Lamorak Booth's

Arcane Compendium

Excerpts

When I was young and foolish, I studied, out of all things, magical combat. The current theory at the time was what is known as "turn combat", in which wizards fight by turns. One wizard fires a blast, and his opponent dodges it, and then fires a blast of his own in return. This came about because of the basics of combat. Blasts and shields create an arena where there was a clear "rock-paper-scissors", and the key was using a big enough rock.

I was dissatisfied with the results of this theory. I set about to making my own, which was a lot harder than I had expected. For a while, I searched far and wide, fighting every wizard I came across, winning some fights, losing some others. Finally, I felt I had enough material to begin compiling all my findings into a single theory.

What I came up with was what I like to call "point theory", in which each wizard can be represented as a point. This makes it easier to understand large field combat, involving multiple enemies and allies.
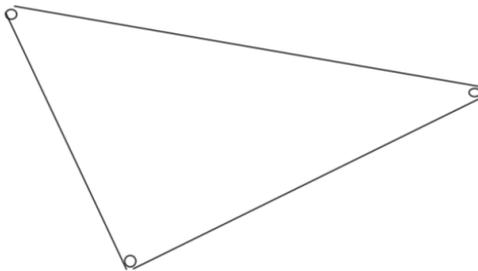
A poor illustration of point theory angles of attack.

The most important part of point theory is its ability to predict angles of view and attack. These are critical to any combat, and allow a wizard to figure out how to best maximize combat efficiency.

Point theory, thus, relies on evading angles of attack, blocking angles of view, and utilizing unpredictable and unexpected angles of attack for powerful strikes.

Point theory does have its failings. Firstly, it is far harder to anticipate vertical avenues of attack, as well as making it more difficult to visualize the wizards as human beings, causing errors. However, it is still a paper theory. Let us see how it applies to reality.

The first and most critical lesson learnt by analyzing point theory is that the faster wizard wins. In standard turn theory, we see that power is critical, with the more powerful wizard defeating barriers and winning clashes, two important parts of turn theory. Yet in point theory, we have several possible angles of attack, and in order to maximize possibilities, a wizard schooled in point theory must be capable of reaching situations where it is possible to use those angles.

Traditional training begins with the blast spell, then the explosion, then the jump, then the beam, then the hover, so on and so forth. This follows the accepted difficulties of learning said spells, in the hope of making a wizard combat-ready in the shortest time possible. Yet this is not a good plan for both teaching wizards how to fight and teaching them how to enjoy using their magic. No, a revised plan should begin with jumps, then blasts, then beams, then hovers. Only after that should the explosion be learnt. Flight must remain last due to the sheer amount of time and effort needed for a wizard to learn flight spells.

This learning plan encourages the use of jump spells and movement in combat, as well as making it more fun for any wizard. Being able to move with your magic is both fun, useful, and exciting. It's also more useful in combat, as being able to flee a fight is better than being able to fight and die in one.

Returning to point theory, it is easily understood that a successful wizard must be able to keep their angles of view and attack open while closing those of their opponents. But how? They share the same angles!

This is the crux of it. The attacker and defender share the same angles, which enables common turn theory to work.

Thus, an attacker must utilize surprise and unpredictable patterns so as to *break out* of those angles of attack and view. Blinding, blocking, and more can reduce a field of view, while rapid movement can break an angle of attack.
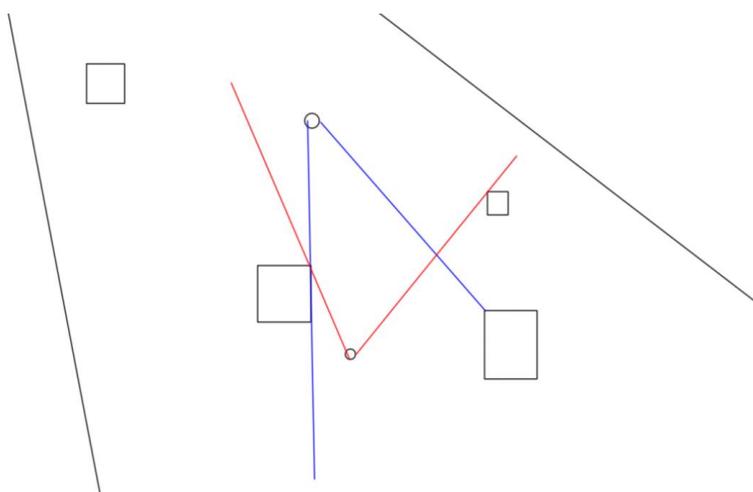
An example diagram.

In this situation, both blue and red have restricted angles of attack and view. Blue is however, at a disadvantage. The large block in the lower left is visibly closer to red as opposed to blue. However, this is not necessarily a blessing. If blue can escape red's field of view before red can attack, blue is capable of using the "dead space" of the block to avoid attack, while having greater mobility due to more space.

It is thus advantageous for red to open up with a beam, while blue should focus on quick, diversionary barriers and barrages.

Once the "dead space" is established between the two, blocking each other from their opponent's field of view, blue is at an advantage. Red should then rise vertically, hoping to catch blue off-guard. Blue should then open fire from one direction using slow-diversionary attacks, rise and move to the other direction in order to catch red-off guard.

All this is basic point theory. Whoever is faster wins here. Speed is more important for blue, who has to cover more space in less time, yet it is still critical for red.

A further discussion of point theory shall be continued in chapter four, where I discuss spells, defense, and offense.