

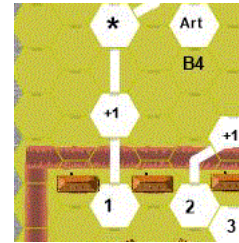
PE TANG 1900 Introductory War Game Review

Pat La Pella, April, 2023

The Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901) was an attempt by Chinese nationals to oust the foreign powers from China. Pe Tang 1900 involves a little known siege that spanned 57 days and featured an unusual alliance between French, Italian, and Japanese units guarding Catholic Chinese civilians in a cathedral.

This is a solitaire, introductory war game, designed by Marco Campari for Lumaca Games. I purchased the game from wargamevault.com, purveyors of Desk Top Publishing games that you print yourself at home. There are 3 pages of rules and the map and counters are on 1 separate page. I printed the map and counters on a full sheet Avery label and attached it to card stock. The counters are 2 sided so I used a glue stick to glue the front and back sides of the counters together.

Map: The map includes an outline of the cathedral walls and the surrounding countryside. Boxer movement is point to point while the allied units can move to any of 6 positions within the cathedral. Several points along the Boxer tracks include modifiers for combat resolution.



Map Detail



Sample Units

Units: There are counters for the Italians, French, Chinese civilians, Boxers, and Artillery as well as a few counters for markers. The counters are arranged nicely so that you can easily line up the front and back sides when you glue them together and cut them into separate units.

Game Play: Your objective is to hold off the Boxers until the Japanese units arrive and that can be difficult as you do not have enough units to occupy each position within the cathedral. The Boxers outnumber you and approach the cathedral relentlessly in order to engage in hand to hand combat. There are also several artillery units that can fire at your units. In addition to your units, you also have a supply of ammunition and managing that ammunition is crucial as it determines the number of activations for the Boxers each turn. If you run out of ammunition then you will be unable to participate in the Allied Fire phase, your only chance to make the Boxers retreat each turn.

Turn Sequence:

- Deployment Phase:** Place your units where they will best defend your position
- Boxer Phase:** Expend ammunition to determine Boxer activations and move the Boxers
- Allied Fire Phase:** Fire at Boxers and Artillery if you have ammunition
- Artillery and Mine Phase:** Boxer artillery and mines attack your units
- Hand to Hand Combat Phase:** Fight off any Boxers that breach the cathedral walls
- Event Markers Phase:** Employ your optional special events
- Victory Condition Phase:** Determine if the game is over

Turns pass quickly as some phases are skipped and resolution is swift for the active phases each turn. Allow about 30 minutes to play, more if you are using the game to recruit a new player.

Rating Introductory War Games: While most introductory war games get average or below average ratings, I believe it is best to rate them based on their usefulness to recruit new players. An

introductory war game should have short, easy to understand rules, a small map, a small number of units with different combat or movement capabilities, and be fast and easy to play. So while one might rate this as a war game with a 5 or 6 on a scale of 10, I rate this introductory war game as a 9 on a scale of 10. The only problem with this game is that it is too easy to win, perhaps not a bad thing for a new recruit. You can lose if you mismanage your ammunition or roll an extraordinary number of bad die rolls, but you could still win! Optional advanced rules make the game a little more difficult but the player will still win using the advanced rules. An experienced war game player might play this game when time is short.

My Game Results: I played the game 3 times where I purposely mismanaged my ammo and lost all 3 but I made it to the last turn before losing 1 of them. I then won 2 of 3 games using the basic rules. The lost game involved my learning how not to conduct hand to hand combat. My next 6 games used the basic rules plus a variant line of sight table I created to make it harder to eliminate the Boxer artillery units. **(See table below for details.)** The Allies won all 6 games. I used the advanced rules which reduced my ammunition allowance, plus the variant line of sight table for the final series of 6 games and won them all. It was interesting to learn about this obscure battle for a rebellion that gets little attention in the war game hobby.

PE TANG 1900 Optional Line of Sight Table¹

Allied Unit Cathedral Location	Artillery Within Line of Sight ³
1	1
2	1
3	2 or 3
4	2 or 3
5	None
6 ²	1, 2, or 3

¹ In the original rules, artillery units on the map represent the number of active artillery rather than artillery locations. This optional table increases game difficulty by limiting line of sight based on the location of the artillery unit on the map.

² Location 6 is the Cathedral roof.

³ Artillery locations are clockwise starting at the upper left artillery unit on the map.