7. Salt Mystic solo play

One obvious way to play Salt Mystic solo is to rotate the battlefield ninety degrees and play both sides as aggressively as possible. That mode is called **The Schizoid Beast**, and it can produce exciting "there I was!" type stories and be a fantastic way to learn the rules and improve your game.

But there are algorithms and thumbrules in the rules of this section engineered to bring unpredictability, urgency and the fog of war to your tabletop to fulfill and enrich your narrative wargaming experience.

We call this set of rules **Wolfpack Mode**.

7.1 Wolfpack Mode overview

In Wolfpack Mode, you're playing against an imaginary player who controls the opposing faction, and whose moves are determined by algorithms. The simple rules of these algorithms are driven by a single roll of two six-sided dice at the beginning of each turn, and the results of each die are referenced according to the circumstances of each successive card for the duration of the phantom player's turn.

Generally, it's an aptly named ruleset due to the increasing deadliness of a pack of enemy combatants ruthlessly charging across the battlefield!
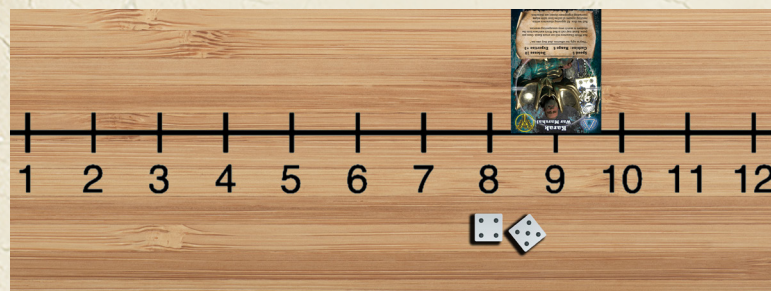
7.2 The Line Rule

When to use the Line Rule:
When you need a specific point along a line, such as deploying the opposing faction's cards.

How:
Imagine a number line with the numbers 1 through 12 equally spaced running across the table. The total roll amount tells you the point on that line.

In this example, the phantom player's total roll at the beginning of the turn was 9, so Karak has been deployed centered at that value on the number line.

7.3 The Binary Rule

When to use the Binary Rule:
When you need binary decisions such as left/right, yes/no or up/down.

How:
Read only the die furthest to your left and consult the table below. If you cannot determine which die is furthest to your left, re-roll both dice until you can.

1, 2 or 3 means NO, LEFT or DOWN
4, 5 or 6 means YES, RIGHT, or UP

An example for the Binary Rule is to resolve the conflict should the Line Rule deploy two Characters on top of each other, and a direction along the Deployment Zone must be selected.

7.4 The Direction Rule

When to use the Direction Rule:
For 360 degree direction-finding, such as determining a random direction for a Character to move per the Wolfpack rules, locate the dice roll result on an imaginary clock face.

How:
Envision a clock face centered around the card for which you're determining actions, oriented with your table edge. The total dice roll provides the direction. In the example shown, Rielle will rotate to the 5 o'clock position.

7.5 The Number Rule

When to use the Number Rule:
At times in applying the Wolfpack algorithms, you will need a randomly generated number.

How:
Consult the total dice roll to determine your needed number for the turn, which will range from 2 to 12. In cases where the roll exceeds some maximum amount listed on the respective cards, then limit the value to that maximum.

7.6 The List Rule

When to use the List Rule:
To select actions for Characters from a pre-determined list of possibilities, read only the furthest die to your right. This option isn't used in the regular Wolfpack mode game, but can be eerily challenging if you choose to develop custom action lists for particular Characters.

How:
Select key Character types for whom you will develop a list of six possible actions, such as "vanish and reappear on battlefield in accordance with the Direction and Number Rules" or "switch loyalty for one turn". Get creative. Then consult the right-hand die to determine the action taken for that Character on that turn.

7.7 Considerations

WOLFPACK MODE

The cardinal, overarching rule in solo play is that the phantom player's Characters relentlessly move in the direction of your War Marshal subject to, and including, the following considerations for each turn:

a.. Characters always end their turns facing the closest opposing Character of highest Expertise (or opposing War Marshal if in range).

b. Characters always seek to optimize attack values, and will deviate their moves to terrain elements or positions where they can attack from behind if available, should an opposing Character be within 12 inches.

c. Characters will always attack the target of highest Expertise as soon as they are able to do so, unless a Guardian Arises card is drawn. The phantom player always deploys Guardian Arises cards as soon as able to do so and, per the card text, combat actions are sacrificed that turn.

d. When Characters are blocked from moving in a direct line to your War Marshal, or should a move place the Character directly in harm's way, rotate the card a quarter turn in the direction that will move it closest to your War Marshal, then exhaust available SPEED attempting to regain a clear path (using the Binary Rule if that direction isn't obvious)

e. The phantom player's War Marshal will move per the Binary and Number Rules in the Deployment Zone except for two conditions:

> i. If the move would place the War Marshal in harm's way, then leave in place (or apply the Direction Rule at max Speed to remove from harm's way if that's also already the case)

> ii. If the War Marshal is the only remaining Character available to the phantom player, in which case the War Marshal proceeds as described above (and with +2 Expertise to reflect desperation and raw fury). Place a die on the card with the '2' face-up to indicate this case.

f. All phantom player Characters within targeting range of your War Marshal receive an additional +1 to their attack rolls for EVERY phantom player Character also within range.

In this example, Karak is in the targeting range of three individual Characters from the opposing faction. He's been backed into a corner and is outnumbered.

Each Character, in turn, will receive +2 to their attack rolls because there are two additional Characters also within range.

7.8 Wolfpack Mode game play

How to play:

1. Deploy phantom player's War Marshal using the Line Rule, then deploy yours

2. Shuffle both battle decks and draw 7-card hands

3. Each turn for the phantom player:

   a. Roll two dice to set the outcomes for the turn as described above

   b. Draw a card (except on phantom player's first turn) and spread phantom player's hand out face-up

   c. Working from left to right, match the first available Vehicle to the War Marshal, and first available Vehicle Attachment. Proceed in the same manner for other Characters until out of Vehicles. Any remaining Characters will deploy on foot.

   d. Deploy all Characters per the Line Rule unless doing so would deploy on top of another card (as it will in the first move of the game). In that event, displace the deployment point in a direction determined by the Binary Rule by the number of inches determined by the Number Rule, wrapping to the other side of the Deployment Zone if necessary.

   e. When the Binary Rule determines a YES, play the first Breaker Card available from left to right and immediately resolve its effects.

   f. Gather hand back into a pile and place face-down till next turn

   g. Perform each deployed Character's Movement and Combat Action per the above guidelines in turn.

4. Proceed in alternating turns as in the regular game.

5. Special Case: Any effects described on phantom player's deployed cards which are described as 'Once Per Game' are immediately resolved when the phantom player's dice roll is snake-eyes (two one's).

6. Should these guidelines determine moves or actions which are impossible, then take no action in that case.

> A helpful general rule to avoid confusion or breaking immersion in the game is to intervene on the phantom player's behalf if necessary and decide for it an action you would take in those circumstances.