

Narrative Missions

Most warriors of the *Weird Wars* undertake many relatively mundane (but no less deadly) missions before they encounter the strange things that rise in the darkness and horror of war. The latter is the true theme of the setting, but it's important to set the tone of routine patrols, bombing runs, or other standard fare before battling more insidious foes.

While these can and should often be run using the standard rules, the War Master and players may occasionally want to narrate a mission rather than play it out scene by scene. The War Master may want to set the tone by sending the heroes on a sortie from their aerodrome before going on the more detailed and horrific adventure he's prepared for the night's session, for example.

This is where Narrative Missions come in handy.

There are four steps to resolving Narrative Missions:

- 1) Determine the mission
- 2) Draw cards
- 3) Resolve skill tests
- 4) Determine the mission's success

1) Determine the Mission

The mission is determined by the War Master, but should be something relatively routine. More exotic tasks should be gamed out normally. Patrols, bombing runs, or reconnaissance are good fodder for Narrative Missions.

The War Master should then take a moment to tell the player characters what their task is and any additional resources (Extras) they'll be assigned.

2) Draw Cards

Next, the War Master deals a number of cards equal to the number of players, plus one for the Extras (regardless of number).

The player character with the highest military rank (even if he's not actually the leader of the overall mission) then assigns one card to each player character including himself, and one to the Extras.

The player characters' cards indicate the theme of their individual narration and the difficulty modifier of their skill tests. The Extras' card represents their casualties (use the **Aftermath** rules in *Savage Worlds* to determine if they're actually dead or just wounded and out of action). The leader must choose these assignments carefully.

The War Master may grant a bonus or inflict a penalty for the general state of the campaign. If the Allies are reeling from recent German assaults, for example, he might say all missions suffer a -2 penalty, which is cumulative with the individual

modifiers of the mission cards. If they're mopping up their opponents' shattered forces, they might receive a +2.

Tactician Edge: If the leader of the group has the Tactician Edge, he draws one extra card and may discard one of his choice.

Card Suit

Suit	Theme	Typical Skills
Spades	Subterfuge	Stealth, Investigation, Notice, Streetwise
Hearts	Social	Persuasion, Taunt, Intimidate
Diamonds	Physical	Climbing, Driving, Piloting, Swimming
Clubs	Combat	Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, Arcane skills

Card Value

Value	Modifier	Casualties
2	-6*	75%
3-5	-4	50%
6-10	-2	25%
Jack-Ace	-	10%
Joker	+2	Negligible

***Heroic Effort:** If a hero succeeds at this task he's eligible for an Award or Promotion (see the **Setting Rules** for details).

3) Resolve Skill Tests

Starting with the Ace and working down as usual, each player narrates what his character does during the mission, culminating in whatever event his card indicates. He then makes the skill roll and adds or subtracts his card's modifier.

The player and Game Master then work together to interpret and narrate the results. "Failure" may not mean the hero actually failed in his desired plans, by the way—it may simply mean he took some damage or is affected in some other negative way.

Heroes may spend Bennies to soak damage from failure as usual. Healing abilities may be used if the situation allows (rare for pilots, for example, until they return to base).

- **Critical Failure:** The hero's plan gets her into serious trouble. She suffers d3 wounds. If she's the pilot or driver of a vehicle, it suffers d3 wounds as well. If she's a crew person on a vehicle with others, it suffers a single wound.

- **Failure:** The character suffers a wound, as does any vehicle she's piloting or directly in charge of.
- **Success:** The warrior manages to get through the fight unharmed. She takes out several of the enemy or somehow disrupts their plans.
- **Raise:** The hero truly shines during the fight. He receives a Benny for his efforts.

Death: Note that characters can't be killed or incapacitated unless they were already wounded. A vehicle which suffers 4 or more wounds may either be destroyed during the mission or limp back to base before falling apart. Either way, the passengers return from the mission even if the vehicle does not.

4) Determine Results

Once the narrations are over, every character who has a success or raise turns their card face up. Those who failed turn their cards face down. If there are more face up (success) cards than face down cards, the mission is successful. If there are more face down (failure) cards, the mission failed. With a tie, the mission is marginally successful.

Ammunition and Power Points: Estimating ammo, Power Points, and other resources is often important in Quick Combat because it quickly simulates a single encounter. In Narrative Missions, the heroes are assumed to be involved in multiple battles (or one longer one) and then return back to base. They expend most all of their ammo or resources, then return and resupply.

If that's not the case, use the standard rules for Quick Combat (see *Savage Worlds* or the free Quick Combat supplement at www.peginc.com).

Example: Desert Patrol

The heroes are British soldiers of the Light Armoured Car Brigade near Siwa. Their job is to patrol the rail lines and keep the Senussi tribesmen from sabotaging them.

Lt. Lucas is one of three men in a Rolls-Royce armoured car, and commands two other cars crewed by Extras. Lucas draws a card for each of the player characters and one for the Extras.

He gives his driver, Howard, the Queen of Hearts (no modifier, Social engagement). Howard describes the Rolls-Royce overheating somewhere along the rail line. They must put in at a local village and demand precious water. He tries the friendly approach and uses his Persuasion, resulting in a success. Howard's player says he had to give the locals a box of rations in exchange for the water.

The Extras get a Jack of Hearts (no modifier). The type of encounter is ignored for them, but they take 10% casualties somewhere during the patrol. The War Master says one of the gunners in the second vehicle banged his forehead while bouncing over rough road and bled heavily. He's wounded throughout the day, but recovers after the mission.

The second gunner gets a 9 of Diamonds. The player describes changing a flat while under fire from a sniper. He fails and the vehicle drops on his hand, damaging it bad enough to take a wound.

Lucas takes the Seven of Spades (-2, Subterfuge) for himself. Lt Lucas actually had to discover saboteurs hiding in the sand. He and the War Master agree this is a use of Notice versus the saboteur's Stealth. Lucas wins handily and narrates the tribesmen's capture.

With two of the three characters successful and only 10% casualties among the Extras, the War Master decides the mission is a minor success. The Senussi cause little harm this day.

British troops use Rolls-Royce armoured cars to patrol the rocky deserts of Mesopotamia.

