Yom Kippur Variants: Putting a Little More Zing in the Arabs

by Dave Powell

The recent release of **Yom Kippur** has delivered unto us a game with some real sting in it, no matter which side you play. Neither side has a cakewalk, though each has some clearly defined limits beyond which you had better not venture. The Egyptians, for instance, can be hard to defeat close to the canal, but better not wander beyond the range of their cannon or SAM screen, lest that power evaporate quickly. For that matter, for all that the Israelis seem invincible while dancing in and out of contact, once they close to sustained combat, those one-step combat units can disappear in an eyeblink as well.

Hence, many games will develop a certain rhythm after repeated play, as the Arabs hunker down on the high ground, and dare the Israelis to get mixed up in sustained action. In order to add a little extra spice to that mix, here are a couple of quick variant ideas.

1. Hanging out the washing on the Bar-Lev line.

One of the biggest controversies of the war on the Israeli side was the casualty list. In a nation of less than 3 million people, every loss was acutely felt, and the Israelis bordered on the fanatical when it came to evacuating the injured or rescuing trapped comrades. Much of what motivated that urgent initial rush to counterattack on 8 October was not just overconfidence, but also the need to rescue any of the Bar-Lev garrison still holding out. In the previous days, a number of daring missions had been conducted to extract individual garrisons, often successfully. Given that background, use the following rules:

• If the Egyptian player destroys 9 or more Bar-Lev fort units (**not** steps), he is awarded 1 VP. Destruction of 12 or more Bar-Lev units is worth 2 VP. These awards are not cumulative.

• The Israeli may rescue Bar-Lev fort units. He does so in either of the two following ways:

A) Have a supplied Israeli exploit-capable unit within two hexes of the Bar-Lev unit to be rescued at the end of the Movement Phase, or;

B) Move into a Bar-Lev unit's hex during either the Movement or Exploitation Phases and expend 3 MP. Units may continue moving after they rescue a Bar-Lev unit.

Remove the Bar-Lev fort counter from the map at the instant the rescuing condition is fulfilled. Bar-Lev forts may be rescued starting on Turn 2. Players may not *partially* rescue a fort unit, rescuing only one step and leaving the rest to fight it out: Any rescued fort unit is completely removed.

For every 7 Bar-Lev fort units so rescued, the Israeli player is awarded 1 VP and may replace 1 step of any non-tank unit in play or in the dead pile. Replacement steps are handled like recovered tank steps. Note that the Israeli player does not round off the number of units rescued: rescuing only four units does not let you round up to get the VP award and replacement step anyway. Also, both reduced and full strength fort counters count equally for VP and replacement step purposes.

The Israelis get this extra replacement steps because of their amazing ability to repair equipment and create ad-hoc forces out of what seems like thin air.

2. On to Jerusalem

After the war, the Egyptian chief of staff became disenchanted enough with the Sadat regime to depart the country and speak his mind about the October War. In his view, the great mistake the Egyptians made was to halt too near the canal. Instead, they should have driven forward to seize the more defensible terrain deeper in the Sinai. This option allows you to explore the implications of that strategy in an extreme way: by committing the carefully hoarded Egyptian reserves right out of the gate.

On turn one, the Egyptian player may release all units in both the Exploitation Reserve and the GHQ Reserve, who then enter the map normally. Additionally, one Egyptian HQ may cross the canal to coordinate supply for the exploiting force. Note that the release of this HQ is a one-time event, and should it become eliminated, no other HQ may cross to take its place. Of course, the Arab player may also use the Schnell Abdul option, freeing both other HQs and the SAM umbrella.

Nothing comes without a price, and having demanded the Egyptian reserve, you will be expected to achieve great things with it. Use of this option will cost 4 VP. If you fail, be on the next plane out of Cairo!