

# ALTAR OF FREEDOM

## GRAND TACTICAL BATTLES IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR



## Experimental Double Blind Rules

### 1. INTRODUCTION

---

The fog of war rules were designed to be used in conjunction with our experimental "double blind matchbox rig." This contraption allows players to conduct hidden movement without the use of a GM or referee. The rules we devised are quite simple, so as not to bog down the length of the turns.

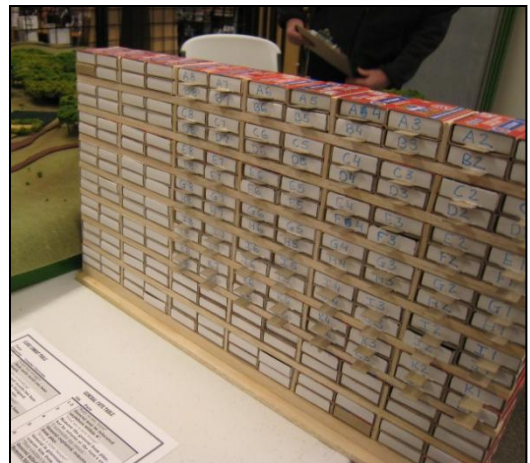
### 2. WHAT YOU NEED

---

To use these rules, you'll need to create a **map of the battlefield**, divided into 6" grid spaces. This means a standard 6x4 table will have 96 possible grid spaces where units can maneuver in secret. Any wooded spaces which conceal units should be specifically marked as woods. There are no "partial grids" or half-covered spaces. A 6"x6" grid space must be deemed entirely wooded, or not wooded at all. Make sure the map is very clear, to avoid any later confusion. Both players need a copy of this map. An example appears on the next page.

If you are using a GM or referee, players can simply move their divisions on this gridded map with a dry-erase marker and transparency sheet, and then hand their maps to the GM to cross-reference.

If you are not using a GM, and instead using something akin to our "**matchbox rig**" (a concept borrowed from the great Donald Featherstone), then you will also require a set of **tokens** to place inside the matchboxes. There should be one token for each division on your OOB, each general, and each HQ. These could be slips of paper. We use pennies with labels.



*Our double-blind matchbox system.*

### 3. MAP MOVEMENT

---

When it's time to begin the scenario, both sides deploy with all divisions "hidden," on their maps but with no miniatures on the table. Players bid for Priority Points as normal, and proceed to move their divisions as they would in a standard game.

When a hidden division moves, they may only move **1 grid space** per turn, regardless of terrain. Cavalry and generals may move **2 grid spaces**. Only a maximum of two friendly divisions can occupy the same grid space. Generals and HQs do not count toward this stacking limitation.

### 4. SPOTTING RULES

---

All of your divisions are allowed to "scout" grid spaces immediately adjacent to them. If using the matchbox system, a division that moves can peek inside the neighboring matchboxes to see if any enemy tokens are inside.

Woods are the only exception--you cannot scout into a wooded grid sector. The only way to find out if an enemy unit is in the woods is to move into that space yourself!

If an enemy formation is "spotted" nearby, both your division and the enemy division are placed onto the table. The only exception to this is if **your division** is in the woods, scouting an enemy in the open --in this case, you are allowed to not announce your presence and no miniatures are placed on the table.

### 5. CONTACT IS MADE!

---

Miniatures are placed on the tabletop when: (a) Adjacent formations have "spotted" each other in the open; or (b) A division moves into a grid space already occupied by a defender.

Whenever contact is made, the miniatures with Priority who initiated the contact deploy **SECOND**. The player already occupying the space deploys **FIRST**, anywhere he wants within the grid space area. After he has deployed, the formation which initiated



the contact or spotting may deploy, **no closer than 2"** from the enemy, and **not on his flank/rear**. This means no immediate close combats are allowed.

Once your miniatures are on the tabletop, they move and fight as normal.

## **6. MELTING BACK INTO THE WOODS**

---

It is possible for your miniatures to "melt into the woods" and disappear from the tabletop. If you choose to do so, you may remove your troops from the table whenever they enter a wooded area not occupied by the enemy. If this happens, take the miniatures off the table and resume moving them as a hidden formation.

## **7. WHAT ABOUT RESERVE MOVEMENT?**

---

In the standard *Altar of Freedom* rules, divisions are allowed to utilize rapid reserve movement (20"), if they remain in column on a road at least 10" away from the enemy. We do have a special way to represent this with the double blind rules.

A division attempting reserve movement is allowed to move up to **3 grid spaces**, following a road marked on the map. If you are using reserve movement, you can scout all adjacent boxes along your path of advance (excluding woods, of course). If you spot an enemy formation along the way, an **AMBUSH** occurs. Your column of troops should be placed on the road, in column formation, and the enemy is then allowed to deploy second, anywhere within 2" of your column. He may deploy on your flank or even behind you, so long as he is within his original grid space.

## **8. HILLS**

---

We are still fiddling around with this concept, but in our most recent play-test, we allowed formations occupying a large hill (at least 2 elevations above ground level) to "spot" units up to 2 grid spaces away. This seemed to work fairly well, though it does take more time for players to open up matchboxes and scout. We're still experimenting on methods to handle hills in a simple, fast manner.

*Please note that our double blind rules are purely experimental! We are still play-testing them and making revisions as necessary. So far, they have worked quite smoothly for us, but please feel free to offer suggestions or notes based on your own experience.*