

BATTLE CATTLE

Rules Variant

Submitted By: Sheila Davis

When I was a guest at BenCon 2001, I ended up meeting Sheila Davis, an extremely nice lady that everyone kept telling me I had to meet. It ended up being that she is the biggest Battle Cattle marketing tool I have in the Denver, Colorado area. Even the retailers knew who she was. Though the variant below is not formatted wonderfully (my fault), I wanted to let people check out the intense work put forth by her to further the joys of bovine barnyard battles! - [Aldo](#), Owner, Wingnut Games

Battle Cattle Rules Variant

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Tractor rules:

The tractor acts as an extra-heavy BC with a moo-vement of 10. It has ** HP, no armor and cannot be tipped. It tramples at extra-heavy +1, and rams on extra heavy +1 on ramming chart. [** For 10,000 point cows the tractor has 75 points. For 15,000 point cows it has 125 points]

A BC must spend 3 MP to board the tractor then lose one turn to get it started. It takes 2 MP to leave a tractor intentionally, and 1 MP to shut it down (if desired).

The tractor moves like a BC, except you must go 1" forward for every forward turn. It takes 2 MP to reverse direction, but after that the tractor moves normally.

When targetting a BC ridden tractor, either the tractor or the BC must be targetted. The tractor offers -2 cover for a BC riding it. A grenade that hits the target does 1d less damage to a BC riding it (ignore the highest die).

A BC tipped while riding the tractor falls out of the tractor.

If the tractor is driverless (tipped or unconscious rider), it

continues at 1/2 speed for 1 turn then stops.

When the tractor "dies", roll 2 dice. On a 8+, the tractor explodes. A BC riding it takes 6d6 internal damage and is flipped somewhere on the field.

Cover rules:

If over 1/2 the target can be seen -1 dice

If less than 1/2 can be seen -2 dice

A flamethrower will ignite any flammable cover. Any BC closer than 1" to burning cover at the end of its move will take 1d6 damage internal as long as it remains there.

If using a live animal as cover, any shot that misses the target has a chance to hit the cover. Roll again at +1. All animals have 10 HP.

Stampedes:

Killing any member of an allied animal group will cause them to stampede away from the dead animal. All animals move at 7. When a stampede approaches, a BC in the way must lose a turn or roll TDN 2 times. If tipped, the BC takes trample damage from a light BC for each cow&horse that will hit it. Pigs will not stampede.

[County Fair Rule] The fences holding the animals are temporary, a stampede will move through it rather than around.

Pigs underfoot:

When moving through milling about pigs, the BC must move 1/2 MP or make a TDN roll.

[County Fair Greased Pig] The pig moves randomly at speed 7. It cannot be targetted by any weapon, nor can it be trampled by a tractor. It can only be trampled by a BC. Each turn trampled gains the side 20 points each. Four turns of tramples smushes the pig further trampling will not gain points. As with any other pig, the BC must move 1/2 MP or make a TDN.

Targetting:

+1 to hit on the sides.

Points:

+1/2 for each enemy BC armor damage done (rounded down).

+1 Point for each enemy BC internal damage done.

-1 Point for each allied BC internal damage done.

-20 Points for dead allied animals (cows, horses).

+15 Points for dead enemy animals (geese, chickens).

[Farmer Brown's Apples] +25 Points for each turn munching. There are 4 available bunches of munching. It takes at least 2 MP to munch and the BC can do nothing else that turn.

Fowl:

Move at 9 MP. They have 5 HP and a -1 modifier to hit.

Ramming:

Only total of last movement forward (45 degree turns do not interrupt the forward movement) counts towards the ram.

Trampling:

Damage is on up side only.

Armor & weapons:

Weapons are *not* destroyed when armor is.

Firing:

BC move during their turn, but may fire any time up until their next movement phase. The player receives a chit at the beginning of movement. When the BC fires, the chit is expended.

Starting Position:

Roll dice, pick starting position in order from highest to lowest.

[County Fair]:

Ferris Wheel:

It takes 3 MP to board the Ferris Wheel, and 2 to get off. The

Wheel can only be boarded from the loading area at the bottom. On the Ferris Wheel, the BC may only face towards one of the two sides. To change direction, it must get off, turn, and reboard.

The Ferris Wheel moves 1/2 rotation each turn.

A BC on the bottom half of the wheel is treated as standing in the open, no benefits. If tipped it falls off the Wheel with no extra damage.

A BC on the top half has its range doubled in each category. This range is measured from under the center of the Wheel at the ground level. A BC on the top half also has a cover of -2.

Multiple BC on the Ferris Wheel may not shoot each other (their weapons cannot be brought to bear).

If a BC is tipped while on the top half of the Wheel, it falls off the wheel and takes 3D6 internal damage.

Carousel:

It takes 3 MP to board the Carousel, and 2 to get off. Once on the Carousel, position the BC with one side facing outward.

The Carousel moves 1/2 rotation each turn.

The Carousel is considered to be moving throughout the turn. Thus a BC on it will have its outwardly facing side trace a fire arc of 270 degrees measured from the center of the Carousel. A BC on the Carousel has a cover of -1 at all times.

A cow tipped on the Carousel falls off with no extra damage. However, if the roll to hit/tip was a natural 12, the BC falls on the controls to the Carousel. This speeds it up causing all BC on it to fly horizontally outward 2D6 inches. The shooter may specify exactly where the Carousel is when he shoots, thus directing any possible flight. On landing, the BC takes 1D6 internal damage. If the BC hits an object in its flight, treat as a "cow-tapult". The Carousel will return to normal speed the following turn.

Midway: Should a cow find itself flung for any reason (exploding tractor, sped up Carousel, etc), the owner

may try to flip it so as to hit one of the midway games. The cow must come down onto the game (direct shots are disallowed). If successful, the flippee earns 25 points.

Tractor displays: Only 2 tractors in each display have the keys in them. Roll a die to determine if the keys are present. A BC must board the tractor to see if it has keys.

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As promised, here's the recap of the great Buttercup rescue, AKA Battle Cattle game at the Gathering. I apologize for any errors in attribution and missed events. As I mentioned before, I wasn't all there.

We had 8 players sign up for the game on Friday and when we made the general call to start, another 8-10 showed up. Unfortunately, we only had room for 12, so some interested players were forced to be spectators.

Background for those who've not heard it: Sometime in the near future, the Army experiments with cybernetic implants on cows to create the ultimate battlefield weapon. When funding is dropped, the Military sells the still equipped cows as military surplus. Farmer Brown is thrilled to get prime cattle at rock bottom prices.

Unfortunately, every time Farmer Brown heads off into town, the Battle Cattle take advantage of his absence to playfully blow each other up with heavy weaponry.

The scenario: Continuing destruction at the farm has wreaked havoc with Farmer Brown's finances. Sadly, he's forced to sell beautiful Buttercup, the barnyard sweetheart. The Battle Cattle will have none of this, so they plan a midnight raid at the sale barn.

Everyone knows, however, that Buttercup is a fickle heifer, and she'll only truly love the cow that actually rescues her. So there's incentive for the BC to, um, hinder any rivals.

With that introduction, the players selected the starting positions for their bovine assassins. Before even starting, several groups recognized the advantage of working together. On one corner of the field the IH Tractor Possee began their stealthy approach to the nearby display, while on the opposite corner,

the John Deere of Death crowd picked their vehicle of choice.

In the corner closest to where I sat, the concept of cooperation hadn't quite worked its way into the large bovine heads of the BCs. Consequently, before anything else could happen, they all shot at Cow Tse Tongue. A huge firefight erupted as endless Balkanesque revenge motivation overwhelmed any thought of rescuing or even finding Buttercup.

Sanity prevailed, though as the Deere 'o Death league lead by Moohatma started firing into the melee. It's amazing what a common enemy will do, and Tongue, Sir Loin and Moo-nie formed a quick alliance.

About this time a small flock of chickens took refuge behind the Dodge parked in front of the barn. Spot astutely noticed that the pickup had a tank for some sort of liquid on the back. He asked if the liquid was flammable. Well, it wouldn't be any fun if it weren't so I said yes. Every cow within firing range immediately opened up on the truck. The brand new 98 double wide was converted to Swiss Cheese before a lucky shot ignited the liquid and sent the chickens off to visit that big Colonel Sanders in the sky.

While everyone was busy frying chickens and smoking beef, no one noticed that Tewbie Inabun had worked his way to the barn and was sneaking inside. As soon as this was spotted, though, efforts were quickly made to beat him to the punch. Al and Tipper Gore along with Wellington, all started a pack of IH tractors and headed after the Tongue alliance. Moohatma, Spot and Rambovine opted for the single Tractor-tank and all climbed the same vehicle, also heading for Tongue and company.

The alliance beat a hasty retreat to the (relative) safety of the barn.

Inside, Tewbie was having a hard time finding Buttercup. The stalls were each clearly marked with the name of the heifer inside. Unfortunately, cows can't read. So Tewbie had to check each stall looking for his beloved bovine. Tongue and Moo-nie managed to slip into the barn behind Tewbie and started taking pot shots. Through another door came Rambovine hoping to take advantage of Tewbie's work and lead Buttercup away with his obvious studliness.

This is the point where one player (Wellington) proved what an evil man he is. He casually wandered over to where I was sitting and pointing to a tank like thing I had set up next to the barn asked, "Is that a gas tank, by chance?"

I replied "I dunno, what do you think it looks like?"

"I think it looks like a gas tank. If I shoot it what happens?"

I thought for some quick rules, "Let's see, if you hit it, and then if you roll an 8 on 2 dice, it will explode".

He did and he did and it did :-)

A turn later the barn was in flames. The BC trapped inside realized this was no time for petty arguments and heavy machineguns and called an immediate truce in an effort to rescue Buttercup.

Several players asked if the roof would collapse. That sounded like fun too, so I made up some more rules. I randomly rolled 1 die, looking for a result from 4-6. This would be the number of turns before the roof collapsed. I rolled a 4 but didn't tell anyone. The BC in the barn located Buttercup and chewed frantically at the ropes to free her.

Meanwhile, the tractor aficionados outside decided the best way to win fair Buttercup's hoof was to wipe out all opposition outside the barn and then pick off the stragglers as they exited. Grenades and machinegun bursts were exchanged when the Deere 'o Death discovered the wonders of driving very heavy farm machinery over rival cattle. Several BC were ground before Moohatma was shot from the driver's seat and the tractor crashed into the still burning pickup.

The would-be Buttercup rescuers finally managed to free their distressed love and beat a hasty retreat out of the conflagration. Rambovine couldn't pass on tossing off one last concussion grenade, though, knocking over not only his rivals, but Buttercup also. They managed to struggle to their hooves and head for the door. Moo-Nie and Rambovine made it out safely but then, tragedy struck.

Just as Cow Tse Tongue reached the exit with Buttercup a few feet behind, a terrible crash sound through the barnyard. The roof of the barn collapsed, burying the valiant hero and

his love in pile of burning timber.

A silence fell across field as the remaining BC realized what had just occurred. Sadly, they lowered their weapons and their heavy heads and slunk off into the night to grieve the loss fair Buttercup.

Actually, I called the game at that point or they would have shot at each other all night :-)

When points were totaled, the John Deere contingent came away with the Pyrrhic victory, and I laughed a great deal.

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Battle Cattle! We had 9 players show up this year, 3 of which were sub-10 yr olds, so I was very pleased with the turnout.

The scenario: Farmer Brown was perplexed by the destruction he'd find at his farm every time he returned from town ("Dagburned Kids!"). But the Military understood. It seemed the retired Battle Cattle were not quite read to be put out to pasture. And what better way to remove troublesome BCs that with more Battle Cattle? They chose as their battleground the Filmore County Fair where Farmer Brown was showing his prize cows. Complicating the operation was the matter of the secret plans. It seems that when Farmer Brown bought the retired BC, he got a lot of paper work with them. Mixed up in the papers were the plans for the next "secret weapon" (tm). Unfortunately, Pinky the pig, ate the plans. The Military couldn't allow the plans to fall into the wrong hands, so the military cows had as a secondary objective to stomp Pinky. Pinky being the agile little greased pig he was required 4 stomps to completely squish. For their part, Farmer Brown's cows always liked to stomp pigs, so they had the same objective. With that setting, the game began.

The military cows quickly showed their training and organization as they headed for the most useful terrain at the fair. Veal McCoy started for the John Deere display and Moo-nie for the Carousel while High Steaks started hunting down Pinky. Farmer Brown's cows were a little less certain, taking cover behind the various hay bales and midway games. The Military started the carnage when a few well placed shots from across the fair convinced Farmer Brown's cows that hiding wouldn't save them. Accordingly, Tewbie

Innabun made a dash for the International Harvester tractors and Wellington headed for the Ferris Wheel.

Veal McCoy was having a heck of a time finding a tractor with keys in it and she kept receiving pot shots from Wellington each time the Ferris Wheel would carry him to the top. Moo-nie took his place next to a carousel horse and commenced spraying the fairground with a circular hail of heavy machine gun fire. For his part, Pinky was doing a good job of avoiding being stomped (considering the movement was random, I was impressed by how well the pig succeeded in running away from approaching hooves). Finally, however, an unlucky roll cornered Pinky against the Future Farmers' concession stand where High Steaks took advantage and trampled.

Meanwhile a melee erupted near the Grandstand as Tipper and Al Gore (both Military) started a fire-ram-trample attack against poor Spot. It seemed Spot would be a goner, but at that moment Tewbie, got his IH started and came roaring to the rescue. Through the fence, over the chickens and into Tipper, Tewbie blasted across the Fair. Al Gore beat a hasty retreat, but Tewbie revved the engine into reverse and pointed the tail hitch at Al. In a last great act of defiance, Al charged the tractor imprinting the Army logo on the side door. He died with a valiant cry of "Semper Bovis!" on his lips.

Back at the carousel, Moo-nie unveiled his secret weapon just as Wellington decided to step off the Ferris Wheel and go after Veal. Adrenal boosts rocketed Moo-nie across the fair and into Wellington. I ruled that Wellington re-entered the atmosphere somewhere over Iowa.

Pinky was being thoroughly mauled by High Steaks, but not willing to let the Military have all the fun, Spot revealed he also had Adrenal boosts. Blasting the full length of the fair, he squished Pinky for the fourth and final time, tripped on the ensuing bacon and ended up piled against the entrance gate.

Most of the cattle had been squished, zapped, stomped or mauled by the time Veal McCoy finally found a tractor with keys and got it going. The two moving tractors started a death run at each other. Tewbie had a great idea of lobbing a grenade at Veal, knocking her out of the tractor and then running over her. Unfortunately, the dice failed him and he couldn't hit the broadside of a tractor, so to speak. There were a few final shots and rams, but by then the result was obvious.

Tewbie was the last of Farmer Brown's cows standing. He pointed the tractor for home and drove away. Farmer Brown will no doubt be dismayed by the loss of his prized cows, but pleased by the sudden appearance of a brand new 9730 tractor (less a few bullet holes).

Their objective obtained, the remaining military cows regrouped and after a hearty "Moo-rah" disappeared into the night. The Fair officials were stunned by the damage they found in the morning, and sadly had to cancel the much anticipated "Tony Orlando and Dawn" concert scheduled for that evening.

Final result--Military victory by 100 or so points, Moo-nie won the individual prize and was promoted to Cowporal.