

From: "David L. Richtmyer" <dlrichtm@UMICH.EDU>
Subject: LUFTSCHIFF was PERELLO'S EDITORIAL

Doug,

I've been playing Luftschiff (which I picked up at Origins) and having a blast. Now, I'm a rigid airship nut, but even for someone who is not this is one great game/simulation. There is nothing in the rules that is particularly out of the ordinary, though it doesn't use hexes or areas. The basic mechanics are simple, but you do have to dig in Mr. Eklund's rules to find out everything. The rules organization is printed in many tiny fonts and is somewhat confusing; I'd say that an editor would work wonders for this game). But it is well worth the work (I even went so far as to color the RNAS and RAF planes to get some visual color in what is otherwise a pure white game). The game is exciting, you have many decisions to make every turn, and it is an excellent sim of lighter than air flight. In one game (1914 Von Tirpitz raid on London) I got savaged by RNAS fighters on the way over the Channel, but made it to the coast by nightfall with just a few cells leaking gas. Surprisingly, I found the primary target soon into the Hostile 10 card deck, and the fighter defence was almost non-existent. But what the RAF couldn't do Mother Nature did: I ran into a big rainstorm that lowered my lift to the point that I was just about 800 meters above England. Got back over the Channel, and had just begun to gain lift again, when I ran into *another* storm. This time we got down to *150* meters above the water before we began to rise again, and I came within a hair of reaching the 350 meter implosion inertia rate. We had to dump everything overboard: all machine guns, spares for the cells and the engines, the radio, etc. etc. It was nip and tuck as to whether my intrepid band of Luftschiff Manner would see Valhala or not. Of course, just then the RNAS found us and began to hound our wounded Zep. They were within striking distance before we got back to our Tondern sheds (and the light flak that protects it). This was the first mission I had won in about a half dozen tries.

It's just too bad that CoA won't take this one and give it the Rick Barber treatment. You will really appreciate what those LZ crews went through, and how hard it is to control a Zep (though they are surprisingly tough customers--they can take quite a lot of abuse and still keep on flying).

Give it a try, you won't be disappointed.

David

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From: Doug Murphy <dmurphy@WPPOST.DEPAUL.EDU>
Subject: LUFTSCHIFF

>>> David L. Richtmyer <dlrichtm@UMICH.EDU> 09/03/96 12:37pm >>>

(I even went so far as to color the RNAS and RAF planes to get some visual color in what is otherwise a pure white game).

What an outstanding idea. I played this game for the first time last evening solitaire (inspired and accompanied by the airships documentary on the History Channel) and had a blast. It is indeed a very different feel

than an average "air" game and such an incredible improvement over S&T's Zeppelin...I was up and playing in no time. While David is right in that you have to dig a bit through the rules, there are plenty of examples and once you play a few turns, you get the hang of it.

Getting the hang of flying the Zepp is another story entirely. I played the introductory scenario, taking a Type R with Mathey to bomb London in '17. I took a long time to reach 1000 feet as I was getting the hang of using the elevators / ballast / engines. I was initially lucky in Situation Cards (which scroll across the elevation map depending on your airspeed and representing the passage of sea, hostile land and sea again) until nearly to the coast when a series of rain storms caused me to descend to barely 500 feet...ran smack into a Type M destroyer with searchlight and ack-ack. After he holed a few gas cells, I decided discretion was the better part of valor, dumped everything trying for altitude and ran for home, chased by the DD. Just as I was pulling up and away ran into St. Elmo's Fire which lit up the leaking gas. Kaboom! Fell into the sea in flames. Bet that DD felt smug.

Doug Murphy

From: s0590851@let.rug.nl (M.R. Murkes)
Subject: Luftschiff review by Sierra Madre Games

It was requested that I put this on the board:

Forwarded message:

From: dlrichtm@umich.edu (David L. Richtmyer)
To: PHILEKLUND@aol.com
Date: 96-08-18 18:13:35 EDT

Phil,

Just wanted to let you know that I finally won Luftschiff's 1914 Von Tirpitz raid, and a blast it was. This after trying that scenario maybe a half dozen times. I'm impressed in that the game is an excellent simulation--so good that you literally must learn proper tactics to win the game. At any rate, things started out on this one poorly, as an RNAS raid and a shore-based 4th class fighter were amongst the first maritime cards out and savaged my rear end: the first cell (next to the tail) was completely relieved of gas and the next two in a row had at least one contaminating coin in their circles. I reached England after dark without much hope (I had, after all, lost all of those previous missions by running out of benzin, blowing up, falling into the Channel, etc. etc.), but low and behold the target appeared on the 3rd card! Further, that wasn't any Brit resistance except for some flak that only hit once. But what the locals failed to provide Mother Nature made up for: monstrous headwinds and then rain. Well, I finally made it back to the Channel and began reascending when another damned storm hit me. This time I was in real trouble, as I hadn't really made it back to altitude after the first one. Further, I had everybody up above trying to repair those leaky cells when the storm hit. It took a while to get some mechanics back into the gondolas to begin throwing stuff overboard. But then another RNAS raid hit; the aeroplane starting at the higher of the two RNAS starting squares, and because of my low altitude it didn't take him long to get up to my altitude. Well, he was loaded with LePrieur rockets, the observer had incendiary darts and one of the Hale rifle grenades, so no matter whether he flew above or below me he had good chance to ruin my first possibly successful mission, as I had plenty of contaminated cells in the last two areas for him to hit. I let him have it with two bursts from my bow gunner, which put paid to that gun, but killed the pilot and made any further attacks from the plane a moot point. By the time that little drama was over I was only 200 meters above the Channel. With the last bit of resistance gone I had my men throw *everything* overboard, and as I had

only one card to go I dumped most of my benzin as well. We only began to ascend again when I was within 50 meters of the ocean surface ...
Wouldn't you know that the last card produced another scout, but we outran him to the Lustschiff sheds for a most satisfying victory. Incidentally, I've found that my sail-maker guys ruin more cells than they repair: I roll a '6' more than I do a '1', for some damn reason!

A couple of suggestions:

Given that there are mechanics for hitting targets with bombs (on a die roll of '1'), why not allow a hit on a secondary or tertiary target count the same as finding both of the latter. A '1' is pretty difficult to roll with just two bombs on board, and in many cases I've only found *one* of the lower-valued targets over enemy territory, much less the primary ... pretty much a one-in-four chance.

Second, when there is only one RNAS raider I use the even-odd die roll (for single vs. two seat plane) as an indicator as to which of the two starting RNAS altitudes to use: 1-3 low altitude, 4-6 the higher (900 meters, if I remember right).

David

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***** <http://thok.let.rug.nl/mark/> *****
Mark R. Murkes | "I kissed the white rose,
Keeper of Ways | Tasted her crimson life
Dreamer of stories | Caressed with my every love
m.r.murkes@let.rug.nl | Wept when she did not survive"