

SUPPLEMENT 12: OPTIONAL RULES FOR STRATAGEMS, PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE & RANDOM EVENTS.

STRATAGEMS.

Following on from the extra army lists already released, this supplement to “Death in the Dark Continent” includes some optional rules for stratagems which are specific to certain armies, and so have not been covered in the main rules. These cover the sort of trickery that enabled less well equipped, well organised or numerous peoples to hold their own against their enemies by relying on psychology or superior local knowledge. They can add interest and local colour to a game, and what is more they can allow players to field tribal armies consisting of figures which are relatively cheap in points, without having to buy excessive numbers of them.

The business of deciding who can use these stratagems is highly subjective, and so to avoid unnecessary wrangling we restrict ourselves to the handful listed below, and permit each of these only to the armies which we judge to have been most likely to use them. This is admittedly rather arbitrary, and means that many armies - especially colonial ones - cannot use stratagems, but that is not really a serious disadvantage as they will not always justify the points spent on them in any case. The occasional army which is listed under more than one stratagem can choose which one to use at the start of each game, but cannot employ more than one in the same encounter.

Each stratagem costs 50 points, and must be decided on (and paid for out of the usual points allowance for the relevant scenario) before the game starts. It is only fair to set up the terrain and decide on the scenario first, though, as some stratagems will be pretty useless in some circumstances. An allied contingent may not make use of a stratagem unless it is also permitted to the main army. If two opposing players choose the same stratagem, they cancel each other out and the results are ignored. If they choose different options, both have their usual effects.

Surprise:

Some African armies were particularly good at making use of their knowledge of the terrain to lure invaders into ambushes, and this was a popular way for poorly armed forces to even the odds. If a player is using the Surprise option, he may always deploy at least 3 of his units in ambush unless he is the attacker in an “Ambush” scenario. At least 1 of these units may be placed anywhere in suitable cover in the player’s own half of the table, even if the scenario would normally prohibit ambushes or restrict them to a smaller deployment area.

Only these armies may choose Surprise: **West Coast Chiefdoms (List 2). Ashanti (List 4). Azande (List 9). Jungle Cannibals (List 10). Pygmies (List 11). Warrior Herdsmen (List 16). Kikuyu (Eastern Highlanders, List 37). Xhosa (List 41). Bushmen (List 42). Beja (List 53). Bari (List 69).**

Scouting:

This option represents the deployment of advanced patrols to scout an enemy’s position and give warning of his intentions. Armies containing a lot of Light Horse are especially good at this, but men on foot may be equally effective if well organised and trained. Note that - with one exception - colonial armies do not benefit from this option, even if employing scouts from one of the peoples listed below. This is because such scouts were not always trustworthy, and not always believed if they were. Furthermore, as Lord Chelmsford observed shortly before coming unstuck himself, “Natives always know when an enemy is in the bush, but they often forget to report it, thinking the white men know as well as themselves”. The exception is the British in Matabeleland and Mashonaland in the 1896 rebellion, during which men like Baden Powell, Burnham and Selous developed the art of military scouting to a new level.

If a player chooses Scouting, his opponent must declare at the start of the game the identity of any units which he has kept off table as late arrivals, and the table edge which they are to arrive on. At this point the Scouting player may also nominate up to 2 of the terrain pieces on the table, and require his opponent to

immediately deploy any troops which have been deployed in ambush in or behind them. They cannot now count as in ambush for the purpose of inflicting morale tests.

Scouting is permitted to the following armies: **Azande (List 9). Pygmies (List 11). Warrior Herdsmen (List 16). Boers & Basters (List 23). Kipsigis (Eastern Highlanders, List 37). Sotho & Tswana (List 39). Somalis & Danakil (List 51). Borana (Gallas, List 52). Herero & Nama (List 56). Kamba (List 64). British in Matabeleland & Mashonaland (List 72).**

Terror:

Other people enjoyed a particularly terrifying reputation (whether deserved or not), which meant that their opponents were often half beaten before a battle started. Of course everyone liked to think that they were scary, and many tribes used a combination of warpaint, noise and spectacular headgear to intimidate their enemies, but we restrict this stratagem to those who were known to be able to “walk the walk” as well. (A partial exception is the Ngoni, some of whom were genuinely fearsome, while others were the notorious “donkeys in the skins of lions” whose resemblance to Zulus was purely skin deep.)

If a player chooses this option, all his opponent’s units - apart from Elites, Muzungus, field guns, machine guns and gunboats - which are on the table at the beginning of the game must take a morale test before the start of the first turn. Soldiers cannot ignore this test because they are in square or holding a fortified position, but it can be cancelled as normal by the influence of a Chief (for which see page 24 of the rules). Vulnerable units which come on as late arrivals must also test, as soon as they are placed on the table.

This stratagem is permitted to the following armies: **Dahomey (List 5). Touareg (List 6). Kusu, Soko & Fan (Jungle Cannibals, List 10). Masai (List 17). Mirambo (Ruga-Ruga, List 18. This option is only allowed if the points are paid for Mirambo as an Outstanding Chief.) Ngoni etc. (List 19). Matabele (List 21). Zulus (List 22, not Swazis). Nandi (Eastern Highlanders, List 37).**

Drums:

Although drums were widely used in Africa for summoning men to war, their employment on the battlefield to demoralise the enemy was less common. We restrict this option to the great camel-mounted kettledrums of the Islamic savannah armies, and to the Central African kingdoms of Buganda, Rwanda and Burundi. (The Baganda relied on them so heavily that individual drums were sometimes credited with the conquest of an enemy’s country!) The Ruga-Ruga of Nyungu-ya-Mawe supplemented their drums with bells attached to their ankles, which apparently had a similar effect. An army which is allowed this option may beat its drums at the start of the morale phase of any 1 turn in a game. The result is to force all affected enemy units to take an immediate morale test. It affects all non-Elite opponents who are at least partly within 24 inches of the Chief of the army using the stratagem.

Only these armies may use drums: **Hausa-Fulani (List 7). Buganda (List 8). Mahdist (List 14). Nyungu-ya-Mawe (Ruga-Ruga List, No. 18). Rwanda & Burundi (List 48). Bornu (List 58). Bagirmi (List 59). Wadai & Darfur (List 60).**

Witchcraft:

Most African societies were more or less obsessed with witches, but a few tribes enjoyed a particularly fearsome reputation for sorcery. An army using this option must provide a witchdoctor figure, who moves and is shot at like a Chief base. He always counts as a Skirmisher for these purposes, but cannot shoot, and is automatically killed if contacted by an enemy in hand-to-hand combat. Like that of a Chief, his death causes a morale test for all friendly units within 24 inches. A witchdoctor can curse any 1 enemy unit which is at least partly within 8 inches of his figure in the morale phase of each turn. The effect of this is to force it to take a morale test, though this can be cancelled by the presence of a Chief or for other causes in the usual way (see page 24 of the rules). Witchcraft does not affect Pygmies, Muzungus, gunboats, field guns or machine guns, or Elite Soldiers, Heavy Cavalry or Light Horse (though all these must still test for the death of a friendly witchdoctor). All troops in a **Bena Riamba (List 63)** or a **Wanga army (List 65,**

Kavirondo, Wanga option only) are also immune to the effects of witchdoctors.

Only these armies are considered to be sufficiently notorious for their reliance on witchcraft to justify this stratagem: **Villagers (List 1). Benin (West Coast Chiefdoms, List 2). Jungle Cannibals (List 10). Ruga-Ruga (List 18, not Mirambo or Nyungu-ya-Mawe). Yoruba (List 35). Pedi (List 40). Barotse (List 50).**

Pantomime Cows:

The use of tempting bait such as a herd of cattle to lure an enemy into a trap was a time-honoured stratagem, and any army can attempt to employ its baggage in this way. However it was not always necessary to risk real cattle in order to decoy an over-enthusiastic opponent. Zulus and their kin generally carried shields made from cowhides which retained their natural colours, and so from a distance a military formation might easily be mistaken for harmless beasts - a fact which the Zulus especially were fond of exploiting.

In any scenario, whether or not they are required to field a baggage train, the armies listed below may deploy up to 3 baggage bases or groups of bases consisting of cattle models. One of these will be the real baggage where this is compulsory, but the others are decoys. A decoy represents one of the army's Warrior or Skirmisher units, and a slip of paper should be placed underneath it stating the identity of the unit concerned. It is replaced by the actual unit as soon as it wishes to move, or any enemy approaches within 4 inches of it. When it is replaced none of the unit's bases may be placed nearer to an enemy than the nearest point of the baggage base. An enemy does not need to test morale for being ambushed when the unit is revealed.

Only the following armies are considered to have the right combination of equipment and attitude to pull this trick off: **Ngoni (List 19). Matabele (List 21). Zulus & Swazis (List 22). Hehe (List 38). Xhosa (List 41). Hlubi (List 68, not Phuthi).**

RANDOM EVENTS.

These optional rules are intended to reflect some of the unique problems which could affect armies and war parties operating in the hostile African environment. There are two kinds of events - those which occur before the battle begins and may affect the deployment or tactics of one side either favourably or unfavourably, and unpredictable disasters which can befall one or both of the combatants at any time. Players may agree to use either or both of these provisions, or even to ignore particular results if they seem inappropriate for the game scenario.

Pre-Game Dicing.

Each player throws a D20 at the beginning of the first turn of the game, after the setup procedure has been completed and on-table troops deployed. "Flood" applies to both sides, other results only to the side which diced for them.

Dice Score	Event
1 - 16:	Nothing.
17:	Flood.
18:	Thirst.
19:	Funga Safari!
20:	Bullets Turn To Water.

Flood. If either player gets a "Flood", any "Thirst" result his opponent may get at the same time is cancelled. For the whole of the game all rivers and marshes are impassable, boats other than gunboats cannot be used, and gunboats cannot travel upstream. All gullies must have a stream running along the bottom, and all crops also count as marsh.

Thirst. One side has failed to find any water at its last camp, and has spent a thirsty night. By morning all its units are exhausted and can march only with difficulty. While a unit is in this state, any 6 which is thrown on its movement dice is counted as a 1. (A similar effect might of course be produced by an excess of certain other liquids, but the same rule can still apply.) A unit ceases to be thirsty (or hung-over) and returns to normal movement as soon as a Cloudburst occurs, or once any of its bases have spent one full turn in contact with a water feature (including a marsh - they can't afford to be fussy!) **Touaregs (List 6), Bushmen (List 42), and Somalis & Danakil (List 51)** were exceptionally well adapted to hostile conditions and proud of their ability to survive on much less food and water than most people, so this event does not apply to them, whether fighting in their own armies or as allies.

Funga Safari! One of your followers has invented a new marching song, which puts fresh heart into your tired men. Such songs were a well known device for maintaining the enthusiasm of the askaris in colonial armies, and there is no reason to suppose that irregular native warriors were any different. ("Funga Safari!" was the favourite march of the King's African Rifles.) The singers would often comment freely on the personal characteristics of any white "Bwanas" in the vicinity, who were obliged to put up with it in the interests of morale. The effect of this is to allow one unit in the affected army to move the score of an extra D6 in inches for each of the next 2 turns only, in addition to its normal allowance. However a unit cannot do this if it starts within 12 inches of any visible enemy, or if the move will take it closer to visible enemy than 3 inches.

Bullets Turn To Water. A witchdoctor has produced a potion which he claims will turn enemy bullets into water, and so make his tribe's fighters invulnerable to firearms. All troops in the affected army (including allied contingents) can ignore disorder results from shooting hits by guns (including field guns and machine guns, but not rockets) until any unit on their side has lost a base, either to shooting by firearms (including rockets), or in hand-to-hand combat against an enemy equipped with them. Once this happens the men will realise that the magic does not work, and all normal results apply from next turn onwards. This result applies only to the following armies, and is ignored if rolled by anyone else:

Villagers (List 1). Ashanti (List 4). Dahomey (List 5). Jungle Cannibals (List 10). Masai (List 17). Ruga-Ruga (List 18). Ngoni etc. (List 19). Matabele (List 21). Zulus & Swazis (List 22). Eastern Highlanders (List 37). Hehe (List 38). Xhosa (List 41). Lunda (List 49). Beja (List 53). Herero & Nama (List 56). Bushongo (List 62). Kamba (List 64). Bari (List 69).

Random Events During The Game.

If this option is used, one player only throws a D20 at the start of every turn after the first, to see if there are any random events occurring this turn:

Dice Score	Event
1 - 15:	Nothing.
16:	Hippo.
17:	Wild Animal.
18:	Killer Bees.
19:	Cerebral Malaria.
20:	Cloudburst.

Hippo. The hippopotamus is often described as the most dangerous animal in Africa, though it is usually only aggressive if its route to water is blocked, or if a frustrated bull hippo mistakes a boat for a rival. If there are no water features other than streams (but including marshes) on the table, this result is ignored. Otherwise, if there are any canoes in the water when this result occurs, one of them (chosen at random from both sides if necessary) is smashed in by an irate hippo and all embarked troops are drowned or eaten by crocodiles. If there are no canoes, a randomly selected dhow or gunboat will be attacked instead. This is too big to sink, but will be brought to a halt for one turn by the impact. If there are no vessels in the water, place a hippo model on the table at random (determined by the standard method of dividing two table edges into tenths and throwing a pair of ten-sided dice). Then draw a straight line from the model to the nearest

point of a water feature (excluding streams, but including marshes). The beast will immediately run to the water by this quickest route, inflicting 2 disorder markers on every unit it passes through. We assume that it all happens too quickly for anyone to shoot it before it does any damage.

Wild Animal. Like the previous one this rule might seem like a bit of a caricature, but wild animals were known to interfere with military operations in the wilder parts of Africa. The explorers Capello and Ivens, Cameron and Thomson all had their caravans routed by buffalo, and in the First World War one participant described the operations in the Tsavo area, where lions and rhinos were especially serious hazards, as "like fighting in a zoo". On one occasion an irate rhino, disturbed by the sound of a firefight between a British and a German patrol, charged and routed both sides in turn. If this result is rolled, an appropriate wild animal model - a rhino or buffalo, for example, or perhaps a gorilla if in Forest terrain - is placed at a random point on the table, decided as explained for hippos, above. If this point happens to be in open terrain the beast is assumed to have already seen the approaching combatants in time to make its escape, so nothing happens. However if the point selected is in jungle, bush, tall grass, crops or marsh, place the model there. Now dice for the direction of the wind. The best way to do this is to throw what are generally known as "wind dice", with an arrow painted on each side, or alternatively you can use an improvised clock-face method.

So the poor beast is suddenly startled out of its siesta by the sound or scent of humans, and charges the nearest base of those within 45 degrees either side of directly upwind of it - ie. towards the direction the wind is coming from. It moves at 3 D6 inches per turn, regardless of the terrain. This move takes place immediately, before anyone else on either side has moved. If the animal reaches the target base its unit cannot move to avoid it, but fights it hand-to-hand using the normal procedure. In the first turn the creature is on the table, only a base which is facing in the right direction and within 3 inches may shoot at it, always counting as at effective range. In subsequent turns the alarm has been raised, and anyone who would normally be eligible to shoot may do so. A wild animal can be killed by shooting in the normal way, except that as it has very thick skin, weapons other than elephant guns, field guns and machine guns must deduct 2 from their shooting dice. It fights hand-to-hand in the normal way, adding +4, but counting no other modifiers. In every turn after the first it continues to act in exactly the same way, charging the nearest base within 45 degrees of upwind. If there is no eligible target, it will rush straight upwind until it either finds one or leaves the table.

Killer Bees. Like most of the continent's wild creatures, it seems, African "killer" bees and wasps are notoriously bad-tempered, and their intervention in a battle (as at Tanga in 1914) could be very unpleasant for all concerned. Choose one unit at random from all those on the table (on both sides). If the unit chosen did not move at all last turn, or has no figures within 6 inches of any cover, or consists of Pygmies or Bushmen, it will be safe, so ignore it and choose another one. A clumsy fellow belonging to the selected unit has disturbed a nest of bees, which swarm out of their treetop hive and begin stinging him and his companions. This unit, and any others on either side which have any bases within 2 inches of it when the result occurs, immediately receives 4 disorder markers. These can be removed by rallying in the usual way.

Cerebral Malaria. The sudden onset of cerebral malaria - often mistaken for sunstroke - could occasionally fell unacclimatised Europeans as quickly as a bullet. If a player getting this result has any Muzungus in his army, one such base is removed from play immediately (dice for which one is affected if he has more than one). This does not count as a combat casualty, however, and does not cause a morale test, as the collapse of yet another of these feeble strangers is no surprise to the natives. All other troops are unaffected even if they are white men, as by our period organised military units usually had plenty of quinine available for the brief campaigns which they undertook in malarial zones.

Cloudburst. A sudden tropical downpour soaks everyone on both sides, turning loose gunpowder into a soggy mess. Field guns, rockets, and men armed with muskets or elephant guns suffer a -3 shooting penalty this turn and next. Furthermore no shooting is permitted during the next two turns with any weapons at ranges beyond 12 inches, because the driving rain reduces visibility. All gullies count as having streams running along the bottom for the rest of the game.

LIST AMENDMENT.

LIST 45). PRAZEIROS ETC. Add the following note:

“Chikunda cannot have Soldiers or cannon, or and breech-loader armed figures apart from a Light Horseman Chief, but can equip up to 1 Elite Skirmisher unit with elephant guns as “Nkombalume” elephant hunters (14 points).”