

The War of the Triple Alliance RFF Variant

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The War of the Triple Alliance, fought between 1864-70, pitted the nation of Paraguay against the alliance of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. The conflict began when Brazil sent forces to intervene in the civil War raging in Uruguay. Solano Lopez, the leader of Paraguay, saw Brazil's entry into the conflict as a means for them to gain control of the vital Parana River, thus strangling Paraguay's trade and communications with the outside world. When the Blancos Government of Uruguay asked for Paraguayan help, Lopez responded by seizing the Brazilian vessel Marques de Olinda, and finally declaring war on Brazil on December 13, 1864. When Lopez approached Argentina and asked to be granted military access through their territory to attack Brazil, he was refused. Lopez instead declared war on Argentina. and proceeded to invade. Following this, the new government in Uruguay, headed by Venancio Flores, declared war on Paraguay. The three powers were called the Triple Alliance.

During the course of the conflict, the Paraguay forces fought bravely against overwhelming odds and superior weaponry. By the war's end, Lopez and his small army of old men, invalids, and children was hunted down and destroyed. Lopez and his son killed; an easy way out for the Dictator, but for the Paraguayan people they had suffered greatly at the hands of the invaders. An estimated 90% of the male population died in defense of their homeland. The Country would not recover until after the Chaco War.

The War of the Triple Alliance can be played as a variant to the basic Regimental Fire and Fury rule system. In addition to having to building the unique South American armies and terrain for the period, players will need the WTA Quick Reference Sheet which can be downloaded for free from the *fireandfury.com* website. We hope to provide a number of scenarios on-line, starting with the Battle of Yatay, fought on August 17, 1865.

This document describes the basic rule changes, special rules, army organizations, and unit ratings. It will be updated as needed after play tests and discussions on the forum.

WTA Quick Reference Sheet, (Version 4). There are a number of changes to the basic QRS to represent the WTA period:

1. A new +1 modifier for troops in square and +1 modifier called "machismo" appears on the Maneuver Table and Charge Table. Units rated with machismo have other advantages in morale and maneuver.
2. The Crack unit rating is not needed for this period. The ACW term "Green" troops is now called Raw.
3. New formation: Infantry may form square.
4. Slower movement rates on Movement Rates Chart for siege guns and ox-drawn field guns. Squares have limited movement.
5. Maneuver restrictions for siege guns.
6. Extended line is now called skirmishers and this formation is limited to a few units.
7. New hasty maneuver: infantry may form a hasty square. Machismo rated infantry may counter charge. Gun "crews" can take shelter in a square.
8. Revised weapon list for the WTA period.
9. +2 fire combat modifier for firing on a square. Squares have reduced firepower.

10. No charge home, charge checked and cold steel effect on fire combat table. Charging units always close.
11. 0 modifier for cavalry charging a square or +1 if charging pikes, -1 for irregular cavalry.
12. Defender in charge combat receives a -1 as skirmishers or in hasty square.
13. New charge combat effect if a defending unit in square is defeated by a hard Pressed effect.

Scale. We discovered that a larger scale is often needed to fight battles in periods other than the American Civil War. Larger regiments, particularly with the Paraguayans, with huge regiments of 800-1000 are too unwieldy. The WTA uses a scale of 1" = 50 yards, and 1 stand = 80 men or 4 guns. Weapon ranges in inches are reduced, but many control distances remain the same, such as the 8" command radius and 2" support.

Machismo. Unlike in the wars in Europe and North America, the combatants in South American conflicts were imbued by the culture of *machismo*, an exaggerated sense of masculinity, courage and strength. Latin American soldiers relied less on their firearms and rushed into close combat with bayonet, knife, sword, lance and pike. It was a fight to the death with quarter neither asked for, nor given. Prisoners and wounded were executed, and casualties heavy.

In game terms, all units are considered to have some degree of machismo. Many Paraguayans and Uruguayans, and a few Argentinean and Brazilians unit, receive a special "machismo" rating, which gives the unit several advantages. Machismo rated units have a special morale class with higher fresh-to-worn and worn-to spent-ratios than a unit with spirited morale. The unit also receives a +1 in its maneuver check and +1 for charging or counter charging into charge combat. Machismo infantry also may counter charge.

A player no longer has a choice for a unit to charge with or without cold steel. A player can still decide not to charge a unit, but any unit declared charging or counter charging, is considered to be charging with cold steel and cannot fire in the next phase. Charging units no longer receive a +1 in charge combat for charging with cold steel which is now replaced by the +1 machismo rating.

The rules for charge home or charge checked no longer apply in a fire combat effect. A unit cannot be checked by a Telling Fire or Withering Fire effect and always charges home after the fire combat is resolved.

In RFF only cavalry is allowed to counter charge. In the WTA infantry with machismo may also counter charge. The same rules for counter charging cavalry apply to counter charging infantry. Machismo infantry may counter charge if they are the target of a charge, or are within 2" behind in support or adjacent to a unit that is the target of a charge. A unit may only counter charge a charging enemy unit within 45-degrees to its front, and the opposing units must meet halfway.

Another rule change: infantry and cavalry may now charge the same target.

Morale. Paraguayan and Uruguayan troops should be some of the toughest troops you will ever face in a wargame. Think of the army, with the courage of the Old Guard, with clothing 100 times worse than the Confederates of 1865, and with the weaponry that is more suited for an army fighting in the Napoleonic Wars rather than the 1860's. Paraguayan troops almost NEVER retreated in battle and practically fought to the last man. There is only one record of a unit retreating and Lopez had it decimated. The morale of the Paraguayans should be such that they do not break, even under the heaviest of fire. That is not to say that they should never break, but it should be very hard for their effectiveness to go down.

A new morale column for units rated with machismo is added to the Unit Effectiveness Table. Most Paraguayan and Uruguayan and very few Argentinean and Brazilian units receive this rating. Machismo troops have a very high fresh-to-worn and worn-to-spent ratio.

In game terms, Paraguayans are going to be able to take a beating on the table, and this is good since most of the earlier historical battles have them on the attack and crossing swamps. Later in the war, the Paraguayans are almost always on defense, but their stubbornness keeps them from breaking--thus the high casualties amongst the troops.

Unit Effectiveness for WTA

Machismo	Spirited	Reliable	Unreliable
2/-1	2/-1	2/-1	2/-1
3/-1	3/-1	3/2/1	3/-2
4/-2	4/2/1	4/3/2	4/-3
5/2/1	5/3/2	5/4/3	5/-4
6/3/1	6/4/2	6/5/3	6/5/4
7/4/2	7/5/3	7/6/4	7/6/5
8/4/2	8/5/3	8/6/4	8/7/6
9/5/2	9/6/4	9/7/5	9/8/7
10/6/2	10/7/4	10/8/5	10/9/7
11/7/3	11/8/5	11/9/6	11/10/8
12/7/3	12/8/5	12/9/6	12/10/8
13/8/4	13/9/6	13/10/7	13/11/9
14/9/4	14/10/6	14/11/7	14/12/9
15/10/5	15/11/7	15/12/8	15/13/10
16/10/5	16/11/7	16/12/8	16/13/10
17/11/6	17/12/8	17/13/9	17/14/11
18/12/6	18/13/8	18/14/9	18/15/11
19/13/7	19/14/9	19/15/10	19/16/12
20/13/7	20/14/9	20/15/10	20/16/12
21/14/8	21/15/10	21/16/11	21/17/13
22/15/8	22/16/10	22/17/11	22/18/13
23/16/9	23/17/11	23/18/12	23/19/14
24/16/9	24/17/11	24/18/12	24/19/14
25/17/10	25/18/12	25/19/13	25/20/15

Skirmishers. The formation extended line is now called *skirmishers*. Only a few units have the ability to deploy as skirmishers. Skirmishers maneuver and fight the same as an extended line. A skirmish rating (SK) should be indicated on the unit label.

Dismounted Cavalry. Not all cavalry can dismount and not all dismounted cavalry may deploy as skirmishers. Cavalry not rated as skirmishers may only dismount into line formation. Dismounted cavalry move at the infantry movement rates. Use the same horse holder ratios as in the basic rules. Only cavalry units with small arms may dismount and they can only fire when dismounted. The lance was universally used by cavalry in the WTA but it does not have a special rating or effect in the game.

Infantry Squares. Infantry may form square. The rules for squares can be downloaded from the *fireandfury.com* website under the Support menu, titled *Infantry Squares for RFF Variants*.

Weapon Types. The WTA featured a vast array of different troop types, weapons, and abilities.

INFANTRY WEAPONS

Rifle Musket (RM)- *Minie, Enfield, Springfield*

Breechloading Rifle (BR)- *Dryse*

Breechloading Carbine (BC)

Rifled Carbine (RC)- *Enfield Carbine*

Smoothbore Musket (SM)- *Brown Bess*

Smoothbore Carbine (SC)

Mixed Firearms & Pike (FP)

ARTILLERY WEAPONS

Breechloading Rifle (BR) - *Whitworth, Krupp*

Muzzleloading Rifle (MR) - *La Hitte or RML over 12-lb*

Siege Gun (SG) - any poundage over 12-lb

Hvy Smoothbore (HS)- 12-lb

Med Smoothbore (MS)- 6 and 9-lb

Light Smoothbore (LS)- any poundage under 6-lb

Antiquated Guns (AG) - very old and obsolete guns

Rockets (R)- Treat the same as medium smoothbores (R-MS).

Ox-drawn Guns (OX). Artillery was often pulled by oxen during the war. After the fall of Humatia, this became universal amongst the Paraguayans. In fact, some guns were reduced to being pulled by men.

In game terms, the Allies should be using horse-drawn artillery for guns that are field and oxen for guns that are siege, same with the Paraguayans. After 1867, the Paraguayans should be using more oxen, and by 1868 almost all of it should be oxen or hand-driven. As the Allies progressed further into Paraguay, the use of Oxen became more--especially as they hacked their way through the Chaco.

Ox-drawn guns move at a slower rate than horse-drawn guns.

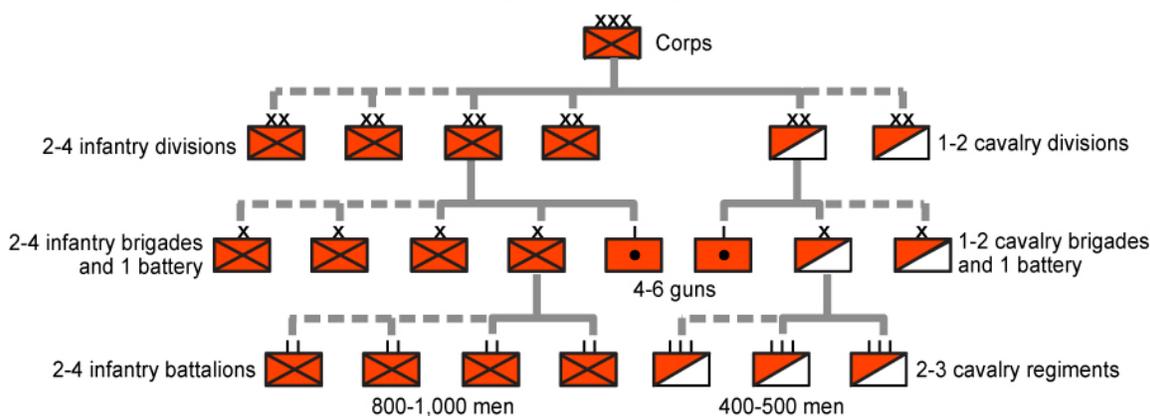
Mixed Firearms & Pikes (FP) – A lack of firearms and ammunition later in the war, especially after the battle of Avai in late December 1868, caused many Paraguayan troops to be issued pikes. These were traded for whatever weapon that could be picked up on the battlefield.

Opposing cavalry reduce their charge combat modifier to a +1 when charging units armed with mixed firearms and pikes.

Lances. Cavalry were universally armed with lances which has no special advantage in the game.

Antiquated Guns (AG). Much of the literature talks about the lack of weaponry amongst the Paraguayans. You might have a scenario where the Paraguayans are using artillery that went back to the 1600's.

Paraguayan Army Organization



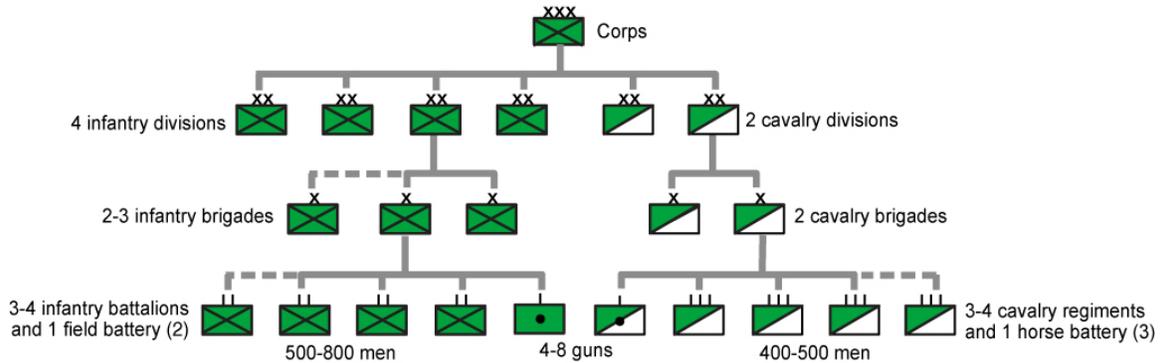
Paraguayan Unit Ratings

Unit	Morale	Effectiveness	Weapon
Regular Infantry ns.	Machismo	Trained	SM / RM (1) / FP
14th and 40th Regular Infantry Bns.	Machismo	Veteran	RM
6th and 7th Nambi-i Marine Bns. (2)	Machismo	Veteran	RM / SM (2)
Militia Infantry	Spirited	Raw	SM / FP (3)
Regular Cavalry Regts.	Machismo	Trained	SC (5)
Aca-Caraya Cavalry Regt. (4)	Machismo	Veteran	BC (5)
Aca-Vera Cavalry Regt.	Machismo	Veteran	RM / SK (6)
Aca-Moroti Cavalry Regt.	Machismo	Veteran	SC (5)
Militia Cavalry Regts.	Spirited	Raw	- (7)
Artillery	-	Trained	MS, HS, SG, MR (8)

Notes:

- 1) Regular troops can be armed with either all smoothbore muskets (SM), all rifle muskets (RM), or a mix of firearms & pikes (FP). Only three infantry battalions were equipped with rifle muskets (RM) in 1864. Later in the war up to 30% of the infantry were equipped with captured RM.
- 2) Nambi-i means "Little Ears." The marines are also engineers. The 6th is armed with RM, the 7th with SM.
- 3) Militia infantry can be armed with either all smoothbore muskets (SM) or a mix of firearms & pikes (FP).
- 4) Aca-Caraya is Lopez's 250-strong bodyguard.
- 5) Cavalry must dismount to fire weapons and may only form line.
- 6) Aca-Moroti must dismount to fire weapons and may only form as skirmishers (SK).
- 7) Militia cavalry are considered to be only armed with lances and cannot dismount.
- 8) The bulk of the artillery was MS. One battery of 12-lb MR was available in 1864. At Cuevas, there was a battery of 24-pdr. heavy rifles (rate as MR), and a battery of 24-lb rockets (rate as MS).

Brazilian Army Organization (1)



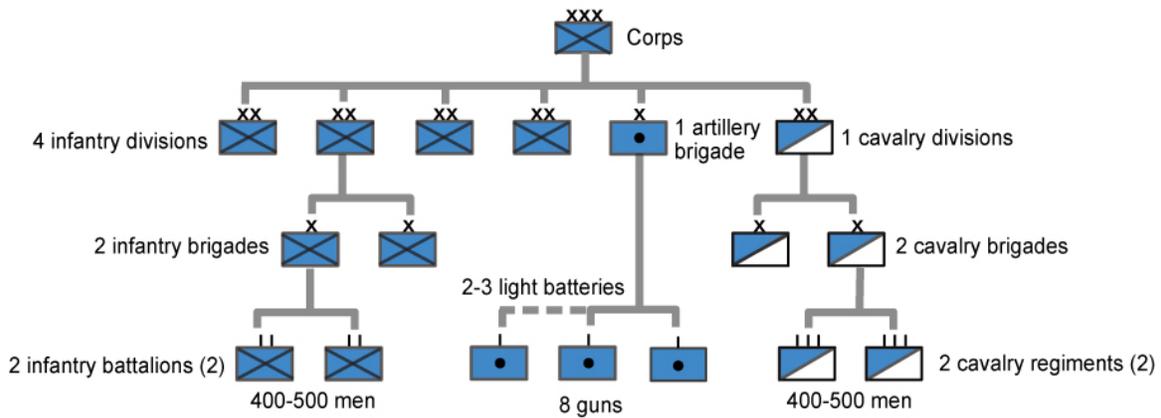
Brazilian Unit Ratings

Unit	Morale	Effectiveness	Weapon
1st - 7th Line Infantry Bns. and 8th - 14th Light Infantry Bns.	Spirited	Trained	RM
15th Light Infantry Bn.	Spirited	Trained	BL
16th - 22nd Light Infantry Bns.	Reliable	Raw	RM
Marine Bns.	Reliable	Trained	RM
Zouaves of Bahia	Machismo	Veteran	RM
Pernambucco Zouaves and 11th Provisional Zouaves	Reliable	Trained	SM / RM
Engineers	Spirited	Trained	RM
Garibaldi Battalion (4)	Spirited	Trained	RM
National Guard and Volunteer Inf Bns.	Reliable	Raw	SM / RM
Irregular Infantry	Unreliable	Raw	SM / RM
Regular Cavalry Regts. and Mounted Rifles	Spirited	Trained	RC (5)
National Guard Cavalry Regts.	Reliable	Raw	SC (5)
Irregular Cavalry Regts.	Unreliable	Raw	- (6)
Artillery	-	Trained	SG, MR, BR (7)

Notes:

- 1) Brazil made up 60% of allied force at the start of the war. By October 1866 this rose to 80%. After July 1867 it was 90%
- 2) An infantry brigade is usually 2 line or light infantry battalions and 2 volunteer or National Guard battalions, and an attached field battery.
- 3) A cavalry brigade can be regular, volunteer, National Guard, or mixed, and an attached horse battery.
- 4) The Garibaldi Battalion was attached to the Uruguayan Brigade until September 1866. After this date it fought with the Brazilians.
- 5) Cavalry must dismount to fire weapons and may only form line.
- 6) Irregular cavalry are considered to be only armed with lances and cannot dismount.
- 7) The artillery consist of 9 and 12-pdr. Whitworths and a few Krupp breechloading guns (BR). A few 32-pdr. siege guns (SG), 4, 9, and 12-pdr. La Hitte muzzleloading (MR) field guns or horse guns.

Argentinean Army Organization (1)



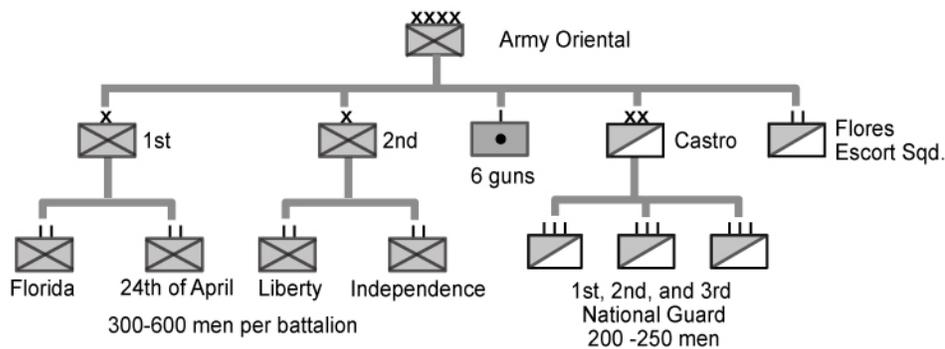
Argentinean Unit Ratings

Unit	Morale	Effectiveness	Weapon
Line Infantry Bns., Marines and Engineer Bns.	Reliable	Trained	RM
6th Line Infantry Bn.	Spirited	Veteran	RM
La Rioja Bn.	Reliable	Trained	RM / SK (3)
San Juan Battalion	Machismo	Veteran	RM / SK (3)
National Guards	Unreliable	Raw	RM
Buenos Aires National Guards	Reliable	Raw	SM / RM
Paraguayan Legion	Spirited	Trained	RM
Irregulars	Unreliable	Raw	SM / RM
Regular Cavalry Regts.	Reliable	Trained	RC (4)
Bodyguards	Spirited	Veteran	RC (4)
National Guards	Unreliable	Raw	RC (4)
Buenos Aires National Guards	Reliable	Raw	RC (4)
Irregulars	Unreliable	Raw	- (5)
Artillery	-	Trained	MS, SG, MR (6)

Notes:

- 1) Argentina made up 30% of allied force at the start of the war. By October 1866 this dropped to 20%. By July 1867 it was down to 10%.
- 2) Infantry and cavalry brigades can be all line, volunteer, national guard or a mix.
- 3) La Rioja and San Juan Battalions may form as skirmishers (SK).
- 4) Cavalry must dismount to fire weapons and may only form line.
- 5) Irregular cavalry are considered to be only armed with lances and cannot dismount.
- 6) The artillery consist of 6 and 9-pdr. smoothbore guns (MS), 18, and 24-pdr. smoothbore siege guns (SG), 12-pdr rifled guns (MR), and 24-pdr. rockets (treat as MS).

Uruguayan Army Organization(1)



Uruguayan Unit Ratings

Unit	Morale	Effectiveness	Weapon
Florida Infantry Battalion	Machismo	Veteran	RM
24th of April Infantry Battalion	Spirited	Veteran	RM
Liberty Infantry Battalion	Reliable	Veteran	RM / SK (2)
Independence and Independente (3) Infantry Battalions	Unreliable	Raw	RM
National Guard and Irregular Infantry	Unreliable	Raw	SM / RM
Escort Squadron (4)	Reliable	Trained	SC / RC (6)
National Guard and Irregular Cavalry	Spirited	Veteran	- (7)
Artillery	-	Trained	MR (8)

Notes:

- 1) This is the entire Uruguayan contingent that fought in the war. The army makes up 10% of allied force at the start of the war. By the end of Tuyuti in May 1866 it had shrunk to about 5% and by July of 1867 there was only a few hundred left. By 1868, according to Thompson, there was no sign of any Uruguayan contingent.
- 2) The Liberty Infantry Battalion may form as skirmishers (SK).
- 3) After the Battle of Tuyuti in May 1866 the Liberty and Independence Battalions were amalgamated into the Independente Battalion.
- 4) This is Flores's 265-strong (3-troop stands) personal bodyguard. Unit must dismount to fire weapons and may only form line.
- 5) National Guard and Irregular cavalry are considered to be only armed with lances and cannot dismount.
- 6) The artillery consist of 4, 9, and 12-pdr. La Hitte muzzleloading (MR) field guns.