

Command Magazine (The Chaco War)



Very Good Condition Punched Copy. Counters are bagged. Missing variant counters for "Red Sky Morning", "Alexandros" and "Hougomont". Rules are loose, removed from the magazine.

The Chaco War covers

Rating: Not Rated Yet

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Description

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The Chaco War covers the conflict of the same name between Bolivia and Paraguay from 1932-35. A single map depicts the desolate Gran Chaco region, while the 190 counters are split between division-sized units and game markers. Turns represent one month of time. The basic unit of the game is the infantry division, with several cavalry divisions thrown in. Also included are generals (of varying degrees of competence), trucks (to transport troops or supply), and a handful of armored, engineer and air units.

While most of TCW's rules are standard fare, there is one significant detail of the game -- supply -- that receives some unusual treatment. Both sides receive combat supply and replacements based on how long the supply lines are army HQ to a supply source. A die roll is made and a chart consulted for the result. The supply rules, while not overwhelming, are somewhat more involved than a typical wargame. However, as the game's designer points out, this is done so as to reflect the tenuous supply situation that existed in his out-of-the-way region. Remember, this isn't a typical war; besides, after a few turns the supply rules become less a mental effort and more a strategic concern, which is as it should be.

The game's CRT is quite bloody -- combatants take losses in percentages rather than set amounts, in increments of 10, 25 and 50 percent. Thus, bigger forces take increasingly bigger losses. Likewise, the terrain is hardly ideal for combat; almost every terrain-type (even clear) invokes some penalty on attacker, defender or both. Again, as with the supply rules, this brings home that fact that the Chaco War was a brutal fight in a brutal environment.

In addition to the campaign game, several smaller scenarios are offered. Despite the detail of the game's turns (in addition to the supply logistics, both sides get to opportunities to attack and a reaction turn as well, in addition to a political phase), the game plays rather fast, and players will find that they will want to play beyond the end of a given scenario, just to see what will happen next.

All in all, TCW offers a fine simulation on a remote conflict. While I wouldn't recommend this game for a beginner (while a beginner's game is offered, it lacks much of the chrome that makes TCW so appealing), it is a solid intermediate level game that will give players a good break from the usual wargaming "theaters," while also offering an interesting game system that matches the rugged nature of the Chaco War itself.