

Savage Worlds Walker Rules for Achtung! Cthulhu/Dust

So, I ran the skirmish with the Eldrazi Ruiner and I quickly realized that using walkers in combat requires a little bit of rules clarification. Thanks to the Savages on Facebook and Google+ for steering me in the right direction. Specifically, Rich Spainhour and Jon Mullenax for citing sources.

To begin with, you'll need to fully read the section on Vehicles on pages 113-117 in the *Savage Worlds Deluxe Explorer's Edition* (SWDE), the section on Walkers on page 58-59 of the *Science Fiction Companion* (SFC), and the section on Robot Armor on pages 84-85 of *The Tomorrow Legion Player's Guide* (TLPG) for Savage Rifts. Walkers are considered Vehicles and use Piloting instead of driving. The pregenerated characters in *Secrets of the Dust* (SotD) use Driving, so I simply changed their skill to Piloting. The Robot Armor in Rifts is very high tech and requires Robot Armor Jock Edge to be proficient in Walker piloting, but for A!C/Dust, we'll just stick with using Piloting.

Parry for a Walker is not exactly explained in the SWDE or the SFC, but the TLPG does a nice job of covering a Walker's Parry. A Walker's Parry is half Piloting +2. If a Walker wants to engage in melee and has the proper configuration (like the German "Luther" Walker outfitted with either one or two Kamfzanges or Claws, then the pilot uses either his Fighting or Piloting skill, whichever is lower, for his trait test. A Walker without the appropriate arms that can be used specifically for melee attacks is treated as an Unarmed Defender in melee – their foe receives a +2 to their Fighting rolls.

The next issue I encountered was how to handle deceleration. The SWDE explains that a vehicle can decelerate at twice its acceleration speed with normal braking and three times its acceleration if doing a hard stop. This doesn't really make much sense. I think it should be that a vehicle brakes twice as fast as it accelerates, which would actually be half the distance of its acceleration speed, not double. For example, a Walker that accelerates 7 on its first turn could brake to a stop in a move of 3.5 (we'll round to 4) on its next turn. Why would it take 14 squares to brake if it was moving at 7, yet a hard stop would take 21 spaces. The wording is confusing. This is important because Walkers might use a tactic of running, stopping, and firing from a stand-still in order to prevent the Unstable Platform penalty that firing while moving incurs. So, for the Light Assault Walker (LAW), which has an acceleration of 7, it can brake at 4 (half acceleration rounded up) and hard stop at 3 (a third of acceleration rounded up). The LAW has a Top Speed of 15; what happens if you want to apply the brakes normally to slow down? Then it seems like our numbers don't quite work. But the principle of halving the speed does work. We're moving along at 15 and want to brake on our next move, halving 15 and rounding up gives us 8. I have to move at least 8 spaces on my turn. I can't choose to only move 3 or 4 yet because I have too much momentum. Then, on the subsequent turn, I can stop in 4 spaces as that is my half acceleration number. Otherwise, if you keep halving each turn, you'll encounter one form of Zeno's Paradox and never stop.

A much simpler and more intuitive method is used in Rifts. The TLPG treats Walkers more like humanoids. They have no top speed and instead use the rules for Running (which means that

accelerating a Walker into a run is an Action. If you were to also fire a weapon while running, it would incur a Multi Action Penalty (MAP). Also, firing multiple weapon systems on the Walker incurs a MAP. Unlike humans, Walkers use 2d6 for running instead of 1d6. In my campaign, I will also impose a Piloting roll to successfully perform a run maneuver if it's a part of a Multi Action such as Shooting.

It should also be noted that the Off-Hand Penalty applies with Walkers as well. Some Walkers have quad machine guns with there being pairs on each side. Two guns fire in tandem so it isn't necessary to impose a MAP for firing a pair, but there should still only be one Wild Die. For example, if I fire the two guns on my dominant side using RoF 3, then I would roll 6 Shooting dice and 1 Wild Die. If, however, I wanted to fire all 4 quads, I would suffer a MAP for all rolls as well as the Off-Hand Penalty on my weak side hand only. The Off-Hand penalty also applies to the "Luther" with two Kamfzanges used in melee.

Some Walkers have guns mounted in such a way that the pilot has to stop the Walker and either stand in the cockpit or get out of the cockpit altogether to fire. Ensure that when these guns are used the Walker isn't moving. Other guns are turret mounted and can be fired while moving, Don't forget that these types of moving attacks impose MAPs as well as Unstable Platform penalties.

For the campaign presented in SotD we'll only be using Light and Medium Walkers. Even though the Walkers aren't Heavy class Walkers, they are all still Large as regards rules that use the term "Large". This means that where the SFC talks about Large Walkers can never take more than 2 wounds from a single attack, this applies to the Walkers in SotD.

When a walker is struck, the attack has the potential to knock the Walker over. When a Walker suffers a hit that meets or exceeds its Toughness, the first thing a Pilot does is make a Piloting roll. If they fail this roll then they have to roll on the Out of Control table (SWDE pg 117). In Rifts rules, the Out of Control rule and table isn't used; the Walker is just in danger of falling. I like this rule and will use it in A!C/Dust because the Out of Control table is geared more for rolling vehicles anyway. Even if the Pilot succeeds, this still qualifies as a Shaken result. The Pilot is momentarily stunned from the attack and has to make their Spirit roll. Technically, though, the Shaken is applied to the Walker.

If the attack entails wounds, then the Pilot must make a Piloting roll for each wound or else the Walker falls over. In addition, each wound entails a roll on the Critical Hits table in SWDE pg 117, or, the better Critical Hits table because its tailored to Walkers, is in TLPG pg 85. This will be the one I use for the campaign. Again, with Walkers, the Out of Control Table isn't used in Rifts. Each wound also inflicts a -1 penalty to the Piloting rolls so long as the Walker is still upright and functional (much like the penalties for wounds affect Pace and Trait rolls).

Also in the SFC is an entry on Ejection Systems. For our WWII Walkers, we'll be ignoring this futuristic feature. The Light Walkers are open cockpit and are ridden more like a motorcycle than being in an enclosed cockpit. For our purposes we'll be having the Pilot take falling damage when

one of the Walkers goes down. But, there are two types of falling damage: high speed (1d6 per 5" of speed, SWDE pg 115) and low speed falling damage (1d6+1 per 10", SWDE pg 101). To make this easy to use we'll be using the Walkers Top Speed. If the Walker is moving more than half of its Top Speed up to its Top Speed, use high speed; if it's moving at or below half of its Top Speed, the damage is low speed. Or, if using the running rule as per TLPG, just say that if a Walker is running, it uses high speed damage. This should take into account the height of the Walker too. For all of the Light and Medium Dust Walkers it's much simpler to just use 2d6+2 for all of their low speed falls. When a Walker does fall, use a d12 and read it like a clock face to determine which direction it topples. A Walker also suffers Xd6 damage to itself (where the X is its size) when it falls over.

Some common modifiers that come into play with Walkers includes:

- Walkers in motion are Unstable Platforms and incur a -2 Attack penalty (Firing a machine gun from a moving Walker incurs a -4 penalty. The Edges of Steady Hands and Rock and Roll would offset these penalties).
- Moving targets incur a -1 penalty per 10" of speed.
- The LAW has a Top Speed of 15 which incurs a -2 handling penalty (none of the other Walkers in SotD can go fast enough to incur this penalty unless you're using the 2d6 running rules. Then, just be aware of when a Walker achieves a 15 or higher.)
- Driving through rough terrain at over half of Top Speed requires a Piloting roll at -2 per round.
- A Walker can move up to half its Top Speed in reverse. Driving rolls while in reverse suffers a -2 penalty.
- Every difference of 2 in Size between Attacker and Target affects the Attack rolls by 2.

Some maneuvers of note that come in handy:

- Hard Stop: No penalty but Piloting roll must be made in order to stop at a third of the current speed.
- Bootlegger Reverse (-4): Stopping while pivoting the Walker around 90-180 degrees.
- Avoiding an obstacle (-2 or -4 for difficult turns or pivots).
- Stomping: Any creature or vehicle half a Walker's size or smaller can be stomped upon. This is an opposed roll using the Attacker's Piloting skill versus either Agility, Piloting, or Driving. If the Walker Pilot wins, the damage is Str+2d6. (Size and strength are given in the SFC as Light is Size 6 with a Strength of d12+4 and Medium is Size 8 with a Strength of d12+6).
- Death from Above: The Allied Medium Walker (Mickey) is the only Walker in SotD that can perform this maneuver since it can jump. This, again, is an Opposed roll. A success equals damage to the target but a failure means the Walker suffers damage (see SFC pg 59).

Savage Worlds Guide to Walker/Robot Armor Warfare; version 3

Using this quick sheet in conjunction with the Critical Hit table on page 85 of the TLPG should be sufficient to run the Walkers in SotD.