

Panzer Grenadier

1938 War of the Worlds edition

by Alan Sawyer

Background On October 30, 1938 Orson Wells put on a radio program that would become infamous in entertainment history by sparking mass panic in a country that was already edge. Bad economic conditions, looming war scares in Europe and population worried about what would next in the country became wrapped up in a radio broadcast that seemed a little too real.

The story was not new, H.G. Wells penned the story nearly a half a century earlier, and had been well read by this point. Wells told the story as a view on what colonialism was doing to the world, great powers with great technology swooping in to take over the land and destroying the native people. Orson Wells took this story and brought it into 1938 with angles that related to the current population. Radio was the way people received the most immediate news. Programs were routinely interrupted for special reports and people paid attention to these bulletins. An invasion of the United States had recently become more of a real idea in people's minds with the tensions in Europe as well as the militant workers parties and communists sympathies on the rise in America. Place these together in a real location just beyond the largest city in America, time it close to All Hallows Eve and you have something that goes beyond a good scare.

In trying to recreate this tension, I have penned a Panzer Grenadier scenario to fight the Battle of Grover's Mill. The battle was never fought for real, but that night on October 30, 1938 it was a very real battle to many people who listened. I hope this scenario can give a little of the drama of that night for all of you PG fans. Can you stop the Martian machines?

Happy Halloween.

Battle of Grover's Mills

October 30, 1938

After the landing, the machines started out on their mission to destroy planet earth. The first area to be exterminated was the eastern seaboard of the United States, New York, Trenton, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington D.C. would be first. The American army deployed the National Guard and later the regulars would join them. The New Jersey Guard units from Trenton were the first on the scene and deployed to surround the cylinders that landed as well as deployed artillery units to prevent them from getting away. The Americans were confident, the commanding officer thought that it would only take some machinegun fire to stop these machines. But the deadly Martian technology was much more than that. As soon as the legs of the machines deployed the Americans were beginning to think differently.

Boards

22
25

Games Required: Elsenborn Ridge

Game Length: 12 turns

First Turn: 23:00

Other: The town hexes on board 22 are Grover's Mills. To the north is the road to New York City to the south the road to Trenton and Philadelphia.

New Jersey National Guard and 22nd Field Artillery

Setup second in any hex on board 22 and 25 at least 2 hexes away from the machines.

27xINF

9xHMG

3x81mm Mtr

6xM5

2xM8

15xM3 (will represent White Scout cars)

Leaders: 1xCol, 1xMaj, 3xCapt, 7xLT, 1xSGT

Morale: 7/6

Initiative: 3

Off-Board Artillery: 3x18, 1x24

Martians

Setup first in the following hexes, one machine per hex. On Board 22: 0705, 0706, 0707, 0804, 0805, 0806, 0807, 0905, 0906, 0907, 0908, 1006, 1007.

3x Martian machines

Morale: 6

Initiative: 3

Special Rules

1. The American initiative level is reduced by 1 for every 8 steps lost (tanks count double).
2. The Martian initiative level is reduced by 1 for every step lost.
3. Although it is night, the machines can be seen from a long way away due to lights and force field. American visibility is 6 hexes. See Martian rules for visibility.

Victory Conditions

Martian Major victory: The Martians must move at least one machine off the north edge and one off the south edge of the board.

Martian Minor victory: The Martians move one machine off the north or south edge of the board and destroy 24 American steps.

American Minor victory: Destroy two Martian machines

American Major victory: Destroy three Martian machines

Any other condition is a draw.

Conclusion: The Martian machines destroyed the New Jersey National Guard troops and moved on to New York and Trenton and the rest of the east coast. Human technology was too feeble to stop the Martian juggernaut. Much of the east coast was abandoned to the Martians, but several weeks later the Martian extermination slowed then stopped. Stunned Americans slowly advanced back into the devastated area only to find the Martians dead, not from the technologies of man, but by the germs and micro-organisms that inhabited this world.

Martian Rules

1. Force field- The machines have a force field that will stop all direct fire, bombardment and AT attacks unless the machines have been demoralized at which point the force field drops until they recover. Armor will be 0 when the force field is down.
2. Machine activation – Each machine should be consider to have a leader in it. It can activate itself and any other machine within the six adjacent hexes.
3. Machine movement – The machine use the foot movement rate as they have three 50 foot legs. The machines cannot use road movement rates.
4. Machine attacks – The machines attack using normal PG rules. They may choose direct, AT or assault fire but may only conduct one attack per turn. They may not move and fire. The machines do not have armor efficiency. They may only opportunity fire once per turn(it takes too long to recharge the heat rays).
5. Combat results against the machines – If you are lucky enough to get a combat result on the machines, they will suffer the results. Effects of disruption, demoralization and step loss have all the same effects on the machines.
6. Black Smoke – The machines have a special black smoke that is similar to regular smoke. Use smoke markers to mark the hexes. Remove them in the marker removal phase. It will block LOS in the hex it is deployed in. It will also attack all American units in the hex on the 42 column of the bombardment table. Black smoke can only be deployed once per turn by each machine, and it is placed in one of the six hexes adjacent to the machines.
7. Limited Visibility – The machines are for mass destruction of cities rather than fight armies so they will ignore units that don't fire at them. Treat all American units in limited terrain for all hexes they are in, until they fire. The Martian machines will only spot them if the American units fire or they are adjacent. Place a spotted marker on these units to show that they may be attacked by the machines. American movement has no effect on spotting, only a unit firing will be spotted. However, the American unit will continue to be spotted until it moves into a different hex that contains woods(light or regular), towns or hills.
8. All other PG rules apply.
9. Solo play guidelines – For games played solo, play as the Americans and use these guidelines for the machines. Machines will attempt to move to the north of south of the board if they cannot spot units. They will move in a straight line toward the edges. If American units are in the path, they will stop and fire at them to clear their path. If in an assault hex they will destroy all units in the hex before moving on. Disrupted and demoralized machines will attempt to recover before moving on.

Counters

