

Mings Enterprises' *Texas Revolution*

Published in 1994 • Designed by *Dan Mings*

reviewed by **Rich Erwin**

Back in *Wargamer* #18, there was a favorable review of a game called *Texas Revolution* by Mings Enterprises, which covered the 1836 war of independence between Texas and Mexico. After ads in *Fire & Movement* and *The Wargamer*, the game dropped from sight. Thinking it out of print, many wargame collectors have since been willing to pay top dollar for what has always been considered one of the better third world, or very small publisher, wargames.

So it's with great pride that I announce *Texas Revolution* is still in print! Note that I didn't say it's back in print; it's always been available at its original price of fourteen dollars since it first was published. Although it received a welcome response in the hobby, Dan Mings found that the majority of his sales came from tourists, distributors of educational materials, and native Texans after unique state memorabilia. As a result, he focused his sales efforts in that direction. However, with a recent revision to the rules (July 1991), Dan is interested in seeing what wargamers think of his game now.

The quality of production makes this game stand out, especially since it was made by a small publisher. Given that the game has a four-color map and a five-color counter set, the overall design of the game is very clean and functional, which speaks Mr. Mings' creative skills. The rules are very much in the early Game Designers' Workshop

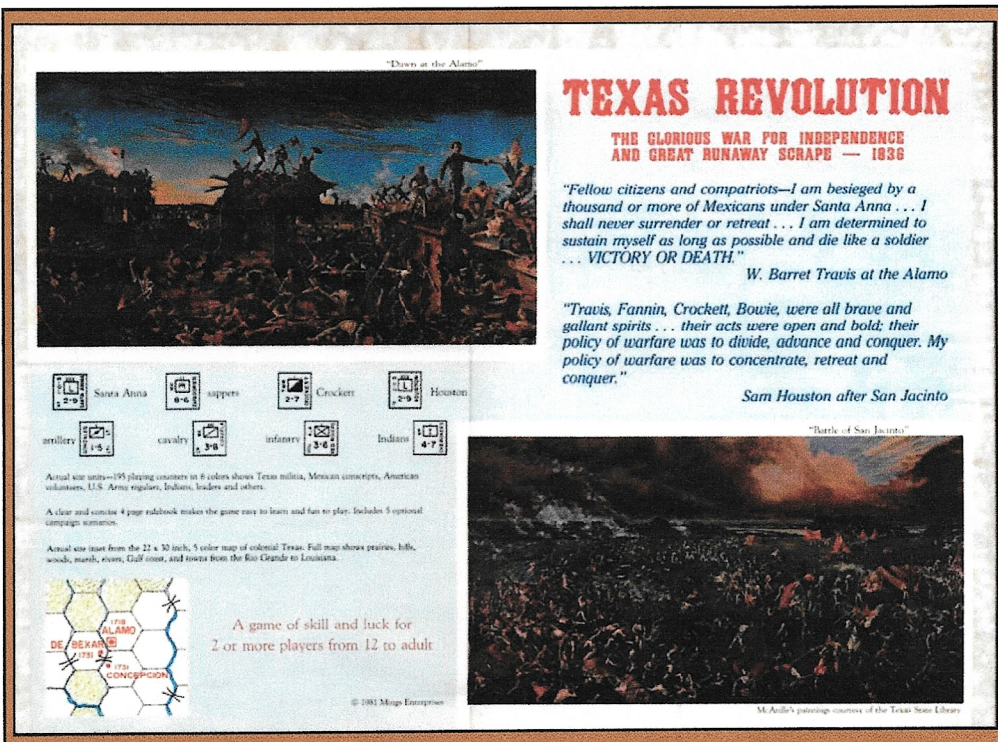
style; easy to read and informal, but thorough. The overall design reminds me a lot of the best of the SPI designs that came out in the mid-1970s, but with the chrome we always wanted.

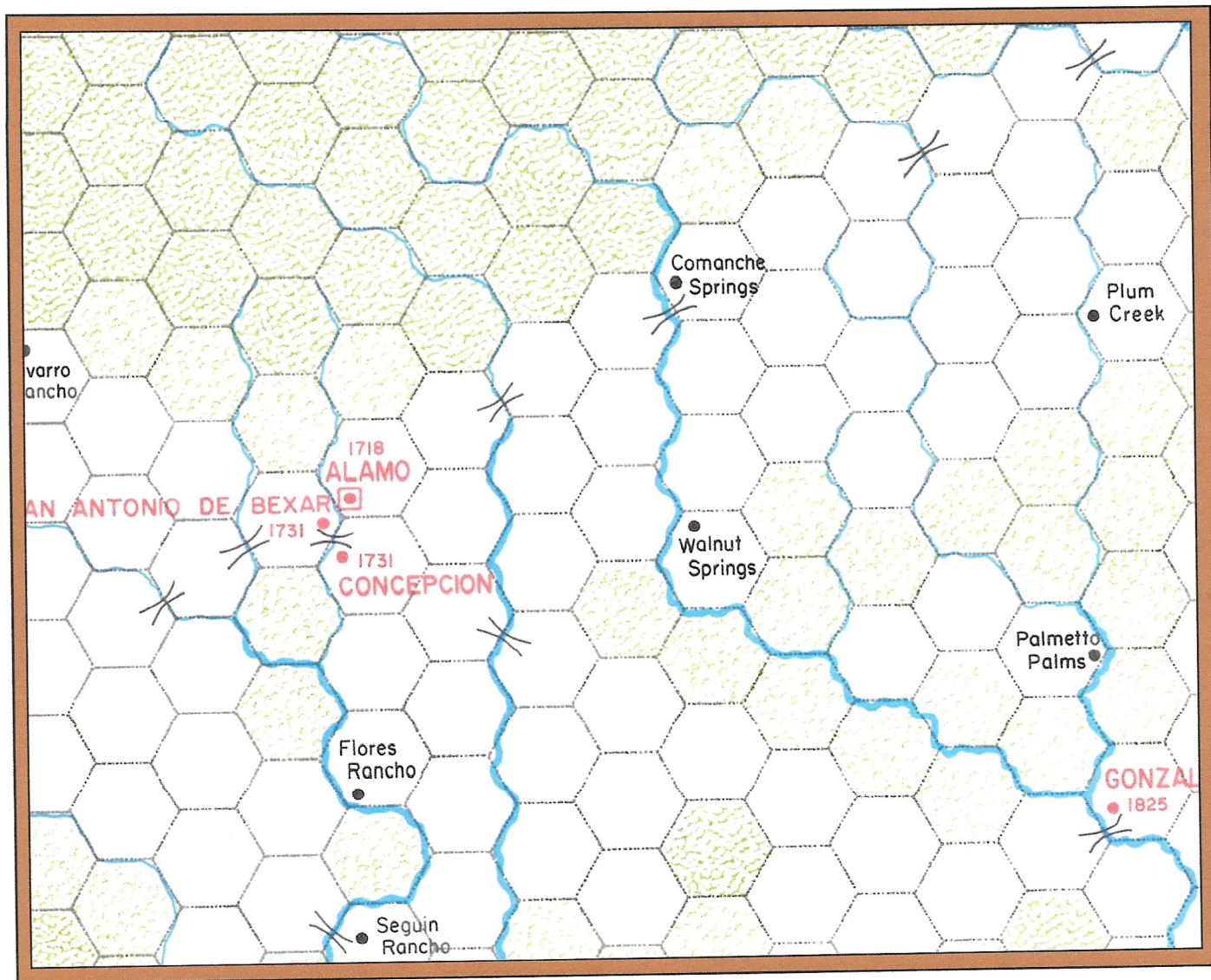
Normally, the Mexican player must control the Alamo, Goliad and two of the three towns of Nacogdoches, Jasper and Beaumont to win the game. However, in place of the towns, he can destroy the Texas government unit. The Mexican player can achieve a tactical victory if he takes both the forts and one of the objective towns, but must declare it immediately after the town is taken or forfeit that option for the rest of the game. The Texan player must prevent these events or must kill Santa Ana to win.

One of the unique rules in the game is that a unit can only control the hex it occupies; no zones of control in the six-hex sense exist. Cavalry has the ability to scout enemy forces (look at the contents of an opponent's force) or mask

them. It also can move twice in a given turn through raids, when it can move a second time between the opponent's move and attack phase. Combined arms is very important, providing a combat bonus to any stack of units with cavalry, artillery and infantry.

When combat does occur, it's very bloody; it's pretty hard to have a great deal of combat, though. Rain is always a variable (which halves movement), and a smart Texan player will be constantly on the move, avoiding combat unless it's on his terms. The harshest combat tends to occur when forts are





assaulted. Both the Alamo and Goliad forts are represented in this game, and the sequence of steps in attacking a fort provides a very well done blend of realism and simplicity. The Mexican player can never be sure of successfully coordinating an assault on all four walls, and if the Texan has heavy artillery inside, the results could be catastrophic. Once a wall is breached, however, it will take all of the Texan's skill and a little luck to survive.

A limited number of supply units can exist for either side at any one time in the game, and they are available only in unburned towns, which provides a feel for how hard foraging for the troops could be. Once used in an attack, they are removed from the board to be recycled in later turns. Unsupplied units can attack only at half strength. Both the Mexican and Texan player can burn towns, but the Texan player should be burning towns as fast as possible to deny supply access to the Mexicans. Leaders are also represented separately, each with specific offensive, defensive and force march capabilities.

Their high movement factors apply to the units under their control, providing tremendous mobility. Santa Ana, Houston, Travis and many others are represented. If that isn't enough for you, there's sea movement, Mexican convicts, and Comanches and Cherokees waiting for a chance to come onto the board and burn as many towns as they can get their hands on!

A cheaper way to take a fort is by laying siege; ten turns after it begins, half of a fort's defenders are eliminated, with half being eliminated every turn thereafter. However, the Texan player has access to river units which can appear anywhere along the river marked on a unit. With proper coordination, a Texan can call on a number of river units during the Reinforcement Phase, use raid movement to bring in cavalry, and lift a siege. (River units are also great for picking off lone supply units forced to travel the great distances a wise Texan player will provide between an unburned city and the forward Mexican forces.)

Is *Texas Revolution* perfect? Of course not; fire and rain counters, not to mention a turn counter, would be a welcome addition. Some new errata to further clarify the rules are:

- A defending unit in an attack can't retreat in the direction the attacker's forces entered into the hex. Retreating forces may move into a hex containing friendly units, regardless of whether enemy units are in the hex, but cannot affect the combat odds and must suffer the same results as the other friendly units in the stack from combat. They cannot be used as combat factor losses.
- The town of Goliad can be burned, but neither the Goliad or Alamo fort can be destroyed. The Alamo is not a town.
- When an *AEH* or *DEH* combat result occurs, the player suffering the result must lose half of his combat factors regardless of whether he takes advantage of the option to retreat. If he decides to remain in combat, the odds are the same as in the first combat. The odds will remain the same, regardless of the number of attacks, until one side retreats or is eliminated.
- Comanche and Cherokee units require supply to attack at full strength. They also do not burn towns they pass through - only the ones where they end their Movement Phase.
- Harrisburg is not a port. (Not until they build the Houston Ship Canal, anyway.)
- If the Mexican decides to lay siege to both

forts, the Texan player will be required to be at his best to prevent at least a tactical victory. To balance the game if the Texan player is less experienced, and to reflect the competition among Santa Ana and his generals for power, an optional rule is that, if a Mexican force with a leader lays siege to a

fort, the Mexican player must roll a die and add his attack factor to the roll. If the result is a six, the Mexicans must assault the fort.

Overall, *Texas Revolution* is a bargain game for the wealth of enjoyment it provides. It tackles a subject few know well, and does it with a style the most jaded grognard can enjoy.

ORDER OF BATTLE APPEARANCE CHART											
MEXICAN											
TURN-IA											
T-2A											
T-3B, Cord											
T-4A											
T-5B, Cord											
T-7B, Cord											
T-8B, Cord											
T-15 Section 19 (sea movement)											
Turn Town Occupied											
Sec 15											
UNITED STATES						INDIAN					
Section 18						Sec. 16					
TEXAN - AT START UNITS											
ALAMO											
ALAMO											
GOLIAD											
GOLIAD											
TOWN NAMED											
Section 21											
Section 20											
Section 18											
Section 17											
Section 16											
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