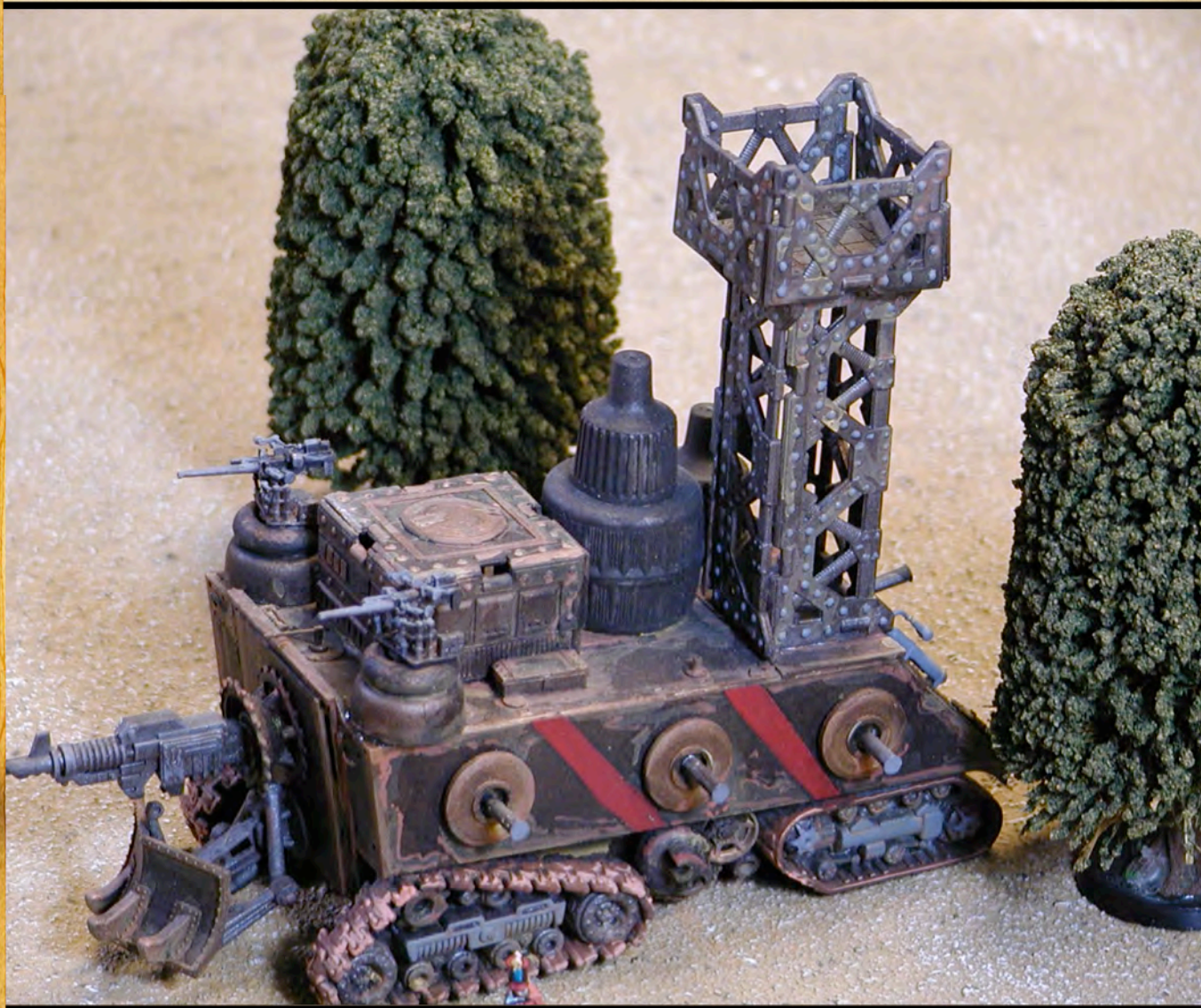


Leviathans



Steam Powered War
Avalon Games



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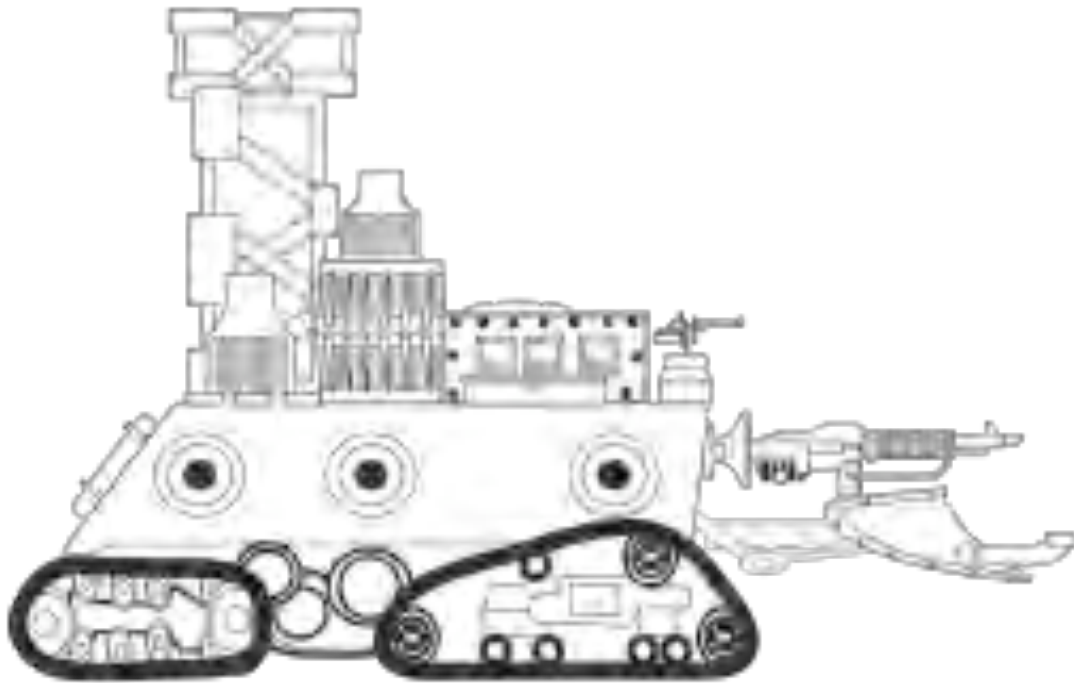
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Thomas Monroe kept his shoulders back and his spine straight, a mirror of nearly a thousand other soldiers that were in his brigade. The light rain that had, along with the cannon fire, persisted since the morning had succeeded in soaking its way completely through his travel worn coat of gray wool. The report of the cannons sounded again, a deafening crash of iron thunder to precede the coming storm of battle. With each echoing cannonade there was an almost imperceptible spasm amongst the assembled infantry as each man imagined the deadly iron canisters crashing home with deadly effect amongst their own lines.

Behind the troops who had already assembled, long lines of soldiers still snaked their way forward across the battlefield, assembling into ranks of stern, frightened faces, nervously holding their positions; waiting for the attack to be sounded. Behind them came the Leviathans, the heart and muscle of the army. Huge metal monstrosities clanked and churned forward, occasionally belching gouts of smoke into the air, each erupting cloud of black punctuated with a high sharp whistle that grated the ears.

There was little aside from his height to distinguish Thomas from the rest of his unit. His uniform was the same stained gray coat and trousers as each of the men around him wore. The faces that stared forth from the battle line, while all wildly different in appearance, held three elements that made them seem much like Thomas's own: Fear, hunger, and steel. These were the men of the Fighting 25th, seasoned veterans who knew their business. They had been charged with anchoring the left of the battle line.

These soldiers had been marching and fighting across the front lines of the conflict for close to six months. Supply lines had become tangled, been raided, and then disappeared. The soldiers scavenged and foraged for what they could, but soon enough men were falling from ranks while on the march, collapsing from malnutrition and exhaustion. In battle these men had learned all too well the awesome destructive force of the Leviathans', the painful cries of dying friends and the howl of artillery, learned to fear them, and this is also where they gained their steel.

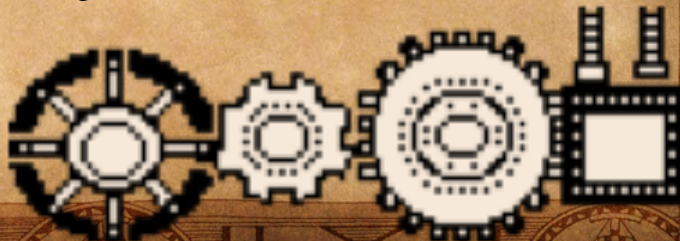
A man can only stare death in the eye with terror in his heart so many times, Thomas thought to himself as his eyes flickered briefly to right and left, looking at the faces of friends and comrades in arms for what could be the last time. As he did so, with a startling suddenness the cannon fire, at least that originating from their side of the field, stopped. A trumpet blasted out three quick notes, the signal for his unit to move forward at an even pace.

At this clarion call the line, three hundred men long and three deep, shouldered their muskets and set forth in step. Thomas fixed his eyes forward, his heart hammering to escape his chest. In the distance, across rolling hills that were once lush farmland but had been trampled, blasted, and stained in blood over the past two days fighting, Thomas saw the low slung barricades of the enemy atop a hill that stood higher than the others. The position they would be taking.

In front of Thomas the enemy, hunched men in crimson coats, scurried back and forth behind their defenses, which loomed closer with each measured step of his company. Soon they would come in range, Thomas knew, all too soon. Behind Thomas, he heard the thunderous rattle of the Leviathan steam tanks as they churned to murderous life, ready to support the push wherever the attack might falter.

When they stood a little less than a hundred paces from the defenders, musket shot began to pour down upon them. Though inaccurate, the sheer volume of fire dropped the men around Thomas with startling regularity. With screaming, bloody bodies laying scattered across the ground for twenty yards behind them, the sergeant in charge of Thomas's company finally bellowed above the sounds of the battlefield. With a voice that had turned into a bark from twenty years of shouting orders across parade grounds, drill yards, barracks and battlefields he commanded "Company halt!" With a unison thud each of the men around Thomas came to a stop. "Ready." Three hundred muskets rose to three hundred shoulders. "Aim." A moment of breathless silence seized the battlefield. "Fire! Charge! For King and country!"

The muskets roared, the sound leaving Thomas's ears ringing and releasing a massive plume of smoke that made it impossible to see if his shot had found its mark. For half a second the world froze, then a bullet slapped into the chest of Henry, the soldier just to the left of Thomas, staining his gray uniform as crimson as those of their foes. Then Thomas was sprinting across the last fifty yards of ground separating him from his foes. When his hearing returned slightly Thomas was surprised to hear his own voice screaming out the same wordless battle cry of the men around him, a howl filled with fear and a desperate will to survive, to triumph.



The dash across the remaining terrain was a task of eight terrified seconds that stretched into hours in Thomas's brain as bullets streaked by him. With startling suddenness Thomas found himself at the barricade that separated his unit from the red coats. A sallow faced man with an unshaven face confronted him immediately, snarling and thrusting for his stomach with a bayonet. Thomas brought his own musket across his body to parry the blow, deflecting it harmlessly to the side. With his backstroke Thomas slammed the butt of the musket into the side of the man's face, sending him sprawling bonelessly to the ground.

Ignoring his fallen foe, counting on one of the men behind him to finish the job, Thomas clambered awkwardly over the barricade, falling a few feet into the shallow trench dug behind it. All around him men in crimson and men in gray struggled and died. Screams and shouts were a constant, and the acrid smell of burnt gunpowder assaulted his nose, blocking out all other smells. The ground was soaked in blood, transformed into thick red mud that offered no sure footing.

Thomas next grappled with an anonymous red coated soldier who tried awkwardly to tackle him. As he wrestled with his assailant, a lanky older man who kept trying to drive his knee into Thomas's nether regions or gut, an unmistakable crash came from further down to the trench to Thomas's left, followed by screams.

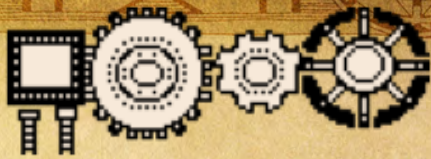
The blows and grappling of moments before were forgotten by both Thomas and his nameless assailant. The pair paused and looked towards the sound that could only be a Leviathan. Throughout the length of the trench men in gray coats, Thomas's friends and comrades who had been winning the day, were turning and running away. Driven to retreat by an iron plated, boxy Leviathan that rolled into the trench on six wheels, had an almost absurdly large cannon pointed forward and Gatling guns on its flanks. Once in position the Leviathan's gunners set to work with their Gatling guns to deadly effect, spraying death up and down the trench.



Watching his comrades fall spurting red and seeing a path of shot impacts tracing their way towards him along the ground, Thomas regained his composure startlingly quickly and jerked his red coated foe between himself and the metal giant, a human shield. The lanky soldier Thomas faced rained blows down on Thomas's head and shoulders, desperate to break his grip. Though dazed by this assault, Thomas held his grip until three heavy thuds battered the red coat's body, now limp and boneless, into his own.

Thomas, already on his knees from his struggle with the Red Coat, was bowled over onto his back from the impact. He found himself sinking into the mud of the trench while hot red blood pumped from the body above him. The steady sharp reports of the Gatling gun continued while Thomas frantically struggled to free himself from the muck and the dead weight that pushed him down. The stench of mud and rancid water filled Thomas's nostrils and his muscles jerked frantically, beating against the ground and the dead body above him like a crazed drummer. Then, over the din of the Gatling gun, the distant sounds of musket and cannon fire, and the screams and battle cries of the men around him in the trench a deafening roar blasted that once again left Thomas's ear's ringing. Adrenaline surging, Thomas heaved the fresh corpse off of himself and forced his body to its feet. Pain pulsed in every corner of his being from the bruises and cuts that already covered Thomas, in the heat of battle this distraction was muted, shoved to an idle corner of Thomas's brain so he could focus on the much more immediate need to survive. Back on his feet an awe inspiring sight confronted Thomas.





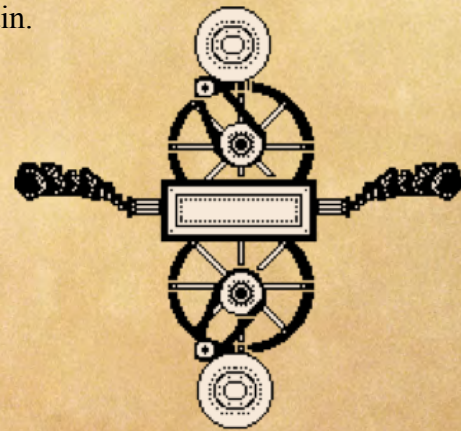
The two metal titans clashed, smoke billowing forth from both in massive billows as the engineers worked overtime to draw forth power. A second Leviathan, this one sent in support of Thomas's routed unit, had taken the field. Different from the red coats wheeled monstrosity, the gray coat's walker moved on six legs, nimbly skittering spider-like from side to side to avoid its foes cannon. Three other appendages protruded menacingly from the bulbous hull atop these six legs, at the end of each of these wavering arms was a steel lance.

The red coat's Leviathan wheeled its cannon from side to side, trying to track this new threat then with another deafening blast fired. For a heart-seizing second Thomas thought they had been on target. The shot bounced off of the circular hull atop the legs and sent the walker reeling drunkenly. The walker's legs moving to correct its balance more swiftly than Thomas would have believed possible for such a huge construct. With the cannon in the process of reloading the walker abandoned its previous dodging approach and ran full steam at its foe.

The Walker covered the distance in a matter of seconds, legs churning manically. For its part the tank began to wheel backwards, but its front tumbled into the trench at an awkward angle that left one tread spinning in the air. Concentrated gatling gun fire, poured on by the helpless crew of the tank, pinged off of the Walker as it covered the last of the ground separating it from its foe. Once in place the spider like Leviathan drove its lances down into the immobile tank again and again, crashing through the vehicles armor plating with a harsh metallic screeching. Stabbing until the tank resembled a bleeding pin cushion and the lances emerged coated in red.



Steam poured out of the tank's shattered hull, a huge pillar that lasted only moments and briefly obscured the walker before it advanced, on to find other foes. Thomas' grey shirted companions were swarming back into the ditch, a new battalion taking their places atop the casualties of the initial charge and hold the ground they had gained. Thomas joined them, taking up a spot on the trench wall facing the redcoats command. Several hundred of his foes fled across the battlefield, the spear armed leviathan charging after and amongst them, skewering fleeing foes like a demented tailor. A cheer boiled up out of his throat. Victory! Life! One more day, and another chance to fight to live again.



Introduction

Leviathan offers a simple to play set of rules for the construction and engagement of steam-powered war machines and the infantry which support them. Based loosely on the Victorian steam punk genre, the system is designed to allow players a flexible system for building and setting up battles for these forces. The game is designed to allow players to kit bash whatever sort of Steam Tank they want, allowing their imaginations to run free and their modeling skills to really take hold.

Fully designed to allow players to use whatever figures and miniatures they have on hand, the system is meant to allow players all the freedom they need, while giving them simple to follow guidelines and a system for waging steam-powered war.

Getting Started

Players should start by picking a scenario. The scenario includes instructions for the players to select their forces and constructing their Steam Tanks. Once both players have decided on their respective battle forces they should follow the instructions in the scenario for setting up the battlemat, defining battlefield boundaries, placing terrain features, placing units, etc. Players are now ready to begin.

At the start of each turn both players roll 1D20. The player with the highest roll becomes Player 1. Both players then determine the number of steam points available by rolling 1D6 for each of their functional Steam Tanks. The result of each die roll is added to the number of steam points generated by the tank's boiler. The players place markers on the Data Sheets for each Steam Tank indicating the number of steam points it has for the turn.

In general, steam points cannot be saved from turn to turn. Any unspent steam points are lost once a player completes all actions for a tank. Tanks equipped with Improved Boiler Tanks are an exception. (See Improved Boiler Tanks under Steam Tank Construction: Miscellaneous Gear and Options.)

Player 1 then selects and activates one of their units. When they have completed all of the actions for the unit they places an Activated marker on it. (This can be any sort thing on hand, from glass beads to coins or dice) Player 2 then selects and activates one of their units, placing an Activated marker on it when the unit has completed its actions. Players continue alternating until all units for one player have Activated markers. The player with remaining unactivated units then proceeds to activate the remaining units, completing each unit's actions before selecting another unit. After all units

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have been activated the turn is complete. Players then begin a new turn by rolling to determine Player 1 and generating steam points. The game progresses by turns until the victory conditions outlined in the scenario are met by one of the players.

Order of Play

1. Roll 1D20 for initiative
2. Roll 1D6 for each tank
3. Indicate steam points for each tank
4. Player 1 activates a unit and conducts actions.
 - A. Reduce steam points as appropriate
 - B. Place Activated counter on unit.
5. Player 2 activates a unit and conducts actions.
6. Repeat steps 4-5 until one player has activated all units.
7. Player with remaining unit activates and conducts actions.
8. Repeat step 7 until all units have been activated.
9. Remove all Activated counters.
10. Begin a new turn.

Unit Types

Leviathan uses several different types of units which can be divided into two basic categories: Infantry and Steam Tanks.

Infantry units represent all non-Steam Tank forces, including foot soldiers, cavalry and artillery. Each unit is represented by one or more stands. Each stand may contain one or more figures. Figures represent anything from a single officer to a group of soldiers or a cannon and crew.

Steam Tank units represent a single, steam-powered war machine. The term Steam Tank is generally applied to any steam-powered machines, ranging from small two-man tanks with a single gun to lumbering leviathans with a crew of ten and a dozen weapons. It can even apply to steam-powered flying machines. Each figure represents a single machine.

Base Size

All units in the game must be set on a standard sized base. All Infantry bases are square. Steam Tank bases can vary. The following base sizes are recommended for each unit type.

Foot Soldiers:

Officer (On foot or mounted):

Cavalry:

Artillery:

Small Steam Tanks:

Medium Steam Tanks:

Large and Huge Steam Tanks:

Figures on a 40mm base; three stands per unit

One figure per 20mm base.

Figures on a 40mm base; two stands per unit

One cannon per 40mm base, includes crew

One per 50mm base

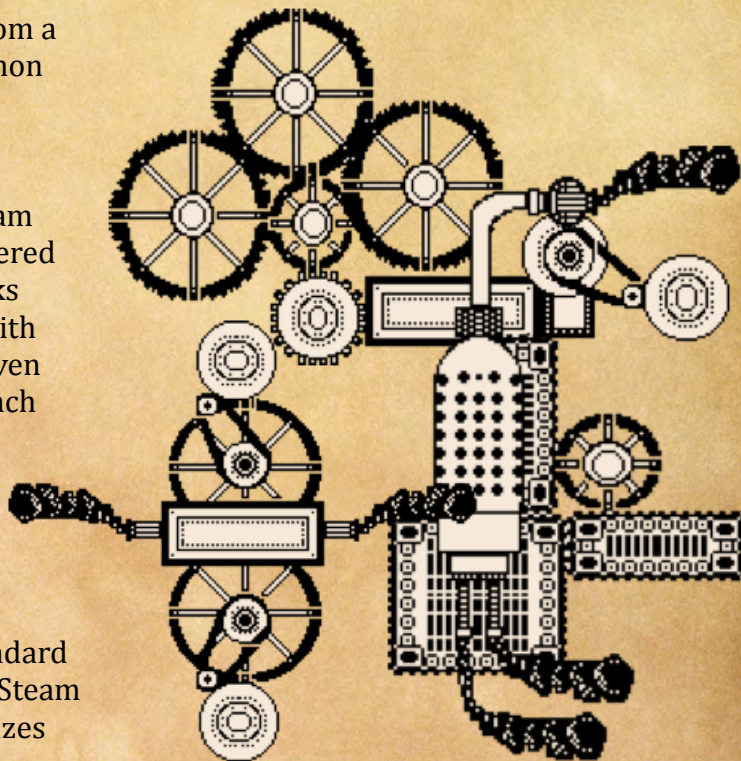
One per 50mm x 100mm base

One per base. (Base dimensions can vary. They should be big enough to fit the figure.)

These bases sizes work best for 1/72 scale or 15mm Infantry figures although figures of any scale can be used.

The army sprawled out across the hill like a massive serpent.

Iron plated Leviathan's trudging forward in the lead with ranks of massed infantry behind them. In the distance the artillery thundered.



"For King and Country!" The lieutenant's voice rang out in time with the trumpet sounding the charge. With a cry that howled out like one voice the Fighting 25th rushed forward across the battlefield,