

Variants

Section 17 of the current (play test) rules includes a number of variants. These variants will create a wide range of options within the game and will help maximise replayability. Here we give a brief explanation of the thinking behind each:

17.1 Allow the player to place their initial Objective markers wherever they want. The initial starting positions would remain the same.

The game assumes that the meeting between Redvers Buller and his subordinates has already taken place. As an alternative an option will be provided to allow you to conduct your own pre battle meeting and set your own objectives.

17.2 Allow the player to place Units wherever they want as long as it is not north of a line 70, 64A, 71,72,73, 81,74,75

In terms of the player taking control of the situation you will in addition be given the opportunity to set up the British forces freely behind a pre-determined line. This will provide a lot scope to test out different possibilities.

17.3 Assume better British reconnaissance prior to battle. Fords are found automatically and no die roll is required (*Reconnaissance took place on the 28th November and the 3rd, 6th and 8th of December but in each case it was totally inadequate*).

The pre-battle reconnaissance conducted by the British was totally inadequate. It could have been, with just some attention to care, so much better. This possibility is explored in the game by assuming the ford locations are clearly known.

17.4 General Joubert takes command. Botha organized the pre battle situation superbly this rule assumes Joubert would not do as well. The Boer emplacements are worth -1 on the dice not -2 (*Joubert would have taken command but for illness*)

But for illness General Joubert would have taken charge of the Boer forces. Botha's preparations were near faultless. An option will be provided that assumes General Joubert was in command and as such the Boer preparations were not as thorough.

17.5 From 13th December till the 3am on the 15th December Hlangwane was not manned. Assume the council of war on the evening of the 14th December fails to persuade any Boer Gruppe to take up positions there.

This battle was unlike anything the Boer had fought before and there was considerable apprehension as to whether they could conduct such a battle successful. This manifested itself in the abandonment of Hlangwane prior to the battle. It was only the force of Botha's personality that persuaded some of the Boer gruppe to re occupy it just prior to the battle. The game provides you with the opportunity to investigate the outcome of the battle if Botha has not successfully persuaded some Boer to return to Hlangwane.

17.5.1 Place Wakkerstrm in **Area 07**

17.5.2 Place Standerton in **Area 18**

Both these areas become Emplacement areas

17.6 The 2nd Royal Fusiliers (6/3) are full strength. New optional counter 4-1 replaces the 2-1 counter for the same unit.

Elements of the 2nd Royal Fusiliers were protecting the baggage train in the rear. You have the option of conducting the battle with them at full strength.

All of the above assist the British in some way (particularly 17.3 and 17.5). It is recommended that the player uses one or more of them if they find they are not achieving success. You can then drop one or more as you get more experienced.

17.7 Assume Winston Churchill was at the battle. After the start of the battle for every Objective accepted by a Formation roll to see if Churchill accompanies the designated formation. On a 1 -3 he does. The Objective accepted must be north of the line 70, 64A, 71, 72, 73, 81, 74, and 75 in order to make this roll.

17.7.1 Churchill is treated exactly like Lieutenant Roberts. If Churchill dies then the victory level is 3% lower (*at the time he was less significant than Roberts. However Lord Halifax signs a peace agreement in 1940 and the loss of freedom of the free world is now blamed on you!*)

Winston Churchill famously was captured during the Boer War. You are given the opportunity of seeing the potential impact of him being at the battle of Colenso. In truth he would have been little more than a nuisance to the higher command who was seemingly intent of finding glory at all costs. This could more kindly be described as a young man caught up in the excitement of war. Either way you get to consider the possible outcomes.