

Great War at Sea: Zeppelins

Variant Rules

1 => **Zeppelins Rule 25.3** (Additional Weather Effects):

Players must make takeoff and landing die rolls for airships just as they do for other aircraft, per rule 20.3. On a modified result of -1, the airship is damaged and flips to its damaged side. If already damaged, or if it does not have a damaged side, it is destroyed. This does not override the prohibition on airships taking off in weather condition 5 (storm) or 6 (gale) per Zeppelins Rule 25.3.

Note: Airships had great difficulty taking off or landing in a cross-wind. The revolving shed built by the Germans at Nordholz was intended to minimize this difficulty, but it did not completely solve the problem and, in any case, the shed could accommodate only two airships. Sudden down-drafts or up-drafts were also a problem. SL3, returning from escorting the minelayer Meteor, was damaged in a squall at Nordholz when she fell hard to the ground. SL3 was not kept in the revolving shed, but this accident would have occurred even had she been.

2 => **Zeppelins Rule 26.1** (Modification):

Combat between airships and airplanes is not simultaneous. Instead, the airship fires first at the airplane, any results are applied to the airplane, and then the airplane attacks the airship. For each "hit" scored by an airship on an airplane, the airship player rolls two dice and applies the results from the table below:

Die-roll Result Effects

2-8 No Effect

9-11 The aircraft suffers a -1 penalty to each die rolled when it returns fire at the airship (so aircraft that would only hit on a 6 cannot hit the airship).

12 The aircraft counter loses 1 step and cannot fire at the airship.

Note: This rule is well-justified historically. During the Great War, the German Naval Airship Division had 12 airships destroyed in the air by airplanes. German naval airships shot down at most one airplane. On April 12, 1918, L62 may have shot down a British FE2b fighter, which was forced to land because something hit the pilot in the head (he survived) and also damaged the airplane's propeller. The pilot believed he had been shot down by the Zeppelin he was attacking. However, his commanding officer's report pointed out that L62 was under anti-aircraft fire at the time and the pilot's head injury was more consistent with being struck by a shell fragment. If that was correct, and the FE2b had been shot down by British anti-aircraft fire, then no German naval airship ever shot down a fighter aircraft. On the other hand, there is some anecdotal evidence that machinegun fire from airships occasionally forced intercepting aircraft to keep a more respectful distance. This is reflected in this variant rule.