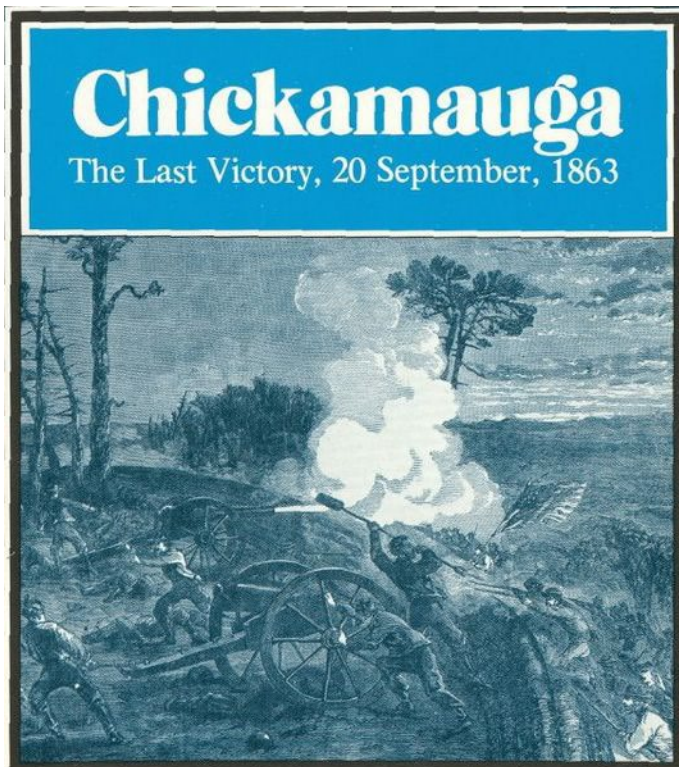

Chickamauga, SPI 1975

Replay by George Nap



Chickamauga – SPI Publications

From the description: *“The Great Battle of the West” was one of the few instances in which the South outnumbered the North. It was also the last major battle the South clearly won. Coming after the twin disasters of Gettysburg and Vicksburg it preserved the vital heartland of the South for another year.*

The actual fighting was a soldiers' battle fought amidst the dense wood thickets and broken terrain between Missionary Ridge and West Chickamauga Creek.

Both Bragg and Rosecrans did more to lose their respective battles than they did to help win. The Players “will often find themselves in similar situations, with no obvious “correct” solution to the game. Elegant tactical combinations will break down in the difficult terrain on the map.”

Editor’s Note: This is one of the jewels of the SPI years. In tournament play between matched competitors, this game often comes down to a 1 point victory. Despite the statement about them breaking down, the game is filled with chances to create those ‘elegant tactical combinations’ and make it or not, they are a joy to create.

Personal opinion, the game shines when you combine it with the original optional rules for Attacker Effectiveness, which forces the players to adhere to Civil War tactics of measured attacks rather than gamey soak offs. Civil War annals are filled with cases of troops returning to active duty in the morning, after being scattered by adverse results during the day and brought back into line by their officers – and lack of choices. These optional rules make that a part of the game, and they work.

This game is one of the greats – and it continues to prove that over the decades of play.

In George’s replay, he uses a piece of this time-tested Attacker Effectiveness rule, and adds in a new optional rule to allow the units to return via a rally die roll during the same day. How does that work out? We’ll let George show us how it works! – RHG



Chickamauga

I do not know what happened to the units in my copy of this game, so you will see handmade US units on white background. My apologies for the aesthetic, but war is truly an ugly business. This is the SPI version.



Yes, I know the Iron Brigade was not there.

I will use attacker effectiveness with the optional rally rolls as well as night recovery.

For the US there is an urgency to keeping the Dry Valley Road open for the trains unit to have a chance to enter and exit the map. Both armies can gain VP by exiting from 0111 or 0101 the CS needing to trace a line of communications to the eastern board edge. Any US units at the end of the game not able to trace supply to 0101 or 0111 are considered eliminated when tallying victory points. The US trains unit is worth 10 points to the US if it exits via the eligible hexes noted above.

Having been to this battlefield, I wonder that the mountains should not be impassable. These are seriously steep densely wooded slopes. I could not imagine a military formation maintaining cohesion scaling them, and defending them would force you to expose yourself to fire. I would envision battles across them as confused affairs with units hopelessly intermingled and intermingled, useless for a day or two. I will play the game as designed, however, allowing such heights to be used militarily.



TERRAIN KEY

| | | | |
|--|--------|--|----------|
| | Forest | | Hill |
| | River | | Road |
| | Water | | Marsh |
| | Swamp | | Mountain |

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Chickamauga
The Campaign, 20 September 1862

Turn 1 – 20 September 1863

US – Reinforcements come on turn two from the south. I will sacrifice units forward to ensure our entry hexes are not crowded. In the north it will be hard to screen the road from Dyer's bridge and the hills at 1711. We will rush reinforcements there. I do not anticipate any attacks this turn, just sacrificial lambs.



CS – need to do damage early and often, they will not be getting any weaker. Kershaw et al vs 1/1/xiv 3-1 dr. Anderson et al vs 1/1/xxi 3-1 ex, Trigg et al vs 3/1/xxi 2-1 ar. Scott et al vs 1/ 2 2-1 ar, horrible turn.

Turn 2 – 20 September 1863

US – One mandatory attack 1/1/xxi vs law et al 1-2 ar. We build a thin brittle line.



CS – Pushing hard to crack the Yankee lines. No rallies, disordered units marked by tile spacers. Kelly et al vs 1/2/xxi 4-1ex

Turn 3 – 20 September 1863

US – With Kelly adjacent to our last major defensible terrain on the entry hexes, we will divert reserves to guarantee a successful counterattack.



The center will have to weather its own storm. No rallies. 3/4/xiv et al w/arty vs Kelly et al 3-1 dr.



CS – We pressure all along the Yankee line. No rallies. 2 arty vs 1/3/xxi et al ne, Anderson et al vs 1/2/xxiv et al 2-1 ar, Strahal et al vs 2/1/xxiv 2-1 ar, Smith et al vs 3/3/xxi1-1 dr, Law et al vs 3/1/xiv 1-1 ar, Greg et al vs 2/4/xiv 1-1 ar, Whitehall et al vs 1/3/xiv 2-1 ar, Ector vs 2/3/xiv 1-1 ar, Forrest et al vs 1/2 cav et al 1-3 dr elim no retreat, Robertson vs 1/1/res 1-2 ar. A major victory by Forrest despicable as he is, otherwise disaster the entire army pretty much disordered.



Turn 4 – 20 September 1863

US – We get a turn of respite as they are disordered. We need to transfer combat power northward, as reinforcements will be arriving next turn. No rallies. 1/1/res vs Armstrong 2-1 dr, 2/3/iv et al vs McNair 1-1 dr 3/3/xiv vs Gist 1-1 ar, 2/2/xiv vs Smith 5-1 ex, 3/2/xiv vs Kershaw 1-1 dr



CS – Creep forward, hope for some rallies to set up next turn. We can make progress in the north where their line is nonexistent and make good on the sacrifice of Smith who tied up their mobility in the south sacrificing himself to buy a turn. Locked into some poor attacks. Rallies; Davidson, Scott, Whitehall, Wilson, Law, better than expected, but still a lot of disorganized units. Wood et al w/arty vs 3/4/xiv at Viniards 1-1 dr, Kershaw et al vs 3/2/xiv 2-1 ar, McNair vs 2/3/xiv 1-2 ar,



Forrest et al vs 1/1/res 1-1 ar Forrest elim no retreat path.



Turn 5 – 20 September 1863

US – We shift the army northwards maintaining our lines. 1/3/xxi et al vs Clayton 4-1 ex, 3/2/xxi et al vs Wood 2-1 ar.



CS – We still have serious combat power deficiencies and they have been devilish in closing off routes for disorganized units, but we will see a path to Chattanooga. We race to the north anticipating a way to trap their entire army, I can use disorganized units to form a defensive barrier while we rally. Night is still turns away, but then we are fresh again. Rallies: Jackson, Humphrey, Deshler, statistically normative. One mandatory attack wood w/arty vs xxi arty 1-1 ar. Also, Ector et al vs 2/2/xiv on the high ground 1-1 de elim no retreat



Turn 6 – 20 September 1863

US – have to maintain a line in the north. Rallies; none. 1/1/res et al vs Robertson 3-1 dr elim no retreat.

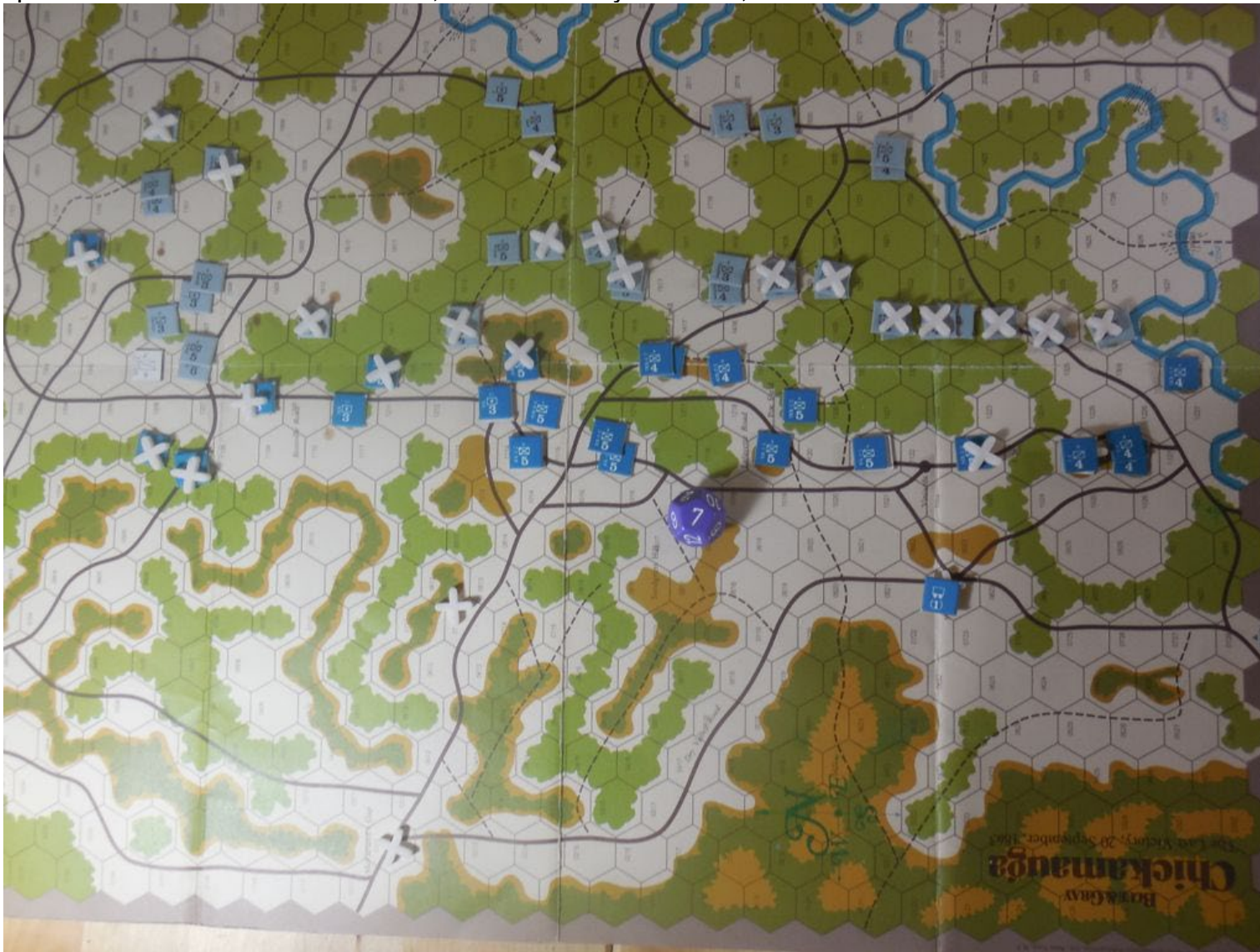


CS – their trains are due soon. Our only hope of a breakthrough is in the north where we have weighted our power, time to push. Helm et al vs 1/1/res 1-1 dr, Davidson et al w/arty vs 2/1/xiv 3-1. Liddell et al vs xiv arty 2-1 ar. Continue to roll horribly.



Turn 7 – 20 September 1863

US – the trains arrive and will head towards the exits, we have kept the door open. No unit can stack with them nor traverse their hex, they are limited to road and trail hexes only and must exit at 0101 or 0111. Two fought out armies staring at each other, local counterattacks. I actually can defend MacFarland's Gap and cede the Rossville Gap, should the rebels exit any units they would also have to guard a long line of communications. There is a good amount of defensible terrain blocking the way for them to approach McFarland Gap. Rallies: None, still wish the counters were backprinted with a disorganized side, would save the aesthetic of tile spacers. 1/1/res vs Helm et al 1-1 ar, 2/1/res vs Drayton 1-1 dr, Winder et al vs Ector et al 2-1 ar.



CS – some failures on their turn, probably not enough the center of their combat power is north of Snodgrass Hill and is not disorganized, so they have a viable reserve, but their line in the north is delaminating and Rossville Gap is within military possibility. Rallies: Gracie – excellent! Stovall et al vs 1/1/res et al 1-1 dr no retreat elim, Ector et al vs 2/1/res 4-1 ex, their flank is turned.



Turn 8 – 20 September 1863

US – getting the trains home. Also, will fight for both gaps, as the victory point values for the rebels are high. Rallies: 1/2/xiv, 3/2/xxi, moot with a night turn coming. No attacks.



CS – pushing before night. Not rolling for rallies, none in ezoc and all will recover at night. Davidson et al w/arty vs 2/4/xiv 3-1 dr, Helm et al w/arty vs 1/1/xiv 2-1 dr.



Turn 9 – 20 September 1863 – Night, no battles, zocs are locked.

US – building defenses. The army rallies.

CS – setting up for the attacks. The army rallies. My attack at lower odds on day 1 was a disaster, but we only have five turns to achieve our goals, so may not be able to be as precise as we would otherwise desire. Must keep a strong line to protect the victory hexes behind our lines, but there are objective hexes on the front lines we can contest, we also have 13 less casualties, so are ahead on that.



Turn 10 – 21 September 1863 – five turns left

US – Some mandatory attacks. Defenses are thin and we are out of units, at least the supply train will escape. 2/4/xiv vs Stovall et al 1-1 dr, occupying to buy a turn as we are exposed anyway. 1/1/xiv w/artillery vs Helm et al 1-1 dr, 3/4/xiv et al vs Wright et al 2-1 ar, mixed bag, nothing good.



CS – time to push, we crack their line we can destroy them in detail. Scott et al w/arty vs 2/4/xiv6-1 de, Russell et al vs xxi arty 1-1 ar,



Crews et al vs 1/1/xiv6-1 dr, Deshler et al vs 2/1/xx et al 2-1 dr, Wood et al vs 1/1 cav 2-1 ar.



Turn 11 – 21 September 1863

US – five turns left, time to try something of our own. The supply train exits. We surge in the south, try to create reserves elsewhere. Rallies: None. 2/1 cav et al vs Deas on the far right 3-1 ex, 2/2/xiv et al vs Trigg et al 3-1 dr, 2/2/xxi vs Kershaw 1-1 ar, 2/1/xx et al vs Desher et al 1-1 ar, 1/1/xiv vs Gist et al 1-2 ar, xxi arty vs Scott et al 1-6 ae. Overall not bad, we retreated to high ground do not anticipate attacking in the north. We made progress in the south which should be worrisome, as their flank is now also turned and that is where their ineffective units are.



CS – Thin the lines, create and pivot reserves to protect the victory hexes and the loc. Rallies; none. Scott et al vs 2/1/xiv 3-1 dr, Trigg et al vs 3/3/xx 1-2 dr. too slow, too damn slow.



Turn 12 – 21 September 1863

US – time and space, running out of both. Rallies; none. 2/1/xiv et al vs Scott et al 1-1 dr, 3/1/xx et al vs Trigg et al 2-1 dr 1/1/xiv et al vs Anderson et al 1-2 ar.



CS – four turns to breach the gap. Rallies; Russell. Trigg et al vs 3/3/xx 1-2 ar, Stovall et al vs 2/1/xiv 1-1 ar, now for Rossville Gap. 2 arty vs Winder ne,



Scott et al vs 3/2/xiv 1-1 dr, Wilson vs xx arty 3-1 dr, Crews vs 1/2/xx 1-1 dr.



Turn 13 – 21 September 1863

US – We are losing Rossville Gap and have to rely on low odds attacks. Rallies; 2/2/xxi. Xxi arty vs fulton et al ne, 3/2/xx vs Harrison 1-2 ar, Winder et al vs Scott et al 1-2 ar, xx arty vs Wilson 1-2 ar, 2/2/xx et al vs Crews et al 1-1 ar, 2/2 cav vs Kershaw et al 3-1 dr



CS – have to keep pushing towards both gaps, especially Rossville. We will apply pressure all along the line and try to shatter their defenses. We are ahead having cause 58 casualties, suffering 36. The disorganized units on the Ringgold Road limit our options, but we have to push while the heights are unoccupied. A general attack goes in. Rallies; Stovall, Bates, Davidson et al vs 3/2/xx 3-1 dr elim no retreat, 3 arty w/arty vs xiv arty 2-1 ar, Scott et al vs 3/2/xiv 2-1 dr, Wilson et al vs xx arty 1-1 ar, Liddell et al vs 2/2/xxi 1-2 ar, Wright et al vs 2/3/xxi 1-1 ar, Benning et al vx 1/2/xx 1-1 dr, Gracie et al vs 3/2/xxi 2-1 ar. Both armies well fought out, we are in range of the Rossville exit hex.

Turn 14 – 21 September 1863

US – fighting tooth and nail. We may not be able to hold the Rossville Gap. Rallies 2/3/xxi, 2/2/xiv. Xiv arty vs Polk et al 1-2, 3/3/xiv et al vs Scott et al 1-1 ar, just missed eliminating him, damn. 2/2/xxi et al vs Humphrey et al 1-1 ar, 3/3/xx vs Strahl 1-1 ar, 2/2 cav et al vs Kershaw et al 2-1 ar.



CS – one turn to open the road, one turn to exit. Here goes, all the attacks are towards Rossville. Rallies: Hairston. Crew et al w/arty vs 3/1/xiv 2-1 dr elim, that opens the gate. Davidson et al vs winder et al 1-2 ar, barely, Scott et al vs 3/2/xiv 2-1 dr. Looks like we will not pry the gap open, going to run out of time.



Turn 15 – 21 September 1863

US – Rallies: 2/3/xx, 3/2/xxi, 1.2.xiv. No attacks. They can clear the road but not exit.

CS – A last push to inflict damage. Rallies: Davidson, Polk, Trigg. Scott et al vs 3/2/xiv 2-1 dr elim, no retreat the road is open too late. Crews et al vs xx arty 2-1 dr, Stovall et al w/arty vs Winder et al 1-2 dr elim no retreat, the gap is clear



Totaling up victory points, I anticipate a considerable CS victory. The alternate rally rules were helpful, but I outmaneuvered myself, too. I could not exit union forces without compromising the line.



CS – US Casualties 90 + 20 Rossville gap + 5 1108= 115 points.

US – CS casualties 36 + 5 1115 + 5 0822 = 46