

First Air Battle of Britain: The Air War Over England, 1917-18



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Description

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The First Battle of Britain: The Air War Over England, 1917-18

First Battle of Britain (1BoB) is a two-player wargame of intermediate complexity covering the 1917-18 German bomber offensive against England, designed by S&T Editor Joseph Miranda. The objective is to score more morale points than your opponent. Historically the bombing inflicted little real damage on British cities in general or industry in particular. The attacks' psychological impact, however, was enormous: the campaign demonstrated Britain was vulnerable to outside invaders for the first time in a millennium. Victory is therefore determined based on the German player's ability to panic the British populace.

Each air unit represents a flight or squadron of aircraft. Each hexagon represents five miles from side to opposite side. Each "operational turn" represents one month. Each "flying turn" represents 20 minutes of flying time.

1BoB has three scenarios. Scenario 1 covers the situation in 1917, with both sides racing to build up their airpower. Scenario 2 covers 1918, with both sides at full strength. Scenario 3 covers the entire campaign from 1917 through 1918. Players who want to get right into a head-to-head contest of strength in the skies over England are advised to begin with Scenario 2. Experienced players will need about four hours to finish one of the yearly scenarios, while the campaign game will take about eight hours to finish.

Units include bombers and fighters, both carrier and land based, as well as Zeppelins, Royal Navy seaplane tenders and aircraft carriers, anti-aircraft artillery, aerodromes, civil defense and early warning. German formations and aircraft types included in the large-size iconic counter-mix (176 total), by famed artist Larry Hoffman, include the following: Albatross D-I, Fokker D-VII and Pfalz D-III fighters; the elite "England" and "Kagohl 3" bomber squadrons; along with plenty of Gotha and Riesen bombers. On the British side there are: Avro 504, Be-2, Be-12, Fe-2, Sopwith Camel, Sopwith Pup and Se5A fighters; along with DH-4, Handley Page and Strutter bombers. All planes are rated for air-to-air combat, pursuit, bombardment and speed. The game turn sequence is as follows:

Random Events Phase.

RAF Creation Phase. The British player may choose to create the Royal Air Force by expending the designated number of morale points.

Redeployment Phase. Both players may move any of their air units from any friendly aerodrome to any other friendly aerodrome

Reinforcement Phase. Both players may enter additional units by expending morale points.

Training Phase (optional). Both players may: a) note "Up" status on their squadron roster sheets; and/or b) train units for night operations.

Recon Phase. Each player declares and executes any recon missions.

Mission Preparation Phase (optional). The German player assigns bombing units to targets, and both players may assign fighters to patrol missions.

Gentlemen's War Phase. If both players decide not to conduct any missions, this month's flying turns are skipped and play proceeds to the start of the next monthly operational turn.

Flying Turns

Each month may have up to 24 flying turns. During each flying turn, the following occur in the sequence given below.

German Flying Turn

German Movement Phase. The German player may move any, some or all of his side's air units that are able to fly. German air units already aloft may land. If German air units enter hexes containing British anti-aircraft, AA combat may occur.

German Air-to-Air Combat Phase. If the German player has any flying air units in the same hexes as flying British air units, air-to-air combat is initiated.

German Bombardment Phase. If the German player has any bomber units over a target, those units may initiate bombardment.

British Flying Turn

British Movement Phase.

British Air-to-Air Combat Phase.

British Bombardment Phase.

Recycle. Repeat the flying turn procedures, first German then British, until all 24 flying turns are completed by both players, or until all air units of both sides have landed and no further air missions are to be flown, whichever comes first.