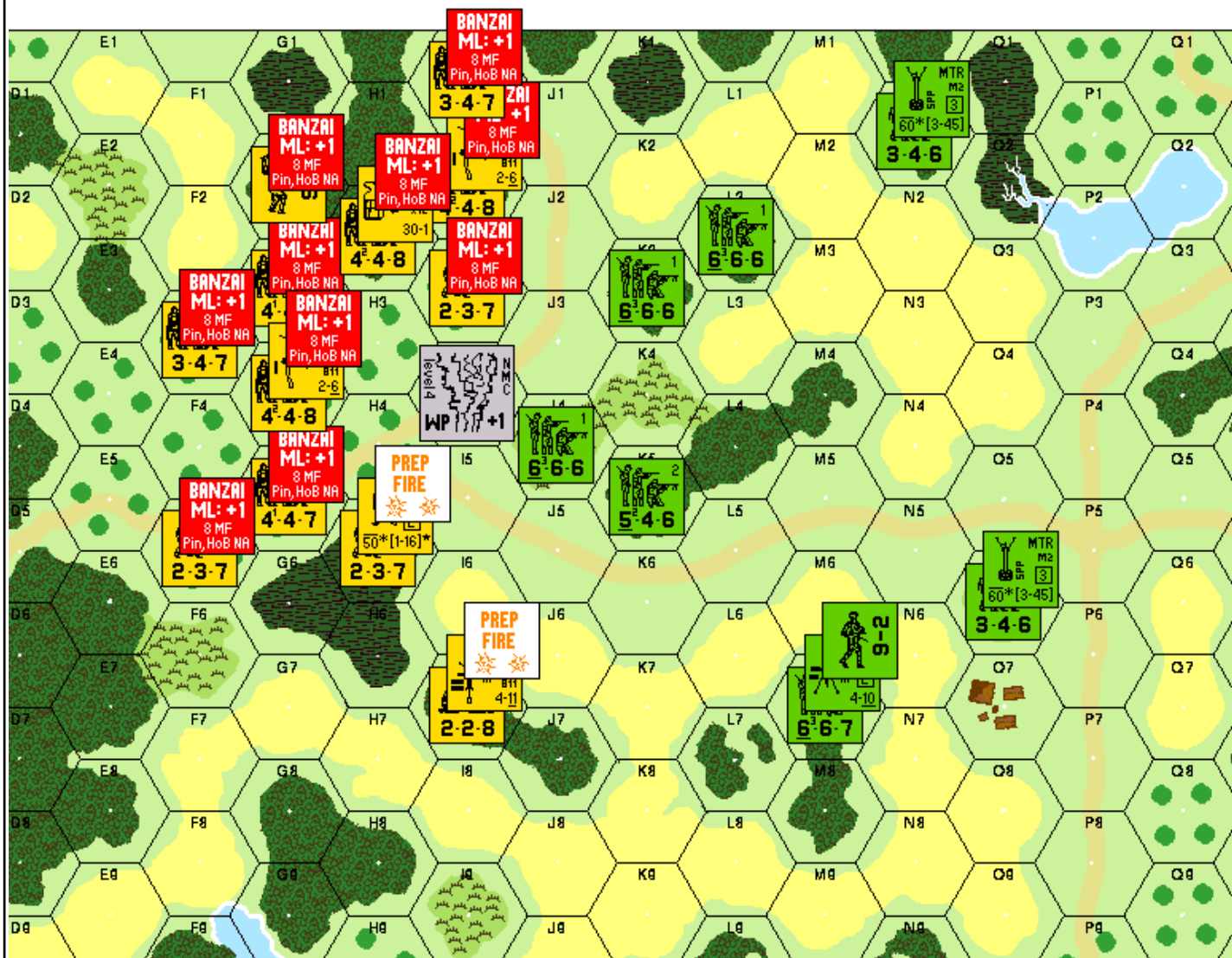


Banzai!!!



The Newsletter of the Austin ASL Club

September, 2007 Volume 12, Number 3

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In this Issue

Commissar's Corner:	2
After Action Report: RbF-41 Vatutin's Right Hook	2
Toe to Toe: Tiger I vs. IS-2	7
Player Profile: Glenn Schools	10
6+1 = Profit	11
Style Points	12
2007 ASL Team Tournament Wrap Up	12
2007 ASL Team Tournament Results	14
This Happened to Me	15
Rules Tip	16
Club Notes	16
Next Issue	16

Commissar's Corner:

Matt Shostak



Austin Tourney Celebrates Fifteen Years. It's a testament to the strength of this club that we've hosted a tournament for 15 consecutive years now. We've had 3 tourney directors in that time, starting with Mike Seningen, then David Hailey for a few years, then back to Mike, and finally now Rick Reinesch has taken the reins and done a bang up job. The brainchild of Mike Seningen, it started small so many years ago but has gained a lot of momentum since the early days. We've now reached the stage where having less than 32 players would be a bit of a disappointment. One thing I've learned when trying to stay physically fit is that it is easier to stay in shape than it is to get in shape. I think that lesson applies to our ASL community as well. Let's stay active over the next year, welcome new players and teach them, and come back next year for an even better tournament. As *Oddball* from *Kelly's Heroes* might say, we should dig all the positive waves we've created.

After Action Report: RbF-41 Vatutin's Right Hook

Matt Shostak

Diagram by Rick Reinesch

07.29.2007

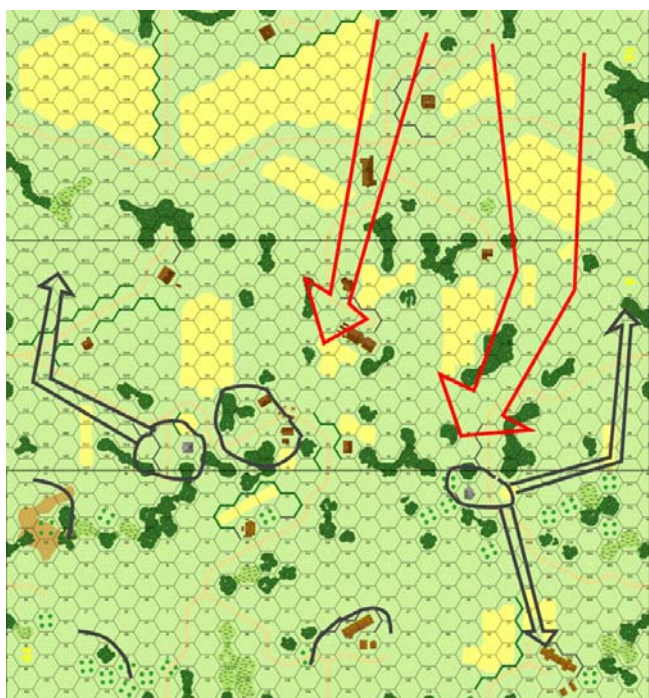


Yesterday Rick Reinesch and I matched up in this Chas Smith design from *Recon by Fire #4 Germany's Captured Vehicles*. We were both looking for something substantial, yet also short enough that we'd finish in a day so that I could have table space clear for next week's club game day at my place. This one is armor-heavy, pitting 18 Russian vehicles, 9 squads, and 2 leaders against 15 German vehicles, two guns, 6 squads, and 2 leaders. Despite

appearances, I thought it would play rather fast because there isn't much infantry involved, it is only 5.5 turns, and armored battles can speed up dramatically as the number of usable vehicles dwindles during the firefight. Moreover, crew survival is NA by SSR, and there are no snipers. We finished in about 9 hours including setup time, a break for pizza, and of course we knew we had all day so we were not in much of a hurry. We both really enjoyed it, and had a match that seemed to include a little bit of everything. If I had one quibble with how HoB does scenario layout, it's that the SSRs are often in two different places on the card: in the *scenario variables* table, and in the *historical rules*. This makes some SSRs easy to overlook, as I did in this game. Boresighting is NA according to the table, but I didn't notice that and recorded multiple bore sighted hexes. Luckily for us, I never took a shot where I used the bore sighting modifier, but I would have been kicking myself afterwards if such a mistake had given me an edge in an otherwise great game. I realize it is up to the players to read the card, but this artificial separation of SSRs in HoB's layout doesn't help. I hope they change it in future issues.

This is a classic Barbarossa matchup, where the Russians have vastly superior tanks, but they are rather clumsy in their use (mainly due to lack of radios and inexperienced crews) whereas the Germans are nimble with their more lightly armed and armored tanks. In a way this battle is similar to the one depicted in *Directive Number Three*, but in that battle the Russians really only have a few behemoths to pave the way for their horde of lighter tanks. Here, the Reds get eight T-34s and four KVs to steamroll a path for six other much more lightly armed and armored vehicles. The Germans await them on defense with a doorknocker 37L antitank gun, an intimidating sIG33 infantry gun (150*, HE only), a couple of Pz IIFs, a pair of Pz IVEs, and six Pz 38(t)Es. The trick they have up their sleeve here is that they've captured a few Russian tanks and pressed them into service. They'll use the heavy armor and big guns of a couple of KVs and a couple of T-34s, plus a sporty little BT, against their former owners. This match is played on the wide open spaces of 3 countryside boards, and to enable you to follow my description of events, I'll try to describe the playing area from the German perspective. From north to south, or top to bottom from the German side, are boards 16, 4, and 44 respectively. Board 16 is wide open with a lot of grain, and not much of the action happened there. We're probably all very familiar with board 4 by now. There's a farmhouse roughly in the center, and just enough trees at the board edge to block a lot of lines of sight from board 44 below it. At the join with board 44 there are big open gaps to the far left and far right, and smaller gaps toward the inside, where an attack could flow. Board 44 at the bottom is very wide open with few grain fields. It has a small hill to the upper left, and a line of trees over there to create various choke points. In the lower center is a two-hex

building surrounded by a wall, and over on the far back right there is another two-hex building with a wall in front. There is a hedge line and some grain between these two buildings, closer to the far-right complex. Small copses of woods, and the odd orchard or hedge create various obstacles to lines of sight, but overall this board is open tank country compared to most. To win, the Soviet force must score 75 points. They can do so by a combination of casualty points scored, and exit points earned, but a minimum of 25 points must come from German casualties. The exit area is the left half of the south (bottom) edge of the board. Rick looked over the powerful Russian force and couldn't resist giving them a try, so I took the Germans and prepared my defense.



I had to decide where I wanted the battle to take place, and what kind of battle it would be. Killing the Soviet tanks would not be easy, as the T-34s have circled 11 frontal armor, and 6 on the sides, while the KVs have 11 on the front, and boxed 8 on the sides, very stout indeed. The best kill number for the German ordnance is that of the sIG33, a whopping 16. The captured Russian tanks were next best, as the 76L has a 13, and the 76 guns have a 12. The 75* of the Pz IVEs is only a 10, while the various 37Ls have a 9. Although the Germans can set up on boards 4 and 44, I chose to anchor my defense at the goal line, the left half of board 44. It was the only way to be sure the defense would not be bypassed, since the Russians had to go that way to exit. My basic plan was to try to get the Russians in a firefight with the big captured Russian tanks and the 150* gun to their front, while the smaller German tanks zipped around the flanks and rear to get them from all sides, and perhaps to be opportunistic about nailing the weaker Russian armor. Therefore I set up the 150* in the back

center of the exit area, in some woods, with the 76L armed captured Russian tank next to it, with an armor leader inside. The Germans are allotted 3 armor leaders here, but only 1 can set up in a captured Russian tank. I chose the one with the best gun. The other two armor leaders went in those nifty Czech tanks. I wish they had a cool nickname, since it's a hassle to always call them Pz 38(t)Es. I put the 37L antitank gun on the small hill in the upper left of this back board, pointed back toward my own lines, with a screen of infantry in foxholes in front of it, and the two Pz IVs up there as well. I put another of the captured T-34s on the goal line, a few hexes to the right of the 150*, but to the left of the central building. That central building with the wall was a great place for a couple of the captured Russian tanks, so a T-34 went in one hex and a KV in the other. The KV, especially, would be hard to kill here, because its upper armor is 11, and the best kill number in the Russian order of battle (OB) is the 13 of their 76Ls, and only two of their tanks had those. They had quite a few tanks with 76s, with a kill number of 12. This is not very worrisome if my tank is hull down behind that wall. Upstairs I put a squad and a half to protect the tanks. The smaller tanks I scattered about, with three to the right, a few in the center, and a couple to the left. Their job was to kick into motion and circle around the flanks, so I decided not to record any bore sighted hexes for them, but I did record some for the bigger tanks and guns that I expected to remain in their positions.

Rick, ever the rebel, eschewed the scenario title and made his attack as a sort of sweeping left hook. This was not a bad plan, since my defense was arrayed more or less against a more frontal attack, figuring that the other approach would take him a bit longer and he did not have a lot of time. Turn 1 was very uneventful, as he simply moved onboard almost completely out of contact with my forces, and yet his speedy T-34s still covered a lot of ground, getting about halfway into board 4. The KVs, being slower (but at least they had radios), were more toward the center, and bringing up the rear were the lighter tanks, AA trucks, and infantry. Thus he had sort of a diagonal line going from upper middle down to lower right as I faced the board, with his behemoths in front. It didn't look easy to flank. In my half of the turn, I did little but reposition some of my tanks. Those on the right flank were about to be enveloped by a host of T-34s, so they bugged out. One Pz IIF raced to the far right flank and hid behind some trees, in motion. The other ran behind the building complex in the lower right, remaining in motion. My captured BT also ran to that building area, going into bypass so it could get hull down behind the wall. In the central sector, the two 38(t)s with the armor leaders zipped back behind the central walled building complex to assist the bigger tanks in that building, and the others got as far as they could on the left flank, hoping to eventually circle around behind.

The battle was really joined on turn 2. The KV group continued to press through the center of board 4, with the infantry and lighter vehicles close behind. Four of these

lighter vehicles were hampered by truck-type movement, and here there was a gap in the road net, slowing them down significantly. Combined with platoon movement, they were slow indeed. Two T-34s went through a small gap just to the right of center, and stopped to engage the KV I had in the building behind the wall in my back center area. Three other T-34s went through another gap just to the right of that, also able to engage my tanks in the central building. The other three T-34s went just a few hexes to the right of that group, to get a bead on my captured BT that was in bypass behind the wall at the lower right corner. I had some pretty good luck early. A squad in a building near the center got a moderately lucky shot with an ATR (5 to kill) and knocked out one of the light Russian vehicles, a BA-6. The KV I had back next to the 150* got a hit on one of the T-34s at 15 hex range, and also knocked it out (also a 5 to kill), while the KV in the central building whacked one of the T-34s in the center (needing a 4 to kill). Very good shooting by the Germans! However, I also made a blunder by not advancing my infantry down to ground level in the building to protect the KV. This made it vulnerable to losing wall advantage if the Russian tanks moved up close, which is precisely what Rick subsequently did.

From this point onward I cannot recall precisely which events happened on which turns, so I'll just try to describe the various high points. Realizing that shooting at my hull down KV was hopeless, he charged three T-34s straight at it. Two got up adjacent and claimed wall advantage, while a third got next to the back building to take on the 38(t)s I had in support. Two other T-34s motored over to the back right area, and got behind the hedge, to help protect the backsides of those first three. But one of them had to point backwards in case my BT back there got frisky and tried to hit them from the rear. There was a nice spot behind a wall that I could reach 3 hexes behind them. It had line of sight to both, and the 45L of the BT had to be respected. A kill number of 10 against the rear of the T-34s was a little too dangerous. The particular fight in the center of board 44 was important. One of the bulwarks of my defense was threatened. Very soon his tanks would likely kill both of mine in the big building. I resorted to intensive fire with the KV and broke the gun. The other KV back next to the 150* also malfunctioned its weapon. I was in trouble. I thought my best course was to go on the attack. The first 38(t) raced around behind one of the T-34s, and stopped. The T-34 declined to shoot, hoping its armor would protect it and it could kill its acquired tank in the building, but the 38(t) found an APCR round and killed the Russian behemoth, then moved away to a safer distance. Another 38(t) raced around the other side and was set ablaze with some good shooting by Rick's Rooskies. I moved two of my captured T-34s over behind the other Russian tanks, but the only result I got was an immobilization on one of them, and the inexperienced crew hung tough and stayed inside to duke it out. I also ran yet another 38(t) back behind the wall of the central building, where it could engage the two remaining T-34s from the other side. My infantry belatedly

crept downstairs and got their hand grenades ready. I moved my captured BT on the lower right over to that spot behind the wall that I mentioned earlier, to try to distract Rick's two covering T-34s there, but Rick had wisely acquired that hex previously, and promptly nailed my tank with the first shot: so much for that threat from me. The ensuing battle at the central farmhouse went into extra innings. My infantry got into close combat with one of the T-34s, but there was no result. The other (immobilized) Russian T-34 managed to malfunction its gun, so it was nearly useless now. His covering tanks pounded away at one of my T-34s (which had also malfunctioned its gun), immobilizing it and causing the crew to bail out. They promptly broke the crew with machine gun fire. My squad in CC survived triple point blank machine gun fire in the next turn, and a shot from the gun, and then successfully knocked out the T-34 in the next close combat round. So all three T-34s at the central farmhouse were mission killed, at a cost one of my captured T-34s killed by a shot from other Russian tanks that had since moved into the area, one 38(t) killed, and one of my captured T-34s immobilized, gun broken, and abandoned. As far as we could tell this tank would not count for CVP unless actually killed, and as it turned out Rick was never able to actually kill it. One of his covering T-34s at the lower right broke its gun some time during this fight trying to take it out.

Meanwhile, back in the center of board 4, the German squad with the ATR went berserk and charged to their deaths. One of the AA trucks was destroyed by fire from a German squad and LMG. Being unarmored, it wasn't likely that this vehicle would survive long anyway. Eventually Rick had to push his KVs forward, and without their protection his other vehicles were more vulnerable. A counterattack from both sides by my encircling Pz IIF and three 38(t)s left one BA-6 immobilized and abandoned with a dead crew, both T-26s dead, and the other AA truck dead also. The Pz IIF was knocked out in this fight.

Rick moved one KV around back to my left flank to force a way through there, while two other KVs moved up in the center in front of the walled building, one facing left to engage my two Pz IVEs that I had repositioned in this area. They tried to kick into motion and hit the smoke dispensers, but only one succeeded. What followed was another one of those crazy ASL sequences. Having no choice left, the stationary Pz IV tried for deliberate immobilization and missed in the next prep fire. Now truly desperate, it tried another immobilization attempt as intensive fire, needing a 4 and hull hit, and got it! The inexperienced Russian crew bailed out. The German tank sprayed them with 8 down 1 machine gun fire, to no avail. A German squad later dashed across the road to finish off the crew, but the crew broke them with a 2 flat shot. In the next turn, this crew reentered their vehicle, and promptly smashed the Pz IV that had immobilized them. Later another T-34 and a KV joined up with this pair of KVs in front of the central farmhouse, and continued the firefight for a while. The sIG finally made

itself known, plopping a smoke round on one of the KVs, hoping to keep the 38(t) behind the wall over there alive a bit longer. The Russian tanks took multiple shots at this 38(t), but its hull down status saved it. On the far left, German infantry moved over toward the KV that had moved in that direction, and an 8-1 leader and squad knocked it out in close combat.

With time running out, Rick revved his engines and tried to get as many tanks off the board as he could. One KV raced off, along with both of the covering T-34s that had been at the lower right farmhouse area. Lastly, a T-34 and KV started up in platoon. A nearby Pz IV tried for an immobilization shot against the T-34, and succeeded. The KV now failed its non-platoon task check and was stuck there. *(Later we found out that this was in error. The KV should have been able to continue going, and had a good chance to make it. Nevertheless it was not enough points to change the outcome. Still, this shows that even experienced players can make mistakes.)* We tallied the points, and the Russians had scored 32 CVP and 20 exit VP for 52 total points, short of the 75 needed to win. Had that last platoon gotten off, that would have been 14 more points, and a couple of tank kills changed either way, and it could have been a Russian victory. So it was really a very close game. It had a little bit of everything: lots of bounding fire, motion and smoke dispenser attempts, burning wrecks, immobilizations, intensive fire, tactical mistakes and good plays by both players, etc. The infantry really played a subordinate role here, so this scenario may not be quite as appealing to those who want more action from the leg troops, but I enjoyed it thoroughly and I think Rick did too. I recommend it.



Here are some pictures depicting the situation at game end.

In the photo above, you can see the aftermath of the battle of the light tanks in the center of Board 4. The Russian BA-6s and T-26s were no match for the Pz 38(t)s.

In the left photo, you can see the line where the big Russian tanks were (mostly) stopped, primarily by deliberate immobilization.

Photo 3 on the top of the next page zooms in and pans down a little bit to give a good view of the wreckage left by the intense point blank tank fighting around the center back walled building on Board 44.

The fourth photo, bottom of the next page, shows the German back left flank where the antitank guns were deployed.



Toe to Toe: Tiger I vs. IS-2

Matt Shostak

Diagrams by Rick Reinesch

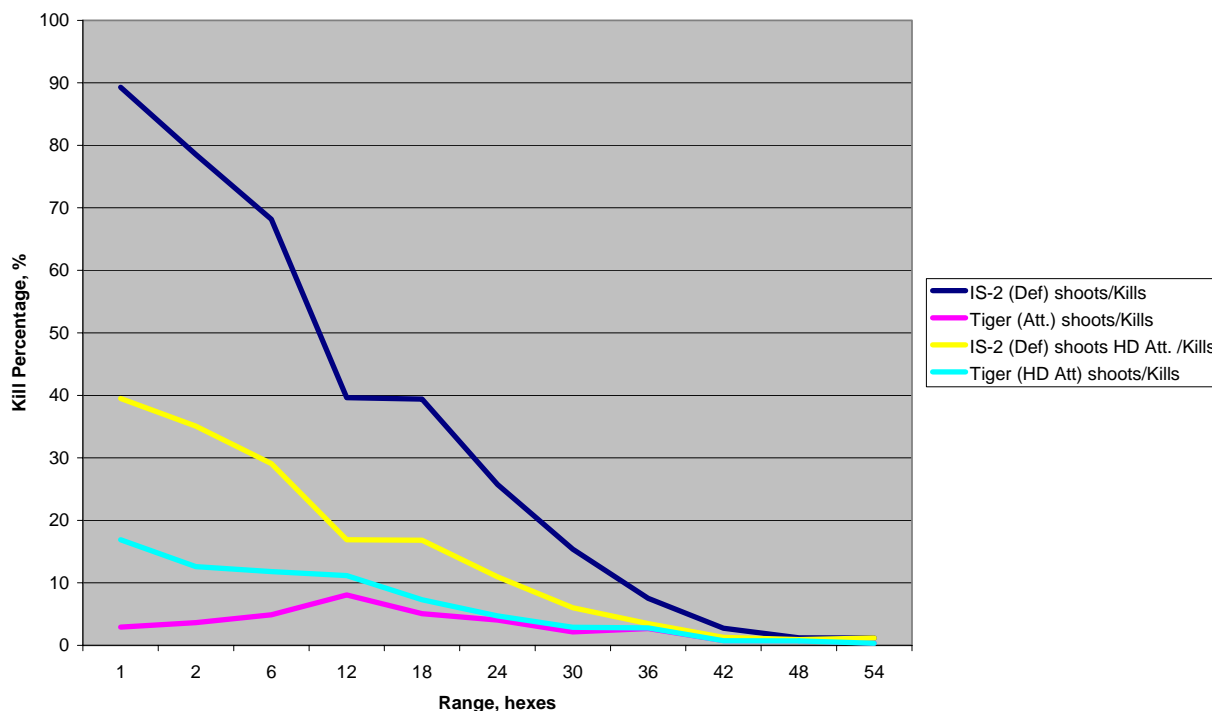


In the last issue of this newsletter, I wrote about using a simulation program to test out what might happen under certain circumstances in a game of *Marders Not Martyrs*. That simulation depended on a program I wrote a few years ago to analyze tank vs. tank matchups, and the same disclaimer applies: *there could still be bugs in this program, although I've worked on it a lot and hope I've eliminated most of them. The numbers presented here are for entertainment purposes only.* It's a very simple program that only considers what happens if an attacking tank moves into the line of sight of a defending tank and stops, with each tank in the front covered arc of the other. The assumptions are that the defender will fire, always trying for APCR or APDS if available, until it runs out of rate. Then the attacking tank will fire back if still able. The program will tally the various outcomes over a large

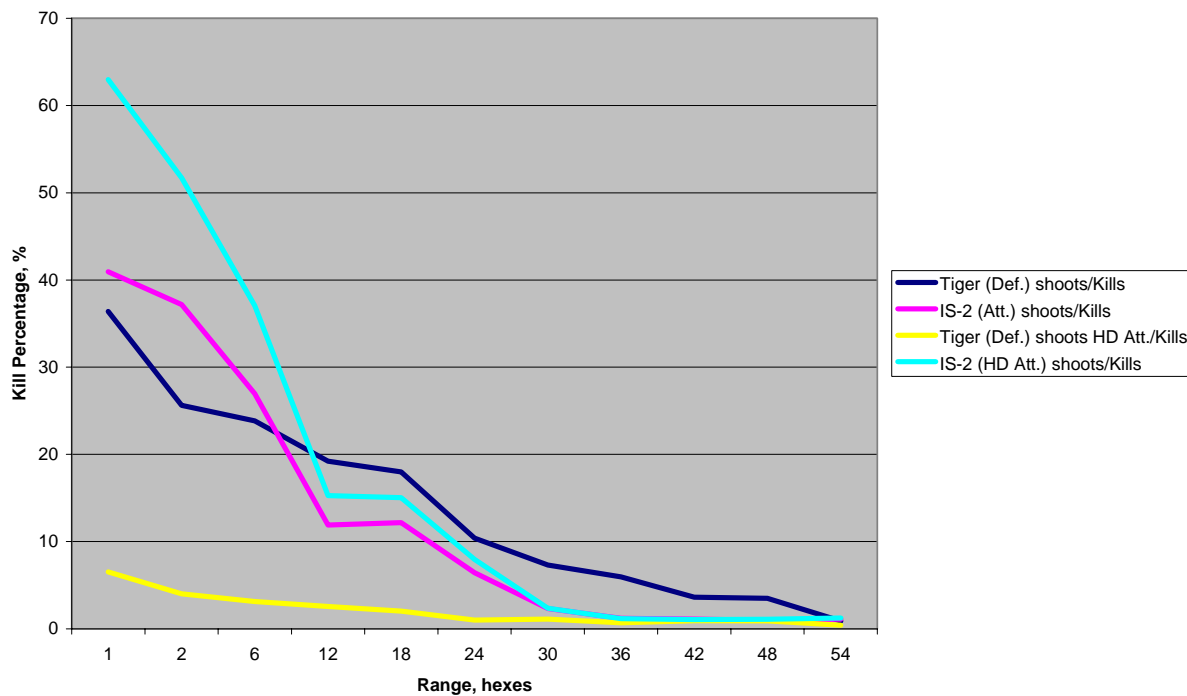
number of iterations. I thought it would be interesting to introduce a new series of articles to this newsletter, showing the results of these toe-to-toe encounters. Obviously such an analysis is only one part of a much larger picture when considering the various merits of the tanks in question. Here we just model who is likely to come out ahead if they simply duke it out face to face. The program simulates the encounter taking place at every range level (except zero), and also considers the attacker moving in to a non-hull down position, and then again using a hull-down position.

For the first toe to toe matchup we see a heavyweight fight of two of the iconic tanks of the Second World War. This will be a 4-round bout governed by the rules of the Banzai!! newsletter. The 4 rounds are designed to have each combatant attack twice (once non-hull down and once hull down) and each defend twice (non-hull down). In the German corner, weighing in at 57 tons, designated the PzKpfw VIE(L), wearing the feldgrau counter, it's the late model *Tiiiiiiiger*. In the Russian corner, wearing the light brown, tipping the scales at a lean and mean 45 tons, it's the Man of Steel, the Iosef *Staaaaaaaadlin*.

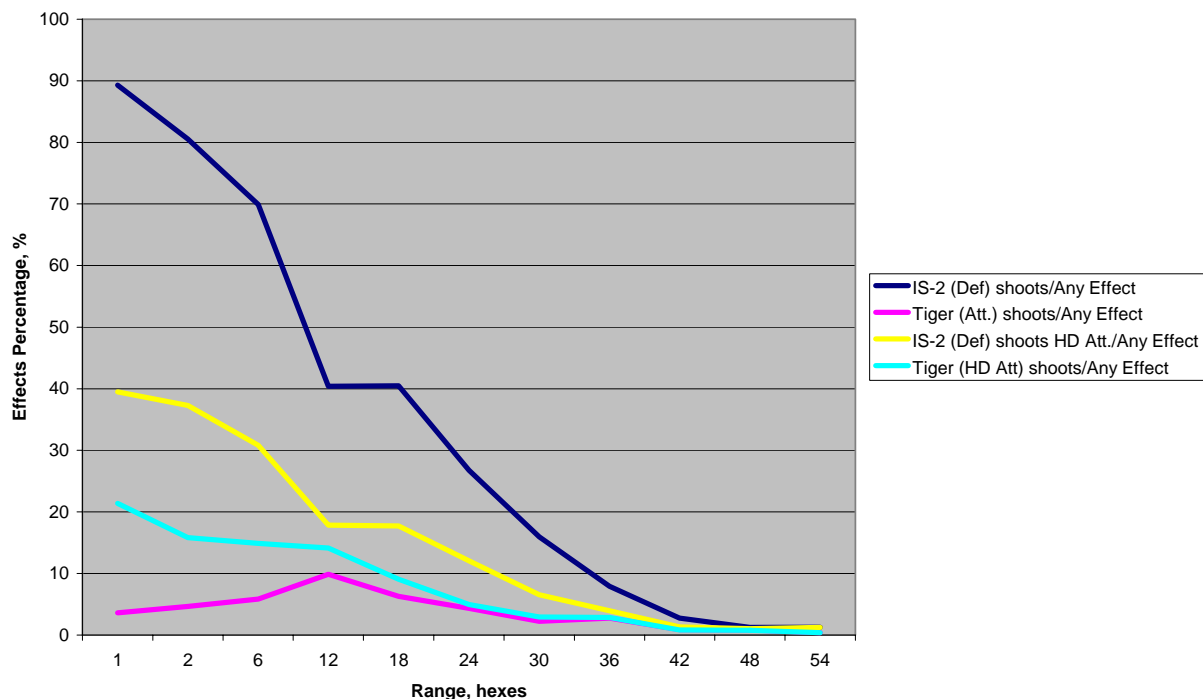
Tiger, HD and non-HD, Moves On IS-2
Kill Chances



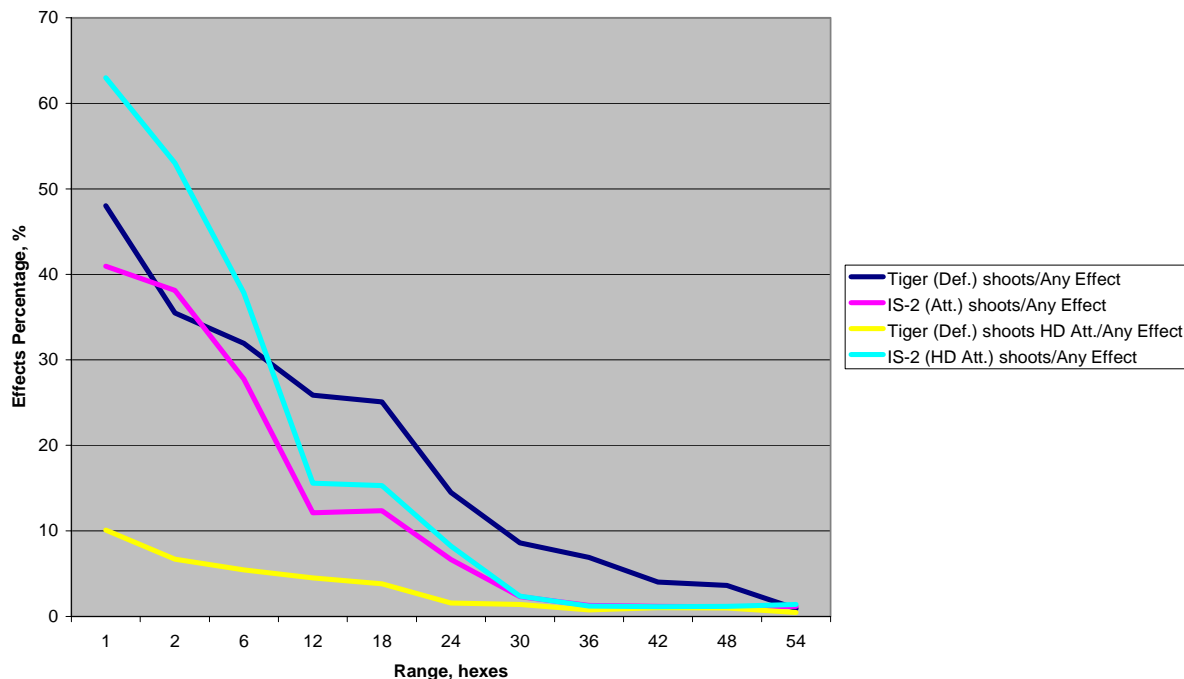
IS-2, HD and Non-HD, Moves on Tiger
Kill Chances



Tiger, HD and Non-HD, Moves on IS-2
All Effects - Kill, Immob, Shock, Abandon



IS-2, HD and Non-HD, Moves on Tiger
All Effects - Kill, Immob, Shock, Abandon



One thing that really stands out in this simulation is how important a hull down position is. Gaining such a position is always important because it cuts down your chances of getting hit by a bit more than half, which is very significant. That effect is exaggerated even more for this bout, because both tanks have superior turret armor. For the Stalin, it's a bump from 14 to 18 armor factors, and for the Tiger it's a jump from 11 to 14. This is huge especially for the Stalin, because the Tiger's 88L has a basic kill number of only 20. Using APCR will boost that kill number, as will short range, but notice that the Stalin's survival numbers jump a whopping 38% even at 1-hex range! The Tiger fares even better, with an astronomical 50% increase in survivability at 1-hex range by going hull down. Look the numbers over for yourself to see what's going on. You might expect the Tiger to do better at the longer range encounters due to the differences between black and red hit numbers. This is a fascinating matchup of guns and armor. The Stalin has a harder-hitting gun and thicker armor, but the Tiger has APCR available, the possibility of rate of fire, and doesn't suffer from limited ammo as the Stalin's 122L does. However for this simulation, the effects of limited ammo would only be seen if we turned this into a cage match, where we let the simulation run for an unlimited number of turns until a winner was determined (or both broke their guns), rather than a simple 1-turn match as we have done here.

Certainly the frontal gun vs. armor calculation is not the be-all and end-all of comparing the relative merits of tanks in the ASL system. The Stalin, as noted, has slightly better armor and a bigger gun. It is also slightly faster and has a lower target profile. But it has circled B11 ammo, cannot intensive fire, has no special ammunition whatsoever, and doesn't really have great machine gun firepower. The Tiger boasts a 9 morale crew, better machine guns, has APCR available in 1944, has a close defense weapons system in 1944-45, and has a rate of fire of 1. Let's close this analysis with a quick comparison table.

Attribute	Tiger I	IS-2
Gun Power		X
Gun Other	X	
Armor		X
Machine Guns	X	
Target Size		X
Close Defense	X	
Morale	X	
Special Ammo	X	
Speed		X

Player Profile: Glenn Schools

Banzai: When and how did you discover ASL?

GS: *I got into gaming when I was at Kilgore Jr. College in 1982. I got started doing the typical D&D type stuff. When SPI released Air War and War in the Pacific, I dropped the role playing stuff entirely. I was shopping in the Tyler Mall and saw Cross of Iron in a store and bought it. After trying to play it, we realized that I should have gotten Squad Leader first. I got hooked on Squad Leader and then ASL and have not really played any other board game since. It has been a highly addictive habit.*

Banzai: What nationality do you enjoy playing the most?

GS: *That one is a hard one to answer because they all have their strengths and weaknesses, but I don't mind using anything that mounts an 88.*

Banzai: Describe your favorite kind of scenario.

GS: *I like a fairly balanced 6 to 7 turn scenario that I can learn more about ASL from. I loved doing PTO for the 1st time during the last tournament.*

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

GS: *I still struggle with combined arms in attack tactics. I am probably best at playing defense.*

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

GS: *The best part of ASL is that I learn something new in every scenario I play no matter who I play. The worst part of ASL is that I can not play as much as I would like to.*

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

GS: *I have found that all the people I've met playing ASL have a wide variety of backgrounds and personalities. But we all have one thing in common - ASL.*

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?

GS: *I think I would rather have the platoon of two BT-7 M37s and two BT-7As.*

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

GS: *The coolest, the only time I beat Jim Ferrell. I had an immobilized T-34 in the middle of a field that the crew stayed aboard and went on a rate festival.*

The worst, when Jim had 4 straight APCR shots in "Marders Not Martyrs", leaving 4 burning KVs on the board. It was the shortest ASL scenario I have ever played, but it was fun.

The craziest, I have had a bunch that went down to the last die roll.

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

GS: *I need to remember to properly use all of the assets I am given in a scenario.*

Banzai: You get choice of sides in a scenario. Would you rather have the side with a single behemoth tank like a Panther or Tiger, or the side facing them with larger numbers (say 4) or less stout vehicles like Shermans or T-34s?

GS: *There is probably nothing cooler than a Panther or Tiger taking out targets that are 15+ hexes away.*

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?

GS: *A B-29, no just kidding. I would like to see Pershing vs Tiger or Panther scenario.*

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?

GS: *I would take the Germans.*

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

GS: *UNDERRATED - The late war heavy metal scenarios I have seen depend on who get the 1st shot to penetrate the front armor or who can maneuver to get the side or rear shot with out blowing the transmission.*

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?

GS: *Start small and simple. Learn something with each scenario you play. and do not worry about losing. Play different kinds of scenarios with different opponents and do not worry about losing. To misquote Tom Selleck from the Movie "Mr. Baseball"*

"ASL is a game and games are meant to be fun"

Banzai: What's your favorite AFV (or other game piece) in ASL and why?

GS: *the Tiger, so much was expected from each one of them.*

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

GS: *I kind of like "Bang". It is a neat game to play after a day of ASL.*

Banzai: What are your other interests outside of gaming?

GS: *Getting on my wife's nerves*

Banzai: Any final comments to wrap up?

GS: *I would like to finish up by saying thanks to all of the guys that I have played ASL with over the years. It was fun and I am looking forward to playing more ASL in the future.*

6+1 = Profit

Dan Preston

Call me strange. I like 6+1 leaders, that oft-maligned bottom of the barrel leader. Back in the old days, one of my favorite 10-2 leaders was Captain Robinson. In the original Squad Leader, there were "blank" leaders with no name. The blank 10-3 leader was eventually known as Major West. There were even leader counters with no number or name. My Squad buddies and I soon carefully wrote in 6+1 as the value. (Mind you, there were no American 6+1 leaders in the original mix.) This poor piece of cardboard came to be known as "Doctor Smith". We all remember Captain Sobel and Colonel Klink. Poor leaders at best, barely adequate on a good day. But a poor leader is better than none at all, as we who play ASL well know. I therefore

sing the praises of the 6+1.

Rally. A player may self rally one MMC in his own rally phase as first action of that phase. How aggravating is it to have a whole stack of assorted brokies in the middle of nowhere with no one to rally them? Self rally will take forever, and those MMCs are usually needed elsewhere. Enter our pride and joy, the 6+1. If those panic-stricken remnants are in rally terrain, the rally DR (barring DM) is straight. And if the broken troops have a decent broken morale, like SS or American troops, they have a fairly good shot at rallying quickly.

LLTC/LLMC. The task check/morale check is only taken if the leader has a higher morale than the troops he is with. If the 6+1 dies for double break or gets bagged by a sniper, nobody really cares.

Movement Bonus. Great for CXing up to the action. A good

example is *The Road to Wiltz*. The Germans are very short of transport and leaders in the force which enters on Turn 1. Put a stack of squads with the initial German 6+1 who enters and get running.

Portage. Same deal. Colonel Klink can help carry that HMG as well as any other leader. Just find someone else to direct fire.

Cowering. Yes, I know. Nobody actually wants a 6+1 to direct any fire attacks. However, with most nationalities except the British, the specter of cowering hangs over attacks which are not leader directed. Also, long range MG fire is out beyond a certain range. Consider using that 6+1 despite the obvious drawback. Do your math and decide if the +1 modifier is worth the hit on the IFT. Speaking of cowering, it is a rare but concrete fact that flamethrower attacks are subject to cowering, even if leadership is NA. Under rare and desperate circumstances, consider giving the torch to the 6+1. Qualified usage, no cowering, and no detriment to the attack, since the leadership modifier is NA. Pity about the morale.

Disruption. Every once in a while, one of your really good leaders will HOB on a 2 DR and disrupt. I watched it happen to a 10-2 leader one time. This disrupted unit will stop in its tracks and sit there for the rest of eternity until a friendly leader rallies it. Great to have our 6+1 nearby.

Possession and Transport. Like any other unit, a 6+1 leader can possess an infinite number of SWs in his hex. And being a good order leader, he can hand them out to other deserving units. If your kill stack just got zapped and there is a huge pile of SWs lying around, he is a good man to go over and keep them possessed for the boys coming to

take over. Not to mention being able to take a weapon away from a brokie and give it to a good order unit. Concerning transport, a leader is 0 pp. Therefore, a 6+1 can possess a SW aboard a conveyance and not take up any room.

Berserk, Stripping, and Interdiction. Any unit which goes berserk has a morale level of 10. A berserk result can turn our modest 6+1 into a nearly unstoppable killing machine. A 6+1 can strip concealment as well as anybody else. And a 6+1 able to put out any kind of firepower can interdict. Not to mention the ability to prevent rout just by standing there.

Heat of Battle. Briefly mentioned above concerning berserk. A 6+1 can HOB into a 7-0, a man of respect. Or else, he can HOB into a Hero, a man of real respect.

Forward Observer. This guy is begging to man the radio or field phone. While the "0" leaders are busy with rally duties, who do we trust with the OBA? The 6+1 is first in line to volunteer. The least valuable warm body gets the coolest toy. And again, radios and field phones are not subject to leadership modification. So, no hit on usage. Is your observer HIP? Icing on the cake. Your 6+1 may find a cozy spot to direct the OBA, and your opponent may never figure out where he is, much less fire at him to menace that brittle morale. All while the "real" leaders are fighting the "real" war.

In conclusion, I kind of like 6+1 leaders. I think they get a bad rap when the big boys are around. Even the 7-0s and 8-0s look down on them. But they are capable of great things when used properly. Imagine playing "Hill 621" and giving the Russians a 6+1 leader, just for laughs. An asset, when used properly.

Style Points

Matt Shostak



At a recent San Antonio game day, I had the pleasure of playing Dan Preston. When it came time to turn the turret on my German tank, Dan suggested using one of his German-specific turret counters, a holdover from the old SL/COI/COD/GI days. The retro look was sporty and hip. It inspired me to break out my old Squad Leader box and see what counters I could recycle for my own system.

2007 ASL Team Tournament Wrap Up



Rick Reinesch

The fifteenth edition of the Texas ASL Team Tournament was held again this year at the La Quinta Inn in Round Rock, TX from June 21st through June 24th, 2007. We had 46 players joining us from points all over Texas and from locations as far away as Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma. This was a banner year for us and we certainly had reason to celebrate; holding our tournament now for the fifteenth straight year, through good times and hard times. It was great that so many showed up to join in the festivities and to battle it out for the many honors and prizes made available for the taking. Everyone who preregistered this year received a t-shirt and a set of personalized 7-0 leader counters.

As has been the case over the last few years, the doors opened on Thursday morning to open gaming. Thursday gaming counted toward the Major Johnson award – given to the person who plays the most ASL over the course of the weekend, and the Audie Murphy and Col. Klink awards – given for the greatest number of snakes and boxcars respectively.

Back by popular demand, Zeb Doyle developed a couple of original scenarios to kick things off for the 'Opening Assault' Thursday mini. Zeb's format uses a unique team/scenario scoring format that does a good job of taking out scenario imbalances as evidenced by the fact that the difference between the eventual first and second place teams was just 3 points. Zeb does a great job running the mini as evidenced by the increased number of participants over last year. At the end of the day, the winners of the Opening Assault mini were Mike Cadieux of Oklahoma City, OK and Jerry Simmons of Dallas, TX. They walked away with some great looking plaques.

Friday open play began counting towards the meat of the tournament: the team honors and the top individual awards. For those not familiar with it, the Texas Team Tournament is an open tournament – you play what you want with whom you want. It makes for a relaxed atmosphere to enjoy playing ASL with folks you normally don't get a chance to compete against. As the tournament director, I will work on arranging matches with the top winners starting Saturday afternoon to make sure we get a definitive overall champion. But otherwise it's a freewheeling good time.

As has been tradition for several years now, the Texas Team Tournament offered a Saturday only, one-day mini-tournament. We call it the "Texas Heat". This year we picked up the format that Zeb utilized for his Thursday mini for a concept that emphasizes the team. A field of 8 played

two scenarios: *Armored Probe* (CH6) and *Makin Taken* (J84). Zeb Doyle (Austin, TX) was a one man wrecking crew as he along with his partner Glenn Schools (Ft. Worth, TX) garnered enough points to outdistance themselves from the rest of the competition and take home the HEAT trophies.

Saturday afternoon we took a little time out for the tournament to give back to the folks who took time out of their lives to join us in Austin and to remember. This year we lost a good friend of the ASL community in John Van Marter of Capitan, NM. John came to our tournament last year and was looking forward to coming again this year before he was tragically killed in a car accident in the spring. John had a great attitude in his play, was a patient mentor to new players on VASL and was truly dedicated to the game based on the 4-hour commute he would make each month to play in the New Mexico game days. In remembrance, we created an annual ASL sportsmanship award to recognize those individuals who are great examples of why we all enjoy playing this game. This year that recognition went to Tom Gillis of Houston, TX.

Also this year we were able to pull in a number of donations from some great supporters of the tournament and take time to give them all away in a free raffle. This would not have been possible without the extreme generosity and support of the following producers and merchants.

- Against the Odds Magazine
- Armchair General Magazine
- Boulder Games
- Critical Hit
- Dispatches from the Bunker
- East Side Gamers
- Fanatic Enterprises
- The Gamer's Armory
- Half-Price Books
- Heat of Battle
- Historical Art by Ken Smith
- Key Games and Hobbies
- Lone Canuck Publishing
- Multi-Man Publishing
- Osprey Publishing
- SoCal ASL Club

I can't begin to say enough about how their generous support helped us make our fifteenth annual tournament a very special one. Everyone that I contacted was more than willing to assist in making this years' tournament a memorable and exciting one. If you have the opportunity, please support these folks through your purchases and let them know how much you appreciate their contributions.

Saturday evening is a time to unwind as we set out a cake to celebrate 15 years of ASL in Austin as well as the informal, but now traditional game of Bang! into the early hours of Sunday morning.

All the action concluded with the final big matches on Sunday that determined the team champions, and also saw it pit the top scoring players against each other to crown the "10-3" individual champion and "9-2" runner-up. When the dust settled the Team winners were Zeb Doyle (Austin) and David Longstreet (Austin); in an unsuccessful defense of this title, the "9-2" runner up was Jim Ferrell (Ft. Worth, TX), and the "10-3" overall champion for this year was Matt Shostak of Austin. Congratulations, gentlemen!

We also handed out the dice awards on Sunday. The winner of the Audie Murphy award for the most snakes rolled over the weekend was won by Jeff Taylor (Harrisburg, PA), and the Col. Klink award for the most boxcars was achieved by Brian Roundhill (Austin), though he was a pretty close race for that award with Bud Garding (Wichita, KS).

I want to thank the many folks who helped me pull all of this together: John Hyler for getting the trophies and setting up the tournament room; Matt Shostak for helping pick the Heat scenarios, and for his advice and support; Zeb Doyle for pulling together and running the Opening Assault mini and all the other support he provided; Glenn Schools for helping clean up the place the end of each day, contributing to the raffle and for the use of his cooler; Allen King and Jeff Toreki for the use of their coolers; Kevin Kenneally for his vocal support on the Forum; and many others. Of course I want to extend my sincere appreciation to the La Quinta Inn for providing us the gaming space.

Thanks, as always, is given to the ASL players who choose to make the Texas ASL Team Tournament one of their ASL tournament stops each year. Without you guys, there would be no Team Tournament. Thanks again for coming!

As we closed the doors on the 15th Annual ASL Team Tournament, as the last of the gear was packed and folks headed home, it is always incredible to consider what a privilege it is to have all of these great players together for several days of competition, camaraderie and just plain ol' fun. I hope that you can join us in Austin next year as we look to see who will be the champions of our 16th Annual ASL Team Tournament. To all, please mark your calendars for June 19th through June 22nd, 2008 and make plans to be here!

2007 ASL Team Tournament Results

Rick Reinesch



Player Scores

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Matt Shostak	6.0	7	1
Zeb Doyle	5.0	6	1
Mike Seningen	4.0	4	0
Jim Ferrell	3.0	4	1
David Longstreet	3.0	4	1
Randy Shurtz	3.0	4	1
Eric Gerstenberg	3.0	4	1
Jeff Toreki	2.0	2	0
Ed Beekman	2.0	3	1
Nick Drinkwater	2.0	4	2
Sam Tyson	2.0	4	2
Dan Ryan	1.0	1	0
Tom Gillis	1.0	2	1
Bryan Register	1.0	3	0
Clinton Howell	1.0	3	2
John Hyler	1.0	4	3
Mike Rose	0.0	2	2
Chris Buehler	0.0	2	2
Jeff Taylor	0.0	2	2
Norman Harman	0.0	2	2
Doyle Motes	0.0	2	2
Jerry Simmons	0.0	3	3
Jack O'Quin	0.0	1	1
Glen Gray	0.0	2	2
Bill Zopff	0.0	0	0
John Garlic	0.0	0	0
Matt Schwoebel	0.0	0	0
Cory Sosebee	-1.0	3	4
Scott Hopkins	-1.0	2	3
Glenn Schools	-1.0	1	2
Rick Reinesch	-1.0	1	2
Manabu Matusuura	-1.0	1	2
John Farris	-1.0	1	2
Russell Mueller	-1.0	0	1
Roy Connelly	-2.0	2	4
Mike Cadieux	-2.0	1	3
Walter Eardley	-2.0	1	3
Scott Bell	-2.0	1	3
Allen King	-2.0	1	3
Bill Dorre	-2.0	0	2
Chuck Anderson	-3.0	1	4
Steven Miller	-3.0	0	3
Kevin Kenneally	-4.0	0	4
Brian Roundhill	-5.0	1	6
Bud Garding	-6.0	0	6

Major Johnson Scores

Player	MJ Total
John Hyler	19940.0
Brian Roundhill	19309.5
Matt Shostak	16932.5
Zeb Doyle	14522.0
Jim Ferrell	13795.25
Sam Tyson	13746.0
Jerry Simmons	12488.0
Bud Garding	11319.75
Randy Shurtz	11112.5
Cory Sosebee	9597.0
Clinton Howell	9445.1
Jeff Taylor	8508.0
Doyle Motes	7794.0
Mike Rose	7723.5
Roy Connelly	7462.0
Ed Beekman	7152.9
Allen King	7134.0
Bryan Register	6953.75
Mike Cadieux	6942.0
Nick Drinkwater	6937.5
Scott Bell	6513.0
David Longstreet	6316.0
Glenn Schools	5539.0
Bill Dorre	4802.6
Kevin Kenneally	4347.2
Chris Buehler	3784.0
Scott Hopkins	3636.75
Rick Reinesch	3548.75
Norman Harman	3455.0
Glen Gray	3337.0
Walter Eardley	3196.4
Chuck Anderson	2698.75
Steven Miller	2554.5
John Farris	2552.5
Eric Gerstenberg	2035.0
Mike Seningen	1958.6
Jeff Toreki	1510.0
Manabu Matusuura	1341.0
Tom Gillis	1314.0
Bill Zopff	585.0
Jack O'Quin	536.0
Dan Ryan	245.0
Russell Mueller	181.5
John Garlic	0.0
Matt Schwoebel	0.0

Team Scores

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
David Longstreet,Zeb Doyle	8.0	10	2
Dan Ryan,Mike Seningen	5.0	5	0
John Farris,Matt Shostak	5.0	8	3
Clinton Howell,Ed Beekman	3.0	6	3
Jeff Toreki,Norman Harman	2.0	4	2
NORTH TEXAS	2.0	17	11
Jim Ferrell,Scott Hopkins	2.0	6	4
CENTRAL TEXAS	1.87	38	24
Jeff Taylor,Tom Gillis	1.0	4	3
Bill Dorre,Randy Shurtz	1.0	4	3
Glenn Schools,Sam Tyson	1.0	5	4
Jack O'Quin,John Hyler	1.0	5	4
Nick Drinkwater,Scott Bell	0.0	5	5
Chris Buehler,Glen Gray	0.0	4	4
Eric Gerstenberg,Steven Miller	0.0	4	4
HOUSTON	-0.4	20	22
Bryan Register,Roy Connelly	-1.0	4	5
Jerry Simmons,Mike Cadieux	-2.0	4	6
Allen King,Doyle Motes	-2.0	3	5
FOREIGNERS	-3.0	13	25
Chuck Anderson,Mike Rose	-3.0	3	6
BrianRoundhill,Manabu M.	-6.0	2	8
Bud Garding,Walter Eardley	-8.0	1	9

Audie Murphy

Player	Snakes
Jeff Taylor	32
Jim Ferrell	24
John Hyler	24
Sam Tyson	23
Ed Beekman	22
Brian Roundhill	19
Bryan Register	19
Tom Gillis	18
Doyle Motes	17

Col. Klink

Player	Boxes
Brian Roundhill	33 (Ok, he stopped counting at 33)
Bud Garding	32
Sam Tyson	25
Jim Ferrell	23
Doyle Motes	22
John Hyler	21
Ed Beekman	18
Tom Gillis	18
Mike Rose	16

This Happened to Me

My personal 7-0 American leader counter (care of David Longstreet), Cpl. Register, found his rally point, stuffed with broken marines, one hex away from a line of Japanese who were, by SSR, going to Banzai every turn until they entered CC. To prove to his men what a bad tactic this charging was, he sent one of the squads running berserk. Into the Banzai charge. – *Bryan Register*

Great tourney! While it doesn't quite match Brian's experience, Jeff Toreki had two Guns, a 20L AA and an 81 MTR (both ROF 3) on a hill overlooking my advance. While I failed repeated smoke mortar rolls, Jeff boxcarred both Guns on consecutive rolls. I will note that the MTR was very effective early on and after repair. The AA Gun was useless for the entire scenario. – *Chris Buehler*

In my first game, *J23 Smashing the Third*, played on the big boards that I had made, Brian Roundhill drove his PzIVs on turn 1 onto the board and took up position to deal with my two tanks situated in the buildings in the middle of board 44. In Russian turn 1, my first T34M43, 1ROF, led no doubt by the tank commander "Man with No Name", went on a rate-fest. Blam-Blam-Blam-Blam!!! Four hits, three dead MkIVs. Another MkIV was summarily dispatched elsewhere on the board.

In my 5th game, I was playing Mike Rose in *SP136 Orczy Square*. I was the Russians and Mike was the Hungarians. After playing Nick Drinkwater in *One Down, Two to Go* I was somewhat bleary, so I do not remember the exact turns that this occurred. That said, Mike drove one of his Zrinyi IIs [6] AF 14TK 0ROF AFVs behind a wall facing my SU76M (4) AF 13TK 2ROF. My first DF shot missed by a country mile, but I had AQ. Mike's AFPh shot missed, but he had AQ too. My next PFPh I had to decide to shoot or to attempt to start up and move behind a wall to be hull down as well. Figuring that since Mike needed a 9 or less to get a kill with a hit, I might as well shoot, I shot again....miss by a country mile. "Ruh-Ro!" as Scooby-doo might say. Mike's DFPh shot was a hit...He rolled an 11...PAWANG!! squared...I was just about pushed back a hex by the impact. Next turn, Mike got another hit in his PFPh...and rolled 10...immobilization. My heroic Suka crew passed their TC. In the next DFPh, they then proceeded to demonstrate that it is not nice to fool around with Father Joseph. They went on a rate-fest, scoring 12 consecutive turret hits, with a 5 Shock 4 TK. Regrettably for them, the AT rounds made east of the Urals were not up to the task and bounced off right and left, ultimately shocking him, but no more. In my next PFPh, I went on another rate-fest and scored 5 more turret hits in a row, with the same effect...ARGH!!! After that, with gun barrel drooping from the repeated firing, I was unable to score another turret hit. Mike's Zrinyi actually recovered and shot at me again, hitting, but not

killing my Suka. In frustration, he then pumped a SMOKE round on top of the SU76, effectively neutralizing him.

– John Hyler

Rules Tip

Matt Shostak



Suppose you take an ordnance HE direct fire shot with a 76mm Gun against an emplaced gun and crew, and you applied the +2 emplacement DRM to the To Hit roll. The target Gun happens to have a gunshield, and your shot originated within the target's CA. You achieved a hit, but not a Direct Hit. Hence it is a Near Miss Hit (C11.4). Now, you resolve the attack against the crew as a 12+0 on the IFT, right? Wrong. Pay close attention to the last sentence of C11.5: "A gunshield DRM never affects a To Hit DR, but can be used to modify the effects of a Near Miss Hit even if a TEM was already used to modify the To Hit attempt." It should be a 12+2 attack on the IFT. This is a very commonly misplayed rule. In fact, I had been playing it wrong until Gary Trezza pointed it out to me at our tournament a couple of years ago. Thanks Gary!

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

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 now meets on the first Saturday of every month. To stay informed of upcoming club events, join our email group. You can post a message at central-texas-asl@yahogroups.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
 - Club Ladder
- And much more!