

October 21, 2010

Solitaire Song of Blades and Heroes

Posted by Dogui under [article](#)[\[18\] Comments](#)

You probably know I am a solitaire gamer. Even though it was started out of necessity, it is something I've learned to enjoy very much. It's my private playground, and probably 70% of my painted figures have only been used in solo games.

I don't think playing solitaire is the same deal for every game, period, or ruleset. There are games easier to adapt, others harder. Some require this while others require that. You can see that clearly on my specific set of solitaire rules for the Lord of the Rings Strategy Battle Game called [Isildur's Bane](#).

Song of Blades and Heroes is a pretty amazing little game for skirmish gaming from [Ganesha Games](#). It's quality has been proven by adapting it to several settings and eras. The basic rules are set in a generic fantasy world, and the lists of troops show an amazing mix of troupes. It is a very good game for scenario play, creative warband creation with lots of character, and maybe even narrative campaign play. And it suits my solo play perfectly.

The game's system has, however, two very specific instances where player choice is essential. The most obvious one is what each figure does with its allocated actions. This happens in most every game and we will deal with it a bit later. The other one is more important and a big part of the game. A player can freely choose how many activation dice to roll, from 1 to 3. The more successful rolls the more actions the figure has. But two or more failures mean the turn passes to the opponent. You can see this game is pretty hectic and when playing solitaire it has a life of its own.



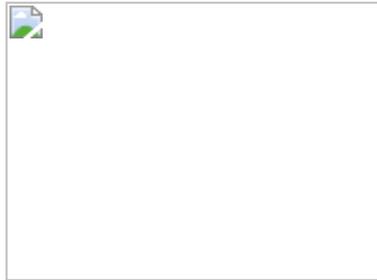
A couple of warbands, in this case historical opponents not really from a fantasy world.

I must now give credit where it's due. This system to randomize the activation roll was not created by me but by Mr. Timbo75 from [Tim's Wargaming Stuff](#) and left in a comment on a post from the month of May 2010. It's quite elegant and simple. You take 3 different colored dice and give them a priority rank. For example, I use green, blue and red and consider them in that order. Now you take a 3 sided die, which is usually a d6 with two 1s, two 2s and two 3s or you can simply use a regular d6 considering the following: 1-2, one, 3-4, two, 5-6, three. Roll them all together and the first thing to do is look at the fake d3. This die will tell you the amount of actions the figure is going for. Now check the rest of the dice to see which ones beat the Quality rating of the figure. Be mindful of the priority you gave them. An example will show this clearer.

I roll the dice and get 2 (d3), 4 (green), 1 (blue), 6 (red). Figure's Quality is 3+. Since the d3 rolled a 2, that means we will only check the first two dice. Given our priority, we discard the red die. We keep the green and blue, giving us a success and a failure. We use the single action for the figure and go onto another from the same side.

This time I roll 3 (d3), 2 (green), 1 (blue), 5 (red) for a similar figure. I will get to use all three dice, and I've got two failures and one success. The figure will carry out its only action and since it has two failed rolls play passes to the other side.

It's actually harder to explain than it is to execute. Now, how do I apply this to my games? There are two ways normally used in solo gaming. One is giving both sides to the "AI," in this case using the aforementioned system for both forces. The other one is letting one side act randomly while the other is played normally. For this game I prefer to have one side under my complete control. I do however roll to see which force I will be "using" before play.



My dice. The d3 came in one of GW's box sets (Epic 40K) and it's pretty useful for playing solitaire.

Now I have my randomized activation roll, but what to do with the figures? A popular approach is to have the automated warband be in a defensive stance, and the actual player's force in the attack. Personally, if I were to do this, I would not even need a system for them, since most choices would be pretty obvious. I rather device a scenario with very clear objectives for both forces, preferably different goals. And if one of the sides is going to be mildly in the defensive I rather have it be the one I am playing. This way the automated enemy's choices become more entertaining, making you make the most of what you're given by the randomizing system.

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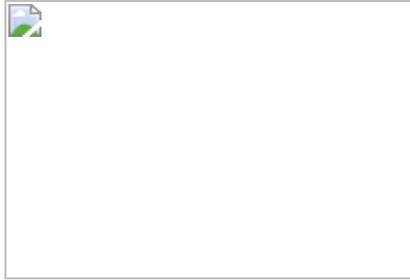
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SoBH lends itself perfectly for campaign play as well. The warband upgrades are fun things and if you keep them on your "real" warband, so to speak, they can grow and change from battle to battle. It's a game that lets you pit your guys against a horde of goblins, then against a single dragon with its wizard master, and then maybe go underground for some ruins exploration with the weirdest enemies. It's not a competition game and I believe it can create good narratives, specially playing solitaire, where you can focus on your characters alone and every battle is uncertain.



I make these cards with a Magic card creator. A pic, the Q and C of the figure, and its special rules. A lot prettier than a roster sheet.

18 Responses to “Solitaire Song of Blades and Heroes”

1. [Flying Lead skirmishes](#) « [oMAD](#) Says:

November 23, 2010 at 4:26 pm

[...] The warbands were made somewhat balanced. In the case of the U.N.A. there were several of the regular troopers (the ones with the grenades). The board was clear ground, the low walls were reinforced cover and everything else was hard cover. The first couple of games were played solo while the others were against my girlfriend (you can see the different colored dice and the D3 in one of the pics below, and the rules for solitaire SBH/FL can be found here). [...]

[Reply](#)

2. [Bard](#) Says:

December 3, 2010 at 3:12 am

That’s a really interesting way to play solo — I’ll have to try it myself. One thing occurs to me too is that you could have different types of “opposing generals,” rolling before the start of the game on a d3 where 1 = cautious, 2 = normal, 3 = aggressive. Then using a d6 instead of a d3, each time you determine how many actions a figure will attempt, a “cautious” general would attempt one action on 1-3, two actions on 4-5, and three actions on a 6; a “normal” general would use what you gave above, and an “aggressive general” would attempt one action on a 1, two actions on a 2-3, and three actions on a 4-6.

[Reply](#)

1. [Dogui](#) Says:

December 3, 2010 at 2:32 pm

That’s an interesting variation Bard. I might try it out soon (specially with FL or SDS where, in my opinion, leaders are so much more useful)

Thanks for sharing!

[Reply](#)

3. [user@example.com](#) Says:

February 21, 2011 at 7:52 pm

This is a nice, simple way of handling the SoBaH activation system. Thanks for posting it, even if you didn’t create it! It works surprisingly well to add a bit of uncertainty.

I just put together a set of three dice, RGB, and painted the spots on a black die rather than using a d3. 1 & 5 have all their spots in blue, 2 & 4 have evenly split blue & green spots, and 3 & 6 have all three colours. I would have preferred to keep the sides opposite, but the pattern of the spots compelled me to do it this way... and I put blue first because I had a nice shade of blue paint and wanted to paint all the spots on the 5 side blue. Heh.



I might try setting up more dice for different styles of general, as Bard suggests, perhaps with painted symbols in various colours swirling around the spots to differentiate between them? Hm.

[Reply](#)

1. [Dogui](#) Says:

[February 22, 2011 at 4:22 pm](#)

Remember to keep posting variations and options to solo systems in the SBH yahoo group. Lots of fun to be had. I specially recommend the Song of Splintered Lands if you play solo. It has an amazing campaign system with variable force generators that can be translated to any Songs game. It's genius.

Cheers!

[Reply](#)

4. [Solo rules for SDS.](#) « [oMAD](#) Says:

[May 19, 2011 at 1:19 pm](#)

[...] at BattReps has posted a two part solo rules for Song Drums and Shakos, based on the ones posted right here. A different twist and I think it suits the style of play of SDS very accurately. Check them out! [...]

[Reply](#)

5. [Solitaire Song of Blades and Heroes](#) « [Jozar's 2 Cents](#) Says:

[September 15, 2011 at 3:59 pm](#)

[...] Solitaire Song of Blades and Heroes Teilen Sie dies mit:TwitterFacebookDigg [...]

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6. [Solo gaming day.](#) « [oMAD](#) Says:

[November 11, 2011 at 2:10 pm](#)

[...] check Isildur's Bane, my solitaire rules hack for the Lord of the Rings game, as well as this solo mechanism for the Song of Blades and Heroes which will work with any Ganesha (and other's) games with the same core [...]

[Reply](#)

7. [navy seal watch](#) Says:

[September 12, 2015 at 8:50 am](#)

navy seal watch

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[Reply](#)

8. [Er1ck B•](#) Says:

[March 28, 2016 at 1:56 pm](#)

Nice initiative, thanks for sharing !

[Reply](#)

9. [Flying Lead: Rules Introduction and Review - Skirmish Wargaming](#) Says:

[April 8, 2016 at 11:17 am](#)

[...] characters. It lends itself rather well to solo- or coop-play, rules for which can be found online (Here and here. Both are designed for Song of Blades and Heroes and Song of Drums and Shakos, two games [...]

[Reply](#)

10. [domino qq online](#) Says:



August 13, 2017 at 3:52 pm

Great weblog here! Also your website loads up very fast!
What host are you the usage of? Can I get your associate hyperlink for
your host? I desire my website loaded up as quickly as yours lol.

Reply

11. icms na conta de luz como calcular Says:

August 26, 2017 at 3:13 am

FACIAP, tendo recebido _como nota cabal. <http://queromeudinheiro.com/conta-de-luz/>

Reply

12. 610.hani.co.kr Says:

May 11, 2018 at 7:12 am

They're made in pairs either worn on one ear
or both.

Reply

13. Kirstie Furtak Says:

March 18, 2019 at 5:14 am

Hi, this is a good website. I have shared it in my twitter. Thank you.

Reply

14. wentylacja mechaniczna mp Says:

September 4, 2019 at 7:11 am

My brother recommended I might like this website.
He was totally right. This publish actually made my day.
You can not imagine simply how so much time I had spent for this information! Thanks!

Reply

15. Jaimie Bines Says:

September 24, 2020 at 4:55 am

I don't know about you, but when that occurs to me, I'm tempted to toss my pc correct out the window.
Learning how to perform poker signifies a starting stage to understand the card values and combinations.

Reply

16. Free Dating Tips Says:

July 31, 2021 at 5:24 pm

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