

MILES

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Imagine being able to conduct training that is challenging, fun, inexpensive, and easily implemented —and training that does all of the following:

- Exercises basic infantry skills.
- Develops small-unit leadership.
- Improves squad cohesion and teamwork.
- Builds physical fitness.

And imagine that this training takes only ten minutes!

Soldiers in the 3d (Marne) Infantry Division don't have to imagine such training; their units are accomplishing all of this and more.

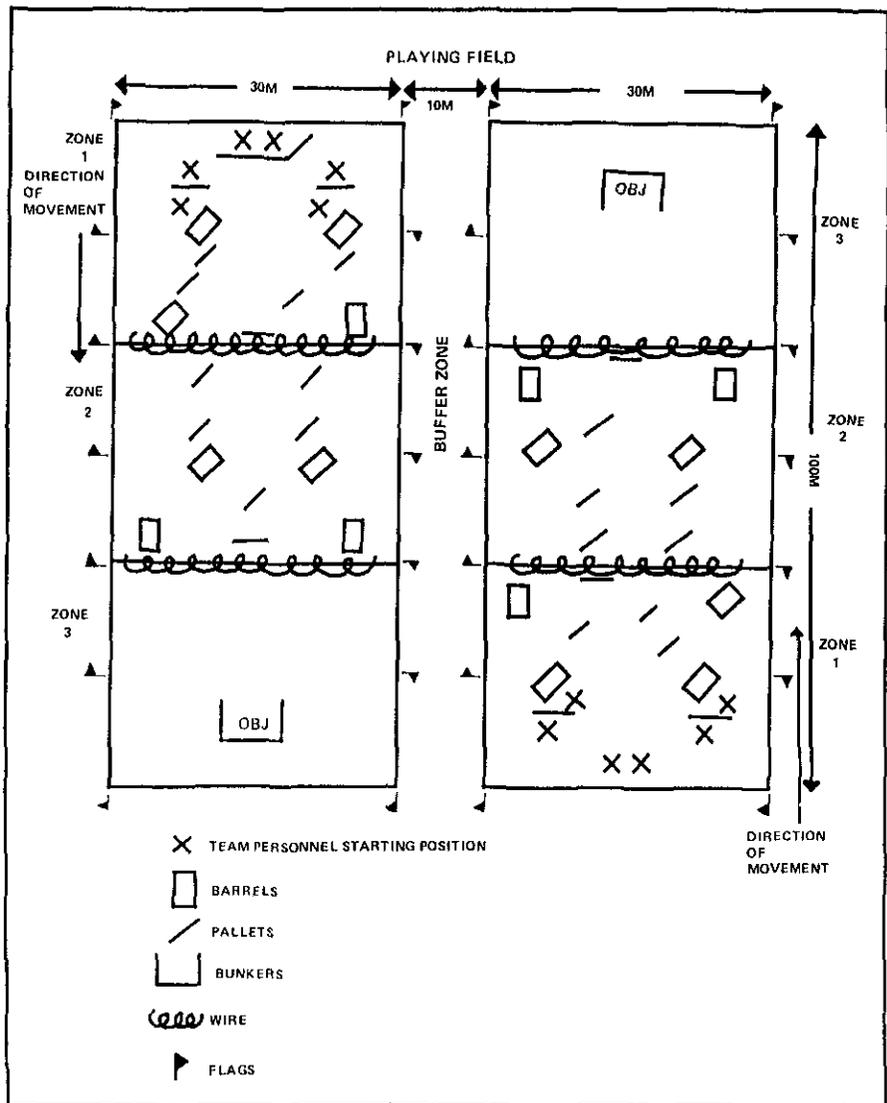
The Commanding General of the 3d Division, Major General Howard G. Crowell, Jr., challenged the division's units to develop a small-unit competition that incorporated the use of the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) and one that could easily be implemented throughout the division. The implied task was to pack as much training value as possible into the competition. The soldiers of the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, responded to the challenge and created what is now called the "MILES Game."

The MILES Games is a squad-against-squad competition that combines the tried and true fire and movement tactics of the infantry with the training value of MILES. It was specifically designed to train soldiers in the use of individual movement techniques to improve their chances of surviving on the battlefield. But, as it turned out, the game does more than that —all of those things listed above, in fact.

The game can be conducted in any

open area with dimensions of approximately 100 meters by 70 meters. The playing field, as laid out by the 3d Division, consists of two lanes, each 30 meters wide and 100 meters long, with a 10-meter buffer zone between them (see sketch).

Each lane has an enemy bunker, two wire obstacles, and a series of identical emplacements, which are designed to provide cover and concealment for the competing squads. The obstacles and emplacements can be created from such easy-to-find items





Obstacles and emplacements provide cover and impede or facilitate movement.

as 55-gallon drums, concertina wire, sandbags, pallets, railroad ties, and logs. (The placement of obstacles and cover can be left to the discretion of the controllers, so long as it is the same for both lanes.) The bunkers are five sandbags wide, four deep, and five high. Markings, obstacles, and bunkers are emplaced as shown in the flag sets is the easiest way to mark the field boundaries and the buffer zone, but engineer tape, rope, lime, or other materials can also be used.) The lack of cover in Zone 3 requires the intelligent use of smoke and covering fire.

In the interest of teamwork and cohesion, the game was designed for two teams, each consisting of members of the same squad. The actual team size in the 3d Division is six soldiers — the number in a Bradley's dismount element. The other squad members observe from the sidelines; their "during-action reviews" add peer pressure to the game, and at the same time these members gain from the experience of watching the action.

The soldiers carry standard infantry equipment for realism — including load-bearing equipment, protective masks, and body armor — and wear MILES laser detector suspenders and helmet bands. Each team carries five practice hand grenades, one M60 machinegun, and five M16A1 rifles. All the weapons are equipped with

blank adapters and MILES transmitters, which *have been boresighted*. (Extra MILES equipment is kept available to replace unserviceable items.) Binoculars, squad radios, rifle bipods, and M60 accessories can also be used at a squad leader's discretion. Four hundred rounds of blank machinegun ammunition, 200 rounds of blank rifle ammunition, and one smoke grenade are issued to each squad.

The teams begin the game with their soldiers in the prone position behind obstacles at opposite ends of the field. (Or they can start from inside BFVs or APCs at each end of the field.) A blast from an artillery simulator signals the start of the game, and the soldiers may immediately begin moving and firing, shooting at the "enemy" along the way. The object is for them to move down their team's half of the field and throw or roll as many of their grenades as they can into the bunker at the far end while sustaining as few casualties as possible. (They can use smoke to conceal their advance.) At the same time, they must try to prevent the other team from accomplishing the same mission. After ten minutes, the end of the game is signalled by a blast from another artillery simulator. (A detailed list of rules is shown in the accompanying chart.)

Three soldiers are delegated to serve

as umpires, although it is possible to conduct the game with two. (Platoon leaders and platoon sergeants are best suited for this duty, because they are, after all, the teachers and trainers of the squads.) The duties of the umpires are to start and stop the competition; to see that the rules are adhered to; to test the MILES equipment; to determine the winner; and to conduct after-action reviews. The umpires must have MILES controller guns.

The game is scored as follows:

- One point for each soldier who remains "alive" on the friendly side of the first wire obstacle.
- Two points for each "live" soldier who has crossed the first wire obstacle.
- Three points for each "live" soldier who has crossed the second wire obstacle.
- Five points for each grenade that is exploded *in* the enemy bunker.

Note that a team earns more points for getting a grenade inside the opposing force bunker than for keeping one of its soldiers alive. This represents the weight assigned to the accomplishment of the mission versus the preservation of the force. In combat, both are important, of course, but mission accomplishment is paramount. In the MILES Game itself, this disparity in point value is the motivating factor that pushes soldiers out from behind their cover toward the opposing bunker.

In addition to the points awarded, points are also taken away for certain violations of the rules. One penalty point is deducted for each of the following:

- Any activity by a "dead" soldier — talking, shooting, passing ammunition forward.
- Throwing a smoke grenade into enemy territory.
- Going outside the boundaries or into the buffer zone.
- Tampering with MILES equipment — removing batteries, for example. (The umpires must check the "live" soldiers before, during, and after the game with their controllers' guns to make sure the individual MILES equipment is operating the

Rules for MILES Game

- Squad leaders may allocate ammunition and grenades in whatever way they deem necessary before the game starts.
- Soldiers may have magazines inserted and weapons loaded before the starting signal.
- Soldiers must remain on their half of the field of play at all times. (Soldiers who leave their half of the field of play, by moving either across the sidelines or the rear boundary of the end zone or into the buffer zone, will be "killed" by an umpire with his controller gun.)
- M16 MILES transmitters may be set on either semi-automatic or automatic, as a squad leader deems necessary.
- Ammunition and grenades may be reallocated within a team during the game. Ammunition and grenades may be taken from "killed" soldiers.
- If a machinegunner is "killed," any other soldier on the team may take his place and operate the weapon.
- When a soldier becomes a casualty, he must remove his helmet and remain in place. He may not communicate with his team through gestures or any other actions. If a soldier violates these instructions, an umpire will "kill" the nearest member of the soldier's team.
- "Killed" soldiers are allowed to observe the action.
- Casualties may not fire weapons or throw grenades, but grenades thrown by soldiers who become casualties in the act of throwing the grenades will count.
- A soldier may throw or roll the smoke grenade anywhere in his team's half of the field or in the buffer zone. A smoke grenade that is thrown or rolled across the buffer zone into the other team's half of the field will cause the thrower's team to lose one point.

way it should.)

In case of a tie score, the squad with the most ammunition on hand is declared the winner. When the game is over, an after-action review is conducted in the buffer zone.

(Experience has shown that it is best to run the exercise three times for each pair of squads —the best two out of three games yields a true winner, and this allows for such variations as wind direction, sunlight, and slope of field.)

What the MILES Game has done is to give the division a way to involve an entire unit in an inexpensive training exercise. In addition, with the use of the MILES equipment, the leaders and trainers are free to concentrate on their soldiers' combat skills rather than on such technicalities as determining casualties or assessing the effectiveness of fire and smoke. The soldiers who participate in the game obviously enjoy themselves and try hard to win; and this kind of challenge and competition is vital to any good training exercise.

The game is also physically demanding, for it helps develop the specific kind of physical fitness an infantryman needs most in combat —the ability to move short distances from position to position in a series of sprints, dives, rolls, and crawls.

Another advantage of the game is that it requires good marksmanship, just as combat does. To successfully engage fast-moving targets, fleetingly glimpsed while his head is down, a soldier must be able to hit what he is aiming at. Soldiers who place the selector switch on full automatic soon find themselves out of ammunition and with few "casualties" to show for it. (One platoon sergeant observing the game commented, "There's no way you can play 'John Wayne' with this system. Those who try the old Hollywood approach soon find they are no longer in the game.")

One thing that squad leaders have to learn in the game is how to communicate with and control the members of their team under fire. Observations of several squads competing in the game have shown that most squad leaders know how to organize their team to accomplish the mission and how to control their soldiers. The problem is that few of them can control their soldiers and stay "alive" at the same time. The leaders who continually dash back and forth and raise up to shoot are invariably among the early casualties.

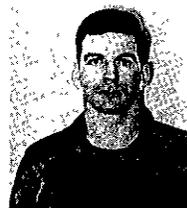
One winning squad leader said that he positioned himself near the center front of his team because "it was more important that I be able to personally

see the enemy and be positioned where everyone in the team could see me than to be positioned where I could watch everyone in the team." An old lesson relearned! Squad leaders who position themselves to the rear of the team often have their soldiers "get away" from them —at least far enough away that they cannot hear their squad leader and he cannot use visual signals without exposing himself to enemy fire. So leading from the front is a key to success.

The MILES Game, as it was designed and is being conducted in the 3d Infantry Division, is laid out here in the hope that it will be just as valuable to other units. But this is only the basic approach. The terrain and the obstacles can be varied; other weapons and ammunition can be used; and the size of the teams can be changed. Or the game can be played at night, even in MOPP 4! The variations are almost endless. But however it is played, the MILES Game produces good training —and it doesn't require a lot of time or money.



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