The Fall of the North
Historical Intro

With the Nationalist advance on to Madrid stopped, and seeing that the war could not be finished in a single stroke by taking the capital, the Francoist High Command decided to move the main effort to a new theatre, the so-called North Front.

The Plans

For the Nationalists, the industrial resources of the areas, and the numerous units of their navy needed for the blockade of the Northern coast, were more than enough reasons to eliminate the Northern front.

The 100.000 men of Mola's Army, reinforced by the reorganized C.T.V, lavishly equipped with artillery, and supported by the Italo-German air force, allowed to form a mass of maneuver that could launch an offensive with solid chances of success.

Mola had managed to turn his Carlists volunteers into a regularly trained army. Their elite units were the Navarre Brigades. These brigades were formed mostly formed by Carlists, with regular soldiers, Falangists, and a few Moors, attached. The political influence of the *Requetes* [i.e. Carlist militia] had been balanced by the militarization of the militias. The Navarra Brigades, despite of including almost all able-bodied Carlists troops available, became hard-fighting, disciplined units that were led by estrict veterans of Africa such as Camilo Alonso Vega or García Valiño.

In the Republican side, the situation was much more complex. The "North Front" was only a word that lacked any real significance. Its theoretical commander, Gen. Llano de la Encomienda did not had the real power to decide anything. The Militia organization persisted, and the creation of a regular army had just begun. Only in Euzkadi (reduced to the westernmost province, Biscay, because Mola occupied all the rest) existed an elaborate defense plan. This plan relied in a fortificated line following the example of the Maginot line. (After all, the Blitzkrieg had not yet shown the real value of the Maginot line). There were two defensive belts, the exterior along the front with the Nationalists, and the Iron Belt, that defended Bilbao and its surroundings.

The Euskadi government had started to raise its own army by calling several classes, creating military Academies and disciplinating the militias. The industry was mobilized. This,

coupled with the purchase of weapons abroad that began in earnest after October 1936, should have provided the neccesary weapons for the new Basque army. But the Basques failed to arm properly its forces: the weaponry (machineguns, rifles) of some battallions was faultless, but the lack of heavy equipment and the many different calibers hampered severely the operations of the 30-40000 men available.

The Nationalist Offensive

The so-called battle of the North lasted nearly seven months. It was delayed by bad weather and by the diversive offensives unleashed by the Republicans in other fronts. The most important phase was the conquest of Biscay (31 March-19 June) that was the main stronghold of the area.

For the Biscay offensive a new tactic was used. The attack in parallel columns were useless in that terrain, rough, fortified and stubbornly defended, where the mountain passes and the dominating peaks marked the ebb and flow of the battle. The tactics used by Mola and his staff consisted in accumulating troops in front of a selected point, pound it with the artillery and the air force, and then unleash a frontal infantry assault whilst the aircraft harassed the enemy rearguard. Given the terrain, the few roads available and the fortifications, this tactic was the only possible. And it worked.

The new tactic was so successful that Franco preferred to use it in other battles. The accumulation of resources to launch them in a attrition battle become their method of choice even when the terrain would have allowed more maneuver. To apply it systematically provoked unnecessary bloodshed and delayed the end of the conflict.

Excepting from an enveloping maneuver by García Valiño's brigade, and some short Italian advances, the Biscay province was not a brilliant operation. It was a methodic and unimaginative application of brute force. It was also a hard fought campaign that witnessed many heroic acts in both sides.

The Basque outern belt of fortifications was incomplete, and was formed by mere trenches and barbed wire supported by a few main strongpoints. The air superiority of the attackers allowed them to first detect and then destroy these strong points with the artillery.

The President of the Basque government appealed desperately to the Central Government for help. The Republican government was convinced that the best way to help the Basques was to debilitate the Nationalist strenght in the North. Therefore, from the 7 to the 24 April the Republicans launched several assaults in Madrid (Garabitas ridge), and in Aragón (Huesca, Teruel) without any result worth mentioning. In Madrid, Miaja [Commander of the Republican Army of the Center] made a serious effort, but the Republican resources in Aragón and Catalonia could not be used because the Anarchist, that controlled the situation there, were of the opinion that the best way to win the war was to make the revolution, not to strenghten the state and the army.

The first phase of the Biscay attack consisted in the breaching and surrounding of the outern line, advancing on to Guernica-Durango-Amboto. Durango had been heavily bombed the 31 March, to intercept the road junction there, and Guernica was nearly obliterated because of the same reason. Guernica was the sacred city of Euskadi, and the Francoists tried to appease the international outcry that followed its destruction. They attributed the destruction of the town to the Basques, first, and then to an independent act of the Legion Kondor. These theories, though, had been refuted by serious historians years ago.

The 30 April the Nationalist reached the line Guernica-Durango-Amboto. Enjoying absolute air superiority, the Nationalists conquered during May one by one the Republican positions. The ferocious Basque resistance in places such as Sollube peak or Peña Lemona could not prevent the Nationalists from reaching Bilbao's Iron Belt.

The assault of the Iron Belt began the 11 June. 150 guns and 70 bombers crushed the Arechabalaga sector, where a breach was achieved. Most of the Francoist army penetrated through it, demostrating in the process that the Iron Belt was useless, like all other "Chinese Walls" of History. Bilbao fell the 19 of the same month, although the fight in Euzkadi went on until the 5 of July, with the Basques resisting heroically in many places.

After entering Bilbao, a sizable part of the Basque army retreated to Santander and Asturias, but again the Nationalist superiority in weaponry and *matériel* finished off all resistances. The 21 October Franco's troops entered Gijón, putting an end to all organized resistence in the North.

Bizcaya
The Spring 1937 Nationalist Offensive.

Rules booklet

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Game Index

Introduction.
Bizkaya is a historical simulation for two players of the Nationalist offensive against Biscay during the springtime of 1937. It recreates the military operations that ended with the defeat of the Basque Army Corps and the occupation of that province. One of the players controls the Republican forces, the other the Nationalist forces.

Scales.
Each turn equals 1week of time. Each hex is 8 km. across. Unit size range from company to Brigade or equivalent

1.Game Equipment
Bizkaya includes this rulebook, tables, map and 140 counters. 2 6-sided dice are required also.

The Counters.
There are two types of counters: units and markers.

Units. There are two types of ground units: combat and support (artillery) that represent the units that historically intervened in the battle. The printed symbols identify these units: name, type, and size, among other things. See Fig 1.

Definition of terms included in the Units.
Combat Factor (Factor de Combate, FdC). It represents the ability of the unit to perform combat. Units have two CFs: offensive and defensive. Artillery units do not have CFs, they have an Artillery factor (*Factor de artillería*, FdA).

Morale Factor. It measures the psicological ability of the units to withstand casualties and combat strain. It ranges from 1 (lowest) to 6 (the best).

Movement Capacity (*Capacidad de Movimiento*, CdM) The CdM is not printed in the counters. Both sides have a CdM of 6, SIX points. Depending on the CdM of its army, units obtain Movement Points (MPs).

Units Steps. The number of steps show the size of a unit. A unit in "Cadre" status (shown by a "C" as their step strenght factor) has only one step strenght.

Extended Zone of Control Marker (Indicador de Zona de Control) It is an hexagon that can be find to the right of the unit type symbol. Units with that symbol exert ZoC over adjacent hexes.

Markers. Markers display several pieces of information referred to the status of the match of that of the units: demoralization, euphoria, reserve, entrenching, 2nd echelon, Number of Movement Points of the unit/stack.

The Map.
It showns the terrain where the actual campaign was fought. There is a hexagonal grid superposed, to regulate the placement and movement of units. The different terrain features had been adapted somewhat to the hex grid. The hexagons (hexes) are numbered to facilitate the placement of the counters.

Each hex and hexside represent a type of terrain. See the Terrain Effects Chart (*Tabla de Terreno*) to see the effects of each terrain in combat and movement. Weather can affect the effects of terrain on movement and combat.

Population Centers. Entering a population center costs more Movement Points. It can affect combat too. If it is a Major City, the terrain effects of the Major City substitute the costs of the terrain they are in.

Playable Zone. A white line printed on map showns the limits of the playable area. The following hexes are not playable: column 16XX from 1608, column 17XX from 1707, column 18xx from 1807, and column 19xx from 1906.
Roads. When a unit moves across hexsides connected by road, it pays the terrain costs of road, ignoring the cost of the terrain they are crossing. CdM costs of road movement are only valid for movement. Road movement costs can not be used when attacking an hex.

Geographical Peculiarities.
The Portugalete Ferry. Hexes 1502 Guecho and 1603 Portugalete are separated by the *Ría*[1] of Bilbao, and therefore are impassable. But the so-called "suspension bridge" of Las Arenas connected both sides. Effects: treat the hexside 1502-1603 as Major River for movement. Combat remains forbiden, though.

The *Ría* of Mundaca. Hexside 1102-1202 Bermeo is the *ría* de Mundaca. Treat it as a Major River for movement only.

2. Sequence of Play
Each match is played in a series of turns. Each turn is further divided in two phases: first player phase and second player phase. In Bizkaya, the first player is the Nationalist, the Republican the second. Both player turns are further divided into a series of sequenced steps. During the first phase, the first player is considered the "active" player, although the second can intervene in certain sub phases.

Sequence of Play.
Initial Segment.
Weather Phase.
Administrative Segment.
Reinforcement Phase
Recovery Phase

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[1] In North Spain (Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, Euskadi), a *Ría* is an estuary, the narrow mouth of a river. (Translator Note)

Reserve Phase

Operations Segment
Supply Phase
Movement & Combat Phase
    1st Operations Impulse
    1st Reserve Impulse
    2nd Operations Impulse
    2nd Reserve Impulse
    3rd Operations Impulse
    3rd Reserve Impulse

Final Segment.
Victory determination.
Advance Game Turn marker 1 box.

Initial Segment.
Weather Phase. The Nationalist player rolls 1d6 to determine weather conditions for this turn.
Administrative Segment.
Reinforcement Phase. The active player places the reinforcements received as per the Order of Battle.
Recovery Phase. The active player tries to recover demoralized units.

Reserve Phase. The active player can put all eligible units in "reserve" status by putting a "Reserve" marker on top of it.

Operations Segment.
Supply Phase. The active player checks the supply state of its units. Units trace supply to their rearguard or supply source. Place or retire Out of Supply (OoS) markers.

Movement & Combat Phase. Each movement impulse is followed by a Reserve impulse. The active player moves its units on map. Combat is treated as part of the movement of a unit/Stack. That is, you move towards your objective until you find enemy units blocking your way, and you try to destroy or dislodge the enemy units.

Final Segment. Check the victory conditions. If neither side wins, move the Turn Record marker one box on the Turn Record Track. Play goes on one more turn.

3. Weather.
The Weather Table (*Tabla de Meteorología*) determines the weather for that turn. The Possible results are Improving (*Mejora*, M) Worsening (*Empeora*, E) or No Change (*No Cambia*, NC).

At the beginning of the first turn, the Nationalist player rolls 1d6, and cross reference the weather of the previous turn with the die roll. For the turn 1st weather roll, the weather for the previous turn (IV march 1937) was Rainy (Lluvioso). Thus, if the result is "2" the weather gets worse ("E" result) and therefore it changes from Rainy (*Lluvioso*) to Winter (*Invernal*).

There are three possible weather status: Warm, Rainy, Winter. When the weather is rainy or

winter, terrain costs are doubled (See the Terrain Effects Chart).

4. Stacking.
Within a stack, units are further divided into two echelons representing first line units, and reserve/ support units (artillery).
Stacking limits are in effect during ALL the turn. Only during the reinforcement placement phase stacking limits can be violated.

Stacking Limits.
In all hexes excepting from Mountain hexes, players can stack up to 10 steps worth of units in the first echelon, up to 5 steps of combat units plus 5 steps of support units in the 2nd echelon.

Mountain Hex limits.
5 steps in the 1st echelon, 3 steps of combat units plus 2 of support units in the 2nd.

Overstacking.
If one stack is found to be overstacked, the owning player must eliminate any number of units until the stacks is within stacking limits.

During retreat after combat, a unit that retreats to a stack and causes overstacking must continue its retreat one or more hexes until reaching a hex where stacking limits are not violated. If this is not possible, the unit must be eliminated.

Placement of Units
Units must be stacked differenciating between first echelon and second echelon. First echelon units are placed on top of the stack, second echelon units in the bottom, under a 2nd Echelon marker. Support units (Artillery) must be placed in the second, combat units can be placed in the 1st or the 2nd.

Second Echelon.
A combat unit may move from the 2nd echelon to the 1st and viceversa during its normal movement or during the reserve movement without paying any movement costs.

In the 2nd echelon there must be always less combat units than in the 1st. If this rule is not fulfilled, all combat units are placed in the 1st echelon inmediately.

Combat Effects. All units placed in the 2nd echelon do not suffer the results of the artillery barrages and that of the attacks against the hex they are placed in. Only when all the units in the 1st line are not enough to cover the step losses requirements the 2nd echelon units will suffer step losses.
Combat units placed in the 2nd echelon may not add their combat factors when attacking. Only the 1st echelon units attack and/or defend. When one stack retreats, the 2nd echelon units must retreat too.

Artillery units perform barrages before resolving combat. Not all arty units can advance after combat (see 13. Artillery) but all arty units must retreat if its stack is forced to do so. Support units alone in a hex (without stacking with combat units) that are bombarded or attacked are automatically eliminated.

5. Zones of Control (ZoC).
All combat units exert a ZoC in the hex they are placed. Besides, the combat units with a ZoC marker and arty units exert a ZoC over the six hexes adjacent to them.

Restrictions.
Supply. Unsupplied units lose its ability to exert ZoC if out of supply.

Terrain. ZoC can not be exerted over mountain, city or Major City adjacent hexes. ZoC can not be exerted across mountain hexsides.

Effects of ZoC
Terrain. See the Terrain Effects Table.
Retreats. Each unit retreating across enemy ZoC becomes demoralized. If it was already demoralized, loses 1 step. If it is a stack of units, eliminate 1 step (choose it at random) for ALL units.

Supply. Supply lines can not be traced across an hex in enemy ZoCs excepting when there is is a friendly unit in that hex.

6. Morale.
Units can have three possible morale status: Normal, Demoralized, and Euphoric. Usually units are in Normal state. When they become demoralized or Euphoric, a marker must be placed on top of them to show its current morale.

Demoralization.
When an unit fails a morale check or enters in enemy ZoC during a retreat, it becomes demoralized.

Demoralization Effects. Demoralized units can not attack. When defending, the attacker has a die roll modifier (drm) of +1.

A demoralized unit can not be selected as the leader unit if there are other non-demoralized units in the same stack. The demoralized unit must be the last to suffer step losses. Demoralized units can try to recover during the recovery phase.

Euphoria.
Euphoria applies to the whole stack, and not only to individual units like Demoralization. Stacks become "Euphoric" when they get a favorable result (A DR3 on a grey background) in attack. See the Combat Results Table.

Euphoria Effects. If all attacking stacks are Euphoric, the morale modifier difference of the leader unit(s) is doubled. Same if all defending

units are euphoric. If the stack of both attackers and defenders are euphoric, do not apply this rule.

Duration. Euphoria lasts until the euphoric stack gets a negative result of AR in attack or DR in defense. It will lose its euphoric status if some units left the stack or if new non-euphoric units reinforce that stack.

Morale Check.
Combat units pass a morale check after an artillery barrage, to avoid retreat after combat, or to recover from demoralization.

Procedure. Roll 1d6 for each unit, and add any drm's. If the die roll is less or equal to its morale factor, the unit pass the check. If it is greater, it fails.

Definitions of Front and Rearguard. Hexes adjacent to enemy units are Front hexes. The hexes behind the front are rearguard hexes.

7. Reinforcements.
The Orders of Battle (OoB) of both sides determine the arrival of reinforments during a match of Bizkaya. Players must place them in the hex determined by the OoB.

8. Leaders.
The Nationalist player has two leader counters, García Valiño and Alonso Vega. At the beginning of each turn, the Nationalist player places them on top of any of its stacks. Leader counters does not count for stacking, can not be eliminated, and add a +1 drm to all combats of the stack.

9. Trenches.
Any Brigade-sized unit can build trenches in the hex they are placed in. During the supply phase, place a "trench" marker in that hex. If at the beginning of the Supply Phase of the following turn the unit had not been forced to retreat and/or the unit has not moved, the trench is completed.

10. Supply.
Units trace supply to an appropiate supply source to operate at full strenght.

Procedure. During the Supply phase, the active player checks the supply state of its units. Units must trace a continuous path of hexes (free of enemy units or enemy ZoCs) to a friendly supply source.
Out of Supply Effects. Any unit(s) that can not trace supply receive an "OoS" counter. OoS units have their combat and movement factors halved. OoS Arty units may not fire.

Units found OoS during two consecutive turns become demoralized (no morale check is needed). These units receive a "Demoralized" marker.

OoS units can not try to recover from demoralization.

11. Reserves.
During its Reserve Phase, the active player places any combat units in Reserve Mode. Arty units can not be placed in Reserve mode.
Procedure. At the beginning of the Reserve Phase, all units selected for reserve mode have a "Reserve" marker placed on top of it. When the Reserve Phase ends, the marker with the Movement Points remaining is not withdrawn (See 14. Movement & Combat). These Mov. Points will be its Movement Factor during the Reserve Impulse.

Units sent to the reserve must be in the 2nd echelon if they are adjacent to enemy units. Reserve units in the 1st echelon lose its Reserve status if attacked.

12. Artillery.
Arty units do not add its Combat factors. Its combat factors are used for barrages.

Artillery Types.
There are three types: light (ligera), heavy (Pesada), siege (Asedio). The only difference is in their movement abilities.

Light Artillery (L). It may advance after combat.
Heavy (*Pesada*, P) It can not advance after combat. If the combat units advance, then a new stack is formed with the units left behind, and therefore a Movement Point marker should be placed on top of the new stack.
Siege (*Asedio*, A). It can not advance after combat. It can not fire barrages the same turn that is moved. When firing against cities or fortifications of level 2 or higher, its Combat Factor is doubled.

Artillery in Combat.
Arty units do not suffer step losses as a result of attacks and/or bombardement. If alone in a hex, (without combat units) are automatically eliminated.

Artillery Barrages.
All enemy units in the 1st echelon may be attacked by an artillery barrage.

During the Operations and Reserve Impulses barrages are conducted inmediately before solving any attacks and after the movement of all units had been conducted.

The target hex must be adjacent to a friendly unit. One hex may not receive more than one barrage per impulse. Bombarding does not costs any movement points.

Procedure.
Add the Combat factors of all firing units, and check the Barrage Table (Tabla de Preparaciones Artilleras). The Column to be used is the closest to the total number of Factor

firing but it can not be higher. Roll 1d6 and apply any modifiers.

Barrage Results.
(-) No Effect. Nothing happens.
(C) Morale Check. Defending units must pass a morale check.
(1, 2, 3) Casualties (*Bajas*) The defender will lose that number of step losses plus checking the morale of all surviving units. The attacker chooses which units will suffer step losses. Any unit can suffer a second step loss until all units in the hex have lost at least one.

Example. 2 Artillery groups announce a barrage against one entrenched hex. The two arty groups add 14 Combat Factors. Therefore, the column 12 of the Barrage Table is used. The die roll result is 5, modified to 4 because of the trench marker. This means 1 step loss AND a morale check of the surviving units.

Limits. During a Operations Impulse, barrages can be conducted only before launching an attack (with ground units) against the barraged hex.

During the Reserve Impulse barrages can be conducted only against stacks that had moved during that turn.

Combined Barrages. A joint barrage is a barrage where air units participate. Add the Combat Factors of the arty units and the Bombardment Factors of the Air units, and resolve the barrage like a normal one. This type of attack has a favorable drm of +1.

13. Combat & Movement Segment.
The **Movement Ability** (Capacidad de Movimiento, CdM) provides the units Movement Points (MP) that are used to operate across the map.

One combat unit will use the MPs to move or to attack hexes. The units will move and fight provided it has enough MPs to do so. At the beginning of the Operations Phase, the MPs available are the same that the CdM of its side.

Movement Procedure.
During each Impulse of the Movement & Combat Phase, the active player moves its units or stacks, paying a number of MPs depending of the terrain type of the hex(es) entered.

Units can not accumulate unused MPs from turn to turn, nor transfer them to other units.

MP Markers. Moving stacks or units must have a MP Marker showing the number of MPs remaining. Units may move individually or as a stack. When moving as a stack, its MP it that of the slowest unit in the stack.

When several units or stacks with different MP markers are stacked together, then the new stack uses the MP marker with the lowest number of MPs.

Movement Sequence.
The Movement & Combat Phase of each player is further divided in 6 impulses: 3 Operation Impulses performed by the active player. Each Operation Impulse is followed by one Reserve Impulse. Players alternate Impulses until the 3rd Reserve Impulse is finished or until the active player decides to stop its operations.

Impulse Sequence. During Impulses, operations must be solved in the following order:
1º All units move.
2º Solve all arty barrages.
3º Solve all attacks/combats.

That is, during each Impulse one unit can only move before the artillery barrages, and can only fight once.

Impulse Markers. It is placed in the map board under the Turn Record Track. It showns the current Operations Impulse of the turn (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and the maximum number of PMs that can be spent by the active player' units during this Impulse.

Take into account that when the Impulse Marker is advanced one box, the number of PM that can be used is decreased by 2. At the end of each Impulse, the Impulse Marker is moved one box to the right.

First Impulse. During the First Operations Impulse, the active player may move any elegible units. Each unit may spend up to 6 MPs.

When the different units/stacks are being moved, PM markers indicating the number of PMs remaining will be placed atop of the units/stacks.

Example. It's the first Impulse, and two Nationalist stacks move and attack the Republican lines. One of the stacks (formed by the Montejurra Tercio) spends 2 MPs because it attacks against a clear hex. Place a "4" MP marker on top of the stack. The other stack (Lácar, Navarra Tercios) spend 3 MP because they are attacking a forest hex. Therefore, a "3" MP marker must be placed over that stack.

2nd, 3rd Impulses. Starting with the 2nd Impulse, each stack conserves the unused MPs during the XXX impulse. But it can not spend more than 4 MPs (if it is the 2nd Impulse) or 2 (if it's the 3rd Impulse) even though the stack has more MPs accumulated.

Reserves. During the Reserve Impulse, the non-active player activates any units marked with a reserve counter. The Reserve marker is withdrawn. The activated unit has available all the unused MPs of the previous Impulse.

Artillery and Reserves. Any artillery unit can fire a barrage only if it is followed by one attack of activated reserve units over the target hex.

Combat.
Limits. One hex may only be attacked once per Operations Impulse. One Hex may be attacked from more than one hex.

Attacking units may not divide its Combat Factors to attack two or more hexes. All units in a hex must add its Combat Factors in defense.

Units in the 2nd echelon are ignored when solving combat.

Procedure.
Total the CFs of all attacking units, and that of all defending units. Divide the attacker strenght by the defender's strenght, and find a strenght ratio (2:1, 3:1, see the Combat Results Table, Tabla de Combate). Round down remainders. Take into account that the printed CFs can be modified by supply status and other causes.
Both sides select one unit as its leader for that combat. (Nationalist first). Compare the morale rating of both units and find a Morale drm. That is, if the attacking leader has 5 morale and the defender 3, the attacker gets a +2 drm in attack. Or, if the attacker leader has 3 Morale and the defender 4, the attack gets a –1 drm.

Example. The attackers total 20 CFs, the defenders 3. The ratio is 20:3= 6,6, wich round down to 6. The final ratio is 6:1. Then, each player (attacker first) designates one "leader" unit for the combat. Determine any applicable drm's, (See the CRT) and roll two dice, preferably of different colors.

The result of the two dice plus the modifier will give us the Combat Result. Also, each of the different dice will indicate the Combat Intensity and the Number of casualties suffered.

Combat Results.
Cross-reference the total of both dice with the Ratio column. The results could be DR, DR1, DR2, DR3, AD, AR, AR1, AR2, AR3.

The first letter indicates if the result affects the attacker (A) or the defender (D). The second letter indicates a result of Retreat (R) or attacker stopped (D). The last figure (if there is any) is the Die roll modifier for the Morale Check if the losing side tries to avoid retreat.

Favorable results in a gray background indicate that the units change its morale to euphoric.

Combat Intensity. Each side uses the result of one of the different dice. Check the Intensity Table (Tabla de Intensidad) and compare the modified die roll with the morale of the units to determine the number of step losses suffered. Each number in the Intensity Table indicates a number of step losses suffered.

Example. We have a 6:1 attack against a forest hex. The leader attacking unit has a morale of 5 and the defender a morale of 2. Two dice are rolled. If we have one white dice and one black, the white is assigned to the Republicans and the black to the Nationalists. The die roll of both dice is 5. We add up both results (5 +5 = 10), plus +3 drm because of the difference of morale favoring the attacker. The final result is 12 on the 6:1 column. This means DR2. In the Intensity Table, the Nationalist compares the "5" with the morale of the leading defender unit. The result is 1 step loss for the defender. The Republican compares its die roll of 5 with the morale of the leading attacking unit and applies to its units two step losses.

Advance after Combat. After solving combat and applying any step losses and retreats, the attackers can occupy (without paying any movement costs) the defending hex but only if it empty of enemy units. The attacking player must decide if the defender hex is occupied or not before solving another combat.

Step Reduction.
The Intensity Table determines the number of casualties suffered. Each number indicates one step loss suffered.

Applying Combat Results. The first step loss must be suffered by the leading unit. The other step losses are distributed as the owning player sees fit, but one unit may not suffer a second step loss until all units in the stack had lost at least one step.

Multi-Step units. Units with several steps are represented by more than one counter. For instance, when a four step brigade suffers one step loss, it is flipped back to its reverse side. If it suffers another step loss, it is substituted by a 2-step substitute counter, etc.

Some units that have only one step remaining are in "C" (Cadre) status. If it suffers an step loss when in cadre status, it is eliminated.

Retreats.
Results of DR or AR indicate a retreat. The owning player has two options: withdraw its unit one hex, or try to avoid retreat.

Retreat procedure. Retreating units can move to different hexes. 2nd echelon units move to the 2nd echelon of a new stack. Units must always retreat towards the rearguard. Retreating units crossing an enemy ZoC become demoralizated.

To avoid retreat, all units must pass a morale check. The number to the right of the "Retreat" result of the CRT indicates the die roll modifier that must be applied. That is, a result of DR3 indicates a drm of +3 to the morale check, etc. If the units fail the morale check, became demoralized and must retreat. Demoralized units may not attempt avoiding retreat.

Exceptions. If the defending stacking is entrenched, the die roll modifier does not apply. Stacks in a fortified hex can ignore the Retreat result without passing any morale check.

14. Air Power.
In Bizkaya the use of airpower is abstracted. Only the Nationalist player has air support available. The Nationalist has 8 "modules" of 3 Bombardment factors each. These modules are used like artillery units. The procedure is the same as for Barrages.

15. Special Rules.
Game Length. The game lasts 12 turns, representing the months of April, may and june 1937.

Supply Sources.
Republican units trace supply to Bilbao, Nationlists to Vitoria.

The Iron Belt
The Cinturón de Hierro ("Iron Belt") hexsides are treated as trench hexsides.

Bilbao.
When the Nationalist player declares an attack against any of the following hexes: 1404 Bilbao and/or 1503 Baracaldo/Sestao, roll one die. On a roll of 1 to 5, the Republican defenders retreat one hex without fighting.

When Bilbao falls, at the beginning of the first Reinforcements Phase after the turn that this happen, the Republican player must withdrawn a fourth (1/4) of all available brigades. Choose it at random, rounding up remainders.

16. Victory Conditions.
In Bizkaya, the objective is the conquest of Biscay. The Nationalist player wins if it takes Bilbao and reaches the limit with Santander (Hexes 1702-1803-1903 inclusive) before or during the turn IV June 1937. Otherwise, the Republican player wins.

17. Orders of Battle.
Nationalist.
Initial Deployment, 1 April 1937.
Deployment line. Hexes 0803 Ondárroa, 0804 Elgoibar, 0805 Placencia, 0806 Vergara, 0906 Mondragón, 0907, 1008, 1107, 1208, 1307, 1408, 1508, 1608, 1707, 1807, 1906.

Units.
Seven 6-6/3 groups (2/I Navarra, 3º/I Navarra, 2º/II Navarra, 3º/II Navarra, 2º/III Navarra, 2º/IV Navarra, 3º/IV Navarra)
One 3-5/2 Group (3º/III Navarra)
One 4-3/4 Moroccan Tabor (5º/Reg. Tetuán)

Two 3-2/4 battalions (C/Las Navas, B/Melilla)
Three 2-2/5 Tercios (Lácar, Montejurra, Navarra)
Four 2-2/4 tercios (San Miguel, San Fermín, Virgen Blanca, Oriamendi)
Three 2-1/4 Tercios (Ntra. Sra. de Begoña Alavés), Zumalacárregui, San Ignacio).
Two Falange banderas (Battallions) 2-2/5 (1º/FE Navarra, 3º/FE Navarra)
Three banderas 2-2/4 (2º/FE Navarra, 4º/FE Navarra, 5º/FE Navarra)
One centuria 1-1/4 (2º FE /Alava)
One company 1-1/4 (8º Requeté Alavés)
Two 6-6/3 regiments (3º/Flechas Negras, 4º/Flechas Negras Brigade)
One battallion 2-1/4 (Arditi/Flechas Negras Bde)

Stacking with any Nationalist group:
1-Light artillery group (battallion) (Mixed/III Navarra)
Five 2-L (105mm/I Navarra, 105mm/II Navarra, Mixed/IV Navarra, Mixed, 105 mountain)
Two 5-L artillery groups (Campaña, Flechas Negras)
One 6-P artillery group (Legionaria)
One 10-P artillery group (Posición)

Reinforcements.
I April 1937
Hex 1109 Vitoria:
One 6-6/3 group (2º/V Navarra)
Hex 0703 Deva:
Two 3-4/2 groups /1º Gpo/Francisci, 2º Gpo/Francisci)
One 1-L artillery group (65/Francisci)

IV April 1937
Hex 1109 Vitoria:
One 6-6/3 group (3º/V Navarra)
One 3-3/4 Tabor (4º Meh/Alhucemas)
One 3-3/3 battallion (7º/Ametralladoras)
One 2-L arty group (105 mm/V Navarra)

II May 1937
Hex 1109 Vitoria:
One 2-1/4 Tercio (Ntra. Sra. de Begoña-Vizcaíno)

III May 1937
Hex 1109 Vitoria:
One 6-6/3 group (2º/IV Navarra)
One 2-2/4 Tercio (Ntra. Sra. del Camino)

IV May 1937
Hex 1109 Vitoria:
Three 3-2/4 battallions (B/Las Navas, D/ San Fernando, D/Ceriñola)
One 6-6/3 group (3º/VI Navarra)
One 1-L arty group (Mixto/VI Navarra)

I June 1937
Hex 1109 Vitoria:

One 2-A battery (305/Legionaria)
Reorganize one arty group 2-L (Mixto) into the arty grouping 5-P (Mixta).

Republican
Initial Deployment, I April 1937.
Deployment line. Hexes 0902 Lequeitio, 0903, 0904, 0905 Eibar, 1006 Elorrio, 1007, 1106, 1207, 1306, 1407, 1507 Orduña, 1706, 1806.

Place trench marker on each of the Republican initial deployment hexes.

Units. (Place anywhere in the Republican line)**.**
Eight 4-4/3 Bdes (1, 2nd, 5th, 6th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 14th vasca)
Five 4-4/2 Bdes (3rd, 4th, 10th, 12th, 15th vasca)
One 3-3/2 Brigade (16th Vasca)
Two 1-2/3 MG Battallions (53º Saseta, 62º Ariztimuño)
One 2-2/3 MAI battallion (77º Irrintzi)

Stacked with any Republican combat unit:
One 3-P artillery group (Schneider 155 mm)
One 1-P artillery group (Verdes-Montenegro)
Three 1-L artillery groups (Ligero 75mm, Ligero Mntña, Saint Chamond)

Reinforcements.
Hex 1404 Bilbao:
Two 4-5*/3 Brigades (1st, 2nd Exp Asturiana)
One 4-4/3 Bde (7th vasca)
One 4-4/2 Bde (8th vasca)
One 2-P artillery group (Pes/Ej. Norte)
One 1-L artillery group (1º "Japonesas")

IV April 1937
Hex 1404 Bilbao:
One 4-5*/3 Bde (3rd Exp Asturias)
One 3-4*/2 Bde (1st Exp Santanderina)

I May 1937
Hex 1404 Bilbao:
One 4-5*/3 Bde (4th Exp asturiana)
One 3-4*/2 Bde (2nd Exp santanderina)

II May 1937
Hex 1404 Bilbao:
Two 3-4*/2 Bdes (17, 18 vasca)

IV May 1937
Hex 1404 Bilbao:
One 3-3/2 Bde (Montaña)

Credits
Game Design: Carlos A. Pérez
Development, Graphics: Xavier P. Rotllán

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Historical Designations.
Alavés: from Alava (Basque province)
Ametralladoras: Machine Guns
Arditi: Italian shock troops
Asturiana: from Asturias
Bandera: A small battalion, c. 600 troops.
Campaña: Field artillery
Centuria: in the Falange, a company sized unit.
Ej. Norte: Army of the North
Exp: Expeditionary
FE: Falange, Spanish Fascist party.
Flechas Negras: Black Arrows, Italo-Spanish Bde.
Japonesas: Japanese
Legionaria: Legionaire
Lig: Light
MAI: Mortars.
Meh: Mehal-la, Moroccan troops.
Mixto: Mixed
Montaña: Mountain.
Pes: Pesada (Heavy)
Posición: Positional artillery
Requete: A Requete is a Carlist militiaman.
Tabor: Moroccan battalion.
Tercio: a big battallion, c. 1000 effectives.
Santanderina: from Santander.
Schneider, Saint Chamond: Type of gun (French manufacturers).
Vasca: Basque
Verdes-Montenegro: Gun manufacturer.
Vizcaíno: From Biscay
105mm, 155mm, 65: caliber of the guns of the unit.

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Designer Notes

(Published in Alea 27).
This game is the product of the close collaboration between Alea and the Editor of the magazine El miliciano, Carlos A. Pérez. Initially, Bizkaya was going to be the first, introductory module of an ambitious project that would simulate the whole civil war in four installments.

That's why I chose the battallion/brigade as the basic units and a map scale of 8 km per hex. According to the tactical doctrine of the time, a battallion in favorable terrain and with prepared positions could defend up to 2 km. Therefore, placing one brigade per hex would form a continuous front line.

Finally, I decided to use weekly turns, further divided in two-day impulses to simulate correctly the arrival of reinforcements and the accumulation of units provoked by the battles. But the limits of the magazine format imposed several radical changes and simplifications of the system.

The Orders of Battle

One of the first consequences of the change of system was the OoB. Initially the units of both sides appeared at battalion level. This would reflect accurately the historical evolution of the units that formed the Basque Army Corps and the Navarre Brigades. When the Nationalist offensive was unleashed in April 1937, there weren't brigades in the Republican army. The biggest organic unit was the battalion that was grouped in several defensive sectors. It wasn't until one month later when the Basque autonomous government (that was who actually controlled these units) followed the example of the *Ejército Popular de la República* (People's Army, EPR) grouping the Battallions in brigades. And, given the circumstances surrounding its formation, these brigades never were little more than ad-hoc units that lacked any cohesion.

In the enemy field, the process of building the Navarre brigades (that despite of being called "brigades" actually were division-sized groups formed not only by Navarre battallions) was not over when the offensive began. Therefore, the basic unit among the Nationalist was the company. It is true that complete battalions operated as single units (especially in Alonso Vega's 4th Brigade) but usually the companies

where grouped in task-tailored tactical forces of battalion size. The brigades that appear at the beginning of the game are the brigades and groups that would be formed later.

Basic Estructures.

In Bizkaya, I wanted to emphasize two basic aspects: sequence of play and Combat results.

My idea was to break the classical sequence of play "move-fight-move". That's why I combined movement and combat in a single phase. Historically, the military operations were conducted according to plans set by the commanding officers. These plans were determined by terrain constraints (few roads, few avenues of approach) and therefore the units received orders to take this or that geographical point. Combat was a consequence of the maneuvering of units towards its assigned objectives.

But this is not true in many wargames. In wargames with the classical "move-Fight" sequence we can see a contradiction: one unit spends all its movement factors and ends up adjacent to an unoccupied enemy city. It can't attack, therefore it can not enter. But if there is a weak enemy unit in the city, then our unit can attack and advance after combat into the city.

In Bizkaya, I established a Capacity of Movement according to the marching doctrine and to the experience of the time. Thus, combat is nothing more than a consequence of the movement conducted.

Another common problem of most wargames that I tried to eliminate from the design is the predictability of the combat results. Only a few games such as COA's "Winter Storm" series (Edelweiss, Prelude to Disaster) had surprised me with an innovative system that makes combat results less predictable. That's why I designed a CRT with two die rolls that allows for more possible combinations. Also, in order to break the rigid correspondence between ratio and step losses I designed the Intensity Table. With the Intensity Table the same Combat result may end in 6 different step losses results.

As for the first and second echelon, the simplification suffered by the system has emptied it of most of its significance. Actually, to separate between 1st and 2nd echelon allowed to simplificate stacking. In the 1st line there are the fighting units, in the 2nd the inmediate reserves, HQs, support artillery, etc. But in Bizkaya there are no inmediate reserves or HQs. Anyway, the Echelon rules are easy to fulfill: all arty units must be placed in the 2nd echelon and some combat units.

The Special Rules

Bilbao. The Bilbao rule simulates the very meagre possibilities that historically existed for a house-by-house defense of Bilbao. The 16 June

a meeting of the military and political authorities presided by the lendakari[2] decided to evacuate the city after destroying the bridges across the Nervión. In simulation terms, we have rated the possibilities as 1out of 6.

After the occupation of Bilbao by Franco's forces, the campaign could be deemed over. The attackers kept the advance on to Santander, but at a such a slow pace that the Republicans had enough time to retreat the remnant of its forces. The Republican player must eliminate ¼ of its units. This is not because of the Santoña Agreement[3], but because of the reorganization of the remaining units that ended up with the elimination of approximately that percentage of units.

Actually, not all the Basque Nationalists battallions surrendered in Santoña in August. Some of these surrendered after the fall of Bilbao (13º Itxas-Alde, 16º Gordexola, 37º Otxandiano, 53º Saseta, 54º Matalo), others dissapeared at the end of june (14º Araba, 55º Kirikiño, 56º Martiartu, 59º Rebelión de la Sal, 62º Ariztimuño, 66º Zergaitik-ez? Finally, the 40º Mungia and 49º Larrazabal battallions had been recombined early in July. And it should be remembered that less than half of the Basque battallions were Basque Nationalists.

Other Considerations
Guernica. The terrorist bombing of Guernica and Durango had little military significance. Their moral effects on the fighting units are difficult to assess, and the moral effects on the civilian population lay outside the scope of this simulation.

Orthography. Some readers had noted that the title of the game is not correct, that it should be "Bizkaia" and not "Bizkaya". But this is not correct- there is not such error. Nowadays Basque speaking people write "Bizkaia", but in 1937 a standard grammar and orthography of the Basque language had not been yet established. In 1937 the Basques wrote "Bizkaya" and not "Bizkaia", "lendakari" and not "lehendakari" or "Euzkadi" and not "Euskadi".

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[2] "Lendakari": title of the President of the Basque government. It means literally "leader" or "chief" (Translator note).

[3] A pact between the CTV commander and the Basque Nationalist to surrender its battallions, put into effect in Santoña in August 1937. (T. Note).