

Schnell Rules for Schnellboote!

Quick Play Coastal Forces Rules by David Manley

Introduction

Coastal Forces duties in WW2 were amongst the most romantic, dashing and potentially hazardous duties that a sailor could undertake during WW2. Small craft, close-knit crews and a high degree of autonomy in terms of operations and equipment, coupled with an image and operational style somewhat akin to that of an air forces' fighters, served to generate a culture of individualism and expertise that captures the imagination of naval historians and wargamers alike. The latter I guess are also attracted by the modelling potential and the ability to personalise their craft to an extent that surpasses more traditional naval forces. The nature of Coastal Forces actions themselves are also popular with wargamers seeking a short, sharp battle at close quarters.

Small craft have always formed part of naval thinking. The development of high speed attack craft began in earnest during WW1, but the designs available were relatively flimsy and their potential wasn't realised; most were discarded at the end of hostilities. Several navies developed a passing interest in Coastal Forces vessels between the wars but these were seen mainly as vessels suitable for export. Both Britain and Germany sold several craft overseas within Europe and farther afield. The US sought to develop a basic capability, relying on British designs. However, with the exception of Germany little serious development was undertaken.

The outbreak of war suddenly showed the enormous potential for small, fast attack craft to take the fight to the enemy's coast line. A significant amount of freight and war materiel was transported in coastal ships and convoys. Motor Torpedo Boats (MTBs) and Schnellboote were ideally suited for night time raids on this traffic. The deployment of these craft led to the development of fast gunboats to counter them, and eventually a whole range of motor launches, minelayers, minesweepers, armed trawlers and other small craft that fought in the "Narrow Seas". Their use was not restricted to the waters around the UK and the North Sea – in the Mediterranean Italian MAS and VAS boats developed a fearsome reputation, whilst US PT boats served with distinction throughout the Pacific and European Theatre of War. The Soviets developed the highly effective G5 class MTB that bore the brunt of Russian naval operations against the Kriegsmarine in the Baltic and Black Seas. Many smaller nations developed and operated highly successful coastal forces. Only the Japanese failed to capitalise; although several classes of boat were developed they were rarely used and accomplished little.

The Rules

These rules are intended for very quick, deadly battles fought between WW2 Schnellboote, MTBs, MGBs and other craft of the "Mosquito Fleets". They have been designed to be played on a wargamer's standard 8x6 or 6x4 foot table and hence missile ranges have been heavily compressed. The current rules cover coastal forces boats, small surface ships (up to destroyers) and fighter aircraft only (future work may see larger vessels and submarines added)

Vessel Data

Each craft is described by its Size, Speed and Manoeuvrability. Details of example craft are given in the vessel data tables. Vessel damage is reflected through a series of Damage Levels. Fast or Very Fast coastal forces craft such as MTBs and Schnellboote can accelerate or decelerate 2 levels per turn (for example a boat travelling at Very Fast could decelerate to Fast or Medium); others can change speed by 1 level. .

Size	Speed (max move in cm)	Manoeuvrability (turning circle used)	Damage Levels
Very Small	Very Slow - 10cm	Very Small	Intact
Small	Slow - 15cm	Small	Damaged
Medium	Medium - 20cm	Medium	Heavily Damaged
Large	Fast - 25cm	Large	Wrecked
Very Large	Very Fast - 30cm	Very Large	Sunk

Turn Sequence:

1. Spot targets
2. Determine initiative
3. Move aircraft
 - o Bomb or strafe ships
 - o Resolve AA
4. Move Large and Very Large vessels
5. Move Medium and Smaller vessels
6. Move aircraft again
 - o Bomb or strafe ships
 - o Resolve AA
7. Fire guns
8. Launch torpedoes
9. Resolve torpedoes fired last turn (<40cm) or 2 turns ago (>40cm)

Spotting the Target

All vessels are represented by markers until they are detected. To spice up the action and to introduce an element of surprise players can field one dummy marker for each real marker – dummies are removed when they are spotted (of course only real ships can spot and identify other ships, but dummies can spot and reveal other dummies, and can be used to confirm that markers are real, even though they do not result in an identification). Dummies can be “grown” again if a vessel moves out of detection range.

Cross reference the size of the target and the searcher. The result is the maximum spotting range.

Size of Observer	Size of Target				
	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Very Small	60	70	70	70	80
Small	60	75	80	90	100
Medium	70	80	110	120	130
Large	70	85	120	130	140
Very Large	70	90	130	140	150

- Increase apparent target size by 1 if the target is moving at Fast or greater.
- Decrease apparent target size if the target is against a coastline within 30cm (i.e. line of sight passes from observer through target to land within 30cm)
- Decrease the apparent Observer size if the observer is moving at Fast or greater, or if the Observer does not have functioning Fire Control System.

Initiative

Each side rolls a d10. Resolve ties using a second die roll. The higher scorer wins initiative and may choose whether to move first or second within each phase (the same decision applies to all phases).

Gunfire, Rockets and Bombs

Firing is conducted after movement and is simultaneous. Check the weapon table for range to the target, and the models for firing arc. For each attack roll a d20 to hit, a white d6 for damage and a red d6 for the chance of fire. To speed play all three dice can be rolled together.

The weapon table shows the score required for a hit using a d20 at each range band (roll equal to or higher than the score shown). If a hit is scored see the section below for damage. Regardless of modifiers natural die rolls 1 are always misses. Natural rolls of 20 are always a hit if firing at Short or Medium range.

Die Roll Modifiers are as follows:

Target is moving at	Target size is:	Shooter is moving at:**
Very Slow +5	Very Small -4	Stationary -4
Slow +2	Small -2	Fast -2
Medium +0	Medium +0	Very Fast -4
Fast -2	Large +2	** <i>Very Small and small shooters only</i>
Very Fast -5	Very Large +4	

Torpedoes

Torpedoes are launched after gunfire. A counter is placed on the table for each torpedo fired and the target is announced. Torpedoes arrive in the torpedo phase of the following turn if the target is at 40cm or closer to the firing vessel, or the subsequent turn if the target is at greater than 40cm (e.g. Two MTBs fire torpedoes at targets 30 and 60cm away on turn 1. The closer target is attacked on turn 2, the further target on turn 3).

Die Roll Modifiers are as follows:

Very Slow	+5	Very Small	-4	Target >40cm from	-5
Slow	+2	Small	-2	firer at the time of	
Medium	+0	Medium	+0	firing	
Fast	-2	Large	+2		
Very Fast	-5	Very Large	+4		

Damage

If a hit is scored roll a d6. Add or subtract the weapon's Damage Modifier and the target's Size Modifier

Result	Damage Level	Effect
1 or less	Intact	No damage
2-4	Damaged	Minor damage. Roll d6 for each weapon, and for Speed and Manoeuvrability if the weapon's Damage Modifier is the same or larger than the target's Size Modifier. On a roll of 6 the weapon is knocked out, or Speed / Manoeuvrability reduced by 1
5-7	Heavily Damaged	Major damage - Roll d6 for each weapon, and for Speed and Manoeuvrability. On a roll of 4+ the weapon is knocked out, or Speed / Manoeuvrability reduced by 1
8-10	Wrecked	Critical Damage - Roll d6 for each weapon. On a roll of 2+ the weapon is knocked out. Speed and Manoeuvrability reduced by 2 automatically
11+	Sunk	Vessel immediately stops and is in a sinking condition

Mark off the highest level of damage sustained. If a vessel sustains a second hit of the same severity (except Intact or Damaged) the damage level is increased to the next level down and damage commensurate with that damage level is taken (for example, a transport is "Wrecked". It is hit again an suffers another "Wrecked" result- this is increased to "Sunk")



Aircraft

Aircraft move twice per turn, each time up to their full move distance. They do not use turning circles; instead, in each movement phase they may move between a quarter and half their listed movement, be turned up to 45 degrees in place, moved again between a quarter and half their full move distance and then again turned up to 45 degrees again.

Aircraft can only engage one air or surface target per turn (except defensive guns, which may engage one air target per turn for each mount).

Aircraft can shoot at surface targets once during their movement, in which case they are stopped at a point and announce that they are firing (this is then resolved). They can also bomb targets over which they pass during movement. They can shoot at one surface target and can also bomb the same target if they pass over it. They cannot shoot at one target and bomb another. They can shoot in either phase but only once per turn (they could shoot at a target from a distance in the first phase then bomb it as they pass over in the second).

Ships can engage aircraft at the point at the aircraft fires at a surface target or drops bombs. This is also done during the movement phase. Ships can also shoot at aircraft after movement, in the gunnery phase. However, each gun can only fire once in a turn (and this also means you can't use a gun against an air and surface target in the same turn). Aircraft may be engaged by any gun out to its Medium Range (unless the gun is listed as being incapable of AA fire). Required scores to hit are as for surface fire.

Air to air gunnery is carried out in the gunnery phase (phase 7). Guns used to strafe a surface target can't be used against an aircraft.



Optional Rules

Depth Charge Attack

British boats in particular were quite proficient at mounting depth charge attacks against merchant shipping. If an MTB with depth charges passes within 2cm of the bow of a Large or Very Large ship that has moved it may make an attack. Roll a d6. On a roll of 4+ the attack has been successful and the depth charge causes damage (treat as Large)

Turning Arcs

Some players don't like using turning circles. As an alternative the following system can be used. Vessels must make a minimum forward move before they can make a turn. This minimum forward move is as follows:

Size	Minimum Move
Very Small	2cm
Small	4cm
Medium	6cm
Large	8cm
Very Large	10cm

Once the vessel has made this minimum movement it may be turned in place up to 60 degrees.

Torpedo Secondary Attacks

If a torpedo misses its intended target but there is another target within 20cm this target may be hit. Roll as above but apply an additional modifier of -3. The torpedo may not conduct more than one secondary attack.

Fire

If a vessel is hit by above water weapons (guns, rockets or bombs) there is a chance that it will catch fire. Roll a d6, with a fire starting on a 6. Each turn roll a d10. On a 1 or 2 the fire is extinguished. On a roll of 10 the fire causes the damage state of the vessel to increase by 1. Vessels that are on fire are automatically visible at any range.

Random Visibility

Visibility can be made less certain by including an element of chance. At the start of each turn roll a d6. If the result is 1-4 then use the visibility table as written. If the roll is 5 treat all targets as if they were one size class smaller. If the die roll is 6 treat all targets as though they were two sizes smaller. Apply a -10cm modifier if these changes would take boats off the bottom of the table (e.g. if a 6 is rolled Very Small targets can only be spotted within 40cm of a Small target).

Starshells and Flares

Starshells can be fired at specific locations more than 40cm away by guns of 4" or larger. Choose the aim point, roll a deviation dice (a dice with an arrow drawn on each face) or use a spinner and roll a d6, subtracting 1. The result multiplied by 5 is the deviation in centimetres. Starshells illuminate all targets within 10cm of the burst point. Flares are treated the same way, but may be fired by any vessel out to 20cm. The deviation dice result is multiplied by 3 instead of 5. Each vessel is limited to firing 3 starshells or 3 flares.

Torpedo Reloads

Vessels noted as having torpedo reloads may reload their tubes. To do so takes ten complete turns, during which the vessel may only move at Medium or slower and may only turn using the Very Large turning circle. Turns during which these conditions are not met AND turns during which the vessel fires or is under fire, do not count towards the ten turn limit.

Alternative Torpedo Rule

This system is a little bit more complex than the simple system above, but may feel more realistic to some players. When a torpedo is launched a marker is placed 15cm ahead of the firing vessel. The marker is aimed in the direction of travel of the torpedo. If a spread of torpedoes is fired one marker is placed on the table for each weapon. Torpedo markers are moved after all ship movement is completed. The torpedo marker is moved straight ahead. If the marker passes within 5cm of a vessel there is a chance that the torpedo has hit. Use the table above to determine whether the torpedo has hit, ignoring the modifier for the target being >40cm from the firer.

Torpedo Data

Name	Min Range	Max Range	Roll to Hit	Damage Modifier
21" Torpedo	20	100	14+	+11
18" Torpedo	20	80	14+	+9

Gun Data

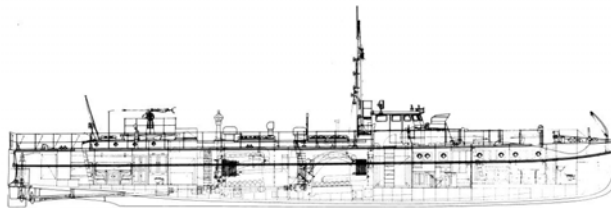
Name	Damage Modifier	Range (cm)/Hit Score		
		Short	Medium	Long
Rifle Group	-3	5 / 7+	12 / 15+	n / a
LMG**	-3	5 / 5+	15 / 15+	n / a
HMG**	-2	5 / 6+	15 / 14+	20 / 18+
2pdr Pom Pom	0	5 / 8+	16 / 16+	n / a
20mm, 23mm**	-2	5 / 5+	15 / 12+	25 / 17+
30mm, 1.1"	-2	15 / 8+	20 / 12+	30 / 18+
37mm / 40mm	0	15 / 8+	30 / 12+	35 / 18+
57mm / 6pdr	0	20 / 6+	30 / 10+	45 / 17+
Rocket Salvo	+3	5 / 5+	15 / 12+	25 / 17+
Up to 3" / 76mm	+2	25 / 6+	40 / 10+	50 / 17+
Up to 4" / 105mm	+2	25 / 6+	45 / 10+	60 / 17+
Up to 4.7" / 120mm	+3	25 / 10+	40 / 12+	70 / 18+

**Roll once per mount, or per 4 guns or part for aircraft

Aircraft Weapons

Name	Damage Modifier	Range (cm)/Hit Score	
		Short	Medium
Rocket Salvo	+6	10 / 16	20 / 20
50lb / 25kg bomb or smaller	-1	0 / 20	-
100lb / 50kg bomb	0	0 / 20	-
250lb / 113kg bomb	+2	0 / 20	-
500lb / 250kg bomb	+3	0 / 20	-
1000lb / 500kg bomb or larger	+6	0 / 20	-

NB – to drop bombs the aircraft must pass over the target, hence a “range” of zero



FAQ

- Q: *Could you treat a small vessel ramming or colliding with another as if hit by a small 18" torpedo but with perhaps a +2 on the D6 damage dice?(So as to always cause badly damaged? I assume there is no "to hit" roll as either you hit or don't) And if rammed or hit by a large or V large ship then treat as a 21" torpedo hit with +2 on D6 damage modifier.*
- A: *I had deliberately ignored collisions and ramming for simplicity, but the system above would work OK.*
- Q: *Do all vessels get to fire a rifle team even if moving? as well as the deck guns or if all guns are knocked out only?*
- A: *I'd actually restrict that to craft such as landing craft or improvised patrol ships vessels that are relying on embarked troops. I'd not apply that to "normal" craft.*
- Q: *How do you determine the arcs of fire from... i.e is it from the gun mount on model or from the axis of the ship/boat.?*
- A: *From the model.*
- Q: *We assume a gun arc described as (FPS)45 degree forward 45 degree port and 45 degree starboard. Or should these be 180 degrees instead?*
- A:- *Each arc is 90 degrees (45 degrees either side of the "axis"), so a gun noted as firing in the F arc could fire to 45 degrees or either side of the centreline of the boat, whereas a gun marked FPS could fire all around EXCEPT an arc 45 degrees either side of the centreline aft.*
- Q: *If your boat is badly damaged should the boat try and get away... or is there any initiative penalty from being badly damaged?*
- A: *You ought to, but most wargamers will fight to the death (unless it's a campaign game!). No penalty is applied.*



Boat Data

Name	Size / Modifier	Manoeuvre	Speed	Guns	Torps
British Vessels					
Fairmile 'D' Class MGB 601	S / +1	S	F	2pdr (FPS) 20mm (APS) HMG (FP) HMG (FS) LMG (FP) LMG (FS)	None
Fairmile 'D' Class Motor Torpedo Boat (MTB)	S / +1	S	F	6pdr (FPS) 6pdr (APS) 20mm (APS) HMG (FP) HMG (FS) LMG (FP) LMG (FS)	18" x2
Fairmile 'D' Class Combined MGB/MTB Fit	S / +1	S	F	6pdr (FPS) 6pdr (APS) 20mm (APS) HMG (FP) HMG (FS) LMG (FP) LMG (FS)	18" x4
Fairmile 'C' Class MGB	S / +1	S	M	2pdr (FPS) 2pdr (APS) HMG (P) HMG (S) LMG (P) LMG (S)	None
Fairmile 'B' Class Motor Launch	S / +1	S	M	2pdr (FPS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (APS)	None
Fairmile 'B' Class Rescue Motor Launch	S / +1	S	M	2pdr (FPS) 20mm (APS) LMG (P) LMG (S)	None
Fairmile 'A' Class ASW Motor Launch	S / +1	S	M	3pdr (APS) LMG (P) LMG (S)	None
"Grey Goose" Class Steam Gun Boat	S / +1	M	F	2pdr (FPS) 3"HA (APS) HMG (P) HMG (S) 20mm (FPS)	21" x2
Vosper 72' 6" MTB	VS / +3	VS	VF	HMG (APS) LMG (P) LMG (S)	21" x2
Vosper 72' 6" MTB Late war	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) LMG (P) LMG (S)	21" x2
MGB 50-67	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (APS) HMG (FP) HMG (FS) LMG (P) LMG (S)	None
Harbour Defence Motor Launch (HDML)	VS / +3	VS	S	20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) LMG (P) LMG (S)	None
Isles Class Trawler	M / +0	L	S	4"HA (FPS) 20mm (FP) 20mm (FS) 20mm (APS)	None

Schnell Rules for Schnellboote

Name	Size / Modifier	Manoeuvre	Speed	Guns	Torps
Flower Class Corvette	L / -2	VL	S	4"HA (FPS) 2pdr (APS) 20mm (FS) 20mm (FP)	None
Halcyon Class Minesweeper	L / -2	VL	S	4"HA (FPS) 4"HA (APS)	None
Landing Craft Gun Mk 3 LCG 3	L / -2	VL	S	* 4.7" (FPS) * 4.7" (FPS) 20mm (PA) 20mm (SA)	None
Hunt Class Type 1	VL / -4	VL	S	4"HA (FPS) 4"HA (APS) 2pdr (APS) 2pdr (FPS)	None
German Vessels					
S 100	S / +1	S	VF	20mm (FPS) 20mm (PS) 40mm (APS)	21" x2+2
S 38	S / +1	S	VF	20mm (FPS) 20mm (PS) 40mm (APS)	21" x2+2
S 26	S / +1	S	VF	20mm (APS)	21" x2+2
Raumboote 25 to 40, 151-217 (late war)	S / +1	S	S	37mm (APS) 20mm (PS) 20mm (FPS) 20mm (FPS)	None
R-21 to 24, 41 to 150 (early war)	S / +1	S	M	20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS)	None
Kriegsfischkutter (KFK)	S / +1	S	VS	37mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (APS)	None
'F' Lighter	M / +0	M	VS	* 105mm (FPS) * 105mm (FPS) * 84mm (FAPS) 20mm (FAPS) 20mm (AP) 20mm (AS)	None
Type 35 Minesweeper	L / -2	VL	S	* 105mm (FPS) * 105mm (APS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (P) 20mm (P) 20mm (S) 20mm (S)	None
VP404 Class Trawler	M / +0	VL	VS	88mm (FPS) 20mm (PS) 20mm (APS)	None
KUJ Type Trawler ("Kriegs U-Jager")	M / +0	VL	S	88mm (FPS) 37mm (APS) 20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS)	None
T-1 Class Escort 1935/1937 Type	L / -2	VL	F	* 105mm (APS) 37mm (APS) 20mm (AP) 20mm (AS) 20mm (FP) 20mm (FS)	21" x3 x3

Schnell Rules for Schnellboote

Name	Size / Modifier	Manoeuvre	Speed	Guns	Torps
T-22 Class Escort 1939 Type	L / -2	VL	F	* 105mm (FPS) * 105mm (PS) * 105mm (APS) * 105mm (APS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (FP) 20mm (FS)	21" x3 x3
MFP Type 1 ("Marine Artillerie-Fahrprahm")	L / -2	VL	VS	* 88mm (FPS) * 88mm (FPS) 20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (AP) 20mm (AS)	None
MFP Type 2	L / -2	VL	VS	* 88mm (FPS) * 88mm (APS) 20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (AP) 20mm (AS)	None
UJ 200 Class Escort	L / -2	VL	S	* 105mm (FPS) 20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (P) 20mm (S)	21" x1 x1
Italian Vessels					
MS-Type 1	S / +1	S	VF	20mm (FPS) LMG (PS) LMG (PS) 20mm (APS)	21" x2+2
MS-Type 2	S / +1	S	VF	20mm (FPS) LMG (PS) LMG (PS) 20mm (APS)	21" x2x2 18" x2
MAS-501	VS / +3	VS	VF	HMG (FAPS)	18" x2
MAS-551	VS / +3	S	VF	HMG (FAPS)	18" x2
VAS-Type 1	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) LMG (FP) LMG (FS)	18" x2
VAS-Type 2	S / +1	S	VF	20mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) LMG (FP) LMG (FS)	18" x2
Spica Class Escort	L / -2	VL	F	* 100mm (FPS) * 100mm (APS) * 100mm (APS) HMG (P) HMG (S) HMG (PS) HMG (PS)	21" x2 x2
Gabbiano Class Sloop	L / -2	VL	F	* 100mm (FPS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (APS) 20mm (FPS) 20mm (S) 20mm (S)	21" x1 x1
US Vessels					
Elco 70' PT Boat	VS / +3	VS	VF	HMG (FPA) HMG (FSA)	18" x4
Elco 70' MGB	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (APS) HMG (FPA) HMG (FSA)	None

Schnell Rules for Schnellboote

Name	Size / Modifier	Manoeuvre	Speed	Guns	Torps
Higgins 78' PT Boat	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (APS) HMG (FPA) HMG (FSA)	21" x4
Elco 77' PT Boat	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (APS) HMG (FPA) HMG (FSA)	21" x4
Elco 80' PT Boat	VS / +3	VS	VF	20mm (APS) HMG (FPA) HMG (FSA)	21" x4
Elco 80' PT Boat	VS / +3	VS	VF	37mm (FPS) 40mm (APS) 20mm (FPS) HMG (FPA) HMG (FSA)	21" x4
DE Class Destroyer Escort	L / -2	VL	M	3"HA (FPS) 3"HA (FPS) 3"HA (APS) 1.1" (APS)	None
"Flush Decked" Destroyer	VL / -4	VL	M	4"HA (FPS) 4"HA (APS) 4"HA (P) 4"HA (S)	21" x3 x3 x3 x3
Generic Vessels					
Small Transport	M / +0	VL	S	None**	None
Medium Transport	L / -2	VL	S	None**	None
Large Transport	VL / -4	VL	S	None**	None
Medium Barge	M / +0	VL	VS	None **	
Large Barge	L / -2	M	VS	None**	None
Schooner, Caique, Barque etc.	L / -2	L	S	None**	None
Trawler	M / +0	VS	S	None**	None

Notes

* guns preceded by an asterisk (e.g. *4.7") cannot be used against aircraft.

**some vessels may carry one or two 3-4" guns for local protection.

Turn Circles

