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Editor's Foxhole

Rick Reinesch



This issue of Banzai brings you a detailed scenario analysis of Rally Point's scenario RPT6 *Cadets and Cadre* by Nick Drinkwater. Nick does a great job of providing tactical insights for both the attacker and defender. Nick is probably the most prolific AAR writer in Texas, and his insight, British wit and witticism make for an enjoyable read. If you enjoy this article, make sure and drop by the club AAR link on the Texas ASL website and check out Nick's other fine articles.

Zeb Doyle gives a great rundown of his exploits at the ASL Open up in Chicago. One of the key things to come out of his report is the need for us in Texas to get out to more tournaments around the country. Outside of the elite ASL talent, I believe Texas has some of the strongest players from top to bottom in the hobby. The more we get out and participate in other tournaments like the Open, the more we'll get folks to recognize the skill level of the players in our area and the more we'll get them to want to make the trek to our tournament.

We also provide a player profile of Scott Bell from San Antonio. Scott is a relative newcomer to the Central Texas ASL scene but has been very busy recruiting and promoting ASL in the San Antonio area. I can personally attest that Scott is great host for San Antonio game days, if for no other reason than to check out the military decor on the second floor of his home!

The usual Tactical Tips, Style Points, Rules Tips, and Happenings will hopefully provide some nugget to help elevate your game or provide a good chuckle (at someone else's expense). Finally, Matt Schwoebel gives us a list of his favorite scenarios and Rick Reinesch provides us with an update on the Texas Team Tournament to be held in June in Austin. We celebrate our 16th Anniversary this year and it promises to be just as much fun as in years past.

Scenario Analysis: RPT6 Cadets and Cadre



Nick Drinkwater

Romanian: [ELR 3, SAN 4]

Hungarian: [ELR 3, SAN 4]

Scenario setting

A thoughtful scenario, and I personally think, a really, really good one. It's September 1944, and the Romanians have just swapped sides and turned on their former comrades-in-arms, including their super-hated neighbors, the Hungarians. The Hungarians, seeing a hint of *et tu brute* in this act, are out for a bit of old-fashioned burn and pillage in rural Transylvania and to enforce a bit of a beating on the treacherous turncoats. They've picked on a local cadet college to make their point; the defiant cadets are making a final stand on a nearby hill (overlay Hill 8 on board 10).

Pre-game analysis - victory conditions

For once it is *not* a windless, moderate day but merely a windless, wet one. The Romanians who set up first are faced with a tough task. To win, the Hungarians must ensure there are no Good Order Romanian MMC on the hill at game end. The Romanians must therefore keep an eye to this and keep units on or close to the hill at all times - it may be that they will need to advance back on to the hill in turn 6 for the win. So there is some potential in spreading the force over and around the hill so as to make the attacking Hungarians divide and disperse to conquer these brave boys. Remember it will only take a single half-squad or a crew crawling onto the hill to win - I think this is actually an easier victory condition than in many other scenarios as the hill is big, and there are many useful places near the base of the hill for the Romanians to hang around, having turn 5 "cigarettes and wine", waiting for their moment of glory on turn 6. By that point, the remaining Hungarians will be spread thin to try and cover every angle. If the Romanians focus solely on holding out on the top of the hill, the Hungarians have the mobility in their tanks to surround and encircle them and that gets to be a bad place for the Romanians very quickly.

Romanian hill-top defense

Clearly then it is critical to carefully plan your hilltop setup - your four foxholes should be here in level 2 and 3 crests, and it may be good to set up a foxhole as a rout path. In these foxholes, you definitely want to have the light mortar

(one of those tasty, nice French 60mm jobs), and your -2 leader with the MMG. These guys are very scary to the Hungarians as they will dominate the approaches through the town, and more importantly the run-in to the hill. It is these units that will be hurting the Hungarians the most: that -2 leader and the MMG is a lethal combo and you should look for every 2-2 and 2-1 cheap shot you can find, especially in turn 1 where the Hungarians enter and when you are not smoked in.

If the Hungarians are stuck in a woods hex, the mortar should be making their life hell - there will be several -1 and 0 shots for the mortar to get lucky and this French weapon is key. Note some of the other date-dependant (September 1944) Romanian characteristics - neither side is

giving or expecting quarter, and both sides' broken morale is increased by one - these guys *really* hate each other. There is no real need to be afraid of the Hungarian tanks - you have a panzerfaust range of 2 hexes, and your two elite squads will be finding these on a very healthy 3. Your Hungarian enemy also gets panzerfausts but will have fewer opportunities to use them and fewer of them overall due to usage restrictions. Finally, your elite squads have a -2 ATMM capability as well - these blokes are nasty! What could be bad is that your Hungarian opponent may opt to shove a suicidal tank right in the face of the hill-watch team: the panzerfaust will almost certainly make the tank burn and thus become a very useful obscuring smoke hindrance to the hilltop.

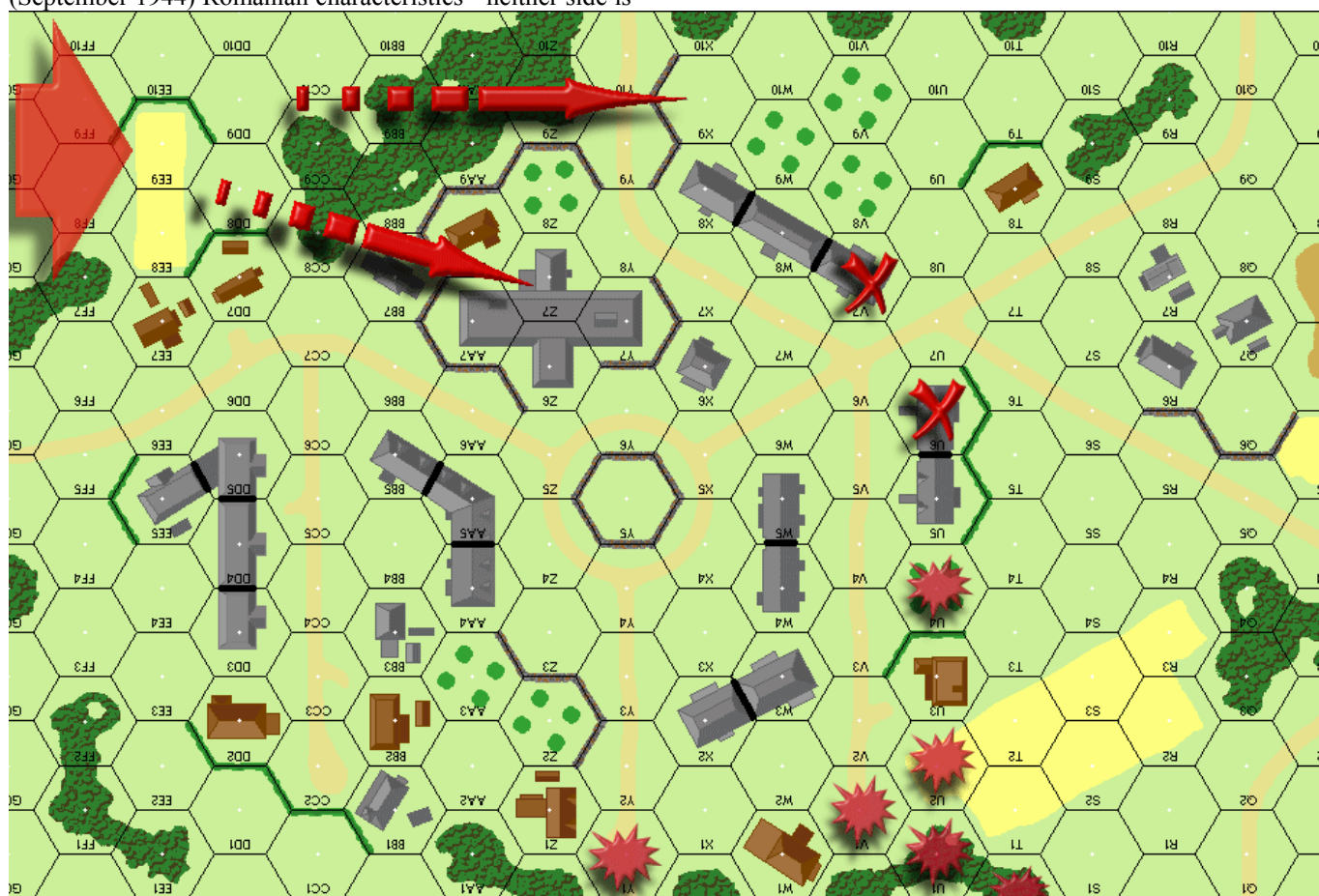


Figure 1: The northern half of the game area. Probable Romanian entry points and axis of advance are marked with red arrows – the reinforcing Romanians may well be in a stiff fight by the time they arrive at the 4-hex big stone building. Red ‘X’s mark key stone building locations where Romanian town defenders can interdict Hungarian armored routes using their inherent panzerfaust threat. Hexes marked with red bursts are key access routes that need to be interdicted with residual fire by long-range shots from the Romanian MMG and Light Mortar.

Romanian village defense

The other thing to be thoughtful about is the approach routes to the hill through the town - your reinforcements come in on the north side in turn 2 and the Hungarian needs

to be wary of them and their impact and plan accordingly (see Figure 1). On turns 1 and 2, the Hungarian player may move to try and block or impede your support units, but this may also be good as it means these Hungarians are *not*

fighting for the hill. To help your reinforcements and to slow the Hungarians down, you may wish to use an at-start squad or two to cover the exit road on the south side of town: their job is to delay, leave residual and threaten with potential panzerfaust shots. The decisions you make in set-up to defend the approaches to the town will have a critical effect on how the game plays out. Too little defense, and the Hungarians will blast through you and will be onto the hill in no time, too much and you may find them isolated and bypassed and not helping in the last two turns. These are tough decisions but that is what this scenario is all about - choices.

Romanian - defense of the south

The other area to consider is the south side entry of the Hungarian flanking force: it is probably not good to be fighting the Hungarians in the woods but at the fringe of the forest. A 4-4-7, LMG and 8-1 at the point of the hill (see Figure 2) will dominate many of the hill approaches and keep the Hungarians a little more cautious. Keep another squad nearby in case of lucky shots, snipers etc: if these guys go down to some low odds shot, your southern defenses will be compromised and you will swiftly feel the pain of encirclement

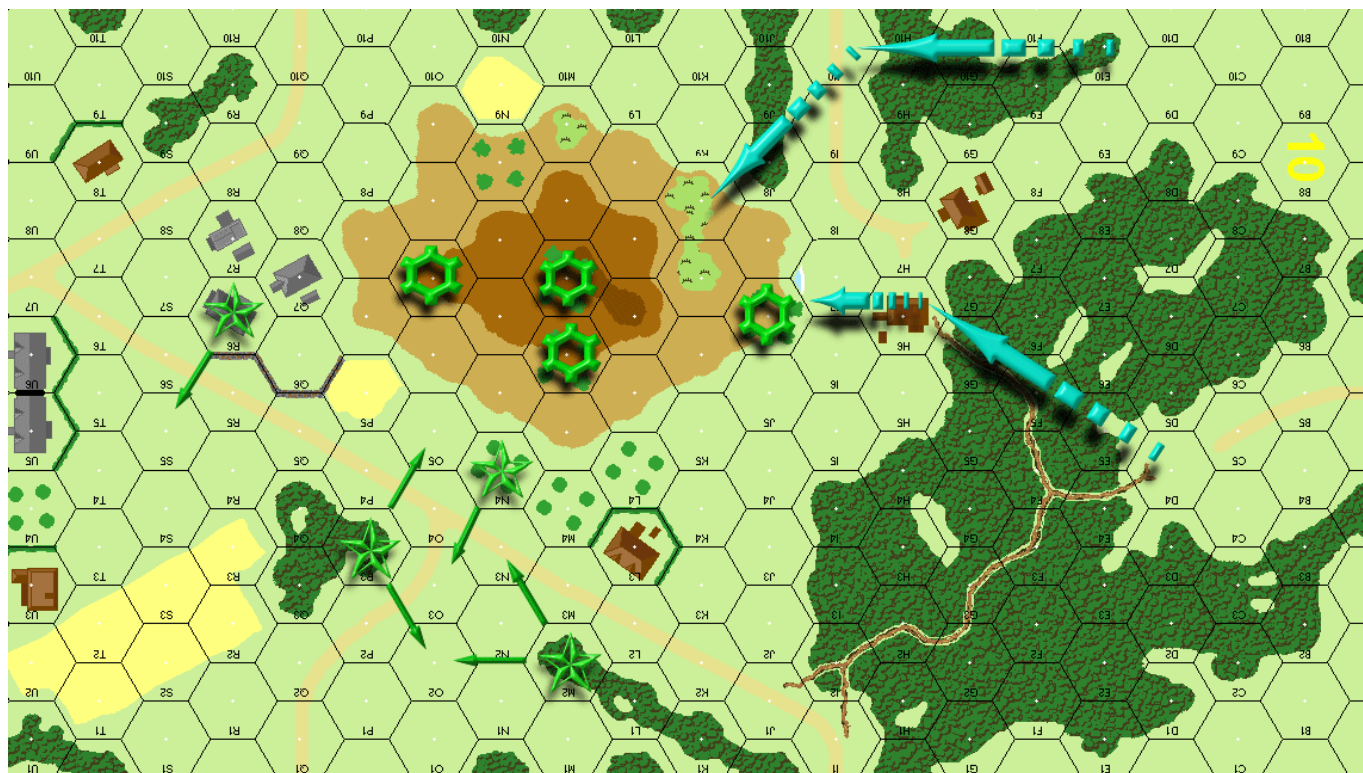


Figure 2: Southern half of playing area. Probable Hungarian entry points and attack routes on the south board edge are marked with blue arrows. Green six-pointed markers indicate possible foxhole positions – the Light Mortar and the MMG with 10-2 leader direction should be in mutually supporting positions on the Level 2 and 3 hill hexes. Green five-pointed stars mark some possible antitank gun locations and some interesting corresponding covered arc hex spines.

Whither the Gatling guns?

Finally, what do you do with the two antitank guns? Their ROF of three is awesome (after one recent bad experience on the receiving end of these, they've since become known as Gatling guns to me!), even if their kill number is more on the side of mildly threatening (10) than truly deadly. They will need some good low rolls to take out the Hungarian armor from the front, but side shots are a definite possibility and the thin-walled Hungarian armor is very vulnerable. Therefore, while options to put the guns HIP on the hill do

exist, these placements are rather obvious and perhaps only useful in a determined hill-top stand.

What is needed is to ensure adequate cover of the open ground and grain fields near the base of the hill (see Figure 2): one gun in the group of three stone buildings to the north hillside is very tasty and difficult for the Hungarians to hit, but is not exactly a surprise. It is important to try and guess the approach of the Hungarian armor and choose an initial covered arc that gives you the best chance to get in a side shot: remember the Hungarian AFVs are small and

moving and you will definitely struggle to hit them if you have to change covered arc before you've dropped HIP. The other AT gun could be placed in a nice flanking position in the west board edge woods - to really boost its effectiveness, keep this gun hidden as long as possible until something juicy rolls in front of you, presenting a side or rear aspect. This may come as a real shock to the Hungarian in turn 3 or 4 where he will be committed to his routes of attack. If he knows where both guns are on turn 1, he can then freely maneuver infantry into place to negate the threat, and his tanks can create mayhem in your ranks instead.

Romanian endgame considerations

If your hilltop teams are still in place on turn 5 or 6, then you are doing really well – while they may be sitting in a huge cloud of smoke, they are still alive and in good order. Any close combat attempt on the 10-2 by the Hungarians comes loaded with peril - he is the key Romanian unit in this scenario and an early loss or falling to a sniper will seriously compromise the Romanian defense: he is a bugger to shift! If you have been kicked off the hill by this point however, do not despair: if you have troops elsewhere on the board, try and maneuver and spread out around the hill - use those crews as fire-soaks to help this process in turn 6.

Advancing for the win

If you force the Hungarians to disperse *their* late-game hilltop defenders, you are almost guaranteed to win: for every one of your units that survive at the base of the hill, your opponent needs to cover two potential hexes that you can advance into - an impossible task. Therefore, he will need to stop, pin, or break almost every one of your units in defensive fire; the more there are of you, the harder this becomes for him to accomplish. Make sure you keep note of the numerous places at the base of the hill for you to start last turn maneuvers under +1 or better cover. Ideally you would assault move next to one of these hill base hexes then advance up on the hill for the win. One last point: don't jump the gun early! The key to this game is to use the full number of turns and to try and attrite the Hungarians as much as possible in turns 1 to 5. You don't need to be on the hill in turn 5 - just there in turn 6.

Hungarian Turn 1

Although ROAR currently states differently (9-4 in favor of the Hungarians at the time of this writing), I personally think the Hungarians have the slightly harder job in this scenario due to the generous end-game Romanian victory possibilities, and also the very tough questions the Hungarian town-entry force has to face in turns 1 to 3. Clearly, they need to assist with a solid punch to the Romanian defenses on the hill, but they also need to rapidly destroy any Romanian units that are left defending in the

town, *and* probably scout for hidden antitank guns, *and*, try to delay / hamper / destroy the arriving Romanian reinforcements. In contrast, their reinforcing cousins entering from the north just need to get on and rush the north edge of the hill - easy!

Where to go next?

Therefore, much of what happens on turn 1 heavily depends upon the dispersal of the Romanians. If they have left any force in the town, you must destroy or remove them as quickly as possible as it is their task to delay you for as long as possible; don't let them! It may actually help you if the Romanian player has focused his defense solely on the hill as you have more opportunities to surround his forces early. One trick is to deploy a couple of squads and set a half-squad blitz to try and find the hidden guns - make the Romanian consider the tough choices by forcing him to choose to shoot at those pesky 1-3-7 units scooting all around his carefully planned defense. Remember to use searching - a nice trick which can quickly check out annoying cover hexes with much less effort. All this activity may also soak up other fire for you and help movement potential.

Some effort must be made to delay the Romanian reinforcements - they must be delayed as they are really useful late game-breakers for the Romanians and offer a lot of turn 6 options. However, you must judge just how much of your force to use here to stop these guys - a platoon and a tank may be enough, but of course those units are now not fighting for the hill. It is a tough call and one of the real cool things about this scenario!

Turn 1 south

Turn 1 Hungarian south-entry units must get on quickly, approach the hill concealed, and try to rout any south-side hill defenders as soon as possible. Your best approach may be from the southeast where you can move adjacent to the base of the hill through the woods (see Figure 2). There will probably be a manned foxhole in this area and if you can break these defenders quickly then you are in a really good position to move up the hill. Get that MMG firing as soon as possible as you need to break and hurt those hated Romanians and this is an excellent tool to do that. One squad may need to be dispatched to enter from the southwest - this is to try to enforce encirclement opportunities on any ground-level defenders in that quadrant and eliminate them for failure to rout.

Hungarian armor

Hungarian infantry should exercise any opportunities to hurt Romanians hanging out in stone buildings by using panzerfaust fire - there will be several chances, perhaps

including bagging an antitank gun, too. The big winners for the Hungarians in this scenario are clearly their home-grown tanks (not a sentence you get used to reading or writing), but the Turan IIs in particular are very handy weapons. Their smoke assets are huge and their first task must be to place smoke on top of those annoying Romanian hilltop positions - their 75 mm guns pack a huge punch in this game and their HE firepower is tough on the Romanians. In contrast the Turan Is and Toldis are less well-gunned, but they also have useful SD assets to smoke key positions and their machine gun factors are extremely useful.

Some caution must be taken with the tanks early on as losing one or two to a Gatling gun on a rate tear is bad news for the Hungarians: the Turan IIs should be looked after closely because of their healthy utility as gun and smoke-platforms. It is important to find those two antitank guns as early as possible. You will then have more flexibility to start moving around and kicking broken Romanians out of positions and start enforcing failures to rout whenever possible. One thing to be aware of is the potential to get the hilltop Romanians moving away from their heavy weapons - if the MMG or mortar squads break, it may even be worth forcing a sacrifice tank to get them routing off the hill. Be wary of two-hex range panzerfaust shots and keep moving and smoking where necessary - be aware of the ATMM capability of the two elite Romanian units.

Hungarian endgame thoughts

Much of the end-game is very dependent on the situation at the end of turn 4: if you have the Romanians nicely bottled up on the hill and any outlying defenders isolated and/or broken, then you are in good shape to win. Note the 10-2 may take some effort to eliminate, but again use the tanks to enforce failure to rout and encirclement wherever possible and get the 10-2 shifted from his weapons if the opportunity presents itself. Make sure you have eliminated the threat from outlying gun crews and have them isolated or smoked up. If you have killed or driven off all the initial hill defenders, then your job will only be half done if there are scattered Romanians around the base of the hill: things may yet get harder. You will need to continue working hard to cut their movement options as much as possible and will need plenty of infantry scattered around level one of the hill to deny the Romanians advance options. It may be the case that some of your infantry are still fighting at the south edge of the town against the Romanian reinforcements - be aware of a board edge dash for victory through the fringe woods - remember it only takes one!

Conclusion:

I really liked this scenario and had an awesome roller-coaster game with Tom Gillis. Of course, it had all of our usual insane rolling fun, with a squad and leader on the hill

going down to a 'warm' sniper and subsequent LLMC failures. On top of that was the creation of a 10-3 out of the 10-2 who then promptly did nothing for the rest of the game and failed to rally a DM elite squad three times with successive rolls of 8!! But ultimately, a couple of overly aggressive tank moves by Tom left him tankless, and then too thin on the ground to keep me from having several options for endgame advances-to-win. Gotta love this game...

I would really recommend this scenario to anyone who likes their ASL thoughtful - setups, movement, attacks and routs can all be problematic in this scenario and this will be one of those classic games which will end up in a series of desperate battles all over the map. As it is 1944, despite being 'bad' infantry, each of the forces has now up-armed itself with a batch of modern defensive weapons and that leads to all sorts of mayhem capability on the map. Great fun!

2008 Texas ASL Team Tournament



Rick Reinesch

The final details for the 16th Annual Texas ASL Team Tournament held here in Austin, TX, June 19-22, 2008 are coming together. The sponsorships are coming in and I'm still on the prowl for even more. With the help of David Longstreet and Bill Dorre, we're getting together some great items for those folks who preregister. Preregistration runs through June 8th, and the deadline to lock in our great rate for the hotel is June 5th. Remember that you will need to contact the La Quinta hotel directly at 512-255-6666 to request the rate. Make sure you indicate that you are with 'Central Texas ASL'. Those deadlines are coming up fast so don't wait!

Last year we had 47 players from points all over the country participating and for this year we already have a number of folks preregistered even earlier than last year. Already a number of new faces appear on the list.

As in previous years, Thursday's games will be informal gaming, with those games counting toward the Major Johnson award. On Friday morning, we will launch the formal phase of the tournament starting at 9am where we will track wins and losses over the weekend to crown the team and individual winners. Our tournament runs an open format; players are free to match themselves with anyone, and play any mutually agreeable scenario. A big help is to have a list and copies of scenarios that you want to play

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over the course of the weekend. It helps speed up scenario selection.

Registration this year is \$36 for Thursday-Sunday gaming, \$31 for Friday-Sunday; and \$21 for Saturday only. Your entrance fee includes participation in any Mini-Tournaments should you desire to enter.

Speaking of minis, we will have the ever popular Opening Assault on Thursday featuring scenarios designed by our own Zeb Doyle. Along with that we will hold the Texas HEAT mini on Saturday. This year's theme is "Death and Destruction" featuring scenarios from MMP's *Valor of the Guards* and Bounding Fire's *Into The Rubble*.

You can check everything out by following the ASL Team Tourney link from the Texas ASL home page at <http://www.texas-asl.com>.

A Texan in the Windy City: My Trip to the ASL Open



Zeb Doyle

The idea of going to a major out-of-state tournament has been bouncing around in my head for several years. Since moving to Texas, I've played over two hundred scenarios against some very tough opposition and gained a lot of experience and a better understanding of the game. The thought of traveling a bit to compare my skills to some of the bigger names in the game was a tempting one. Still, the concept was more of a vague hypothetical than an actual plan, so when the stars actually aligned to make a trip possible, I started hemming and hawing. After a lot of internal debate, the ASL Open became too tempting to pass up. It's one of the biggest tournaments out there so I'd have plenty of opportunities to meet top players. Chicago itself was also a tempting destination since I love Eastern European food. There's not a lot of that in Texas and I figured that even if the ASL went bad, I could still have a fun adventure and some new experiences. The decision finally made, I turned to my significant other, Amy, and told her "pack your bags; we're heading to the Windy City!"

Since the tournament started Friday morning, we decided to leave Austin Thursday afternoon to make it an early night and thus be as rested as possible for the first round. That was the plan, anyway. As everyone was getting seated on the plane, a big guy carrying a huge backpack and two or three other pieces of luggage turned out to be in the wrong seat. He loudly told everyone around him that he didn't want to move and didn't want to stow any of his abundant baggage. A flight attendant tried to reason with the man, and a brief but vigorous argument ended with the guy grabbing all his stuff and storming off the plane to parts

unknown. Apparently, they tried to stop him at the gate but he pushed by them and disappeared. The decision was then made by the powers that be to evacuate the plane and search it with bomb-sniffing dogs. This took some time, during which we milled around the gate, mingling with other passengers from other flights. The search came back empty and the plane was found safe, but the delay triggered some sort of excessive work clause for the flight crew, and they ended up having to call their superiors to see if they were still allowed to make the flight to Chicago. While this debate raged, a zealous TSA official decided that allowing us to be in contact with other passengers could be a potential risk, and we ended up being surrounded by security and herded into an empty corner of the airport. This was tough on people with weak bladders, as we weren't allowed to go to the bathroom, but finally it was decided that the flight crew could still make the trip after we were all rescreened. Eventually, and with a sigh of relief, we finally settled back into our seats and watched the aircraft door swing shut. The sighs turned to groans after the intercom crackled to life and informed us that weather delays would keep us on the ground for an undetermined period. We finally took off, but the weather warning was no joke. The turbulence was as bad as I've ever encountered, and one especially nasty air pocket sent Amy's Dr. Pepper flying right into my face. We arrived around midnight, five hours late, but at that point we were just happy to land at all!

By the time morning rolled around, we were settled into the hotel, the flight was just a memory, and I was ready to focus in and play some ASL. The Open takes a much more structured approach than the Austin Team Tournament, with each round of play strictly timed and a set scenario list. The other interesting twist in Chicago is that all players are seeded ahead of time and then reseeded each round, and are then matched up such that the first place player is always playing the second best, the third best against the fourth, and so on all the way down to the second-to-last player against the last place seed. It's all quite different from the free-play format we use in Texas and I was looking forward to the challenge. I headed down early to meet and mingle and found quite a crowd, with 60+ people spread across two rooms. Right in the middle of it all was David Goldman, the Tournament Director, busy playing ringmaster to our three ring circus. In short order, he announced the seedings and the round one pairings, and we settled in for some cardboard carnage.

As a relative unknown, I was seeded in last place but the way the format works, I figured that wasn't such a bad thing. I'd be matched up against the 'second-worse' player, and could hope to run off a string of wins against some weaker opposition. That plan died quickly when we ended up having an odd number of players, causing David to step in and play me to even things up. I'd played him once

before and knew it wouldn't be an easy game. I ended up with the Russians in FrF23 *Elephants Unleashed*. This is a great scenario that Matt Shostak had schooled me in several weeks before and I was hoping to incorporate some of the lessons I'd learned into my defense. Nothing of note happened until David let one of his Elephants wander a little too far from the herd. I was able to swarm it from multiple angles with T-34s, had a scary moment when a point-blank APCR shot net 10TK roll bounced harmlessly off, ended up ESBing to utilize an ROF shot, and finally destroyed the monster without losing anything. Next turn, David drove his PzIVH/9-2 AL combo over to try some BFF revenge but missed a 7TH roll and died to a lucky return shot. Losing those two tanks without drawing any blood in return was backbreaking for the Germans, and although David played a great remainder of the game and never let me get another of his AFVs, I was able to chop up his infantry, slow him down, and pull out a win. We'd played pretty fast and had enough time for some lunch before the next round. David, not a sore loser at all, introduced Amy and me to a great local restaurant serving Italian beef sandwiches. I'd heard of those sandwiches before but never had one, and I'm happy to say that they are just as delicious as rumored. Fueled up for the next round, we headed back to the hotel to get the second round started.

As it turned out, there were an odd number of winners after the first round. That meant that I, as the 'worst winner' due to my seed, was matched up against the 'best loser,' which turned out to be a certain Bob Bendis. Hmm...so much for my hopes of sneaking into the finals by working over the bottom of the bracket! Bob is quite a character and after a fun discussion about Arkham Horror and run-ins with Texas police, I ended up with the SS in J1 *Urban Guerrillas*. When he started to pull the pieces from memory, I knew I was in trouble. I'd never played the scenario before, but had heard enough to try and fort up in the factory while running some troops across the canal to cover the other VC buildings. That worked all right, but I then got over-aggressive and tried to use my Panther/9-2 AL to hunt down an isolated T-34/85. I was able to go hull-down at seven hexes with my flank covered by the PzIV and 88L flak piece, but Bob showed me the error of my ways by drilling the Panther with an APCR turret hit and got the net 5TK for the kill. Watching the Panther get thrown away must have disheartened my troops, because they promptly failed the next eight MCs. These were NMCs and IMCs on 8ML and 9ML troops, and it left my flanks in a shambles and put an intact Russian force right next to the VC areas with a ton of time left. At that point, the dice swung back my way a bit. The 88L scored a 1KIA on a stack of three 6-2-8s standing in the street, and I was able to teach Bob the hard way that SCW in Factories don't suffer backblast penalties (C13.8). However, it was all very much too little, too late and I threw in the towel on turn six with the

Russians in a dominating position threatening all three of the VC buildings. That dropped me to 1-1 and ended the ASL for the day.

After a little sleep, it was back downstairs for more gaming. Saturday consisted of three rounds and I was a little worried it would turn into a long grind so I was hoping to pick some of the shorter scenarios. My first opponent of the day was Bret Hildebran, the guy who runs ASLOK. Well, if I wasn't getting any easy games, at least I was playing some big ASL names! Bret was also interested in playing a shorter scenario, and we ended up squaring off in CH28 *Children of the Kunai*. I had the attacking Australians and started things off with back-to-back boxcars trying to place smoke with my mortars. Thankfully I wasn't really counting on the smoke and was able to push forward pretty well and put some of Bret's troops in tough spots. He got his air support right off the bat by rolling the required 1dr though, and that slowed my attack quite a bit. Bret then did a nice job of wriggling his trapped units out of trouble, including one annoying sequence (for me, anyway!) where an encircled Japanese HS took a 2MC and rolled back to back snakes to HoB and create a hero. The hero then ran through a fair amount of fire and took out my radio-toting 8-0 in CC. Meanwhile, my 8-1 boxcarred an NMC and ended up broken and wounded off on an edge of the map. To complete the disaster, my 9-1 had to run back to take out the hero and retrieve the radio. He managed to do so, with an assist from a 4-5-8 wingman, but no sooner had my 9-1 grabbed the radio when a sniper bullet splattered his brains across it. That left me with a single wounded leader to run the attack and slowed things enough that Bret was able to easily shut me down. It was a great game on his part to transition from ugly first turn to total domination by turn four and left me at 1-2.

The one upside was that the game had gone so fast, there was plenty of time to recover before the next round. I went up to my room to sulk, but Amy managed to persuade me to check out the surrounding area. This turned out to be a great idea, as we stumbled across an awesome Polish deli filled with all kinds of delicious food. My Polish is limited to knowing that 'most' means 'bridge' (kudos to everyone that can name the ASL scenario that taught me that!) and their English wasn't any better. I ended up having to order via the time-honored 'point-and-nod' method, but it worked well enough to get me several types of kielbasa and pirogies. For the rest of the weekend, opening the mini-fridge in my room brought a wonderful smoky garlic smell wafting out into the hotel room. It was a fun break from the gaming, but by the time the next round rolled around, I was ready for more ASL.

This time, I was matched up against Dave McLee in SP141 *Broken Beek*. Dave got the Americans and set up a defense that looked weak on my left side, so I decided to deploy a

lot and push pretty much everything down that side despite the more open terrain. It turned out Dave had laid a nice trap for me, with a HIP 9-1/7-4-7/2x MMG in the big level two building in the back, and the easy-looking stroll through the open turned out to be a trail of blood for my Germans. It took me a little time to recover, but I managed to park my two half-tracks 11 hexes away from the MMG stack where they were pretty safe and start to suppress the position. Meanwhile, a mini-horde of 2-3-7s pushed their way forward, probing for weak spots in Dave's defense. Eventually, the Americans wore down and started to surrender to the infiltrating Germans. I finally worked some units into the building with Dave's death star and managed to upper-level encircle him. In the next fire phase, my half-tracks broke both his 9-1 and 7-4-7, and they both had to surrender as well. With the lynch-pin of the American defense gone and only a squad and a half standing between me and the exit area, David decided to call it a game. Interesting little puzzle scenario, although I didn't like it enough to try it again and I was now 2-2.

That had been another quick match and, despite my earlier fears, I was feeling pretty rested for the third round. Chris Edwards, my next opponent, wanted to try something a little bigger and I was happy to oblige. We went with T7 *Hill 253.5*, which is from the kitchen-sink school of ASL scenario design. Both sides get armor, artillery, air support, FTs, and all kinds of other fun toys. I had the Russians and set up a pretty conservative reverse-slope defense. Things started poorly for Chris when he put his 10-2, 9-2, 2x 8-3-8, 2x FT in some half-tracks and then bogged them in wire right in front of my 76L ART piece. No one got out alive, and things only went downhill from there for poor Chris, as his horrible dice X'd out his radio, recalled a Panther, and his 8ML troops failed one MC after another. By the time turn four rolled around, all the German armor was dead, the cohesion of the attack was shattered, and my reinforcements were coming on. We decided to call it there; it was a potentially fun scenario with a very fun opponent that was ruined by lopsided dice. My one regret of the game was that I didn't know the guy sitting next to us worked at a toilet paper factory; Chris's constant stream of tissue jokes would have made a lot more sense to me if I'd realized that.

With a 3-2 record the next day and a stomach full of pirogies for breakfast, I was matched up against Larry Zoet, another guy who always had a joke or fun quip ready. We went with J9 *A Stiff Fight* (insert your own joke here) and the dice gave me the defending Ghurkas. Larry and I had a neat debate as the game went on about the correct way to play the Japanese in this one. Where I would have tried to deploy and maneuver around the defense, Larry went straight ahead at me with full squads looking to get me with the bayonet. The scenario played out with my troops wearing down the Japanese as they moved to contact, then staying for CC if they had an advantage or voluntarily

breaking and running if they didn't. Larry was fearless in going for CC, repeatedly advancing in on my troops regardless of the odds. This ended up working well for him because I failed to ambush the Japanese even once over the course of the entire game. It could have been frustrating since every roll was at least -2 in my favor, but Larry always managed to keep me laughing. After failing to ambush once with a -2 drm and six times with a -3 drm, I joked in return that I was due to get at least one as my stealthy concealed troops advanced onto one of his tanks. Even there, with a net -6 drm in my favor, I couldn't get the ambush! Thankfully, my dice were hot in every other aspect of the game, and I managed to knock out an AFV with an ATR shot and KIA a Japanese squad running through kunai with a 16-1 shot. It was a bloody battle, but in the end the Japanese ran out of bodies and I walked away with the victory to put me at 4-2.

At that point, there was still one more round to be played, but my early losses had knocked me so far out of the running there was no hope of getting back on the leader board. Instead, Amy and I skipped round seven and headed into Chicago proper to do some sight-seeing. It was a beautiful sunny day, the Astros were playing the Cubs at Wrigley Field and we managed to make it to the game just in time for the first pitch. It was pretty cool walking around the inside of such a famous park, even if the ivy was all dead and the Astros lost. We still had a little time before our flight so we headed over to a Polish buffet, Czerwone Jabluszko, which offered an all you can eat deal for \$9.95. The food was so hearty it filled you up fast, but the place was still a bargain, with hunter's stew, potato pancakes, roast duck, and tons of other tasty offerings. After that, it was off to the airport, where we had (thankfully) a safe and smooth flight back to Austin. Overall, the trip was tons of fun. It was a bit disappointing being knocked out of the running so fast, but Bret Hildebran ended up winning it all and Bob Bendis came in sixth, so I certainly achieved my goal of matching my skills against the big boys. There's still a lot of work to be done before I can even think of considering myself in their league though! I also have to tip my hat to David Goldman for running a great tournament. The format requires a lot of organization and he does a fantastic job. I ended up at 4-2, good enough for 16th place. If I'd stuck around for the last round and if I'd won (a lot of ifs!), I likely would have come in 7th, which isn't too bad.

After having experienced the timed rounds and play lists, I don't have a strong preference either way for the Chicago vs. the Austin tourney style, but I do think our free-play style suits the Texas style of play better. The Chicago guys are about our skill level and take the competition as seriously (or not) as we do, but overall they play at a much faster speed than us. Being a quicker player myself, I enjoyed it a lot, but I think timed rounds would be very tough to implement here. In Chicago, I played four games

Banzai!!

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with a five-hour limit and finished each of them with at least an hour to spare (the other two were night games and effectively untimed). That would be pretty tough to replicate in Texas, but we do just fine and have at least as much fun with our free-style play. I also think the option to choose any scenario you want works better for most players, especially those who don't get to play a lot and may not want to be forced into picking from a list of just five scenarios when they do get an opportunity for ASL. What really pushes the Texas venue over the top, though, is the BBQ. I like Polish food, but smoked brisket and ribs just can't be beat! Finally and funnily, Texas is an active ASL hotspot but it doesn't seem to have made much of a mark on the ASL community in the rest of the world. I went to Chicago having heard of roughly a third of the players there and had a good time fitting email addresses and names to faces. When the shoe was on the other foot and I mentioned I was from Texas, the result was almost always a blank stare. A few guys managed to reach deep into their memory banks and recall that we have a "big ASLer, right? A physically big guy, named after a boxer?" So, Sam Tyson, congratulations, you appear to be the face of Texas ASL!

Thanks to everyone for reading, and let me extend you an invitation to the Texas ASL Tournament. Come down, get in some good gaming, and for you out-of-staters, the BBQ and beer will be on me!

Tactical Tips

Rick Reinesch



So you've got a scenario that allows you to set up dummy counters or HIP units. Here are a few things you can do to make these units even more effective against your opponent.

- Have a critical position that you'd like to protect from your opponent's sniper? Place a couple of stacks of dummy units next to it so that a sniper check will have to select the dummy stack instead of that critical firepower position.
- Want to add even more dummy counters to your OB? Start with a dummy stack that is 3 counters high. During the MPh have the two dummy counters under the '?' counter go their separate ways. When the dummy stack splits in two, it gains a new '?' on top of the second stack just as it would if the units were real, and you now have **two** dummy stacks to work with.
- Place large dummy stacks in obvious MG upper level locations to soak fire. Your opponent may suspect that

they are dummies, but he usually won't be willing to risk fire from the position to prove it.

- If you have a scenario that provides HIP units and entrenchments, place an empty foxhole in an obvious fire hex that will pop into view. Your opponent must decide to either avoid it or to try and kill it, but there is nobody home. In either case, you've hopefully gotten your opponent to delay or alter his advance for a little while.
- Here's a twist for PTO scenarios. Place A-T DCs with a HIP THH as the detonating unit. Once you blow something up with the A-T DC you then get to follow that up with an attack from a rabid THH.
- Set up real units in a hex with HIP units. Withdraw the real units when the pressure begins to mount. The opponent is fooled into thinking the hex is safe because they saw a real unit pull out. Then you blast him when he moves up next to the hex.
- A variation on this is to place a HIP leader, LMG, and squad in a hex, making sure the leader possesses the LMG. At some point during the game when out of LOS of enemy, bring the leader and LMG onboard concealed and move them back among your other units where they become part of the defense. Seeing two counters under concealment, your opponent may assume that that stack is a squad and leader or perhaps a squad and SW. You then get to reveal the squad later, hopefully to good effect.

Player Profile: Scott Bell

Banzai: Tell us a little bit about your gaming background. How long have you been gaming? What was your first game? Are there any particular games that stood out over the years?



Scott Bell: *War gaming started for me in Jr. High School. I had always had an interest in WWII. A couple of my friends introduced me to Luftwaffe by Avalon Hill. From there, I made the transition to Panzerblitz and Panzerleader. I enjoyed those games for a short time until I played Squad Leader, sometime early in high school. At that point, I pretty much forgot every other game except Squad Leader. My interest in Squad Leader continued into college, where I would start playing on Friday after class, and would play continuously until late Sunday night. Those are some of my best memories.*

Banzai: When and how did you discover ASL?

SB: After I graduated from Baylor University and moved, I lost touch with my regular opponents and slipped away from the game for many years. During this time, ASL came out with new rules that resembled a telephone book. It was intimidating, and that combined with the fact that I could not find anyone to play meant the end of it, or so I thought. It was not until I was looking on the Internet one day, that I identified Carl Kusch in San Antonio, who was heading up the ASL group here. Therefore, I owe my reintroduction to ASL to the Internet and to Carl. I also thank Al Gore for inventing the Internet.

Banzai: You've been very active in rallying the players in the San Antonio area. What can we expect to see from the San Antonio group in the next year or so?

SB: I'm looking for continued growth. I took over the hosting responsibilities when Carl vacated that role. I have seen our numbers grow significantly during that time. We have several players in San Antonio. We just need to work on consistency among our current group. I am optimistic about the future.

Banzai: What nationality do you enjoy playing the most?

SB: I really enjoy all of the nationalities. With regard to being a commander within this game system, I enjoy the tactical challenges that exist via the different strengths and weaknesses that comprise each nationality. I embrace command itself more than any specific nationality. Historically, I find the Germans to easily be the most interesting, but that does not necessarily carry over into the game itself (for me).

Banzai: Describe your favorite kind of scenario.

SB: My favorite type of scenario would involve an early war battle, consisting of a mix of infantry and tanks. I prefer victory conditions that involve control of buildings as opposed to units that get off the board. I do understand, however, the need for having variety with regard to victory conditions.

Banzai: What would you say are your ASL strengths and weaknesses?

SB: I consider my instincts to be my strengths. The core ASL strategies of attack and defense are (in my opinion) relatively constant, regardless of what scenario you play. I believe that I have an acute tactical sense that I hope to continue to develop with more experience.

My first weakness is the rules. There is a lot to grasp. My rules knowledge is behind my tactical knowledge at this point. I'll be a better player when it catches up. My other weakness is not having enough game experience. I have been working on rectifying that, and hope to turn that into a strength in the future.

Banzai: What is the best part of ASL, and what is the worst?

SB: The best part of ASL for me is the camaraderie of enjoying this hobby with an opponent who shares the same interest. The mental exercise and challenge of an ASL game is very rewarding.

The worst part of ASL is the complexity. The complexity adds to the realism, at the expense of slowing the game down at times (looking for rules). The rules can be overwhelming and intimidating, and that is the biggest challenge to developing new players.

Banzai: What are you most looking forward to with regard to ASL?

SB: I'm always looking forward to the next game and the next challenge. I enjoy a competitive game that requires one to be creative in order to win.

Banzai: You're playing the Russians in a 1941 scenario, facing a German combined arms attack featuring several AFVs. Would you rather have a KV-2 or a platoon of two BT-7 M37s and two BT-7As?

SB: I would rather have the BT-7s. The ASL game system has really illustrated to me the importance of movement. The substantially greater movement of the BTs gives me many options with regard to how I use my armor. I like having those options.

Banzai: What was your most enjoyable ASL moment? How about your worst, funniest, coolest, and/or craziest?

SB: My craziest moment had to be my last game of the Texas ASL tournament (2 years ago), where I played my final tournament game against John Van Marder. We played a Critical Hit scenario involving the Russians (played by John), and Finns (played by me). The game came down to a final close combat for control of a building. I was outnumbered in the close combat and needed a snake eyes (roll) to win. I got the roll and won the game. We both really enjoyed that game.

My worst moment was in a game against Manu ...in a HOB scenario at last year's tournament, where I played the German SS against an overwhelming force of Russians. I

started the game with two immobilized PZ IVs against a mass of T-34s. I was defending two entry points into a village, which the Russians had to occupy. Both of my PZ IVs (one covering each entry point) broke their guns on their first respective shots. That pretty much ended that game.

Banzai: What area of your play would you like to improve on most over the next year?

SB: I need to improve my knowledge of the rules. I am pleased with my progress to this point. I just need more game experience, and I am working on that. I look forward to playing some scenarios involving the Japanese after this year's tournament is over.

Banzai: Is there a game piece that you'd really like to use but can't find a scenario where it appears? If so, what is it?

SB: No. There are so many scenarios out there now; that most pieces are well represented somewhere.

Banzai: You get to choose your side in a scenario set in the battle for France in 1940. Both sides have combined arms and a decent allotment of tanks. Would you rather command the French side to use their Char B1-bis, Somuas, and Renault tanks, or the Germans, with their PzIs and PzIIs, and a few PzIVs and Pz38ts?

SB: I would have to take the German Panzers. I recently played an early war scenario against Steve Desrosiers, where the Germans used captured French tanks against Russian tanks. The French tanks did real well, and changed (improved) my opinion about them significantly. However, Panzer I-IVs and Panzer 38s are too sexy. I would have to go with the Panzers.

Banzai: Late war heavy metal scenarios: overrated or underrated?

SB: I would have to say slightly overrated. While late tanks are fascinating, I like scenarios where a hit does not necessarily mean a kill. This is why I have a slight preference for early war scenarios. I like to have to "work" for the kill, through superior tactical maneuvering, as opposed to just needing a hit to virtually guarantee a kill. A guaranteed kill in late war heavy metal scenarios is not always the case, but it often is.

Banzai: Now that *Armies of Oblivion* has been out for a while, have you had a chance to generate some impressions about playing the Axis Minors?

SB: I have played the Axis Minors a few times, but not enough to have any strong impressions.

Banzai: The Japanese knee mortar: overrated or underrated?

SB: I have not played the Japanese yet, though I plan to make this a priority after the upcoming tournament. I have looked at the knee mortar, and it looks interesting. My first observation is that it appears to make the mortar useful in more of a front line manner due to its portability. I'll be interested to see them in action.

Banzai: What advice would you give to players who are just starting out, and what advice would you give to ASL clubs in trying to attract and retain new players?

SB: My advice to new players would be to read a little and play, read a little more and play some more.....The bulk of learning comes through playing (application). This is why the starter kits were such a great idea. Confidence is real important, so new players need to be encouraged and motivated. "Read a little and play," serves to boost the morale of new players by instilling hope that what appears to be overwhelming initially will eventually become manageable.

As far as advice to ASL clubs, I believe the key is persistence and regularity, with regard to efforts in bringing everyone together.

Banzai: What's your favorite game piece in ASL and why?

SB: My favorite game piece in ASL is the tank (in general terms). The tank gives you the opportunity to be creative in attack and defense, through superior movement. Tanks with high MP offer many options tactically, which provides opportunities for creativity. As for a specific tank in most game situations, I prefer the T-34 variants, due to their superior movement combined and a formidable gun. My personal favorite tank, however, will always be the Panther tank, which was such a remarkable piece of engineering.

Banzai: We'll get to your favorite ASL scenarios in another issue, so how about telling us what your other favorite games are?

SB: ASL is my only game. I have somewhat limited time, and ASL is about all I can handle. I kind of follow the old adage.... "Beware of the man with only one gun." ASL is enough for me.

Banzai: Who are your favorite opponents to play and why?

SB: *I have enjoyed playing most everyone that I have matched up with to this point. Most players have been good sports, and playing different players provides unique tactical challenges, respectively. As far as favorite opponents are concerned, my criteria would include the interaction that goes on during the game. I enjoy playing Dan Preston, here in San Antonio. Most of our games include a good dose of humor. He is also a very smart player. In Austin, I would have to say Jeff Toreki. I have only played him one time, but when we played, the flow of the game was very smooth, and the conversation was excellent. That being said, the margin of difference between all players (with regard to a favorite) is relatively minor. For me, it is more about the game and the scenario, rather than the opponent.*

Banzai: What were your worst and best runs of luck?

SB: *My best run of luck came against Dan Preston. We were play testing one of his scenarios involving a large mobile Russian force attempting to escape through a gap that a smaller German force was trying to close. The Russians had a large assortment of T-34 tanks, while the Germans had a small mixture of Panzer IVs and Tigers. I played the Germans in this play test, and continued to get hits, even on low probability shots. Mix in a few critical hits and this scenario was over quickly.*

My worst run (as previously mentioned) came against Manu at last year's tournament. However, that was kind of the story for me through the entire tournament last year. I saw more boxcars during that tournament than I care to remember. I honestly thought I was in the running for the Colonel Klink award. I hope for better results in this upcoming tournament.

Banzai: Which scenarios have you played the most times?

SB: *I am relatively new (to ASL at least), and with so many scenarios out there, I am not inclined to play a scenario more than once, with a few exceptions. I have played a scenario more than once on rare occasion, but not enough to be worthy of mention.*

Banzai: What are your other interests outside of gaming?

SB: *My other two interests are tactical shooting (rifle, pistol, shotgun, and machinegun), and racing/driving German sports cars (primarily Porsche). I also enjoy travel. I am planning on doing a lot more travel, starting later this year, and hope to go to Stalingrad sometime over the next two years.*

Banzai: Any final comments to wrap up?

SB: *I'd just like to say "thank you" to those who have assisted me in continuing to develop my game personally. I respect and appreciate the efforts of all of those who selflessly work to promote ASL. I would specifically mention Rick Reinesch for the excellent work that he does every year in putting together the Texas ASL Team Tournament. I would also mention Matt Shostak for the excellent work that he does in promoting the Austin group, and for the support that he and others have shown for our San Antonio group.*

Favorite Scenarios

Matt Schwoebel



Trying to pick my favorite scenarios was tough! So I asked Zeb Doyle. Then I proceeded to ignore half of his good advice. I also tried to be neutral and pick half wins and half losses. It is always easier to remember victory fondly, especially against Roy 'big house' Casagrande (or so I've heard). These picks do not include historical campaigns like *Red Barricades*, simply awesome, or the long hoped for *Valor of the Guards*. Here are my top seven scenarios in no particular order:

117 With Tigers On Their Tail (ROAR RU 11 vs. HU 5) This day-long scenario is arguably the best portrayal of a fighting withdrawal in ASL. It features a large combined arms struggle pitting a retreating Hungarian force covered by two Tiger tanks against a superior Russian force coming onboard piecemeal. The three boards start with just these two Tigers and every other unit enters from off-board. The Hungarians must prevent a significant portion of the Russians from exiting while exiting a good portion of their troops. This is a good scenario for an advanced player (defender) against a mid-range player (attacker). The Tigers must be played with expertise and the risk of losing the twin titans does weigh heavily on the Hungarian player (probably should include an SSR with the Tigers not exiting if they malfunction their guns). Still, I've never played a scenario where every decision seemed such a venture into the unknown with the constant fluidity of play and tension of defender/attacker plans being completely disrupted. ASL chaos and adrenaline of the best kind!

68 The Rock (ROAR JA 29 vs. AM 31) Another full-day scenario requiring at least two grande, non-fat, heavy-on-the-whip, iced mochas per player to finish. A great PTO

scenario, it has Japanese sledgehammers attacking an immovable American object – the formidable match-up of American firepower vs. Japanese willpower. The scenario will often feature a banzai charge followed by swirling hand-to-hand melee as the Japanese try to exert enough forces to win.

SP115 The Five Pound Prize (ROAR BR 54 vs. GE 49) A classic tourney-sized scenario with defending Brits against attacking German SS. The board layout with a stream cutting the playing area in half and building control VC make it equally tough on setup decisions for the British and on plan of attack for the Germans. Although catastrophic loss is possible, most games should come down to the final turn.

54 Bridge To Nowhere (ROAR IT 87 vs. RU 63) Eastern Front warfare with attacking Italians facing off against defending Russians of the mainly manly conscript variety. This is a scenario where the words “I’ll take that down-one shot” are never uttered with any confidence, only bravado. I believe in playing non-8 morale supermen on occasion to liven up the ASL experience. A solid bridge control scenario, players should consider giving the Russians the balance.

SP119 Captain Lambert’s Factory (ROAR CA 7 vs. GE 14) Give the Molson Canadians the balance in this one and play a fun tourney-size scenario. The German attackers must take buildings from the Canadians. Fortunately, the Canadian player is not stuck with an immobile defense like in many smaller scenarios. The defenders get a reinforcement force capable of damaging the Germans and hitting the attacker’s flank. This makes the German player both take ground and hold it.

SP80 Die Gurkha Die! (ROAR GU/CH 35 vs. JA 27) Awesome PTO action with attacking Japanese trying to take out a mixed Gurkha and Chinese defending force. Somehow I only included one Gurkha scenario in my list (a shout out to the admirable Gurkhas – check out *Burn Gurkha Burn!*, *Nunshigum*, *A Stiff Fight*, and *Bleed Gurkha Bleed!* as well). This is nearly a day-long scenario with the Japanese attempting to surround the allies and to control ground. My scenario ended with hand-to-hand melee in four hexes and the Japanese needing to win three of them to claim victory. The defender must choose carefully where to defend with superior Gurkhas vs. the Chinese troops. The Japanese player must take advantage of knee mortar smoke/WP and well-timed banzai charges.

104 Hill of Death (ROAR BR 8 vs. GE 7) Lots of tanks with some infantry support fighting over three sizeable hills. The assaulting Germans have ~~six~~ Tigers facing off against an assortment of British tanks (mainly well-armored, but comparatively poorly armed Churchills). The Germans win by keeping mobile, manned Tigers on the hills. Although the scenario has a scripted element – British get kicked off the hill, Germans rejoice at taking the hill, and then the Brits counterattack – it was fun to play. Both players face tough decisions as both sides attack and defend. The key is careful application of armored aggression.

Style Points

Matt Shostak



Zeb Doyle’s Germans were proving to be rather troublesome in *The Zebra Mission*. Going into the last turn, they were still holding out in their last stand position, spread out in several locations of a building, and I had to clear them all. One location at level 1 contained just a half squad, but they were one of several dominoes that had to fall. My Pershing tank drove around to that side of the building, intending to perform some bypass target selection freeze on some defenders. Along the way it stopped next to this half squad and shot at it, on the off chance that it might get a lucky hit. The main gun needed to roll a 3 to hit, and got just that, following that up with another 3 on the 16-flat shot to clear that location of Good Order Germans.

This Happened to Me (Us)

Elephants Unleashed

A Day in the Life of Oberleutnant Shostak, Panzerjaeger Tiger commander: Playing FrF23 *Elephants Unleashed*, Oberleutnant Shostak breezes through the first few turns with his 18 frontal AF and 88LL gun. On turn three, he’s forced to exert himself when rushed by three T-34s. The result: kill and burn first T-34, keep ROF. Second T-34 moves in adjacent for a side shot, but bogs on some Russian barbed wire. Elephant decides to wait on the third attacker. Lose Gun Duel to third T-34, survive Dud APCR round to rear. Use the ROF to end the turn with frontal armor towards both T-34s. Turn four: kill and burn both T-34s, one in prep and the other in defensive fire. Turn five: go CE to hunt down SU-152. Laugh off 30+2 HE shell from aforementioned SU-152, fire back and burn the offending

Soviet AFV. Turn six: With no Soviet armor remaining, turn around to try to VBM-freeze some Soviet infantry in the last victory building, but fail the ESB roll necessary, so call it a day and watch your supporting infantry win the scenario. – *Zeb Doyle*

Youth's First Blood

Zeb turned things right around in the following game of *The Youth's First Blood*, with his 9-2 armor leader in a gyro-equipped Sherman constantly getting rate, winning gun duels, and seemingly always getting turret hits to smash my pack of Panzer IVs. – *Matt Shostak*

Hindsight is 20/20

Defending recently against some Japanese, a banzai charge ended with a wounded 7+2 samurai in the same location as a key 4-5-7. I was worried about the upcoming CCPh until my opponent, blinded by bloodlust, advanced a CX'd 3-4-8 in to join the struggle. The Japanese HtH attack came in at 1:1 for a base 7, -1 Japanese, +2 leadership, +1 CX, for a net 5. The attack missed and my 4-5-7 managed to kill them with a good roll, saving the position. Only then did my opponent realize that had the 7+2 leader simply attacked by himself, it would have been a HtH 1:4 at a base 5, -1 Japanese, for a net 6 required. Baka! – *Zeb Doyle*

Singing a different Song

Tom and I were playing *Swan Song* last weekend, a long 12-turn monster combined arms scenario set in early war France. Tom's objective was to take the majority of the level 2 stone buildings on the map. There were a total of 8 locations but 2 had been rubble by SSR including the staircase of one building isolating one of the level 2 locations. I decided to place a half squad with a MMG in this location even though their only hope was to hold out as long as possible and take down as many French infantry as they could before succumbing to return fire. It was a great spot over looking open ground.

Well the half squad was obviously not happy with their assignment because their average roll for about 9 turns was around 10 making them virtually ineffective even with down 2 modifiers. They eventually were overrun and surrendered to the French mopping up the building.

Tom's infantry were well on their way to taking the village and securing the victory when the fickle fate of ASL struck.

My sniper (who was awarded the Cross of Iron after the battle for activating at least 20 times) struck the half squad guards that were holding my obstinate half squad at gun point and broke them. In the CC phase, my boys - who now were feeling the need to redeem themselves - passed their task check, attacked the guards, and took them out in CC. They now held the key building to Tom's victory.

With one turn left, Tom countered by sending in 2 tanks with bounding fire MGs scoring 2 morale checks. But my conscripts held fast. First check, HOB! – Battle Hardening the half squad and creating a hero. Second check was shrugged off.

Now came the infantry counter attack. Tom sent his 8-1 leader and a squad to take back the building but with the hero he took a 6 flat shot - resulting in a one check. The leader rolled 1,1 for HOB(!) but then rolled a 6,6 to surrender! The squad broke. Game over, Tom. – *Rob Burton*

Rules Tip

Zeb Doyle

For AFV CMGs, Mandatory **Fire Direction** is NA. That one comes up all the time, but very few people seem to know it. See the last sentence of D1.82. (Version 13.2 of this newsletter erroneously said Mandatory FG was NA. We correct that here. Our apologies. *Eds.*)



Tactical Tip

Dan Preston

Any time a stack with a leader decides to split its attack between the infantry and MG at different targets, always roll the leader directed attack first. Otherwise, if the first attack cowers, that unit is marked with a Final Fire counter, and loses any other fire capability for that fire phase (aside from FPF, of course).



Club Notes

Biweekly Lunch Gathering

Don't forget to join us every other Friday at 1300 hours down at Schlotsky's on South Lamar and Toomey (just south of Riverside Drive). The club sends out email reminders, or you can call Matt or Sam for information on the next get-together.

Game Days

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The Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas/Ft. Worth groups have remained active, hosting various gatherings for club members to get together and knock cardboard heads. If you missed any of these you missed a lot of fun. It's like a tournament atmosphere for a day. The Austin group meets on the first Saturday of every month. The DFW group has been meeting on the second, and the San Antonio guys on the third Saturday of every month. To stay informed of upcoming club events, stop by our club website, www.texas-asl.com or better yet join our email group. You can post a message at central-texas-asl@yahoogroups.com or you can point your favorite browser to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central-texas-asl> and take a look. For those still not connected, give Matt, Rick, or Sam a call for club information.

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Next Issue

- More articles about ASL
 - Player Profile
 - Favorite Scenarios
 - Club Meeting Recaps
- And much more!