt the foam board, which would be a total disaster after all the hard work you have put into them. Personally, I will only use acrylic paints. The insides of the trenches and the lip would be muddy shades while the rest would be a mid-green to represent grass. One thing you could do is give a two inch area of mud either side of the trench pieces, which will make it easier to judge the distance to the edge of the trench on sight. The green areas can be dry brushed a lighter colour, or covered with static grass.

Total nutters can really go to town in modelling the trenches with extra little features. A central base piece can seriously be modelled to look like it is a hive of activity. There could be a folding table somewhere in the base with maps and stuff on top. You could make the base an armoured bunker with a removable roof, or even without a roof and just armoured sides. Another idea is to hack up old miniatures that you no longer want and stick them into the sides of the trenches during construction. The odd limb or half torso sticking out of the side would really add some "character" to your trench sections, as would occasional crates or ammo dumps. Ladders may also be a good idea, but I would restrict it to no more than two per section, and not on corner pieces.

The main thing with making scenery is to have fun doing it. A well made wargaming table can really bring a game to life, while badly done scenery (either rushed or just done out of obligation) can detract from the realism of a game.

Another piece of advice is to buy a second hand folding table which is big and strong enough to support your wargaming table. You can buy two pieces of 1" MDF that are 4' square. With some strips of wood you can put a one inch high lip around three edges of each piece. Once the two pieces have been put edge to edge on the sides that do not have the lip around, you can set up the table safe in the knowledge that the modules are not going to slide around in a hurry, no matter how animated the players get.

A final tip for the purely mad, is to make double the amount of pieces than what you actually need. Again, half of them will be trenches and half will not. This means you could have a game where the whole board is a warren of trenches, or a game with none at all. You could even have just a couple of trench pieces in a game to act as obstacles or cover (depending on your side's view of them).

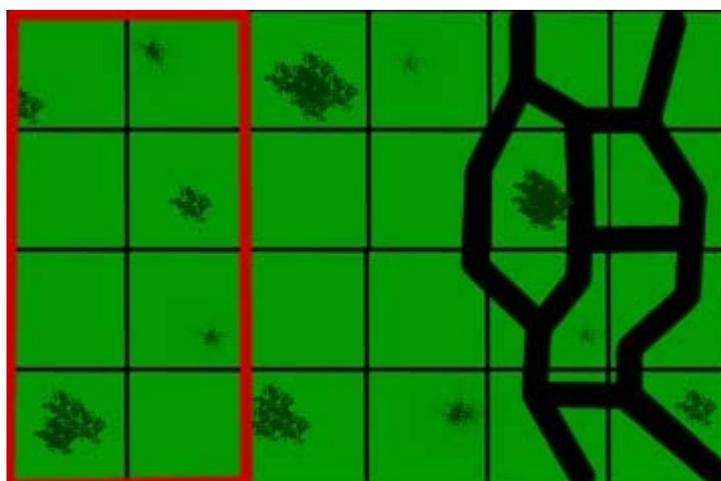
### **Chapter 3: Scenarios**

Of course you can make up many scenarios that involve trenches, but here are three to get started with.

#### **Scenario 1: Command and Conquer**

Set up either a 4' by 4' board or a 4' by 8' board. Along one edge set up some trenches no deeper than 2 sections deep. This is the defending player's side. He may set up within two feet of his edge, but place his units no closer than two feet from the enemy units. He is to set up within the trenches and isn't allowed vehicles. The defending player, because of this, gets 50% more points than the attacking player to reflect the lack of vehicles, and may spend up to half of his points on support weapons like Marine HMG teams and mortar teams. The usual unit rules for other troop types in his army apply as usual.

The attacking player may set up within two feet of his table edge, as long as he is no nearer than 2 feet from an enemy unit. On the part of the table NOT taken up with trenches, scenery may be placed on a mutually agreed basis. That means everywhere BUT the two foot deployment zone of the defending player.



**The red area is the deployment zone of the attacker**

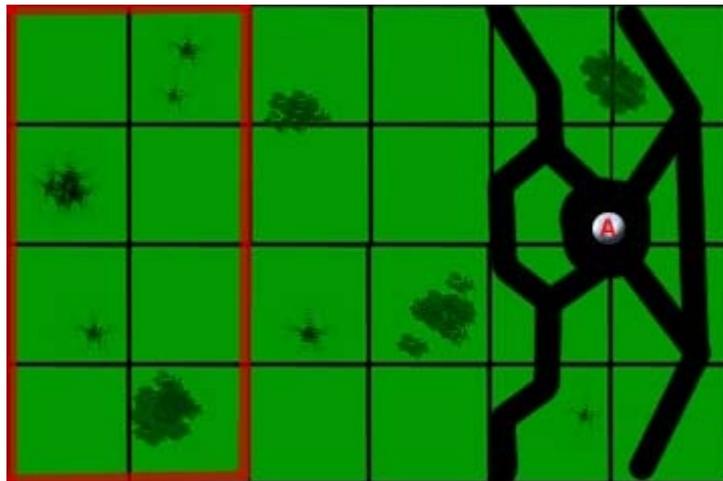
The aim of this scenario is for the Attacker to gain 50% control of the Defender's trenches. This means that at the end of the game he must control 4 out of 8 or 8 out of 16 of the trench sections. The Defender, of course, must prevent the attacker achieving this.

On a 4' long table the armies are to be made up of no more than 500 points for the attacker and 750 points for the Defender. On an 8' long table it is up to the players about point limits for both armies.

This scenario should run for a minimum of six game turns.

## Scenario 2: Capture

This scenario is set up in the same way as Scenario 1, apart from these changes. Both armies are to be equal in points cost. The defending player may have vehicles appropriate to his choice of army apart from the Korvus, the Tiger APC, the Behemoth Assault Tank, and the TAV. Viper bikes, Grav bikes, Sandrunners, Pteraraptors, and Terrasaurs are allowed for the defending player, depending on what army he is fielding. The attacking player may pick anything that is appropriate to the army that he is fielding.



The red area is the deployment zone of the attacker, A is the VIP

In one trench section (possibly the base section) the defending player may place a character model as the enemy target. He may be part of a unit, but he is the target, not his unit. The aim of the game is for the attacker to capture this character model. To facilitate this, at the end of the game the attacker must be in base to base contact with this character model without any defenders within the same trench section. If he fails to do this, he loses the scenario. If the character model is killed then he has also lost, as his superior officers wanted to capture the target alive.

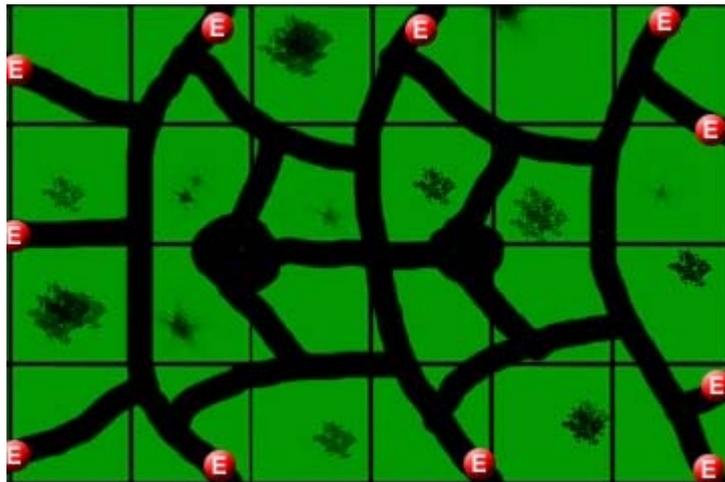
This scenario should last no more than 6 game turns.

## Scenario 3: Flush Out

This scenario requires a Moderator or Judge to make sure that things run smoothly.

Set up the table as a warren of trenches. Use the “you place I place” method. The players take it in turns to place any kind of trench section to hand. Try to make all the trenches join if possible, making use of dead ends and ramps where appropriate. No vehicles may be used for this game.

One player is to be the defender, while the other player is to be the attacker. The defender can place his squads on all the squares apart from the outside ones. He does this by telling the moderator where he is placing them, who notes everything down. All his units are hidden until detected by sight, SPOMM detection, or by literally stumbling across them. If the defending unit is detected by SPOMM, then only a counter will be placed in that section to represent the “blips” that Androsynths or Teratosynths “see”.



**E are the entrance points**

At the start of the scenario, roll for initiative as normal. During the first game turn the attacking player may enter from any side that has a trench that leads off the edge of the table. He must enter as many units as there are entry points. If he has more squads / individuals than there are entry points, then the remaining units must be move onto the table during the following game turns until they are all on the table.

The attacking player wins by flushing out the defender’s army and wiping them out. The defender wins by surviving the game. The scenario is to last 8 game turns.

## **Chapter 4: Campaigns**

There is no reason why one cannot turn a series of trench warfare based scenarios into a whole campaign. Not all battles fought between the Tripartite Worlds are nice, quick surgical affairs. Some of the bloodiest wars have been fought on worlds where both sides were bogged down by a lack of forethought and planning, and the soldiers involved found themselves digging in for the long haul. Such military “bloody disasters” lead to trench warfare, where little gains were made with heavy losses incurred by both sides. One such campaign was the war between Ironglass and Viridia over the planet Foraman, one of the barely habitable worlds in the Scotomas system.

## **The Foraman War**

The Viridians had already gained the planetary moon of Scotomas IV, which orbited Scotomas Major, a large barren rock of a planet.

This planet had no life and very little atmosphere, which made it unsuitable for habitation and colonisation, but it had a wealth of mineral resources, and was ripe for mining by the Junkers, who wanted it badly enough to push into the Scotomas system. Before they could reach Scotomas Major, they had to deal with Foraman, which was a major military outpost of the Viridian Empire. Viridia got wind of this planned operation and gave orders for the military there to dig in, which they dutifully did.

An expeditionary force of Junker Convict Legions landed about a mile away from the Viridian lines, and made their way towards the main military base totally ignorant of the danger they were in. The Viridians were waiting them, and had dug a series of earth works with trenches, gun batteries, bunkers, command centres, and the such like. As soon as the Junker Legions were within firing range, they were mowed down by an extremely heavy bombardment. This was a very heavy defeat for the Junkers, but they were not deterred.

After retreating to their former position about a mile away they dug in themselves and awaited reinforcements. Then the Viridians, convinced that the Junkers had totally routed under their onslaught, moved towards their positions to “mop up”. They found that the Junkers had dug themselves in and the Viridians suffered heavy losses in the ensuing massacre.

For the next six standard years the Viridians and the Junkers engaged in what can only be described as the most bloody war ever fought over a mile of land. The Viridians captured the Junker trenches on several occasions, forcing the retreating army to fall back and dig new earthworks. Then the Junkers would push forwards again, and recapture their former positions.

After those six years the Junkers finally had enough. The trench warfare had sapped their military might, and they still hadn't captured the main base on Foraman, let alone been able to push deeper into the Scotomas system to capture Scotomas IV and Scotomas Major. An armistice was declared and the Junker Space Fleet airlifted the defeated Legions back to Ironglass. The Viridians, even though they had won this protracted war, were also licking their wounds. A large part of their military capability had been destroyed, and it was to be ten standard years before the Viridian Armies in the Scotomas system were back up to full strength. Then came the Koralon.

## **Planning Campaigns**

To run a campaign you will need a Moderator. His or her job is to act as an independent overseer of all the games played, and to set scenarios for future battles. Also, one is going to have to think about how to deal with reinforcements.

During the First World War, the allies had several divisions set up along the western front, forming several “Armies”. The First Army was mostly British and held the northern seaports of Dunkirk and several others. The Second Army was also British, and formed a join between the First Army and the French Armies, and were positioned north-east of the Somme and Flanders. Finally, the French Armies were south of the British and defended the major routes toward Paris. Behind each of the front line positions were whole battalions held in reserved, including, towards the end of the war, some American battalions.

When the Germans pushed through the Second Army's lines during March 1918, there was an unholy row over where the reserve armies were to be sent. Within a week of March the 21<sup>st</sup> 1918, the front line of the British Second Army was pushed back to where the reserves were positioned, and were in serious danger of losing all links to the French positions. The French had plenty of reserves available to be sent to bolster up the British lines, but due to some false intelligence (misinformation) gathered by the French, they were too worried about a German offensive on their own lines to send any to aid the British.

Also, despite the sound intelligence gathered by Haig's men, which put the date of the German push accurately at March the 21<sup>st</sup>, and gave the precise location of the attacks, Prime Minister Lloyd George refused to send more troops to the Second Army positions. Then when it all went pear shaped Lloyd George had the nerve to blame Haig for his own tactical errors.

This almost cost the Allies the First World War.

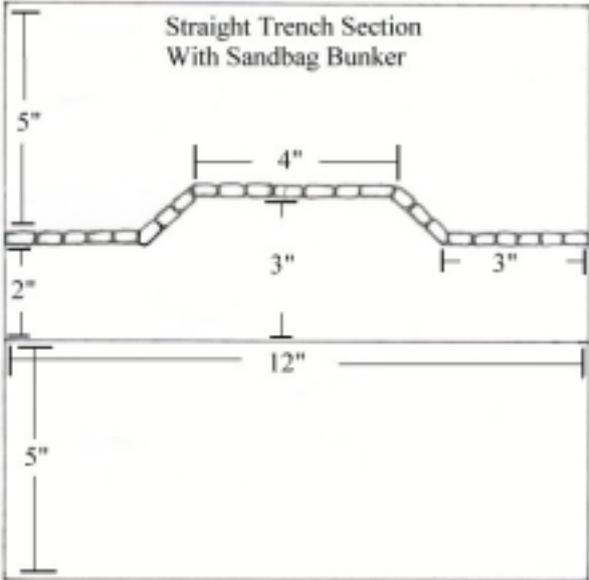
As you can see by the above piece of history, how and where you deploy reserves and reinforcements are vital to whether or not you hold onto your lines. One way of representing this is to allow your players to either bring the points cost of their armies back to force between games, or to allow them to reinforce their armies by a strict percentage of their original points cost.

For example, you could make the ruling that reinforcements are made up of 33% (or one third) of the army's original points cost. If at the start of the campaign one side starts with 1500 points, but is reduced to 750 points during the first battle, then at the start of the next battle that player starts with 1250 points of troops. Of course he might not lose half as many troops during the second battle, and after new reinforcements arrive, he might find that his army now contains more points in troops than he originally started with. He'd still only get 500 points worth of reinforcements before the third battle, even if at the second battle he started with 2000 points in troops. In such a campaign you could decide that the winner is the side with the most troops left after 6 battles or whole games.

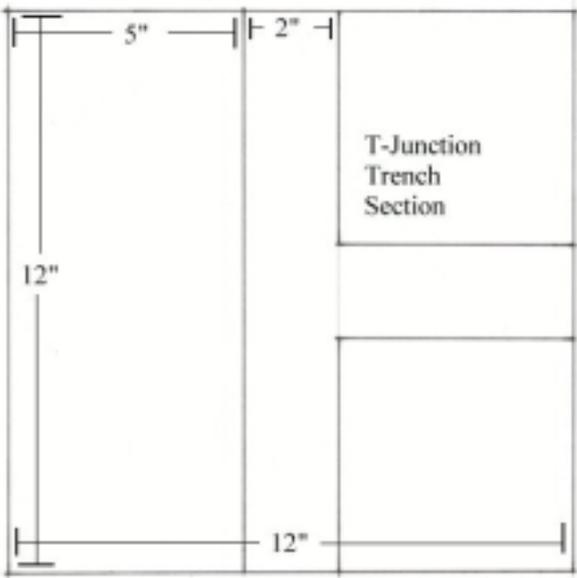
This is just one way to run a whole campaign of trench warfare, and I am sure that with a little historical research one could find different ways of setting up campaigns. The idea is to have fun, after all.

# Chapter 5: Trench plans

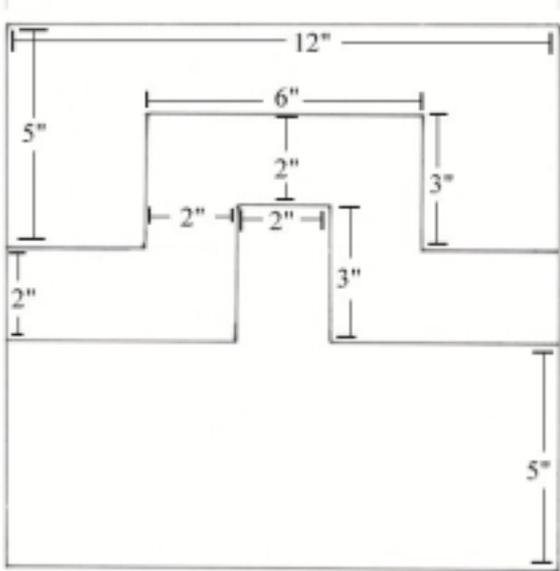
Here you will find scanned copies of my own plans for 12" board modules, some of which have had measurements added in Paint Shop Pro 5. I hope this will prove useful to you in as much as they will provide ideas and starting points for your own plans and modules.



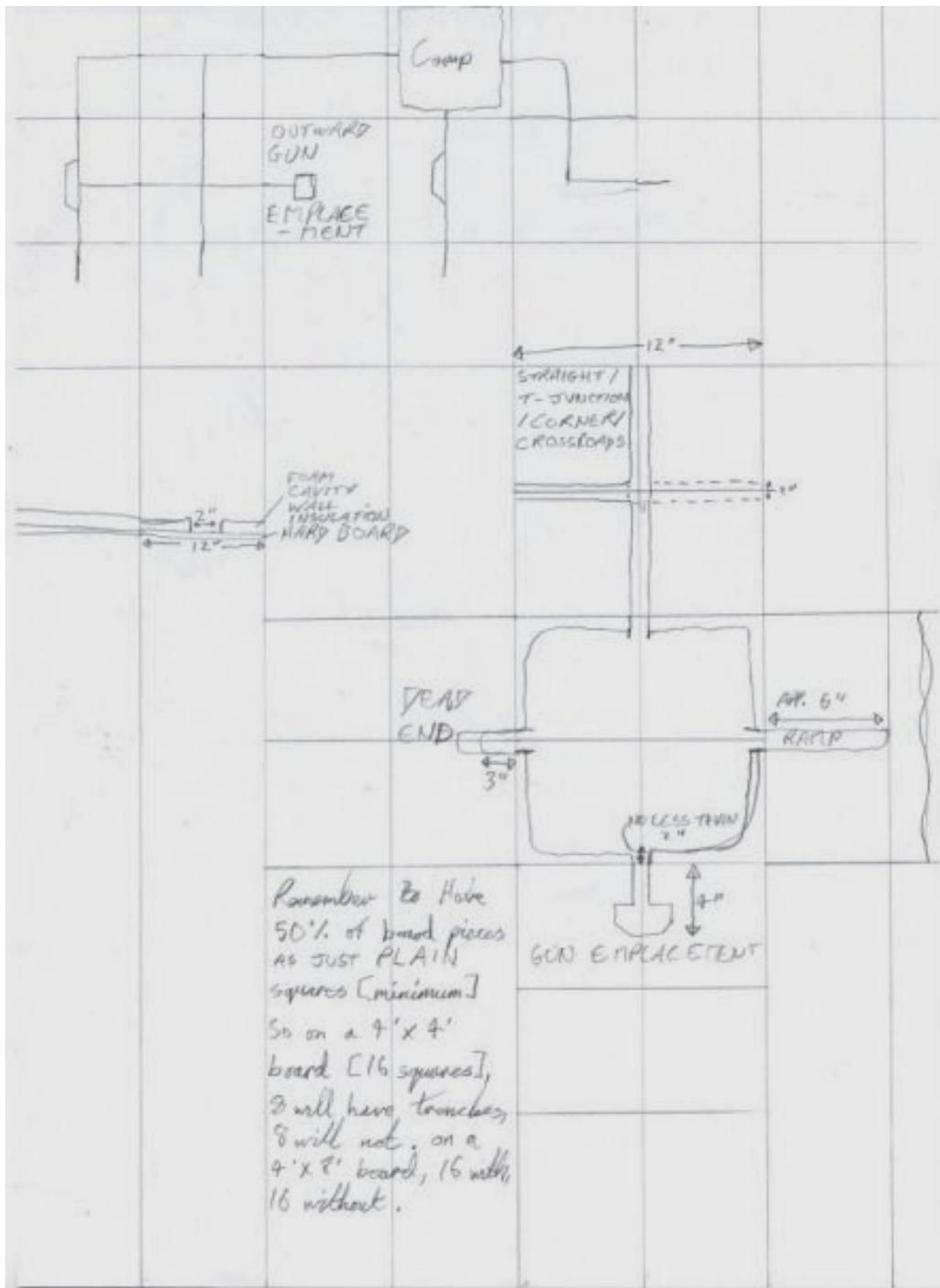
Straight trench section with firing platform protected with sandbags



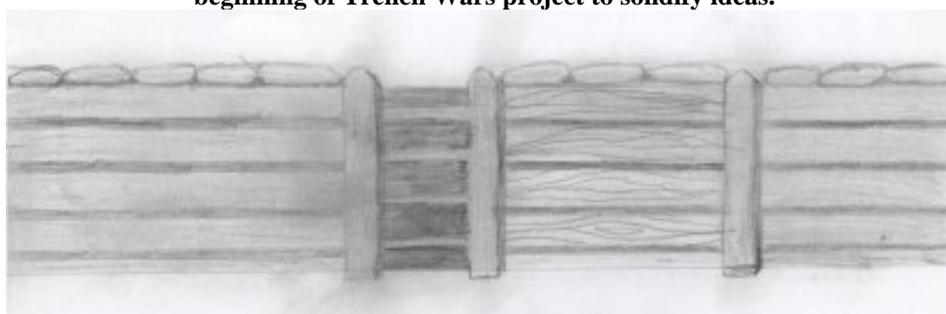
T-Junction Section of trench



Fire Block Trench Section [plan]. NB: The British army made use of such things to prevent enemy troops firing up the whole trench should they be able to breach them. The French forces made their trenches in a zigzag formation for the same purpose.



General Concept Sketches and Plans made at the beginning of Trench Wars project to solidify ideas.



Sketch of the construction of a trench wall.