The Close Combat editor in Excel

CONTENTS

The Close Combat editor in Excel 1

Introduction 2

Before you begin 2

Editing the force pool 3

Loading a unit 3

Reading and editing the force pool 3

Saving the results 4

Other functions 4

Editing the battle group 5

Reading and editing the battle group 5

Saving the results 5

Other functions 5

Editing teams 6

Reading and editing a team 6

Saving the result 6

Other functions 6

Replacing the text files 7

Excel issues 7

Introduction

In Close Combat the Longest Day (CCtLD), the force pool, battle group and team files are in text (.txt) format. You will find both files in the DATA\BASE directory of your CCtLD folder.

- The force pool file determines what units you see on the left of the battle group screen, with a maximum of 25.
- The battle group file determines how many slots you have in the active roster, with a maximum of 15. It also determines what type of units the AI will place in the active roster, and a few other things such as battle group speed, commander name etc.
- The team files, one for the allied and one for the axis side, determine the composition of each team (such as a rifle team, a mortar team,...).

CCEditor is an Excel file that will allow you to edit these files. You can do this in order to tweak the settings of CCtLD, or in order to create fun battles, such as a tank head to head.

Before you begin

It is a good idea to make a number of back-ups before you begin:

1. Make a copy of the BASE folder, and store it somewhere safe.
2. Within the original BASE folder, make a copy of the fpools.txt, bgroups.txt, alsteam.txt and axsteams.txt files.

It is convenient to save a copy of the CCEditor file in the BASE folder, and work with this copy. The presence of an Excel file in the BASE folder will not interfere with the normal operation of CCtLD.

When you open CCEditor, Excel will ask you whether you want to activate the macros in this file. If you prefer not to do this, the file will be quite useless, but is nevertheless the solution recommended by Microsoft. It's up to you whether you click yes or no.

Editing the force pool

You can find edit force pools in the worksheet “BgroupEditor”.

Loading a unit

First you have to select the unit whose force pool and battle group you want to edit. Cell D2 contains a drop-down menu with all the available units in the standard CCtLD version. They are listed in the order in which they appear in the scenario editor. The spreadsheet automatically associates the right side (allied or axis) with this unit.

Reading and editing the force pool

Once you have selected a unit, you can read the force pool for this unit into the configuration space:

- The button “Read the force pool from user data” loads the force pool from the worksheet with user data. When you first open the Excel file, these are the same as in the standard CCtLD version, but you may have changed them in an earlier session.
- The button “Read the force pool from original data” loads the standard force pool as it is defined in CCtLD.

The configuration space will now be filled with the data on the force pool for this unit:

1. The first column is just a sequential number, 25 in total, one for each slot in the force pool.
2. The second column gives a description for this unit. This description is composed of a number of elements, in order to give you as much detail as possible. Each of the cells in this column has a drop-down menu, allowing you to replace this unit with another one.
3. In the next column, you can enter the number of this unit you want to have available.
4. The fourth column tells you whether there is an icon available for this unit in the standard CCtLD version. Some units have no icon available, and will appear as a rifle group in the active roster. When you start up the battle, however, this unit will function normally, you will see for instance a sprite that corresponds with the unit.
5. The fifth column is the internal code, used by CCtLD to identify this unit.
6. The sixth columns identifies the type of unit.

In fact, you may have noticed that the force pool is not a single line. Each force pool consists of different lines, one for each day and level of difficulty. Since there are 4 days and 5 levels of difficulty, a force pool consists of 20 lines.

By default, the spreadsheet will load the line for the first day (D-Day) and the “Player hero” level of difficulty into the configuration space If you want to edit a different line, you first have to select the day in cell C8 and the level in cell E8, and then click on the button next to “Read this line into the configuration space”.

The button marked “Clear the configuration space” will fill the configuration space with empty teams everywhere. You can use this if you want to start from scratch.

You can now proceed to edit the lines of the force pool you have selected. Do this by changing the type of unit in the second column, using the drop-down menu, and entering a number in the third column. Do not touch the other columns, they will be adjusted automatically.

Saving the results

In cells C41 and E41, you can select the day and level where you want to save the contents of the configuration space. When you load a line, both cells will be set to the day an level of the line you have read into the configuration space.

Once you have entered the right day and level, you can do several things:

- The button next to "Save this configuration into force pool to selected day and level" will save the configuration into a single line.
- The button next to "Save this configuration into force pool to selected level across all days" will save the configuration into the indicated level, but for all 4 days.
- The last button saves the configuration across all days and levels.

When you satisfied with the force pools for all days and levels, you can save the whole set into the user force pool worksheet by clicking the button next to "Write your force pool for this unit to user data". This does not yet mean the CCtLD will pick up the results of you work ! You still have to overwrite the original fpool.txt file (see below "Replacing the text files").

Other functions

With "Reset all user force pools to original data", you overwrite all the results of your previous work with the standard CCtLD data.

With "Open fpools.txt, using this path", you open a copy of the fpools.txt file as it is currently stored in the BASE folder. Make sure the path is the correct one for your installation of CCtLD. The macro will also ask you whether you want to copy these data into the user worksheet of the CCEditor file. You can do this to load a version of the force pools which you have edited and saved in a previous session.

With "Go to worksheet with user defined fpools", you go to the worksheet with the user defined force pools in Close Combat format. From here, you can save this worksheet as a txt file (see below).

Editing the battle group

Battle groups are also edited in the worksheet “BgroupEditor”.

Reading and editing the battle group

As with the force pool, you can choose to read the battle group data from user data or from the original CCtLD data.

In the roster space, you will see what type of units the game will try to use in order to fill each slot in the active roster.

1. The first number is just a sequential number.
2. The second column shows what type of unit will be placed in this roster.
3. The third column gives the platoon (first, second or support teams).
4. The next column is an internal CCtLD code.
5. The last column shows how many units of this type are available in the force pool, as it is currently loaded in the configuration space for force pools above.

Below the roster space, you find some more data on the battle group. You can enter other values into these cells. If you click on these cells, you will see what values are allowed.

Saving the results

The button next to “Write your battle group roster to user data” saves the composition of the selected unit to the user data.

Battle group data are the same across all days and levels.

Once again, saving the results does not mean that CCtLD will pick up the results. You still have to replace the text file in the BASE folder.

Other functions

The last three buttons have the same function as with the force pools. Note that the path used is the same as for force pools. If you want to change it, do so in the cell with the force pools path.

Editing teams

You can edit teams in the worksheet “TeamsEditor”. The spreadsheet only supports infantry teams.

Reading and editing a team

You should first select the side of the team in cell C2. Proceed by selecting a team in cell F3.

You can then read the characteristics from the team from the user data or from the original CCtLD data. If the team is not an infantry team, a warning will appear below the buttons for reading a team.

Some general data on the team will appear. Of these, you can only edit the morale and experience levels of the team. Do this with the drop-down menus in the appropriate cells.

The editing space, below the general data, shows the composition of the team.

1. The first column is a sequential number.
2. For each slot, you should select a type of soldier. This is in fact the type of personal weapon carried by this soldier.
3. In the next column, you specify the role of this soldier.
4. An internal code for the type of the soldier.
5. An internal code for the role of the soldier.
6. If you choose “._No soldier” for the role, the type should be “Empty slot”, and vice versa. If this is not the case, a warning will appear in the column labeled “check”.
7. The ammo carried by the soldier. This is a function of the weapon he has. You should not try to change this number.

Saving the result

This is the same as with battle groups.

Other functions

Once again, the same as with battle groups, only now a distinction has to be made between allied and axis data.

Replacing the text files

If you want to overwrite the text files in the BASE folder, you will need to do so with the save dialogue of Excel[1]:

- Select the fpools, bgoups, alteams or axsteams worksheet.
- In the Office menu, select Save as…, and then select Other formats.
- Select the "Text (tab as separation)" format.
- Check that the right directory is selected (i.e. the DATA\BASE folder).
- In the file name, select the right file.
- Click on save. Excel will ask a few questions, but it should be clear what the right answers are.

If you start CCtLD, the game will read the data from the files you just created.

- If you save a game or an operation, the current composition of force pools and battle groups will be saved. If you change them later, this will have no influence on saved games.
- You can use this fact to create, for instance, a fun game, save it, and then replace the fpool and broups text files with the original ones.

Excel issues

I have created the file in Excel 2007, and have written an Excel 2003 version afterwards. Since I do not access to a copy of Excel 2003, I cannot test that the Excel 2003 version will function properly.

Enjoy !

Triarius, June 2009

[1] I have a Dutch version of Excel, so the actual you see dialogue may be slightly different.