CRITICAL HIT!

ISSUE NO. 1 $8

The Independant Journal of the ASL hobby

PRODUCED BY, AND FOR ASL PLAYERS





Wet Behind The Ears

A Beginner's Guide To ASL Play

by Russ Bunten

ASL is, in my opinion, the greatest wargame yet developed. Its flexibility and realism give the most exciting view of WW II ground combat possible. When coupled with the seemingly endless number of scenarios available, the result is a game system which is second to none. Nevertheless, this article's purpose is not to sing the praises of ASL (you probably wouldn't be reading these words if you did not already agree with my point of view at least somewhat). Its purpose is to provide one man's view of some basic tactical tips for squad leaders to use when getting their feet wet on the cardboard battlefield.

Maneuver vs Firepower

"Does this stack move, or do I pound that stone building one more time?" How many times have you asked yourself this question? If your answer is "many times", you have been doing the right thing. You may not have always made the best decision, but at least you are aware that there is more than one option open. On the other hand, if this question is new to you, or alternately, if the answer seems always "obvious", then you are failing to exercise what is perhaps the most basic of infantry tactics. ASL is many things, but what it typically is not is a game of one player trying to out stack the other.

Each time a unit fires, a decision has been made by its "owner" that the FP of the unit involved is more important that its ability to maneuver. Heinz Guderian wrote "... a unit's ability to reposition itself on the battlefield is the most potent weapon available". Therefore it follows that before rolling the dice, you should be sure that the unit's firepower is really the right weapon to do the job. The bottom line is to evaluate closely the progress of your advance or defense. Avoiding firing at enemy units based solely on the fact that you shot at them last turn. When you do decide to move a unit, make sure the its movement contributes to the scenario goals. Every action taken by each unit should move you closer to achieving these goals (read victory conditions).

Sniper, Sniper. Who's got the Sniper?

How many times has your best leader been eliminated by a sniper? It happens to us all, but there are steps which can be taken to reduce the possibility of the enemy sniper causing great damage to your forces.

First and foremost, be very aware of the enemy SAN. Don't take those 4+3 shots if the enemy SAN is a 7. More to the point, analyze the fire attacks you plan to take. You should compare the enemy SAN to the minimum DR you must roll to get a result on the IFT (or IIFT, if you prefer). A good rule of thumb is if the SAN is greater than the minimum DR needed, don't take the shot unless you absolutely must (e.g. a 4FP +3DRM shot will yield a PTC on a DR of 4 or less. If the enemy SAN is 5 or higher, pass up this attack. The result could well be a sniper breaking/eliminating one of your units while the enemy unit is unaffected).

Statistical analysis won't support this principle. Remember that only 33% of SAN DR's will actually result in an effective sniper attack. If you are quick with figures, you can easily analyze the exact likelihood of a sniper ruining your day. I prefer to play it safe all of the time. I've lost enough 9-2 leaders to believe in this course of action. I also feel confident in my ability to inflict the damage these low FP/high DRM attacks tend to generate by using some other means.

Without looking at your rule book, answer the following questions. What DRM apply to Sniper Checks? When are Sniper Checks allowed? What units are eligible? What final DR is required to affect the enemy sniper? If you don't have a clue as to the answers, then you probably get stung by snipers often. The best defense is a solid offense. When a sniper attacks a stack of your units, attack back! Most of the time all units in the location will not be affected. Use these units to attack the sniper. True, they end up TI, and can't conduct a sniper check at all if they've fired (or are pinned), but the end result may be well worth the inconvenience.

Another way to protect your units is to use your sniper counter. Keep in mind that according to A14.31 "...Sniper Target Selection Counters are an inherent part of every location in the hex they occupy". Therefore, the sniper counter is always included for random selection of units attacked in any location in the hex it occupies. If you have a key defensive position or fire base, keep your sniper counter in or near this location. This is especially useful if your SAN is very low compared to the enemy's (e.g. yours is 2 while your opponent's is 5 or 6) because you will probably get very few sniper attacks anyway.

Along the same lines, don't be so anxious to roll that location DR when a "2" comes up on your Sniper Attack dr. It may be more effective to reposition your selection counter to an area of the map where it may cause more meaningful damage. Pinning a squad, particularly the majority of units nearby have moved and/or fired, could be entirely worthless. Moving the selection counter to an area near the important defensive positions will often pay solid dividends.

Holding the Line

Initial setup is perhaps the most crucial time period in any defense. A gross flaw in your original positioning can easily result in the attacker simply running right through you. You may not be able to respond quickly enough if the assault can isolate your units. Some general tactical tips may help avoid these costly errors when setting up.

First and foremost, look at the map! Find the avenues of approach with : a) the best cover, b) the fastest route to victory, and c) the best defensive positions from which to contain the enemy.

The axis of attack with the best cover will often draw the immediate attention of the attacker; if it is obvious to you, it is probably obvious to him too. Therefore you should ensure that you adequately block this route. However, be wary of over commitment. A surprise by the attacker could lead to an isolated defense which accomplishes little. This leads to the second item. What's the quickest way to lose the game?

The fastest route to victory must be protected. Have you ever won (or lost) a game of chess by the "fool's mate" series of moves? Don't let this happen to you in a scenario of ASL! Examine the best positions which will slow the enemy down enough to reinforce as necessary.

Lastly, you should find the easiest approach to "bottle up". This will give you a sound plan to execute. You can endeavor to drive the attacker, through maneuver and/or deception, into this area of the map. Once the assault is channelled to this position, you can easily seal him up for the length of time necessary to accomplish the scenario victory conditions.

Another general principle to follow when setting up is to identify key positions on the playing area. These positions include those ideal for defense and offense. You must not limit your initial view of the battlefield to a purely defensive perspective. If you do, the attack, whatever approach it uses, will come as a complete surprise. A good method to use is to look at the scenario as you would were you to attack. Then use your defense to stop this assault. The attacker will probably choose an entirely different axis. The important thing here is to at least prepare your defense for some sort of an attack that is viable.

Be very careful how many assaults you try to stop at once. A fragmented defense is exactly that; fragmented. You can not set up to defend everywhere in strength. It is better to pick what you believe will be the most likely point of attack, and defend here in strength. Position your units with an easy route to reinforce any weak areas in your setup.

Similarly, use deception when possible to hide your strong points from the enemy. If you can keep the attacker guessing as to the main point of resistance, you stand a better chance of him

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

moving directly into your planned defense. Even if you do not have any concealment counters or HIP available, there are other ways to keep from tipping your hand.

First of all, don't put your leaders at the top of your stacks. 9-2 leaders often have a tendency to attract firepower. Put them on the bottom during setup. The opponent cannot inspect stacks before play begins even if he meets the requirements of A12.16.

Another neat trick is to put SW's with SMC's or other MMC's at the bottom of your stacks during setup. Then the enemy sees only MMC's as he scans the board initially. On the first RPh, you simply transfer the SW's to the appropriate units (by this time, the stack may well be concealed, so the attacker won't even know what was transferred).

Finally, learn the EFFECTIVE use of concealment counters. These assets are not given in the at start OB to complete a line on the scenario card. Many players simply use these to conceal the initial setup stacks. More adroit opponents will utilize them to form new stacks; often in the most inconvenient locations. Endeavor to make the "other guy" expend time, resources, and energy disposing of these dummy stacks. To assist in this task, don't always reveal the contents of real stacks just because a good opportunity arises (cause loss of concealment, take a 4 even shot, etc.). The first time your opponent stumbles into a location he believes contains only dummy units and is rudely surprised by the two elite squads with demo charges instead, he will lose some of the zip from his stride. Now he will always wonder if those units are real or not. Just because they did not fire no longer indicates the lack of real units.

"Make them pay for this ground with their lives..."

Often you will be required to defend a single area of the playing area. This may be a single building, or it may be an exit area which is dominated by a small series of terrain features. It is safe to assume that every scenario employs this strategy to some extent. Even if your victory conditions require you to inflict CVP on the opponent as he proceeds across the board, you will inevitably be faced with the decision to stand and fight, or run like a cheap stocking.

Making this decision is perhaps even more difficult than the proposition of whether to shoot or move when attacking. A bad decision here can spell doom to any defense. If you stay and are blasted to bits by intense amounts of attacking units, then you may have reduced your defending force significantly for a minimal gain in time. If, on the other hand, you withdraw too hastily the attacker may gain an important terrain feature having paid little in the cost of manpower. How do you decide? Such an important battlefield decision must be examined in more depth.

The first thing to survey is the importance of this particular bit of terrain to the overall defense. Remember, this is a small piece to a much larger puzzle. Do not fool yourself into believing that you must keep this objective to prevent losing the game. The only objectives which must be held at all costs are those which grant immediate victory for the opponent. Any others can be conceded. Obviously, allowing a "victory objective" to fall into enemy hands is undesirable and a counterattack will be in order as soon as possible.

Next, look carefully at your flanks. When the British finally secured their flanks at El Alamein, even Rommel found himself hopelessly stalled. If you do not have a "warm, fuzzy feeling" when you glance left and right; back out. You cannot hold a position if your flanks give in. If you try, a skillful opponent will probably capture the entire force which will quickly find itself encircled in the center. If your flanks are secure, you may then be able to stand one more turn even in the face of overwhelming firepower. If the entire center force breaks, your flanking units should be able to prevent any serious breakthroughs by lending supporting fire while the other units rout to safety. The broken units then rally and a new defensive line is established. Sounds easy enough, doesn't it? The only problem is the attacker may not cooperate with your plans.

Finally, examine the retreat routs available. If you have been left in the position where the only path of retreat is through a significant amount of enemy fire, you may consider standing to the last man, at least in this particular objective. Retreating through fire is often less effective than standing and taking what the "bad guy" can dish out.

In the first place, if you choose to fire during Prep Fire, versus move, you may well remove some of the threat to your position. If you can break or pin the enemy where he stands, his return fire will be much less intense. If you move away through enemy LOS he is given, in essence, a free shot at you as you move. If you are going to get pounded anyway, get a last shot off first. Particularly if you have a good chance at breaking a unit which could impede your rout path.

Also, if your units are still in good order when the enemy player turn comes along, he will be forced to deal with you then and there. If the time you gain sufficiently slows the advance, then the sacrifice of these units was not in vain.

"So who's Anti-Tank Gun is that anyway?"

There you sit; before you is a scenario Order of Battle, the requisite pieces, and the playing surface. You ask yourself, "What do I do now?". Perhaps the first thing to examine is the management of your available firepower.

As a defender, you must be acutely aware of the myriad of choices and tasks at hand. What type of defense is best suited, fall back, or static? Is a defense in depth the order of the day? Regardless of your ultimate choice, you will then be faced with the formidable chore of dividing your forces into "defense elements" and doling out assignments to each one. The exact composition of these elements is of paramount importance.

Each element will require enough force to defend its particular sector of the board. If you do not provide sufficient assets, the defense in this area will falter. If you provide too much, you may be lacking in another portion of the board, or will lack the reserves which may be needed to respond to the attacker's moves. Maximizing the efficiency in defending vital areas is the key to a solid defense. To that end, separate your forces into several groups; heavy weapons, vehicles, OBA, MG's and Leaders, and infantry.

The first group to be considered should be the heavy weapons (AT Guns, Howitzers, INF Guns, Mortars, etc.). These units generally are very key parts of the defensive order of battle. Therefore, they must be handled carefully. I believe gun placement should come first. My reasons for this are twofold.

In the first place, guns are difficult to move. They must be placed initially to benefit the defense as much as possible. You will probably not have the opportunity, or the time, to reposition them should you find the guns out of the mainstream of the attack. Take great care in your placement of the "immobile" pieces.

Along these lines, look carefully at A12.34, it allows HIP for any emplaced gun. Note that it does not require the gun to be set up in concealment terrain to be HIP (it must only be emplaced, but loses concealment more readily when not in concealment terrain). Many players, when faced with choosing a gun's initial location, immediately start looking for those ever popular stone buildings to protect these valuable pieces. If no stone buildings are suitable, then a wooden building becomes the next likely candidate, followed closely by woods. How often have you set up a gun HIP in non-concealment terrain? How about an Orchard or Wheatfield? If you have never used one of these alternate areas, you should begin to consider them first.

This is particularly true when the attacker has a limited number of vehicles available. The main reason I say this is because the only advantage to setting up a gun HIP in a building over one in Orchard is that it is more difficult to OVR a gun in a building hex. On the other hand, there are several penalties which apply to guns firing from buildings/rubble/woods which you should consider before nonchalantly dropping a priceless two pounder in a building.

For example, suppose the enemy has two vehicles, both of which are of great concern to you. Your HIP gun is in an ideal position, in a stone building of course, to impede the progress of the enemy tanks. The first tank tries to skirt around the left side; right through your gun's covered arc. Calmly you blast the first AFV and send its crew home for recuperation. Then your opponent pulls out this little white counter with "CA" written on it and slaps it on your ATG; all the while mumbling something about C5.11. Then he calmly runs his other tank right by your (now useless) gun to break through your defensive perimeter. Quickly flipping to C5.11 you discover, to your horror, that all Case A To Hit DRM are doubled when firing within a building (as well as woods, and rubble) and once you have fired, your CA is fixed for the remainder of that fire phase!

This would not have happened if you would have put this gun in that grain hex with that great field of fire two hexes away. Moreover, the only thing you gained by sticking that gun in the building, besides the aforementioned penalties, was an extra +1 To Hit DRM. The bottom line of this is to get you to see the potential of an emplaced gun in an orchard, grain, or brush location. They have no fixed CA or doubled TH DRM's. They are +2 To Hit for being emplaced. And generally can be easily supported by infantry from nearby woods/buildings. Don't scoff at these seemingly unlikely places for those guns. Try running a couple of tanks by an emplaced two pounder in an orchard hex if you think it doesn't make a difference!

The second reason to consider the placement of your guns before any other units is due to their strict reliance on infantry support for survival. Once the guns are placed (remember they are often the linchpins of the defense) you can position your infantry assets nearby to offer supporting fire and protection. An extra German squad or half squad hanging out 1 or 2 hexes distant goes a long way to discourage Allied tank commanders from trying to put tread marks on your gun crews (i.e. "If you want my gun, you can have a Panzerfaust or two first!"). Isolated guns are worthless as enemy infantry will find them out and eliminate the crew. They may even capture the gun and turn it on you.

After the guns are in position, you should move on to your radio observers. Here is a puzzle for you to ponder. Look at scenario 25 (Gavin's's Gamble). As the German player, you are required to defend an entire map width (33 hexes). You have a field phone, and attached 81mm Mtr support, to help you. Look carefully at the leaders you have to choose from for observers; one 9-1, one 8-1, two 8-0's, and a lone 6+1. Who gets the call (slight pun intended)? Before you answer, remember that since it is a field phone (vice a radio) it may set up HIP automatically. How many of you chose the 6+1 to man the phone? Personally speaking, I would choose an 8-0 leader. This phone is too important to trust Colonel Klink to operate. If the enemy sniffs him out, he's through. An 8-0 has a much better chance of surviving to continue his usefulness. The point I am trying to make is to avoid giving your radios and field phones to the worst leader you have without first considering the alternatives. I have seen many players lose their artillery assets lost to low firepower small arm attacks. Once the observer breaks, it will be at least 2 player turns before the OBA is blasting enemy units again.

Getting back on track, you must now determine the most advantageous place to put this part of your arsenal. Since you are on the defensive, you must pick a portion of the area which will be the primary focus of the off board guns. Avoid trying to cover the entire map board with one OBA module. In most cases you will not accomplish anything meaningful. Instead pick a side and locate your observer in a location that is not

Continued on page 29

To Rout or Not

(As If You Have a Choice)



Like the great chess masters, the masters of ASL must be able to think through the possibilities of the turns that lie ahead. This ability should encompass as many aspects of the game as possible. Here, I've chosen to focus on rout and rally. Some players approach the game as if their squads are invulnerable, never to break, and are shocked when it happens. If you're not prepared to break, don't take the field. The truth is: Squads break. Be prepared for that eventuality. Examine the scenario you're playing. A shorter scenario may not provide ample time to rout and rally and still accomplishes your goals. Your defense/attack may need to be built to last until broken. But even then rout positions should never be ignored. In longer scenarios, certainly campaign games where you'd also like your squads to be around for the next day, a well developed plan for rout and rally is a must.

This is one of the most overlooked facets of ASL. If you find a lot of your troops surrendering, eliminated for failure to rout, or just hanging out alone and broken back in the woods, then you're not giving enough consideration to where and how to rout. Before I get into an example, I'd like to list some basic principles.

GENERAL THOUGHTS ON ROUT.

1. Consider where you might have to rout as you enter each hex. Avoid entering hexes that you can't rout from. Especially when entering a hex that will be subject to fire, you should have an idea where you'll rout if you break.
2. Before deciding to Prep Fire, consider where you might rout. You may be the one broken when all fire is done. Sometimes, a move to a location from which you can rout is a better option than taking that Prep Fire shot.
3. Position leaders where your units might rout. Hopefully, out of LOS and concealed. This is most important during your opponents turn, since you will not have the option to advance. During your turn, it's a good idea to have a leader where he can advance to a position where he might be needed. It's good to keep the leader options open while waiting for the results of Defensive Fire.
4. Establish reserves. This may sound a bit luxurious, and it's not always possible, but one squad or even a HS can sometimes save the day. On those turns where everybody breaks, a squad from the rear can move forward to help keep the enemy away from the broken troops.
5. Avoid open ground in normal range. Advancing into open ground can be fairly safe, if the terrain behind you can be routed through. Advancing into open ground with open ground to your back is suicidal most of the time.

Leaders play an important role. Leaders, even those with negative modifiers, may need to be relegated to rallying the troops. In many scenarios, leaders are more precious than they may seem. The loss of that 8-0 on turn 1 may cost you the game.

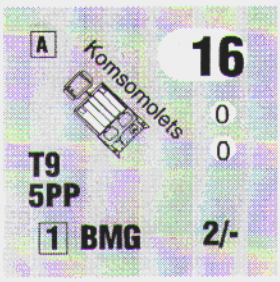
HERE ARE THE BASIC WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR LEADERS: Keep them concealed; Keep them out of LOS; Don't get greedy with the 2 MF bonus; Move alone, not stacked unless necessary; Be aware of that sniper; Give him something else to shoot at, if possible.

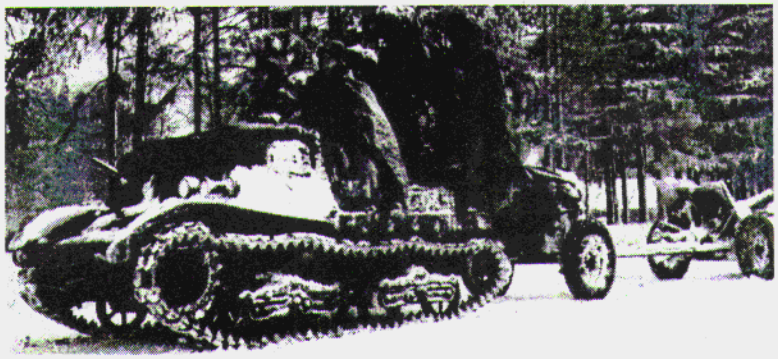
Now, I'd like to put my ideas into context. This is not intended to be a scenario analysis, but an example of how my concepts are put into action. The scenario I've chosen is 'Trapped', ASL-15. I played the Germans. My first step is to examine the board and identify which hexes would be safe rally positions for when my squads break. Generally, looking for patches of dense terrain is the place to start. Sometimes a single hex is enough to build an assault, or defense, around. 2C3 and 2C8 are perfect for the initial approach. There is not much on board 4, but 4A8, which is open ground behind the woods in 4A7-B7 begins the game out of LOS and will provide a place to Low Crawl on turn 1. I'll focus most of my attack on board 2. In later turns 2G9 could provide a good rallying point if the Germans are able to push forward into those trees. If any progress can be made on board 4, 4H5 and 4G1 could be good positions to rout to.

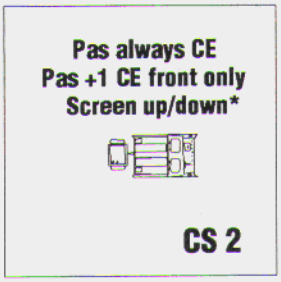
My American opponent had a strong group in the woods around 4h5, including his 9-2. I decided that once broken I could make life miserable for this group. Their rout would generally have to go back to 4I5 and 4J4. A squad with a LMG in 4B2, a MMG in 2D3 to keep pressure on 4I6, and the few squads I had on board 4 kept these guys DM'd for quite awhile. I eventually broke the whole lot and swept forward to take prisoners. Fortune may have been on my side, but his guys had nowhere to regroup.

The Americans have a good number of rout positions to choose from. The woods around 2I9 would have 2I9, 2I10, 2J9, and 2J10. If these wood fell the US could fall back to 2M9. 2N3, 4H0, 4I9, and 4P6 would all serve nicely as rallying points. I think the Americans should be able to play a good fall back defense in the middle and both flanks.

As I play ASL, I continue to learn more about rout and rally. I consider it one of the most complicated aspects of the game. During one of my most precious victories, my opponent sighed, shook his head, and said, "You had that leader right where you wanted him, didn't you!".







STZ Komsomolets

The First in our series of the "Forgotten Counters" of ASL

CH 59. STZ Komsomolets: This Russian light gun tractor is designed to pull the M1937 45mm anti-tank gun (Russian Ordnance Note 7). The Komsomolets has also been recorded on film in action in the Winter of 1941 towing a 37mm anti-tank gun (Russian Ordnance Note 6). Weighing 4 tons, little is known of this AFV. The vehicle could carry a crew of 8 men, consisting of a driver and gunner in the lightly armored front compartment, plus 3 men on each side, back to back. An ammunition trailer was often towed when the AFV was towing a gun. The AFV was used by the Russians as both a troop carrier and for towing guns. It was armed with a DT machine gun in a front bow mount and had a canvas cover which mounted onto a collapsable frame. The cover provided little protection from the elements and was likely withdrawn before the vehicle went into action. The STZ Komsomolets apparently saw some development during its life span. Some models were manufactured with large hatches with square edges over the crew compartment while other versions had rounded off hatches. The Komsomolets tractor was adapted as the chassis for some of the earliest tank destroyers to be deployed by the Soviet Union. An unknown number were built.

CH 59.1 The inherent crew of this AFV may be CE or BU in the same manner as a CT AFV. Passengers are laways CE and receive a +1 CE modifier from the front target facing vehicle only as signified by the "Pas always CE" and "Pas +1 CE front only" on the counter.

CH 59.2 Passengers may only fire 1/2 their inherent FP while riding in the Komsomolets when the screen is down. The canvas screen may be raised or dropped on this AFV by expending 4 MP and only when the vehicle is stopped. Mark the vehilce with a screen up marker as appropriate. Unless so marked, the screen is assumed to be down.

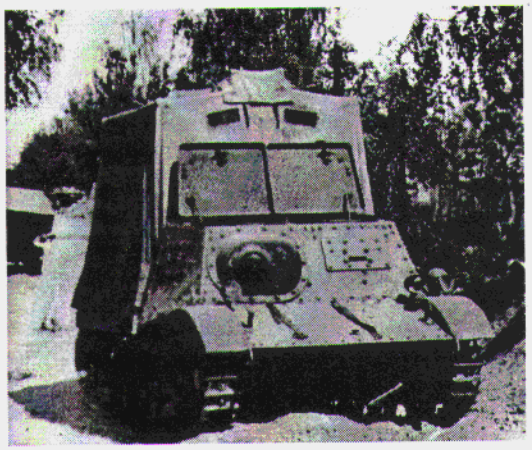
CH 59.3 All 1MT restrictions apply in the normal manner for this vehicle.

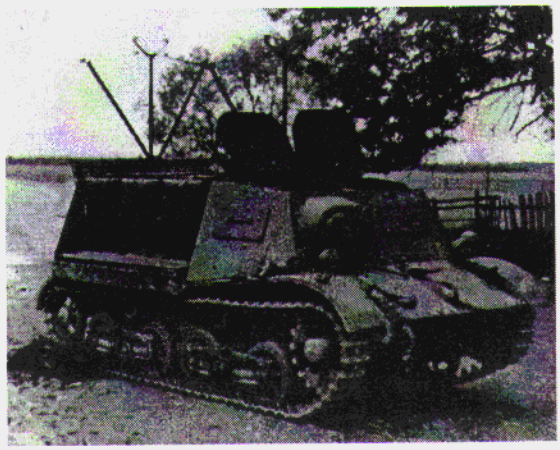
CH 59.4 Designers may wish to use cloaking for passengers when the AFV enters from off board with the screen up.

CH 59.5 The trailer may never be dissconnected from the AFV or treated as a seperate target.

CH 59.6 This AFV does not suffer the penalty of being an OT AFV in CC. All other ambush and CC modifiers are applied in the normal manner.

Other Vital Statistics for the STZ Komsomolets:
WGT: 4; BPV: 19; Type: NT; RF: 1.6; Size: +2; AF: 0; OT: Y*; CS: 2; MP: 16; GP: L; GT: 1MT*; MA: BMG; ROF: 1; BMG: 2; PP/T#: 5/9.





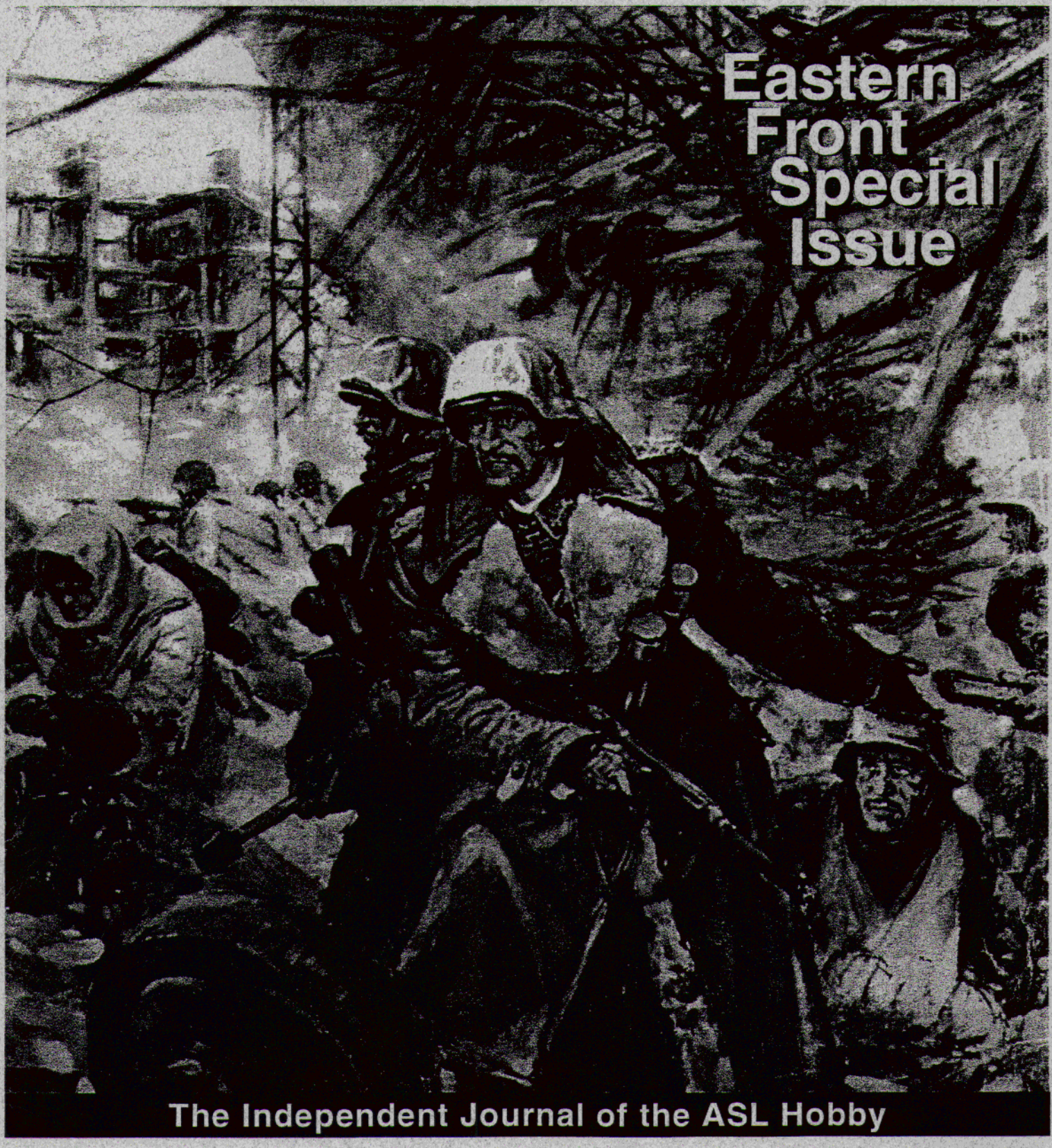
So you want to see the STZ Komsomolets in action?

Send Critical Hit! $2.25, plus $.75 shipping and handling and you will receive a set of 6 unmounted COLOR counters, 5/8" blanks for mounting, and 2 scenarios featuring this AFV.

New Variant for Red Barricades—**p.7**
ASL Championship Scenario Replay—**p.9**
Raging Furnace: A Look into a Scenario Designer's Mind—**p.22**

CRITICAL HIT
ASL MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO. 2 $10



The Independent Journal of the ASL Hobby

Advanced Squad Leader Training

Lesson 2: Strategy 201

by Russ Bunten

Introduction

The ASL hobby has its own pantheon of grandmasters, people recognized as the top echelon of players of the game. You can recognize these people because they have come to be known only by their last names. (In the case of the best, by their nicknames!) I'd estimate this group of top players comprise 5 to 10% of the ASL world. I have good news. This article isn't for them. It's for the rest of us.

Strategy 201 is designed for those players who are still looking for the handle on how to play a better game of ASL. The folks who read the last 'lesson' entitled WET BEHIND THE EARS in the previous issue of Critical Hit! This also includes those who have made only the first step, how to play the game, but are looking for directions to the next step, how to play it well. It is also designed to be a good review for those players who very likely 'know' most of the principles this text tries to illuminate, but have never really given them conscious thought. These principles can help them because if you aren't thinking about these principles during play, you're likely to stumble in the tight situations.

This set of articles is not an abstract set of "hints." Think of it more like a workbook, with examples, diagrams and charts for you, the player, to work through.

Using this guide

Of course, not everyone needs help in the same area, so the layout of this piece is designed to be used "as needed." Some people will play through the entire article, but each section can stand alone, thus you may skip ahead to the concepts or principles that you are unfamiliar with, or need to work on. It can also provide good practice and review for all players.

ASL 201 is a series of principles and concepts for PFCs that have graduated from the ASL Training Manual to the game board. These are not hard and fast rules. They will work 99% of the time, and following these principles can improve your play immediately. But slavishly following these examples are not the key, understanding why they work is the important part.

And if you're wondering, knowing when is exactly the right time to ignore these principles is the mark of those players that have made it to the elite group we were talking about earlier.

Obviously, playing ASL is a key part of the learning experience. Watching your opponent's moves and paying the price for your own bad moves hammers home many lessons. But ASL is a game of details, and some of the most important lessons can be so subtle they are difficult for the people who most need these concepts to grasp them! (Life is unfair, isn't it?) Thus, the title of the first section:

It's the 'little things'

Rage about your dice. Throw chairs at small children. Throw them out the windows when box cars come up at the worst possible times. Look skyward and cry havoc (or worse!) if you feel the need. But know, deep in your bones, while the dice might steal an occasional game of ASL, it's the little things that count.

I see beginning ASL'ers take their lumps and not know why. Worse yet, unable to fathom the reasons for their problems, they blame the dice. That's the beginning of the end of a potentially good player in my book. Why? It's a cop out, folks! If you decide the dice are the problem, and you can't control the dice, then you can't change the outcome of your games. Accepting that you're going to lose is not the problem: deciding you can't do anything about it is the problem! That's like saying "I'm perfect, so it can't be my fault, it has to be the dice!"

Is it really true?

A grizzled old veteran of Squad Leader (at least a three striper) told me when I started ASL: "If football is a game of inches, then Squad Leader is a game of details. If you're going to play ASL well, you have to remember: It's the little things that count."

As with all advice, it's wasted on people who don't know enough to understand what they're being told. But gradually, as the scratches on my win-loss record continue to mount, I've come to understand exactly what he was trying to tell me. Best of all, he's right.

Sure the dice will cost you some games. It's a fact of life and ASL. What he was trying to beat through my thick skull was that while I couldn't control the dice, I damn well control the troops doing the shooting and the moving. If I put them in harm's way by overlooking "the little things," for example, moving in a stack when one at a time was appropriate, or even more important, taking fire I could have avoided altogether, I could be certain sooner or later the law of dice averages would cause bad things to happen. The important point is to minimize the risk.

Let's make it clear: odds are best that you'll roll a "7" anytime you toss two dice. Look at the chart. The "7" on a 4 IFT is a PTC. But take a single negative modifier and instead of rolling for a PTC, your opponent will be rolling for the continued well being of his troops on an NMC. Two standard 4FP squads DFF'ing together is an "8" column attack. If you non-assault move into a wooden building, you could say you're asking for an NMC, couldn't you? (8FP +2 TEM -1 NAM = 8FP +1, a "7" on that shot is a NMC.) Though you'd think that +1 TEM should be good enough, there's always that shot lurking around where one pip difference will spell the doom of some good troops and a poor plan!

Of course, if you roll average on an NMC, you'll generally pin, but I've found if you count on the enemy DRs to hit and your MC DRs to fail, you can go a long way in this game. Every shot that doesn't break you is a joy and a treasure; every time you hit and break an opponent's squad is a godsend. Also, if you expect the worst, it keeps you from getting too discouraged about "the dice" and you can worry about playing "the game."

But all this is actually good news, because it also means that odds are in our favor if we play smart and remember, "it's the little things that count."

Principle #1: The squad leader that pays attention to the details is going to win more games than the one who doesn't.

Look at the details in the examples above. If a 4 + 1 isn't a great shot, what is? Where do the chances "even out" on the IFT? What are the chances of a squad getting a hit? If you do get the hit, what are the chances of it breaking them? Those are details of the game system, meaning "the rules." This is not only about rules, though: it's about tactics. Knowing the rules decides what tactics you have available, but you don't have to know all the rules. Every phase in ASL presents the player with decisions, and how a player responds to those decisions makes the difference.

The choice may be as simple as knowing the right time to stack a leader with a squad and when is absolutely the wrong time! Knowing your chances will decide which squads are best to use prep fire to suppress the enemy, which squad should go into the street first, and who should wait to cross after the first squad has drawn off some of the enemy fire.

Most of these points are so ingrained in veteran squad leaders that they never "consciously" consider them. This article is not

for the veteran, but the beginner. Consider it ASL 201: The Little Things; Prerequisite - ASL 101: ASL Training Manual. If things go well, this should turn into an ongoing series and increase in size and scope because that's how to learn big things: bit by bit until all the small pieces add up to something bigger.

First, let's recognize the two aspects of ASL. They are the often mentioned but rarely understood concepts of strategy and tactics. Tactics refers to the actual movements and maneuvers of the troops on the hex board. Since most players move pieces when they play ASL (at least I hope they do!), everyone has a grasp of the idea of "tactical" play. Whether they employ tactical skill is what these articles hope to correct.

Strategy is another subject entirely. Before we can discuss tactics, we must first discuss strategy. Strategy is first because it decides everything you do in the game, most importantly, the choices you make before you ever hit the first wind-change DR. Strategy is a discussion what you want to achieve in a given scenario, and it needs to be considered before you place any pieces on the board.

Do you defend up front and fall back slowly, or do you cede your opponent the high ground and make it a pitched battle for the town itself?

As that line implies, the strategy you chose will decide the tactics you employ. Your choice must be made before you decide your setup, or you'll spend valuable game time trying to ready troops for the battle they weren't prepared to fight.

Strategy is the choice of how you're going to proceed in a given scenario. You might try an end run, or a frontal assault. It might be you've decided on a slow advance with minimum losses, or a war of attrition, trading losses to try to stretch the defender beyond his limit.

Principle #2: Whatever your strategic choices, make certain you have made them. Evaluate the situation and decide how you want to fight the battle.

Too many beginners, and experienced players too, just "go with the flow." If you abdicate your choices for deciding the strategy you wish to pursue, your opponent already has an advantage, because he will get to decide the pace of the game, and more importantly, where and when to fight. If he's the defender, this is almost as good as giving him your plans neatly wrapped around a package of cigars! You'd be better to give him your plans, since at least then they'd be your plans, not his.

"Well, great," you say. "Everyone always talks about strategy. How do I decide strategy?" The first step sounds stupidly simple: Read the victory conditions (Like I said above, it's the little things that count). You will be amazed how many times people lose just because they didn't pay attention to the VCs! Examples are easy: Rocket's Red Glare (G6). The VCs say "controls Q7 or P10 at the end of any Player Turn. So, if you're the defender, you not only have to protect the building, but the ADJACENT hexes, too, or you'll see an MMC advance into the victory hex if you let him ADJACENT! But I've seen more than one player, damn good ones, in fact, lost G6 just that way. Read the VCs and decide what you have to do to achieve your side of them.

So, let's use G6 as an example, with you as the Germans. To decide your strategy, you first look at where you set up and where the enemy sets up. You know you want to hold the American out, and specifically, not only out of the victory hexes, but out of the hexes adjacent to those hexes, as well. But as the attacker will fire first, so you should also know you can't expose yourself to the withering fire those 7-4-7s and the MMGs put out in a FG! Think about it: if you're "up front" in your defense, you could face a 3 squad stack of 7-4-7s and one MMG. That's 21+4 = 24 FP! Even in a stone building, that's like a 12 straight, which nets an NMC on a DR of 9! Then think of adding the 10-2 Ldr to that stack and odds say you could be looking at a 2MC with only an "average" DR! If the American gets lucky, it could easily be a K/ or a KIA result!

So, in Wellington's terms, it's a "reverse slope" defense, where you try to interdict the areas the American will have to cross rather than meeting him "up front." You're (very) limited on forces, too, so make sure as you fall back you're not going to be channeled away from your defensive points. Meaning, for my money, I don't want to hang too many units on the wings.

So how do you hold the wings? You don't—he can have them! Your desire is make sure they don't help him! So, go upstairs with a machine gun or two and look to use them to interdict those hilltops that he'll have to cross if he uses the wings. From the first floor building, those level 1 hills are open ground. Even an LMG makes life tough, and a -1 or -2 leader with a squad and a light or medium MG makes them death.

Knowing I hold the hills if I hold the level one buildings, I can worry less about O10 and more about the closer building. Okay, where do I next want to make things tough for the American?

Well, now I think it's important to look at things from the American point of view. Where would I, as the American, want to be?

Looks to me that my initial objective might just be the stone building in R3. From there I have a great firebase, can suppress all the fire in R5 and not have to stack everyone together to do it. In fact, it looks damn inviting, except for the 9-2 German leader. But that's what they pay us the big bucks for, you know?

So back to the German side, how do I keep the Americans out of the building, at least for a few turns?

That's the question that decides the course of the game, because how you answer it will decide your strategy. Do you stack up in the R3 building, or try to make it too hot to inhabit by targeting it with your 9-2 or your big gun? Perhaps instead you'd like to make it hard to get to the building, laying a firelane on the street in front.

As you can see, you'll answer these questions differently than I, so our games will be different. Perhaps one time you'll try one answer, and the next, another. That's why ASL is so much fun, because in most scenarios, there are no perfect answers. It's a matter of what's comfortable of you. Play the game and see if it works! Take home the lessons you learn and try to improve upon them, rather than saying it was just "bad dice."

Sometimes your choices will work, and other times you'll have played into your opponent's hands, but in each case, it'll be the "little" things you do that make the difference!

Bad dice are just an easy excuse. And if I had stuck with that excuse as an answer, I'd still be making the same mistakes, rather than experimenting and learning how to play better.

Learn from your mistakes. Every game is different, but there are crucial details that are similar, you all shoot, and you all take MCs. When and where you decide to do both of these things make or breaks EVERY game.

As I said, it's the little things that count!



Next issue: Tactical Tips from Russ!

Perfect for ASL Scenarios!

Incidents with the 7th Battalion: The Somerset Light Infantry in France and Germany from June 1944 to June 1945

Never before published memoirs of a British squad leader in two books: 'Normandy' & 'Germany' made available from the arvchives of C. E. Dornbusch (dec.), retired curator of the New York Public Library (ret. 1951) and famous author of C. E. Dornbusch's Unit Histories of WW II

—send $8.95, plus $1.95 shipping to:

Critical Hit, Inc. Publishing Division

PO Box 700 ◆ Goldens Bridge, NY 10526

Updated ASL Index from CH

It's finally here: a professionally printed and hole punched index including the latest chapters and rules sections for ASL. Prepared by Critical Hit, a limited number of copies is available

—send $5.00, plus $1.50 S & H to:

Critical Hit, Inc. ASL Index

88 Lodar Lane ◆ Brewster, NY 10509

Where Did They Come From?

....adding a little variety to Red Barricades

OK, so we admit it! We are Red Barricades fanatics. If you are reading this then you probably are too. At least you have the potential to be. There is a quick test to determine your status in the separate ASL world of RB. Have you played at least one RB CG to completion? Have you thought about playing at least one RB CG to completion? Have you ever asked why YOU can't buy an OT-34 flame breathing T-34 for any CG when Avalon Hill saw fit to roll them in during the scenario XYZ? Do you think RB is really cool? If you answered any of the above questions with a 'yes' then read on.

After endless hours spent playing Red Barricades the authors decided to 'improve' on Avalon Hill's first historical module. We'll leave it up to the readers to decide if our offering to the RB gods represents an 'improvement' or not. We decided there was room for a greater variety of units than are currently available via the reinforcement charts already in place. Besides the old question about the aforementioned OT-34, we wanted to know where all that great Lend-Lease equipment was. What if the Rumanians were committed to the cauldron of battle IN the city, instead of covering the flanks with Hitler's Italian, Hungarian, and Spanish friends? What if an ME-109 came screaming over the battlefield? All of these questions can be answered right on your RB map.

Our basis for making changes in the form of an expanded OB is based on the fact that there were other units in the vicinity of Stalingrad that may have been committed to the battle. Some have more 'historical' precedent than others a-la the now oft mentioned OT-34. But certainly fighters and other aircraft were available for both sides and may have seen action in addition to the already included Stukas. Larger caliber Russian mortars could have been carried into the city form nearby positions and used on board. The Russians may have captured a supply of smoke grenades from the Germans the day before.

The intent of this article is to get the player using a wider variety of units in their next playing of Red Barricades. We are not going to provide historical footnotes. Here we give you food for thought and the charts to implement a bunch of new units for your battle. Use all of the below listed units, or add them selectively to your next campaign. We'll leave the reader on this note: Since the players are doing a historical 'What If" study or playing a 'Historical Simulation" by their own choice, we'll leave the decision of what, if anything from the charts below to include. On that note, we offer the following units and values for your enjoyment.

by Tim Robinson and Tom Ruta

RUSSIAN REINFORCEMENT GROUP CHART

ID	Group Type	Full/Depl	Unit Type	CPP Cost	Daily Max.	I	II	III
A6	Stuart III Pltn	3/2	Stuart III (see note s)	3	1	1	1	2
A7	Lee Pltn	2/1	Lee (see note s)	4	1	1	1	2
A8	Matilda II Pltn	2/1	Matilda II (see note s)	3	1	1	0	1
A9	Valentine II Pltn	3/2	Valentine (see note s)	3	1	1	0	1
A10	OT-34	1	OT-34 (see note s, t, u)	3	1	0	1	1
G4	107 MTR Pltn	2/1	107* Mtr (see note c)	3	1	1	1	2
G5	120 mm MTR	1	120* Mtr (see notes c, t)	2	1	1	1	2
G6	37 mm AA Pltn	2/1	37L AA (see note c)	2	1	2	1	3
G7	57 mm AT Pltn	3/2	57LL AT (see note c)	5	1	1	1	2
M4	Smoke Capacity	—	Smoke Capacity (see note v)	1	2	4	2	7

GERMAN REINFORCEMENT GROUP CHART

ID	Group Type	Full/Depl	Unit Type	CPP Cost	Daily Max.	I	II	III
I5	Elite Coy	12/9	German 4-6-8 (see note y)	9	2	3	3	3
I6	Rumanian Rifle Company	12/9	Axis Minor 3-4-7 (see note w)	4	2	2	2	4
I7	Rumanian Elite Company	12/9	Axis Minor 4-4-7 (see note x)	6	2	1	1	2
S2	Fighters	1—3	FB w/o bombs (notes b, z)	1	1	3	1	3

NOTES:

s These units are subject to RECALL (O11.614)

t These units are purchased individually. They are not subject to a strength roll.

u The OT-34 is only available on or after November 10th. They are subject to a recall roll as any other AFV, but are recalled on a dr of 5 or 6.

v Infantry smoke grenades are available to the Russians in the same manner as MOL capacity. Each such purchase increases the smoke exponent of every 1st Line and Elite squad by one. Smoke grenade capacity purchased only lasts for the next campaign scenario played.

w A Rumanian Infantry Company can be purchased as any other German infantry company. Rumanian infantry companies receive SW as follows: HMG-1; MMG-1; 20L ATR-1; LtMtr-1. However, for each two Rumanian Infantry companies purchased replaces one German Rifle Company available. Use the Russian leadership table for Rumanian units with a +1 DRM.

x Each Rumanian Elite company purchased replaces one German Rifle Company available. Rumanian Elite infantry companies receive SW as follows: MMG-1; LMG-1; FT-1; DC-2; 20L ATR-1. Use the German leadership table with no DRM.

y Each German Elite Company purchased replaces one German Rifle Company available. Use the German leadership table with a -1 DRM. The German Elite Company receives SW as follows: HMG-1; MMG-1; LMG-2; ATR-1; LtMTR-1; DC-1.

z Subject to the same restrictions as German Stukas.

DYING BY THE HALF-SQUAD



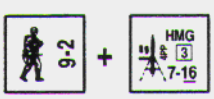
A Discussion of tactics and helpful hints for RED BARRICADES

By Tim Robinson & Tom Ruta

Gentlemen, (ASL Players and other truly dedicated fanatics) if any of you are completely frustrated by the tactics used by your best opponent (and best enemy), then this article is for you. We here in Stalingrad have made several observations on some tactics that work well in the play of Red Barricades, and some that do not. We therefore offer the following "Lessons Learned" in the hopes that we may in some small way assist our brethren players in achieving victory. So, shake the brick dust out of you helmet, and empty the sewer sludge out of your boots, break open that bottle of "liberated" Russian vodka and read on.

First and foremost, the Battle of Stalingrad was a battle of attrition. Second, the campaign games represents an Operational simulation of the battle. Keep these two facts in mind when you play the campaign. Play to win the battle of attrition and to achieve certain operational objectives along the way. Consequently, the way to win the battle of attrition is to eliminate more of the enemy than you lose yourself. You must kill squads and this often is more important than retaining terrain. In Red Barricades, the most effective way to kill squads is to generate multiple morale checks. In urban terrain, you will generate few KIAs, so try to make each Morale check count. Do not let that broken unit escape, and try to protect those squads of yours that do break. From an Operational point of view, keep track of the "big picture" as well as the immediate situation. Don't try to win the entire campaign in one scenario, but do not wait until November 15th to force the issue.

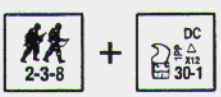
Tactical Hint #1. *The Buzzsaw:*



"Barkov, they're firing at us again! and again! and again!" Simply, in RB it is essential to generate as many morale checks as possible on your opponent, in as little time as possible. Further, to do this successfully, we suggest you employ what our gaming group affectionately calls "The Buzzsaw." Most successful German advances will have at least two layers. The first layer is the shock troops that will actually advance and take territory; the second layer is the overwatch positions. Maintaining overwatch positions is essential to achieving objectives with minimal losses. Place three 4-6-7s, three HMG, (three MMG will also work) and a -2 leader in a 1st or 2nd level building that overlooks the area you wish to attack (or defend). Further, insure that you can see the SPECIFIC hexes that you plan on capturing. You now possess a fire group that can usually break anything in its LOS and often kill with multiple morale checks. From 1 to 6 hexes, its firepower is 33 and at its maximum range of 12, the group can bring down 27 firepower factors on its first attack. Either attack can be followed up by another attack of 21 firepower factors if the machine guns maintain rate, all with leader modifications.

While the German player needs to control the heights, the Russian player needs to control the cellars. Reverse the buzzsaw and put two squads, the -2 leader, and FOUR HMG's in a key cellar location. Use HIP whenever you possibly can and choose a location that is partially masked, where he must come to you. DO NOT try to duel with his buzzsaw(s), you'll probably end up losing your HMGs. In the cellar, your squads will automatically lose half their firepower, so they might as well fire two support weapons. Four HMG's with ROF 3 can bring down repeated 24 firepower table attacks.

Tactical Hint #2. *Special Delivery:*



"A little high explosive never hurt anybody." One of our favorite units in RB is the German Sturm Company. (These boys are vicious!) Besides their rather obvious uses to generate some high firepower attacks, they can be deployed. We suggest you initially deploy as many of these squads as you legally can and equip the half-squads with demo packs and flamethrowers. Make many small, insignificant units with BIG stings. This presents the Russian player with a choice somewhere between "Bad" and "Ugly" with no "Good." Does he attack your large, three squad stacks to inflict greater losses, or does he attack the half-squad with the demo charge or flamethrower? Using this technique, you retain flexibility and the ability to maneuver. You also preserve the (very expensive and rare) Assault Engineers and in the bargain trip the occasional trap. The whole purpose is to keep your losses to a minimum. For a truly insulting addition to injury, combine this technique with the buzzsaw technique above and first break the target you wish to demo/flamethrower.

Tactical Hint #3. *Burning Down The House:*



"Fire's cool, Dude." You are the Russian. Fire is your friend. Use the kindling table to burn down what is left of this ruined city. Your life will be somewhat easier (and possibly longer) if you can deny the rooftops and upper levels to your enemy. Force him to come down into your hole and dig you out. Further, he can not set up a buzzsaw and have effective artillery spotters if the German has no upper level terrain. Additionally, by eliminating his range advantage, and forcing him to fight through the rubble, your German opponent is going to be slowed down. Lastly, by making an even bigger mess of this terrain than it already is, maneuver and attacking is even harder.

Another advantage fire has is that it is a temporary obstacle. Use it to control your opponents movements during a specific scenario. By denying him the ability to maneu-

ver in a certain manner, you may take several of his key units out of the battle for at least three turns by forcing them to around the fires. Also, most fires will last into the next scenario if you are lucky. Lastly, if you are planning a Night Assault on the next day, BURN SOMETHING!

Be aware however, that fire is a two-edged sword. Whatever you burn, plan on surrendering that building to the Germans. Insure that you really DO NOT need that building. A nasty trick is to leave several squads behind to control the spread on the fire. In a non-factory building hex, that location will burn down overnight, but you will retain a toe-hold in that particular pile of rubble. May we suggest a HIP Demo charge as a house-warming gift for the new occupants?

To go along with the paper pyromaniac's of this world. [Who we count ourselves as proud members.] We feel that the MOL-P platoons are somewhat underrated and unappreciated. What they can do for the Russians is deny key terrain features to the Germans by starting fires in certain buildings. Further, once a MOL-P unit hits and starts a blaze that grows into a fire, the building is doomed. This will first deny that 1st or 2nd level building to the Germans for the rest of the scenario. Further, during that scenario the Germans will be forced to go around the blaze channeling him to where you want him to go. Lastly, you can probably deny him the second level buildings that he needs to form overwatch positions. All that will be left is a pile of rubble.

One tip, always try to setup all three of your MOL-Ps to fire at one building. That increase your odds of starting a fire.

Tactical Hint #4. *The Gang with the Biggest Bang:*



"God, I hope his field phone breaks." With all the +3 TEM and multilevel building, at first, artillery may not seem all that useful in a RB campaign game. In fact, it is invaluable to reducing your causalities and to increasing his. First, few attacks should ever be mounted without a little preparation from ARTY. This a great way to inflict those multiple morale checks that are so crucial to killing units in this game. Second, attempt to place the artillery a little bit "long" (i.e. on and behind your target). Once a target unit is broken your opponent faces a rather cruel choice. He can either leave them where they are in hopes of a successful rally roll (usually while under DM), or rout them through the FFE with rather unpleasant consequences should they fail another MC. Third, use the off-board artillery to drop smoke on a target for cover.

Artillery is expensive based on CPP cost and there is the possibility that you will get only one fire mission. (Which is what I usually get!) Unfortunately, Russian artillery is an especially risky buy. To offset this risk, we recommend that both players preregister any battery of 100mm or larger. The extra black card, immediate FFE potential, barrage capability, and additional accuracy is well worth the extra CPP. You'll get more bang for the buck.

The best use for the Russian 70mm artillery batteries is to drop smoke. If you preregister this battery, you can set up a smoke barrage, and a Human Wave directly behind it. In this way, you can open a hole in his lines with bodies, rather than shrapnel. Another radical use is to purchase two light batteries and drop two (Barrage) smoke missions to mask your "Right" and "Left." In this way you can attack in the "Center" without annoying fire from the flanks. We call this maneuver "The Bookends." (Do we seem a bit rough on the Conscripts?)

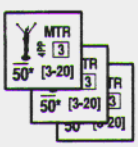
Artillery is especially useful on the defense. Even a light battery or mortar FFE will be avoided by attacking troops. Try placing it in the street just in front of the building he is about to attack. Sometimes, just the placement of the Spotting Round counter is enough to slow him down and make him rethink his attack.

B. *The Rockets Red Glare:*

Rockets are a two-edged sword. If you could count on them to land where you want them to or be able to adjust their fire, they would be great. However, their EXTREME inaccuracy is a problem in that they can come down upon you own head instead of the enemies, especially if you try to land them close to your front lines. Therefore, in placement of these weapons of massed destruction, carefulness is the watch word.

A player might wonder why anyone would want to use these modules as opposed to regular artillery. However, both the Nebelwerfer and Katyusha OBA module have one major advantage for the massive amount of firepower you get, they are CHEAP! At a cost of only 2 and 3 CPPs, a player can bring down 200 to 150mm firepower on top of his opponent. (These are truly garage sale prices.) The key to these missions is placement. Place your artillery spotter with a field phone in an upper level location that has the best view of his rear areas possible. Then place the spotting round and then the FFE in his rear areas far enough from your own front lines so your forces can not be hit by friendly fire. With the right placement, rockets can blow a hole in your opponents lines that you can then exploit.

Tactical Hint #5. *The 'Poor Man's' Artillery:*



"You're not serious. Are you, Comrade Commissar?" On a battlefield where most of the enemy will be hiding in a building, bunker, cellar, foxhole, or in an otherwise equally obnoxious locations, what can you possibly do with this (Weeny) 50mm mortar? It's heavy. It's awkward. And it's in the way. They can't drop smoke. However, light mortars in mass can be useful in generating multiple morale checks, striping away concealment, and forcing your opponent to react to a relatively insignificant unit. One mortar will not affect you opponent's attack plans; SIX will. We recommend that you place three squads, each with two mortars in a "reverse slope" type of position. Use a half-squad as a spotter, and leave him concealed or HIP. You now have a "Mini-Mortar Battery" that will generate at least six attacks, with the possibility of ROF 2 multiple attacks.

The down side of this tactic is that you will probably generate a Sniper attack (or two, or three, etc.) from the many To Hit and IFT effects die rolls. P.S. Do not use conscripts as mortar men. They have other (target) uses.

Tactical Hint #6. *Button Up:*



"Hasn't the General learned yet that armor doesn't belong in the city." By now, almost everyone has figured out that Armor does not have a good time in the city. You have shorter engagement ranges, lots of opportunities for street fighting, wonderful ambush sites, and difficult targets. (It's hard to hit somebody in a damn fortified stone building or cellar.) On the other hand, armor can be used quite effectively as an auxiliary weapon for three primary purposes; Mobile fire-support against enemy strongpoint, [i.e. His Buzzsaws], to place smoke in specific location to provide cover for infantry, and lastly, to kick open the door after the infantry have turn the lock. Even in the city, the armor's mobility can be used to conduct an exploitation.

What seems to work best is a combined arms teams. The tanks support the infantry while they advance, and the infantry protects the tanks from ATG and CC.

Tactical Hint #7 *Along the expected line of advance:*



"Where did #$^%& did they come from." Another tactical hint involves combining HIP, 5-2-7s and cellars. First, as the Russian you need to decide where you think the Germans will attack the next day, and then about 2 or 3 hexes from the front line place three, HIP 5-2-7s in a cellar location. Next, instead of attacking as the German advances in Defensive fire or Prep Fire, wait for Advancing Fire Phase to attack and then move into melee with the now (hopefully) pinned enemy.

This little trick may seem simple, but it is effective and most importantly, CHEAP. Putting the ambush a couple of hexes from the front line also lowers the chance that they will be discovered by a recon. Further, after moving a couple of turns, many people forget to search and will be less likely to find your surprise.

Tactical Hint #8
Defense in Depth:



"What does it take to get through these guys." Saying that you need to defend in depth may seem rather trite for most readers. Unfortunately, in Stalingrad it is not all that easy. Why? For several reason: 1) Mutually supporting positions are hard to develop because the building blocks and all the hindrances add to TEM. 2) Machine guns are vulnerable to counterattack. This is especially true if they are in good 1st or 2nd level buildings. 3) If the weather is clear, the Germans will probably have Stukas to blast out any major opposition in the rear areas of the Russians.

Despite these problems, defense in depth is still practical. How? For one thing you can put the supporting troops in cellars and buildings. By doing so they are a hard target. Further, you can also put your troops in adjacent hexes and levels to form firegroups, and this will force the Germans to fire at 2 or 3 targets instead of one. This should allow you the time to rally an already broken units while the others squads are still stopping the Germans. Also, putting in a mix of concealment counters can also add to your opponents frustrations. Causing him to waste firepower in useless attacks.

Probably an overlooked item for creating a Defense in Depth is reserves. Place these troops 6 to 10 hexes from the front line in stacks of two to three. Since they are cloaked, the numbers of troops in that location is unknown to the enemy. If you use the extra concealment counters that come with them, the enemies problem is even greater.

Tactical Hint #9
Sewer Movement:



Sewer movement is a good way to get the troops off those highly dangerous streets and still retain a little mobility. Further, this is a great method to frustrate your opponent because he almost has to react to the potential threat behind his lines.

Popping the old troops into a building that your opponent thought was his, or moving into a building that has troops in an upper floor, can be quite frustrating to your opponent. Often, the shear presence of troops in the sewers can be an inhibiting factor, because the Germans will have to pull away troops from other attacks.

Also consider using sewer movement to aid an attack. Attack with 3/4 of your troops normally, and put the rest in the sewers for a multilevel assault.

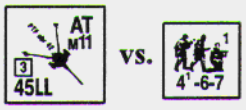
Tactical Hint #10
Booby Traps and Snipers:



She has him in her sights. Ever so slowly, she puts pressure on the trigger. Bang. Another stick falls. Booby traps in RB are a great way to affect your opponents morale and possibly up his frustration level. Why? Because it is aggravating to lose a 1/2 squad or more to an annoying pin check, especially when the Germans does it to himself by rolling an 11 or 12. When you can inflict losses in Red Barricades, do so. For a quick look at the numbers, a "C" level booby trap can be expected to kill something 1 out of 36 times, a "B" level will cause a casualty reduction 2 out of 36 times, and an "A" level will 3 in 36. In our opinion, for a cost of 1 CPP, this is a fair deal for a Russian player. He will probably have a lot of lower level attacks that will lead to pin checks. Instead of pinning your opponent, you can kill a 1/2 squad or at least wound a leader 1/13 of the time. Booby traps are worthwhile.

Snipers are another goody that is available to both sides. For the Russians, snipers are highly useful. For the Germans, its the best way to attack his leaders and with the miserly Russian leader table and a little luck, the Russian can have a real leader shortage. This is another example of something you or your opponent can not really control. If a sniper comes calling, you simply have to hope that he will break your squad and not kill or wound your leader.

Tactical Hint #11
ROF 3 ATG vs. Infantry:



"Guns are BANG fun." In RB, light guns [defined here as the 45mm and 50mm] have some real advantages and a few drawbacks. Since most of your targets will be in buildings, under concealment counters, and probably have a hindrance or two, hitting the enemy in the first place can be difficult. Regardless, what makes guns, even light ATG so vicious is Rate of Fire. Once they hit, you do not add the TEM to the resultant fire table roll. For effects, a 50mm ATG hits, you find your results on the 6 column. This is like a 16 table with a +3 TEM for attack results. Plus, you have the potential for ROF 3 with the light ATGs and these units can quickly cause double morale checks leading to their targets reduction, ELRing, or elimination.

Infantry Guns and Medium ATGs [defined here as 75mm or 76mm] are another source of firepower found on the Stalingrad battlefield. The ROF 2 is a nice addition, but nothing that can be counted on. However, once they hit they can do some serious damage as they use the 12 IFT column. This would make them roughly equal to a 24 attack with a +3 TEM, plus you can expect to maintain rate or fire 1/3 of the time.

Lastly, the Germans have available a 150mm Infantry Gun. When this toy hits, it can do some serious damage. However, this weapon does not have ROF and basically is a one shot a fire phase weapon. However, what it best at is forcing infantry off the 1st and 2nd levels to move, forcing them to other positions. [It can also makes a wonderful amount of rubble for those individuals who enjoy distant demolition.]

Anyway, these are some of the advantages to purchasing guns in RB. Generally, use your guns to engage and hopefully destroy enemy positions in the 1st or 2nd level to avoid hindrance problems as this will help you hit your target. Also, do not forget that several of these weapons come with smoke and can be used to provide cover for attacking infantry. Lastly, several of these units come with special types of ammunition for anti-tank purposes. If a AFV does come within your LOS, do not forget to use APDS or HEAT as it will increase your potential for a kill against armor. Lastly, you can fortify a buildings ground and 1st level, and put guns on the upper levels. This can cause your opponent quite a few problems if you pick a building with a good LOS. The only drawback and what makes this primarily a Russian tactic, is that once up there the gun can not be moved again.

Tactical Hint #12
Demo Charges and interior walls:



"The could have just used the door like everyone else." When advancing through the factories, there are pesky walls all over the place that you have as obstacles. Russians can often hide behind them and generally make life difficult for the attacking Germans. The way to get around this problem is to place a DEMO charge on the wall between you and your opponents. That way, with a MC you can attack the defenders with a 15 table +1 and create a break in the wall where he is not going to expect it. This can greatly aid the person trying to force his way through those huge complexes.

Tactical Hint #13
Tanks in reserve:



For the Germans, tanks can provide fire support, place smoke where infantry needs it, and exploit breakthroughs. Russian armor on the other hand has a little different use. Place it in the middle of the map, and move it to the threaten flank of the day. Almost always, the Germans infantry will be unable to deal with this obstacle quickly and a couple of well placed tanks can disrupt an attack or even put a stop to the maneuver just by their mere presence. They can cause the Germans to pause for a turn to work around the obstacle and that can often be the time the infantry needs to rally. Further, it can prevent the German armor from exploiting a breech in the defenses as all German armor is vulnerable to even the lowly T-70 with their 45L guns.

Tactical Hint #14
Stukas, Stukas, Stukas:



"A Stuka is a German's best friend." If its a clear day, BUY Stukas. The Stuka is cheap, highly flexible artillery for the Germans that he does not have to draw cards for. Do not expect them to win the scenario, but they can will open a hole in the Russian lines. Other uses are to eliminate that pesky buzzsaw, start fires in his rear area, attack anti-tank gun po-

sitions, or to knock out a tank. With the die rolls being what they are, Stukas generally come in late in the scenario, say turn three or four. Because of the "to hit" modifiers, you will get best results if you can use these units to attack the enemy units in the rear. Also, do not forget that once they have dropped their bombs, to use the machine guns to strafe any Russians that are broken or in the open. Stukas can reinforce/revitalize a faltering attack, or add that extra punch needed for a successful one. Once you have him on the run, do not let up.

Tactical Hint #15 *Fortifications*:





You diehard Germans can skip this section. "We are advancing constantly, and we're not interested in holding onto anything, except THE ENEMY! We're going to...." Ooops! My Apologies! I digressed to the wrong front and wrong army for a moment there. Anyway, if you are playing the Russians, THINK like a Russian! DIG like a Russian! Let "Mother Russia" take you into her bosom and protect you. Make a series of strong points that will give the German fits. Your first Operational Objective is to wrest the initiative from your opponent and slow him down. We suggest spending the maximum possible on fortifications for at least the first two weeks. Once his overall attack is stalled, you can then conduct limited offensive attacks.

A) Wire, Mines, & Pillboxes in combination: Imagine the following: You have successfully burned building B19. You have emplaced Minefields in hexes G22, C22, C23, B22, and A22. You have emplaced Wire also in hexes G22, C22, B22, A22, and B21. You built a pillbox in hex A23 facing B22/A22. You still control territory along the hex grain from A23 to A14. You have positioned an ATG in the pillbox. You have squads with HMG's/MMG's in the cellar of C23 and B23. Is this level of fortification possible? YES, ABSOLUTELY! What you have just done in building this complex obstacle is to force the German to halt and conduct a deliberate assault on a narrow front where you can concentrate your firepower. (We call this the "All or Nothing Defense.") The really beautiful part of this is your opponent can not afford to ignore these positions as you will just make them stronger given more time. Further, if you can build these strong points fast enough, he will be reduced to assaulting them one by one until he runs out of time or troops, or both. Also, be sure to plan ahead, because these strong points take several turns to build, plus Mines and Wire can not be emplaced in frontline locations.

B) Set Demo Charge: Germans don't pay rent. Uninvited guests rarely wipe their feet. They are going to trash your house anyway, so why not bring the roof down around their Fascist ears? Seriously, a hidden 36 table will cause even the most hardened ASL veteran to think twice. The odds of him finding and cutting the wire to your detonator are fairly poor, considering the consequences of failure. If the demo charge doesn't rubble the building, count on it breaking most (if not all) of the personnel in the target location. Your follow-up small arms attack should finish them off. Pull this trick on him once, and you will see your opponent move VERY carefully in the future, making full use of the searching rules and slowing down his attack.

Tactical Hint #16 *HIP + Human Wave*:





"THEY'RE HERE!!" As the Russian, you have a little problem. You will have to take an idle day at least three of every four campaign days. However, that does not prevent you from attacking the Germans during an idle day. A dirty and often unexpected move is to setup a hidden human wave attack. The way to accomplish this is, HIP 1/3 of your planned Human Wave no more than two hexes from your objective. Make the next 1/3 of the wave look like normal defensive positions. The rest of your "wavers" should set up one movement phase away from the start point. Plan on executing the wave on turn two or three, but still keep your intentions hidden from your opponent using the HIP squads.

This plan does several things for you. Foremost, it prevents the Germans from locating your main effort and placing his machine guns to kill them off as they advance. Secondly, it allows you the opportunity to Prep Fire with part of the force for at least one turn. Thirdly, if the Human Wave cannot be executed, leave the HIP squads in place for ambushes. Lastly, if the Human Wave succeeds, you have made gains late in the campaign day and will probably be able to hold them through the completion of the present scenario.

Tactical Hint #17 Don't Put all of your HMG in one building



This particular piece of advice in similar to the old adage, "Don't all of your eggs in one basket." If your opponent were to get lucky, drop a FFE right on target, or just roll a critical at the wrong time, you could lose all your ROF 3 support weapons at one time. While you do want to concentrate 2 or 3 of these weapons in one good spot, putting them all in one spot is a large risk.

Tactical Hint #18 *The Precious Crews*:



"Billy, don't be a hero." Crews are precious. You will find as we have, that it is easier to kill a crew, than it is to kill the gun it is manning. Therefore, you will soon have more ordnance than crews to man them. Further, being effectively a 1/2 squad, crews die after failing two MCs and it gets expensive if you have to buy a HW platoon to get more crews for the guns that you have. The Russians will lose guns as the Germans advance and capture them. The Germans however, will rarely lose ordnance to Russian advances. If your crew does break, get him out of the line of fire where he can rally. Do not try to "rally them around the guns." Bad guys will be shooting at them with predictable results. On the other hand, if you have an opportunity to kill an enemy crew, KILL IT! You'll thank yourself later.

Tactical Hint #19 *Maintaining Your ELR*:



"You bought HOW MANY Sturm Companies?!" Unlike most of the other tactical hints (or dirty tricks) we have outlined above, keeping your ELR up to three or four WILL win or lose the campaign for you. Either side can effectively attack or defend with an ELR of three. We have found however, that an ELR of two or less gets you in trouble. An attack against heavy opposition will melt when all those expensive elite troops break and reduce to morale level seven.

As the German player, try to plan your idle days to occur every two or three campaign days. Also try to go idle when you have a large NEGATIVE Historical Modifier and on that idle day, purchase as many elite units as you can. If you can afford it, buy a cheap tank platoon as well. The point is to get as high a modifier on you ELR die roll as possible, so you have a good chance of increasing your ELR level. While there is not much you can do about the bad Historical Modifiers at the beginning of November except hope for low die rolls. But by that time you get to that point, you should have captured most of the map anyway. Plan for very limited attacks, using overwhelming locally strong forces.

As the Russian player, you start out at an ELR disadvantage. But somewhere around the third or fourth campaign day, the German will be forced to take an idle day or risk loosing an ELR level. If you can anticipate the day, save a few CPP's to spend on that day. Purchase as many companies of infantry you can, including at least one elite unit. Regular and Guards SMG companies are perfect for this purpose. They are cheap and will give you a respectable chance to raise your ELR. Buy a light tank platoon as well if you have the funds. If you are certain you will both choose an idle day, purchase everything as a reserves. The units are even cheaper this way.

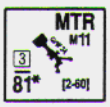
Tactical Hint #20 *Reserves for preventing breakthroughs*:



Reserves in combat are normally something should be utilized by the Russian player, while the Germans are normally confined to taking them on idle days. Careful placement of these squads can be useful for the Russian player as it will force the Germans to engage them and at the least the Germans will be slowed down. Ideally, you should place these units in stone buildings, bunkers, and factories with a LOS that does not exceed three hexes. This way, the Germans will not always

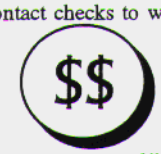
get first shot at your units before you can fire at him. Further, with the EACH reserve company unit you purchase comes five free dummy concealment counters to add to the Germans "Fog of War." Use them, rarely in ASL does anything good come for free.

The downside to reserves, is that your opponent really decides when these units are activated, because he either has to move within three hexes of them and be in their LOS, or attack them with a result of at least a pin check. So, while useful, reserves do have their drawbacks.



Tactical Hint #21
81mm Mortars :

"Another THUMP in the tube." An underrated weapon are the heavy weapon platoon mortars. While as an attacking weapon, these units are somewhat limited for attacking in an urban setting where most everything they are probably going to get a shot at will probably have a +3 or better TEM. However, another exceedingly useful tactic is to have these weapon fire smoke at opponents in an effort to either mask his ability to fire, or to provide cover for your own attacking forces. Mortars are useful in that you have these units as organic forces and you do not have to chits, accuracy die rolls, or contact checks to worry about.



Tactical Hint #22
Good Investments:

"A penny saved is a penny earned." We would like to end this discussion of Red Barricades tactics with a word about what units to buy and how to buy them. Of course your purchase priorities will be dictated by the shifting tides of your own campaign, but we offer these general guidelines.

First, for the Germans, your Sturm companies are by far the best buy. They are highly effective on either the attack or the defense. You should strive to maintain a balanced force of infantry, artillery, and tanks. You will need at least 45 squads to successfully attack, and during the initial part of the campaign, at least half of these should be morale eight squads. Next, you will need one or two platoons of tanks. As stated before, tanks will not win the scenario for you, but they will help. Next, one or two batteries of artillery is almost a requirement if you want to advance. You should also have at least one platoon of infantry guns or anti-tank guns on the board. Lastly, if it's a clear day, BUY A STUKA!

For the Russians, your first priority should be infantry. You need to maintain a force of around 60 squads in play at all times. During the early days of the campaign, we recommend that you purchase most of your infantry as Reserves. They will be cheaper and can be in the right place to blunt a major breakthrough. Expect to lose about one company of infantry per day, so plan accordingly. Your second purchase priority should be artillery. A 120mm battery with a preregistered hex is a best buy for the defense, but you will run out

Getting the most from your mileage (on foot)

by Harold Mortimer

Quick! What is the maximum MF's of a first line MMC carrying 4 PP in the same location as a leader? If you answered anything other than 7 MF's this chart is for you. If you apply A4.4, 4.42, 4.51 and 4.52 you will find a first line MMC with 4 PP and a leader can move a maximum of 7 MF (the base MF for the MMC is 4 MF, +2 for leader bonus, +2 for CX, +1 for the PP the leader must carry, -1 for the PP in excess of the 3 IPC of the MMC and -1 for the IPC loss for CXng=7 MF). In this example the leader must also carry 1 PP because this lifts a PP off the shoulders of the MMC yet still allows it and the leader to stay in the same location.

Use the chart below as a quick reference. You may wish to photocopy the cahrt and keep it handy in your rule book.

Table #1: CX MMC with Leader		PP's carried by SMC
CX MMC with CX Leader at	0 PP= 8 MF (a)	0
CX MMC with CX Leader at	1 PP= 8 MF (a)	0
CX MMC with CX Leader at	2 PP= 8 MF (a)	0
CX MMC with CX Leader at	3 PP= 7 MF (b)	0
CX MMC with CX Leader at	4 PP= 7 MF (a)	1
CX MMC with Leader at	5 PP= 6 MF (b)	1
CX MMC with CX Leader at	6 PP= 6 MF (a)	2
CX MMC with Leader at	7 PP= 5 MF (b)	2
CX MMC with Leader at	8 PP= 4 MF (c)	2

Table #2: Non-CX MMC with Leader		PP's carried by SMC
Non-CX MMC with CX Leader at	0 PP= 6 MF (g)	0
Non-CX MMC with CX Leader at	1 PP= 6 MF (g)	0
Non-CX MMC with CX Leader at	2 PP= 6 MF (g)	0
Non-CX MMC with CX Leader at	3 PP= 6 MF (g)	0
Non-CX MMC with CX Leader at	4 PP= 6 MF (b)	1
Non-CX MMC with (i) Leader at	5 PP= 6 MF (a) [EXC: conscripts (b)]	2
Non-CX MMC with CX Leader at	6 PP= 5 MF (b)	2
Non-CX MMC with Leader at	7 PP= 4 MF (c)	2
Non-CX MMC with Leader at	8 PP= 3 MF (d)	2

Table #3: CX MMC without SMC	
CX MMC without Leader at	0 PP= 6 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	1 PP= 6 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	2 PP= 6 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	3 PP= 5 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	4 PP= 4 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	5 PP= 3 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	6 PP= 2 MF
CX MMC without Leader at	7 PP= 1 MF

Table #4: Non-CX MMC without SMC	
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	0 PP= 4 MF
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	1 PP= 4 MF
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	2 PP= 4 MF
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	3 PP= 4 MF
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	4 PP= 3 MF
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	5 PP= 2 MF
Non-CX MMC without Leader at	6 PP= 1 MF

(a) SMC must remain with MMC for entire MPh. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC see (b).]
(b) SMC has one more MF by CXing at the start of the MPh. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC see (c).]
(c) SMC has one more MF without penalty or can CX at the start of the MPh to get two more MF's. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC see (d).]
(d) SMC has two more MF's without penalty or can CX at the start of the MPh to get three more MF's. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC see (e).]
(e) SMC has three more MF's without penalty or can CX at the start of the MPh to get four more MF's. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC see (f).]
(f) SMC has four more MF's without penalty or can CX at the start of the MPh to get five more MF's. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC add one MF.]
(g) SMC can CX at the start of MPh for two more MF's or during the MPh for one more MF. [EXC: If with conscript or green (if applicable) MMC add one MF.]

Dying by the Half Squad, *continued from above.*

of them quickly. Your third priority should be fortifications. Fourthly, Anti-Tank gun platoons are a good investment. Try to keep at least three guns on the board at all times. Their ROF of three makes them effective against infantry as well as tanks. Lastly, tanks are probably best used to attack, to allow their mobility to be used to its fullest. However, they are also useful in the defense as a counter-breakthrough force.

LC for Targets ...the basics

A Primer on LC killing

by Pete Mudge

Most questions involving LC seem to arise during the resolution of the To Hit process. Just how does one knock out one of these very large barges? The answer to that question is of concern to those floating toward shore in one of these crates as well as to those who seek to avoid their opponents ever reaching *terra firma*. In this article the author will try to shed some light on this subject and forward our mutual quest to play these rules right! We will assume you are taking part in a SEABORNE ASSAULT or a SEABORNE EVACUATION (G14) when using your LC in the references below, and point you to the fact that 'LC' will be used to refer generically to the eight types of landing craft listed in Chapter G (G12.1).

For our example we'll use a scenario published right here in this magazine, CH 4, STEUTZPUNKT VIERVILLE. This Omaha Beach scenario was published here in the last issue and features a bunch of Germans sitting up on the 'bluffs' of Board 3 shooting at infantry and tanks crammed into incoming LC's. (The information outlined here can also be used for the latest LC scenario, A RIDGE TOO FAR, published in this issue of Critical Hit!) This scenario is rather simple from the German point of view: Not one step inland. To defend against the invader the Kraut receives one 81mm mortar, a 75L Pak 40 AT-Gun, a medium and a heavy machine gun. The American has to clear only one of the two 'bluffs' on Board 3 to be declared the victor. As the German, you are rather thin on the ground in STEUTZPUNKT VIERVILLE. Your troop quality/quantity is rather poor but you do have the 75L AT-Gun to serve as a potent LC killer while the 81mm mortar can do equally well as a killer of men. The machine guns may not do much against the LC in the form of sinking them or killing their passengers but as you will see below they do have their uses. Finally, with all that ROF around to use against the Americans, the German must be aware of that Yank SAN of '6' for the first three turns.

So your Krauts at Omaha are watching those bathtubs wallow in across the waves and your commander, asks *you*, the lowly NCO Gunther, what to do. It's time to start eyeballing that LC DESTRUCTION TABLE (LCDT) with all the tiny footnoted text and start thumbing through your rule book. All the LC's we are facing in 'Steutzpunkt' are armored, so look at the first set of rows on the LCDT in the 'Attack Type' column. Firing your 75L AT-Gun using HE gives us a '7' TK number, with rolling one less, or a '6' to inflict damage points (DP) as per G12.62. The number of DP inflicted are based on how much less than the TK # the DR is. For example, rolling a '6' inflicts 1 DP, a '5' will inflict 2 DP, and so on. If we are talking about the LCVP floating around out there in our scenario example, rolling up a DR of '3' will sink one of these puppies in deep water with the loss of all hands (G12.69). In shallow water (the three hexes from the beach in 'Steutzpunkt' you will only immobolize a LC by exceeding the DP rating).

Rolling equal to the TK number, a '7' in this example, does no damage to the LC (inflicts no DP) but does subject the PRC to a Collateral Attack. Here is where you need to keep track of the location of those hits. A turret hit will affect the inherent crew of the LC. A hull hit will affect the Passengers inside the LC. In both cases, a Morale level of '8' applies. In the case of the inherent crew, a +2 CE modifier is applied as in the case of any AFV. The Passengers inside the LC receive no such benefit. In our 75L AT-Gun example, firing HE will lead to a '6' factor Collateral Attack on the Passengers in the case of a hull hit, a '6' (+2) attack against the inherent crew in the case of a turret hit. The penalty for failing a MC for the Passengers is Casualty Reduction (G12.13). A LC crew *never breaks* while inherent, instead suffering a Stun result that keeps adding +1 for each cumulative stun effect obtained. Better yet, when you stun one of these LC inherent crews, YOU get to make a Random Direction dr, reposition the LC to match that result, AND your enemy is considered to have used the remainder of its MP (if any) if all this happened during the MPh.

Your machine guns are also useful for getting those incoming LC's to start spinning around in the water. Remember that all non-ordnance fire (infantry FP and MG FP) is halved against anything in the water (non-beached LC). Your goal is to stun the CE crew of the LC's and delay them from getting ashore (or getting away in A RIDGE TOO FAR). Forcing a LC to start spinning in place also makes it a sitting duck for an AT-Gun or mortar which is ranging in on it.

That 75L AT-Gun can also use AP to take on the oncoming LC's. Using AP type, one DP is inflicted if the Final TK DR is ≤ *half* of the applicable Final TK #. If the TK DR is > half of but still ≤ that TK # there is no effect on the LC except for possible Collateral Attack on the PRC. In the example of our 75L At-Gun, the PRC would be attacked with a 1 FP attack, with the inherent crew gaining that +2 for CE status we mentioned above. The important point to remember is using AP against LC, the *most* DP you can acheive with a non-Dud hit is ONE [EXC: CH G12.64]. If you do get the infamous Critical Hit, all it does is insure that you will get at least 1 DP no matter what the subsequent roll is.

Your mortar serves as a killer of men and a 'stunner' of LC crews in this scenario. Mortars are more of a threat to PRC of a LC due to the fact that they receive the benefit of a -2 DRM (C1.55). An 81mm mortar firing on a LCVP resolves an attack on the 8 FP column of the IFT with a -2 DRM and will inflict 1 DP on the LC with an original IFT DR of 4. A final IFT DR of 5 or less will attack the PRC (a hull hit will attack the passengers; a turret hit attacks the inherent crew) on the 4 column of the IFT with a -2 DRM. For example, an original IFT DR of 5, with a hull hit, will result in a final DR of 3 (due to the -2 DRM), and an attack on the 4 column of the IFT against the passengers. This results in a 2MC for all hands. An original IFT DR of 4 would result in a K/2 on the 4 column, with Random Selection being rolled for normally for the passengers. As you can see, the mortar has a tough time sinking one of these armored tubs outright, but can inflict losses on the passengers. Remember, all passengers have a morale of 8 and casualty reduction is the order of the day when riding the waves in your LC.

LC DESTRUCTION TABLE[1]

ATTACK TYPE:	Non-Ordnance Direct Fire[2]	AP (Vehicle Target Type)[3]	HE (Vehicle Target Type)[4]	HE (Area Target Type, OBA)[5]	Residual FP[6]	A-B Mines[7]	CC[8]	Blaze[3]
LC TARGET FACING:								
Armored[10]								
≤ Half TK#/1KIA	- a	B cd	C cdf	D cdf	- a	-[11]	-	F
< TK#/K	- a	- cd	C cdf	D cdf	- a	-[11]	-	F
= TK#/K	- a	- cd	- cdf	- cdf	- a	-[11]	-	-
> TK#/K	- a	- -	- -	- -	- a	-[11]	-	-
Unarmored								
≤ Half ★Veh #/TK#	A b	B de	C def	A def	A b	E g	-	F
< ★Veh #/TK#	A b	- de	C def	A def	A b	E g	-	F
= ★Veh #/TK#	- b	- de	- def	- def	- b	- -	-	-
> ★Veh #/TK#	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	-	-

'Random Info Bites'

Unit May	Attempted Motion	Attempted sD	Fired & kept ROF	Fired & lost/no ROF	Attempted Motion & sD	Attempted sD, fired & kept ROF	Attempted sD, fired & lost/no ROF	Attempted Motion & fired (ROF or not)
Attempt Motion	–	Yes	Yes	No	–	Yes	No	–
Attempt sD	Yes	–	No	No	–	–	–	No
Fire	Yes	Yes	–	–	Yes	–	–	–

INFO—CHART: AFV capabilities for Motion Attempt, sD usage, and firing during DFF and the DFPh.

- ✪ Nixon's 10 Year ASLOK Re-cap
- ✪ GSTK Replay
- ✪ OBA Flowchart
- ✪ 15 NEW Scenarios!

CRITICAL HIT

ASL MAGAZINE

Issue No. 3 $10



The Independent Journal of the ASL Hobby

THE MARRIED MAN'S GUIDE TO ASL



by Chris Maloney

Articles concerning ASL deal primarily with how to play this complex game. Little tips like creating a 'killer' stack by matching machine guns with your ranking leader or avoiding moving in open ground when you are overstacked are all well and good for the 'average' ASL'er (you know, single, computer programmer, living in the Pacific Northwest). What is missing from the hobby's published works is advice for we married ASL players: we need a guide on how to get our wives to allow us to play the game. If you belong to the married subclass of our geeky little ASL nation, read on. If you ever intend to be married for more than six months, be forewarned. If you are a gay ASL player, you may as well go on to the next article (*If you are gay and have a significant other, you may as well stick around.* Ed.)

I once heard ASL described as "Avalon Hill's best little marriage breaker." I would not go so far as to leave my wife over ASL; making love to little cardboard counters just wouldn't do it for me although I can't speak for the corner clipping crowd. While I remain a married ASL'er, I have not remained a dignified ASL player. Many times my neighbors have heard the sound of whining emanating from my home: "Honey, I won't be gone long, it's only a short scenario."

"Which one?" asks my wife, who, through osmosis, has learned how long most scenarios take.

"Strayer's Strays, four turns max, no vehicles", I lie. I am really going to play Hill 621 in one sitting. So, I am an undignified, dishonest ASL player.

In addition to her knowledge of the time it takes to complete an ASL scenario, my wife now speaks to me in game turns to tease me about how long non-game related events will take. "We have a dinner date tonight, no more than three game turns" she'll say.

This all drives me crazy. Why in the world would my wife, who feels the same way about ASL as NOW feels about sexual harassment in the workplace, hate the fact that I play ASL? All I do is sit around a table with a bunch of guys, roll dice, move little cardboard pieces, and argue about whether or not one needs to have wall advantage to be shot at behind bocage. She doesn't have to worry about me having an affair because of ASL (this could be a concern among the gay ASL crowd. Ed.). I have never even heard of a woman playing ASL, let alone seen one. If there are any women out there that are playing ASL, I am an available, hunky, Brad Pitt type, only better looking. Please send a photo of yourself holding your ASL modules, along with your ASL-AREA rating care of Critical Hit.

Rather that guess at my wife's reasons for hating ASL, I decided to ask her. "Because it's a stupid game, you could spend more time with me or use the money to pay bills or give it to charity" se responded. This just shows you can't talk to women. What do they know about ASL or war, anyway? Imagine Yoko Ono and Barbara Streisand playing an ASL scenario:

YOKO: Barbara, let's say no troops allowed in the woods or orchards, I don't think we should harm the environment because of men's stupidity.

BARBARA: That's a wonderful idea, Yoko! And that chateau over there, I bet it's beautiful. I propose no HE attacks or troops within six hexes of it.

If women designed the game system, SSR #1 would probably read as follows: "The scenario ends immediately and is considered a draw if both sides agree that warfare is a stupid waste of life and 'Dirty Dancing' is a much better movie than 'Full Metal Jacket'.

So, I can discount women's, or my wife's opinion of ASL. It doesn't change the fact that it's a hassle getting her to allow me to play. I tell her I could have worse vices, such as cocaine and teenage girls. In fact, cocaine and teenage girls might go wonderfully with ASL. With enough cocaine we really could play a full blown RB CG in one sitting. A week later you have won the campaign, lost your home, job and wife; you just woke up with a teenage girl named Tammy and the police are at the door with a warrant and Tammy's parents. All right, perhaps it is best to just tell my wife I could have worse vices.

It is just so frustrating to have my dreams of martial glory on the cardboard battlefield crushed by marital reality. I bet Rommel never went through this! (no, he just brought Lucie shoes. Ed.) Picture this, if you will:

ROMMEL: Darlink, I am off to defend the Atlantic Vall!

FRAU ROMMEL: Oh no you're not! We hafe a dinner date vit the Himmlers in two hours. Last time you vent out, you were in Afrika for two years!

I don't think so.

For all my complaining, I do get to play rather frequently. I got in some five or six scenarios last year. I guess I just like to complain. Ask anyone who has ever played a scenario with me: "What, you rolled another nine, you're rolling so LOW!"

After getting beaten again by one of the local beginners I set off for home my usual three hours late. Let me give you a few pointers on what not to say when you walk in the door in such straights:

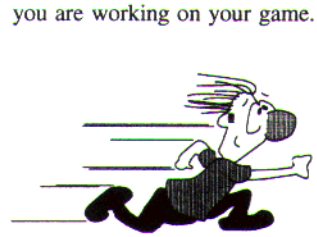
SEXY APPROACH: "I'm home, let's have sex!!"

STUPID APPROACH: "What, it's what time?"

IMBECILE APPROACH: "Honey, sorry I'm late. But, guess what,...I won!"

A few tips to leave you with: the ASL rule book is thick enough to fend off blows from a Paul Revere 16" stainless steel frying pan; tell your in-laws ASL has something to do with working for the government, they will never understand anyway; creep in when you are late and try and crawl into bed without waking up your wife; run, just run, when you are in a tight spot.

If you have been dumb enough to think I was really going to have some good advice here for the married ASL set, think again. If you are dumb enough to follow the advice of a moron like me you will soon be a divorced, unemployed ASL player. But, look at the bright side: you will soon have plenty of time to play ASL. Without the little woman or a career to stand in you way you will soon be an ASL champion. I'll keep my old lady warm while you are working on your game.



ERRATA for CH #1 & CH #2

CH #1:

STEUTZPUNKT VIERVILLE

1. The Direction Arrow is currently pointing toward the EAST edge. North is toward the top of the page. This will fix the US being able to enter right next to the beach on Turn 1.
2. The Be5 overlay should be placed: Be5: 505-506 on D7-D6.
3. SSR #4 should read: Tanks may not enter a Level 1 hill hex from any Level 0 hex that is WEST of hexrow I.

PRELUDE TO BREAKTHROUGH

1. There should be 16 German concealment counters.

BREAKTHROUGH TO KOZANI

1. SSR 1 should read: EC are Moderate with no wind at start. Kindling fires is NA.

THE PREDATORS

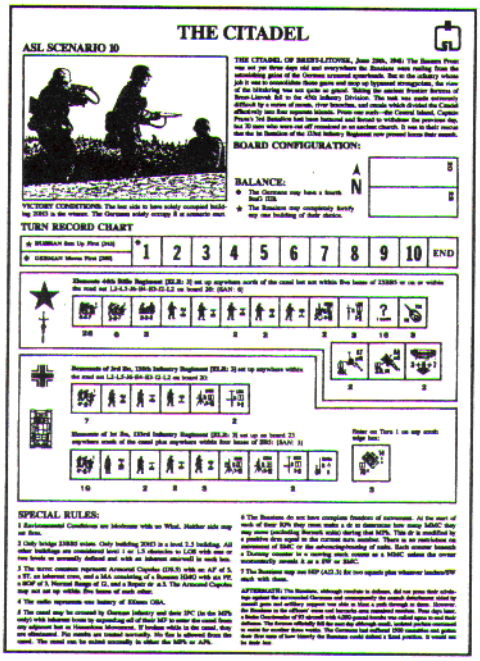
1. SSR 5 on page 16, Infantry Category B is a Russian HMG and a .50cal HMG. A total of 2 machine guns are available to the Russian player choosing this category.

THE GREEN HELL

1. ABS HANDICAP should read:
US3-US2 + replace the Japanese 9-1 leader with a 10-2.
US2-Decrease CVP's in the VC to 18.
US1-Replace a 6-6-7 squad with a 6-6-6.
J1-Increase US SAN to 4.
J2-Increase scenario length to 7.5 turns.
J3-J2 + replace the US 9-1 leader with a 9-2.

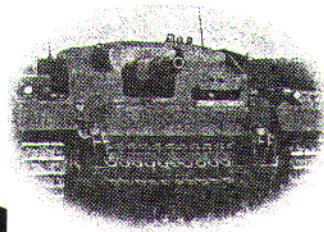
CH #2:

1. **Strategy 201** was written by Russ Gifford, not Russ Bunten as printed. This error was corrected in later print runs of the magazine but still lists Bunten in the TOC.
2. **Jim Berhalter** should be credited for the concept behind the Cave/LC Play Aid Card.
3. **Getting the most from your mileage**, note that all listings on the chart that refer to a CX leader carrying PP should be marked with a footnote to indicate the leader would have to be actually carrying any PP due to an IPC of 0 due to being CX.
4. **Land of the Khan**, the Japanese set up should reference SSR 5, not SSR 4.



Storming THE CITADEL

(as if you were there!)







by Robinson and Ruta

Introduction:

Gentlemen, ASL Fanatics, and Commissar Want-To-Be's, it's time to dust off those old scenario cards, and take another look at "The Citadel". If your circle of ASL gamers is anything like our's, you probably played this scenario once (about eight years ago), then moved on to the next scenario or module. After all, with over 200 scenarios and three campaign games published to date, it is hard for any one single scenario to stand out. This one however, is a gem. It is one of the few scenarios where both sides attack and defend at the same time, thereby creating the potential for a significant number of options for either side. The tactical solutions and trade-offs are many and varied and these combinations guarantee that this scenario will never be played the same way twice. In our playing so far, no one single setup or tactic always seems to work. Therefore, the material we present here is not necessarily a free ticket to victory, but it may increase your chances of winning. Besides, your best ASL buddy (and best enemy) is reading this, so you don't want to concede any advantage to him.

This scenario is unique in that it is a German/Russian city-fight that takes place some where other than Stalingrad. The characteristics of the early-Barbarossa time frame and the canal on board 23 are some of the interesting features. Further, there is a little something to appeal to everyone in this scenario. Besides plenty of infantry, it has just about all of the supporting weapons thrown in for "seasoning". The Germans have AFV's and OBA, while the Russians have on-board guns, pillboxes, and the new armored cupolas. Victory conditions are straight forward "King of the Building" with no regard for casualties.

GENTLY, ...SQUEEZE.

The soldier finished eating his piece of dark brown bread and wrapped the remaining half of the loaf in the waxed butcher's paper."

This bread is getting very stale," he thought to himself. "Tomorrow I will probably have to soak it in water just to be able to break off a piece. This German canned sausage is not bad though. Much better than the rations they issue us. That is, WHEN they issue us rations at all."

He looked around the room. Since he usually operated alone, and rarely even saw the others in his unit, he was used to having conversations with himself.

"This is a perfect position," he thought. "From this room, I can see where the Germans are preparing to cross the canal. They, on the other hand will have a hard time spotting me. Plus, since I had scouted out the building and surrounding area, I've got a ready escape route." After a quick glance out the window, "Well, it looks like I still have a few minutes before they start the show." Having finished his breakfast, he packed the remaining bread in his knapsack.

He felt, rather than heard the telltale signs of the attack about to start. First, the low rumbling of a tank's engine and then the unmistakable sound of the tracks on pavement. The rapid staccato of the German machine guns soon followed, mixed with the sharp report of rifle fire and the shouts of the officers and sergeants positioning their men to begin the attack. Finally, the thud and super-sonic whine of artillery fire completed the picture. Smoke shells, landing near the bridge started to form a thick cloud.

"Just where I thought they would be," he thought. With his binoculars, he studied the German positions across the canal through fleeting gaps in the smoke screen. "About sixty men plus a tank. That means this is the big push. There! He's my target. I can almost see his blue fascist eyes from here." A blond man, wearing a field cap and gesturing with a pistol, dashed across the bridge and ducked behind one of the large trees bordering the canal. "I'm lucky this is still early in the war. The officers with their silly hats and pistols are easy to spot. Soon, they will learn. Wearing a helmet and carrying a rifle will make them harder to pick out." The "target" was still gesturing and shouting, encouraging his men to cross.

The soldier picked up his rifle, and laid it on the makeshift firing platform he had constructed from an old office desk. When he saw that his "target" had gotten most of his platoon into the old warehouse, he chambered a round and peered through the 20x scope. "Good, put your men under cover first," he thought, "I'll wait until there is no one covering you." The "target" exchanged a few hurried words with one of his sergeants outside the doorway. "I'll bet he thinks he's safe in the shadow of the entrance. Breathe deep. Let half out. Gently, ...squeeze...."

CRACK!!!

The blast was almost deafening inside the enclosed room. The "target" fell and didn't move. The sergeant who had been talking to the "target" dove into the doorway then fired a burst from his machine pistol across the street. "Don't waste your bullets, Fritz," he thought, "You have no idea where I am. But I'll save a bullet for you next time we meet."

The sniper picked up his rifle and knapsack, turned, and walked out of the room.

Russian Advantages:

The Russian player's biggest advantage is his initial setup. His position is fairly unrestricted, therefore he can tailor his assault force against the church and the delaying force anyway he sees fit. In addition, urban terrain favors the defense. The Germans must advance against Russians who will enjoy a +2 or +3 modifier for the buildings. Also, the terrain tends to channel the attackers as there are only a few good avenues of approach. The Russian can use this to his advantage in his troop placement.

Time is the Russian's best friend. Ten turns is plenty of time to capture the German posi-

continued on page 36

continued from page 35

tion in the church. On the other hand, it is not an unreasonable amount of time to delay the attacking force coming across the canal. By the time the relieving force gets to the church, it will be too late to do the survivors any good.

Another advantage the Russian has is quantity of units. He has THIRTY-TWO squads, which alone can put out a punishing amount of firepower. He also has two AT guns and an AA gun. Properly placed, these would neutralize his assault guns and some of his infantry. Further, don't forget the two HIP squads. These two squads can ruin his day if they can spring a good ambush. The three cupolas and two pillboxes contribute nicely to the defense.

For once the Russian has adequate leadership. In fact, they have a squad to leader ratio of 3.71 to 1, with total negative modifiers of five. Further, since this scenario takes place before 1 November 1942, the Russians can replace an 8-0 leader with a 9-0 Commissar. While this is a little risky, it is well worth it. You may end up with a few more conscript squads, but a Commissar (a.k.a. Mr. Tenderness) will get your people back into the line much faster.

Russian Disadvantages:

The biggest disadvantage the Russian faces is the movement restrictions in SSR #6. This allows him to move only 1dr plus the turn number of MMC's in his movement phase. While his freedom of movement gets better as time goes on, practically speaking the Russian player can usually either maneuver units against the church or try to conduct a fall-back defense; not both. For this reason, set up your delaying force in a series of layered strong points, and use the Route Phase to fall back. Use your limited movement to assault the church.

Another Russian problem is the typical dearth of support weapons. He receives a paltry two MMGs and three LMGs for his 32 squads. While this problem is somewhat mitigated by the three armored cupolas and the large mass of troops, setting up good fire lanes along streets is a problem.

Lastly, the Russian is fighting on two fronts. For most of the game, there will be a delaying force and an attacking force against the church. Strengthening one will unavoidably weaken the other.

ADJUST FIRE, Over

Spread out on the table, the wrinkled and torn map was starting to look like a child's best Kindergarten work of art. There were so many lines and scribbles on it that you could hardly make out the terrain features underneath. Never-the-less, the two soldiers studied it intently, as it was the only one they could find of the city. The older man, obviously the one in charge, jabbed his finger at various points on the map.

"This is the church Lieutenant Stahler and his men are trapped in," said the older man. "His last report was that he had about seventy effectives left, plus wounded, and that the Russians were getting ready to storm the building. I want you to pre-register your battery on these buildings," he said indicating several of them on the map, "And I want a smoke screen around this bridge so my battalion doesn't get eliminated before we even get across this damn canal."

"That will not be a problem, Sir," responded the younger soldier. "I can see both of those buildings from my observation post upstairs, and our battalion stockpiled smoke shells for this assault. There should be plenty."

"Good, I don't have a lot of time or much information to go on. Be flexible and keep that smoke and shrapnel on the enemy wherever you see him. The attack is going to start in less than ten minutes. You had better get your guns warmed up."

"Yes Sir," answered the lieutenant as the Commander gathered up his map.

Just then, another soldier carrying an apparently heavy backpack rushed through the back door, tripped over the step, and promptly fell down.

"YOU IDIOT!" screamed the lieutenant at the soldier on the floor. "That radio is my only link with the Fire Direction Center! If you break it, I will have you shot for being clumsy! Get that radio upstairs and set it up somewhere where you can't break it!"

"Yes Sir! At Once, Sir!" said the soldier with obvious panic in his voice. "I'll have it set up immediately!" The soldier gathered up his burden and scrambled up the staircase.

"Lieutenant," said the Commander as soon as the third soldier was out of ear shot, "You had better learn to instill some confidence in your subordinates. Scared rabbits do not fight well. This war will not be a short one, and that man will probably be required to save your life one day soon. He will respond better to a leader than a tyrant."

"Of course, sir. I will keep that in mind."

"See that you do. That will be all."

The lieutenant saluted crisply, turned and bounded up the staircase after his radio operator. When he arrived at the upper room that he had commandeered as his observation post, he saw his subordinate hunched over the radio, attaching the hand set. "Not like that!" shouted the lieutenant. The radio operator visibly jumped at the unexpected tirade. "You've got it backwards! Give me that before you break it!"

"I'm sorry, Sir," said the operator, again with panic in his voice. "I was only doing what you told me to do."

"ENOUGH!!!" bellowed the lieutenant. "When this battle is over, I'll have you court-marshalled for insubordination! Now get over there by the window and try to spot some Russians. Where did the German Army ever find a useless klutz like you?!"

The lieutenant spoke into the hand set. "Fire Direction Center, this is observation post two. Fire mission. Smoke, over."

Through the speaker he heard, " Obser ... ost two. Thi ... DC. Send Coordinat ... , Over." The lieutenant shook the hand set and responded; "Coordinates 293847, screen the bridge, over." "Observation p .... , say again coor ...." "I say again, coordinates 293847. Screen the bridge, over." "Roger Ov ... ost two, co ... 847. Smoke on ... way. You're coming in ... static. Check y ... , over."

"Roger, out." The Lieutenant threw the hand set down on the table in frustration. "Can't you do anything right?!" he yelled at the radio operator. "I can hardly hear the FDC. Put your spare set of batteries in this damn thing."

As the smoke shells started falling around the bridge, the battalion commander adjusted his field cap, drew his pistol, and gave his company commanders the signal to start the assault.

German Advantages:

Since the German force is split, we will consider the attacking force first. The biggest advantage the German player has in his attacking force is Leadership. He has eight leaders for nineteen squads with a total modifier of minus eight. This gives him a 2.38:1 Squad to Leader ratio. There is not much that will stand toe-to-toe with that force. The extra leaders allows the German to use the 8-0's for rallying and artillery spotting. Plus, once rallied, those leaders can quickly move those troops to reinforce where needed, leaving the higher ranking leaders to do what they do best; direct fire and kill Russians.

The next advantage the German player has is his 100mm Off-Board Artillery module. How do you advance across city streets against an uncooperative enemy, and still have something to fight with on the other side? In a word: SMOKE. It is tempting to try and open a hole with the OBA, but we have found that its best use is screening the infantry's movement. In the city, the infantry lack MOBILITY, not FIREPOWER. Use the OBA to offset their weakness, not add unnecessarily to their strength.

The three StuG's are both a boon and a curse. Nothing makes an infantryman sit up and take notice like an AFV. They add significantly to your firepower and mobility, but more importantly, they can fire SMOKE (s9) and SMOKE DISCHARGERS (sD7) to screen the infantry's movement. Remember, they have no machine guns and are therefore vulnerable in (Street Fighting) Close Combat. Plus, in order for them to support the main attack, the German is almost required to send most of his infantry and AFV's across the single bridge over the canal.

An often overlooked advantage the German has is his machine guns. The multiple Rate of Fire of these weapons allows the possibility of generating multiple Morale Checks against the same target. This is a very effective way to kill Russians.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, SSR #6 gives the German superior Mobility and the Initiative over his opponent. An often overlooked and unexpected move would be to send two platoons, a couple of leaders, and maybe a StuG for support, on a flanking move to the east and attempt to force a crossing of the ca-

nal in the vicinity of 23H4 or perhaps 23G2. This move could stretch the Russian defenses very thin and just might allow the German to get to the Church by the back door. Just watch out for those two Russian HIP squads. They might be waiting for this very move.

The German defending force has basically two advantages; and they dearly need them both. First, they are defending the only level two stone building on the board. They can gain time by retreating to the upper levels. Secondly, they have three leaders and three machine guns for seven squads. The can dish out some punishment themselves, but they are fragile.

German Disadvantages:

The relieving force must attack through the buildings, and more importantly, the streets. The Russian will usually get first shot at you, while he defends comfortably behind his +3 modifier. Use your SMOKE to offset his firepower, and your leaders to offset his defensive modifier.

It may not seem obvious when you first glance at the board, but the avenues of approach between the bridge and the Church significantly favor the defense. (We will cover the disadvantages of the terrain in more detail later.)

Crossing the canal is a BIG problem. Regardless of where you decide to cross, you will be vulnerable. The bridge will probably be covered by an ATG and possible an armored cupola. Any other point on the canal may be covered by the two HIP squads. Might I suggest SMOKE as a possible solution? Good Luck, and choose wisely.

Several minor nuisances are the lack of machine guns on the StuG's we alluded to earlier, and the fact that your superior range of you infantry will be offset by the short engagement ranges in the city. Take heart, the survivors of this battle will be issued the new assault rifles and become 5-4-8 Sturm Truppen.

The defenders in the church have big problems. They can (and probably will) be surrounded by the Russian from the start. Expect to have any broken squads under DM for several player-turns. Remember to retreat to the upper levels to gain time, and review the rules on encirclement before you start play. You may need them. Above all, do not despair, help is on the way.

TENDER MERCIES

"Comrade Commissar, Corporal Litinovich's squad is coming back."

Moving to peer out the window, the thin dark haired man frowned. He thought to himself, "You're getting too old for this job, Serge Ivanovich. War is a game best left to the young." He reached down and unsnapped his holster and drew out his pistol. He checked to see that the clip was full and a round chambered. With resignation, he holstered his pistol. This one won't be easy. "Private, stand ready by the door," he said to his orderly, "You know what must be done if we need to make an example."

Private Samsonov, perhaps with a bit too much eagerness in his voice responded, "Of course, Comrade Commissar."

"I'll have to replace this one soon. He enjoys this type of work too much. He's a bully and a coward," thought the thin man to himself.

Just then, Corporal Litinovich's squad piles through the door. A few bullets ricochet off the door frame as the last man stumbles through. He is obviously favoring his left arm. The thin man could make out the tattered hole the bullet made in his uniform and the beginning of the dark stain that would be left by his blood. But still, he was obviously capable of continuing the fight.

"Corporal Litinovich, come over here," said the thin man.

The corporal's eyes were wide with fear. "At once! Comrade Commissar!" responded Litinovich.

"Good. At least you can still spout the correct response with enthusiasm. But I can see the fear in you, even if your men can not." The thin man could not tell whether the fear in Litinovich's eyes were the result of the German's fire or his own summons. He had reason to fear both, but the thin man knew it was his job to insure Litinovich feared him more, much more. "Tell me Comrade Corporal, why have you chosen to disobey your orders. You knew your mission before you left this room. Have you completed it?" asked the thin man in a fatherly voice.

"I am sorry, Comrade Commissar. We couldn't advance. Three of my men were hit. We only just got out of there!"

To himself; "Wrong answer my son. You have ten seconds to change your mind. One..." To Corporal Litinovich, "You know no one can be allowed to retreat. The Nazi invaders must be driven out."

The panic started to show in Litinovich's voice this time. "Yes Comrade Commissar. But their fire was too intense! We were pinned down in the middle of the street!"



Three..." "We must all do our duty. You told me yourself that your father fought the Whites at Archangel during the Revolution. What would he think of you now?" "Five..."

"But Comrade Commissar, we can't go back! We'll all be killed!"

"Yes, he has panicked. He can not be allowed to lead this squad. Seven..."

"You must go back! And you must go back now!"

"But Comrade Commissar, I can't go back out there! The Noise! They have so many machine guns and grenades!"

"NINE..." The thin man made a small gesture with his left hand behind Litinovich's back that only Private Samsonov could see.

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!

Samsonov let loose a short burst from his sub-machine gun out the door in the general direction of the German positions. He wasn't really aiming at anything. In fact he didn't even glance around the door frame to look at his target. All he wanted to do was to divert the attention of the remainder of the squad away from his commissar. In this he was successful.

"ten." BANG!

The sound of a single shot filled the room, almost simultaneously with Samsonov's fire. Not even Litinovich saw the thin man draw his pistol. Litinovich certainly did not see the shot coming. The body of the former squad leader slumped to the floor, with a single bullet hole through the back of his head. For dramatic effect, the thin man rolled the body over so that the rest of the squad could see the face. The right eye was missing as was most of the right side above the cheek bone. The bleeding continued, turning the remainder of Litinovich's face into a red mask of gore. From his experience in Finland, the thin man knew the blood would continue to flow until what was left in the brain was released.

The thin man observed the marked difference in the squad members. Most shared a shocked look on their faces. They moved with rather less enthusiasm and most shot weary glances in his direction. None fixed his gaze on the commissar for more than a second. None wanted his attention. Each man in his own way showed the fear that the thin man was looking for. "Good," he thought, "It is me you must fear, not the Germans. Direct your fear toward me."

The thin man turned to the nearest man in the squad, gesturing with his pistol and said, "Corporal Litinovich has met a rather unfortunate end. Congratulations, you are now the Squad Leader. Do you require instructions on your mission?"

"Of course not, Comrade Commissar!" responded the new Corporal.

Russian Setup and Maneuver:

As the Russian player, you have one all important goal. Get into and capture the church FAST. If you can gain control of this building before the relieving forces arrive, they will have a difficult time digging you out. As this is the only level two building in the game, if you have your MMGs on the top floor, and possibly a captured German MG or two, you can control a considerable portion of the map. With this goal in mind we suggest the following setup and plan of attack.

Place your key weapons first. Good places for the ATG's are in 20BB2, 23N9, 23O10, 20Q2 or 20U2. (I prefer the first two hexes.) A pillbox placed in 20BB2 will protect the gun, and it will get a shot at the tanks crossing the bridge. The disadvantage to this setup is that the center of the board is relative unprotected and the tanks can scoot up the "Y" hex row

continued on page 38

continued from page 37

and pull a flanking maneuver. Try to keep the second gun hidden as long as possible. This keeps him guessing and prevents "a bold and daring move" through the backfield.

Your other gun, the 37L AA, is not as effective against armor. Place it in hex 20M4 where it can engage units in the church stairwell. Once you have denied the Germans uncontested access to the stairs, he will have a harder time retreating to the upper levels.

Next place your Cupolas. These weapons at first produced a quandary. What do you do with a relatively well protected HMG that can't move? We suggest you use them to channel the German to where you want him to go. Consider them to be expendable and don't depend on them to win the game for you. The threat of their use is often more effective than the results they actually achieve. Several good places are:

20BB2 To possibly chew up some infantry coming across the bridge.

23O9 To control the road next to the canal.

20R2 To control the center of the board.

20W3 To guard the center streets.

23P10 To engage lots of hexes.

Try to set them up where they have a large sector of fire. Finally, as a dirty trick, you can use the Cupolas as bait and put them in front of an ATG. The only weapon the German player can knock the cupolas out with is a StuG, so you may be able to draw his SPGs into a ambush.

Next, place your machine guns. Use the MMG's to support the attack on the church, and use the LMG's in the delaying force. You can route with an LMG, but not an MMG.

Once you have placed your key weapons, decide on which direction from which you will assault the church. This will depend in part on his setup, but we recommend an initial assault position in either the row houses to the north east, or the wooden buildings to the south east. Either of these positions give you relatively good protection and will require you to cross only one hex of open ground. (Don't forget Dash.) The buildings in 20G1 and 20Fi are more advantageous in that they allow you to form larger fire groups. You will need them to cut through any concealment he may be able to generate.

Lastly, set up your squads. Strong points in the delaying force should be centered around the buildings 20Z2, 20U2, 20Q2, and 23N9. The attacking force should resemble a horde. Crush him under the weight of the unlimited human resources you command. Let your broken squads (i.e. cowards) route to the Commissar at a designated rally point. Do not be subtle. Time is your enemy here. Your maneuver plan should be relatively simple. Use your limited movement to get into the church. Consider a Human Wave if you have enough movement. In your delaying force, let the German break your squads so you can use the route phase to retreat back to the church. Remember, in the Citadel scenario, casualties are not an issue. Every piece you have (except one) is expendable if you control the church at the end.

THE STEEL BOX

Through the vision slit, he could see the infantry rushing into the smoke screen and presumably across the bridge. He had no idea where his guide was now. Who was he supposed to follow now that all the infantry were protecting their own tails? Well, he would let the tank commander decide that question. His ear phones suddenly crackled to life, "Driver, move forward. Cross the bridge and stop behind that stone wall to your right front."

The driver thought to himself, "I can't see any damn stone wall and neither can you. You'll be lucky if I can keep this lousy tank on the bridge with all this smoke," but responded into his intercom, "Yes Sergeant." The assault gun moved forward with a jerk. Privately, he thought, "Just my luck to get stuck in this piece of crap assault gun. No machine gun and no turret, this thing doesn't even compare with a lousy Mark IV and has the same gun. Whoever thought up this design probably got a medal. I would rather have our old Mark II."

The assault gun plunged into the smoke screen after the advancing infantry. The driver could barely see the curbs to either side of the bridge. He emerged from the smoke screen and swerved toward the right next to the large warehouse.

ping-ping-ping-ping-ping.

A few stray machine gun rounds, meant for the infantry, glanced off the front armor. This crew was used to that sound and they were confident that a machine gun couldn't harm them inside their vehicle.

"Driver, stop and turn left," he heard through his earphones.

"Not before I get myself hull down behind that wall. I take it you want me to aim the damn gun too?" he thought to himself. "Say that again Sergeant. I didn't catch it all," he responded into his intercom. By the time the tank commander repeated the order, the driver had already halted the assault gun behind the wall and pointed it toward the building the machine gun fire was coming from.

BOOM!!!

The whole assault gun rocked backward from the recoil of the main gun. "Damn, that thing is loud," the driver thought to himself, "I'll never get used to that gun. Though it does get results a lot faster than our old 20mm cannon." The driver noted with some satisfaction that they did blow a good sized hole in the side of their target building and that the machine gun was no longer firing at them.

"Driver, move right and follow the infantry. Stop in those woods,"

Without responding, the driver backed away from the wall a few meters and swung the vehicle to the right. He headed for a gap in the wall rather than climb over it. When he reached the woods, he stopped well back from the edge and squarely behind the largest tree he could spot. He noted the infantry were taking rifle fire from the stone building to their front.

"Not here driver," he heard in his earphones, "Move forward to our lead squad on your left front."

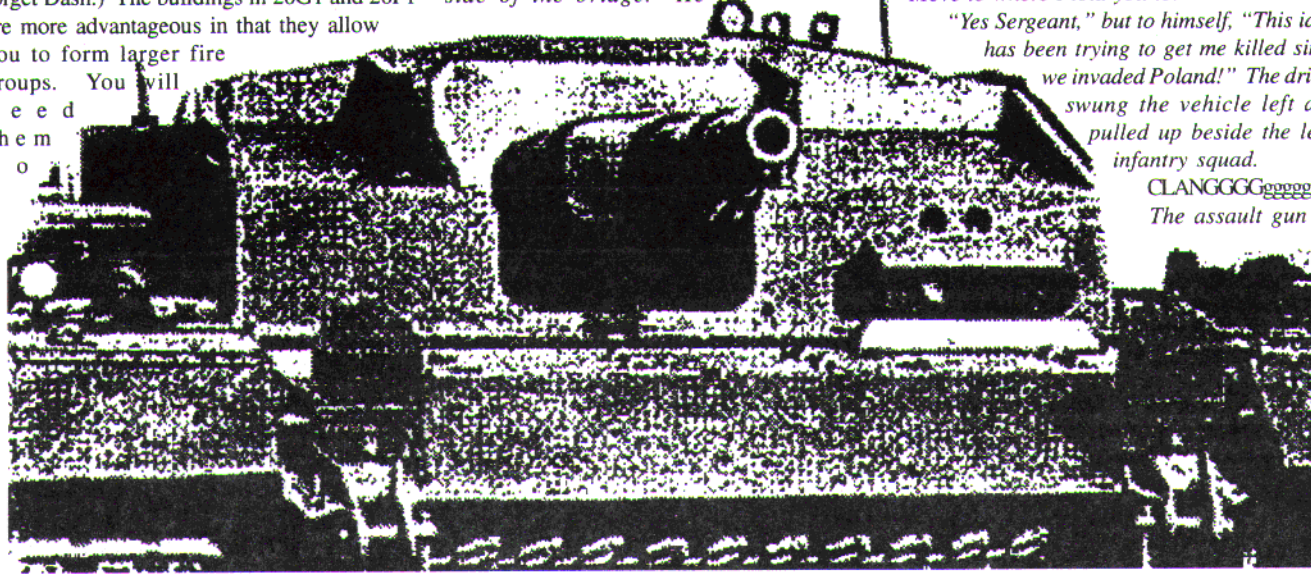
"OUT THERE?! There's no cover!" he thought to himself, but responded, "Sergeant, that's a very exposed position. I can see a better spot over on the right."

"We can't see that building from the right. Move to where I told you to."

"Yes Sergeant," but to himself, "This idiot has been trying to get me killed since we invaded Poland!" The driver swung the vehicle left and pulled up beside the lead infantry squad.

CLANGGGGgggggg!!!!!

The assault gun vi-



brated with the impact of the 45mm anti-tank gun round, then coasted to a stop as the driver disengaged the clutch. The whole crew instantly understood why there was so little rifle fire coming from the building. They had an anti-tank gun hidden inside.

"DRIVER, REVERSE!!"

"DON'T YOU THINK I CAN FIGURE THAT OUT FOR MYSELF, YOU IDIOT!" the driver responded, forgetting this time to keep his thoughts to himself. "I'M TRYING TO GET THIS THING TO MOVE, BUT IT WON'T SHIFT INTO REVERSE!" Desperately, he wrestled with the gear shift lever.

CLANGGGGgggggg!!!!!

Another round ricocheted off the front armor. The driver didn't realize it, but he was trying to find reverse using the shift pattern from his old Mark II.

"FIRE SMOKE! FIRE THE SMOKE DISCHARGERS! GET US OUT OF HERE!" ordered the tank commander with just a hint of panic in his voice.

"Shut up and let me drive," mumbled the driver to himself, "If you had listened to me in the first place stupid, we wouldn't be in this mes ...."

CLANGGGGgggggg, BOOM!

The squad leader to the right of the assault gun ducked as part of its armored roof flew over his head. He knew there was no reason to duck since there would be no time to react if the debris was actually headed in his direction. He watched the assault gun as the driver's hatch slammed open. "COVERING FIRE!" he shouted and fired a few rounds from his machine pistol toward the building protecting the anti-tank gun. He knew the driver needed at least ten seconds to get out of the tank and under cover.

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!

Machine gun fire came from the upper story. The squad leader glanced again at the assault gun. The driver was slumped half in and half out of his hatch.

"Oh well," thought the squad leader to himself, "I did what I could. Now I have my own people to worry about."

German Setup and Maneuver:

First, decide if you will send a flanking force through the park on board 23 and attempt to cross the canal on the east side of the playing area. As we mentioned earlier, you may be able to cross in the vicinity of 23H4 or 23G2. If you choose this option set up six squads, two leaders (the 9-1 and 8-1), and the MMG (dismantled) in hex 23Z2 (Ground floor and Level One). Move, using CX, through the park and hope he does not have a HIP squad with an MMG in 23O10 on Level One. If you get past hex 23R2, you will make it to the canal in three turns of movement, cross on turn four and possibly get to the church by turn seven. Beware of another HIP ambush squad in 23D6 or 23G6.

If you plan on blasting across the one bridge and through the city, it will still take you at least six turns to get to the church against a fairly competent opponent. If you see a cupola or pillbox in the orchard (20BB2), add another turn delay in getting across. A safer alternative is packing 23Y3, Z3, and AA4 with three squads each and using your boats to get across. Three more squads in 23BB4 use assault movement to enter the bridge, then advance into AA6. You will be overstacked with the people advancing out of AA5, but the only positions that can see you are the upper levels on 20CC2 and DD2. LOS to 20Z2 (Level One) is a close call, but the woods in 23Z10 do block. It may also be a good idea to cross starting in 23CC4 and DD3. If you plan to assault the building in 20Z2, you will need a fire group centered around 23CC9. Any extra squads should set up in 23BB3 or AA3. Your artillery spotter should set up in 23BB3 (Level One). From there, he can see the upper levels of 20Z2, AA3, and the orchard in BB2. He can also see the upper levels of 23N9 and O10. Use him to drop SMOKE.

Since the burden of the main attack falls on the German, you must decide what route you will take to get to the church. There are basically three paths open to you. You can take the shortest route through the building in 23Y7, those clustered around 23S9, then through 23N9, to 20K2 and then to the church. Or you could attempt the middle route, again through the building in 23Y7, then through the woods clustered around the building in 20W1, across the street to the large building 20U2, through the rowhouses around 20P2, then across the wall and into the church. Lastly, you could attempt the longer route again taking 23Y7, then attempting to take 20Z2, moving through all the woods and buildings between 20Z2 and the building in 20P8, finally taking the buildings clustered around 20N5, then across the wall and into the Church.

Unfortunately, the problem with all three of these routes is that the German troops are exposed with minimal cover in woods and wooden buildings at critical points. The border between the two boards is not a good place to attack from. See the Russian dispositions above to locate where his strong points will be. You will need to reduce at least two of them before you can make a run for the church. Avoid over-extending one or two platoons (such as in 23Q9) where lots of Russians can engage them with little or no return fire. Don't become the point of a "needle" trying to penetrate a brick wall. You will be "blunted".

Your defenders in the church have little option but to conduct a "Reverse Slope Defence" in the building. You will have the advantage of observing his set up before you place your units. Place them initially out of his LOS so you start the game concealed. Retreat up the stairwell as he advances and try to delay him at least two turns per level. It is possible to hold out for six to seven turns. He is not going to be subtle so don't plan on being cute. Consider fire and movement for these folks FIRST each player turn (before the attackers), otherwise you will forget about them and loose a fire phase.

Lastly, let me comment on "Combined-Arms". Use the StuG's and Off-Board Artillery to support the advancing infantry. You will find that the balance of firepower, protection, and mobility is most effectively achieved when the Infantry, Armor, and Artillery work together to offset each other's weaknesses and compliment each other's strengths. (I.e., fire lots of SMOKE.) Be conservative with your tanks until you have found his ATG's, then run for the church. Your tanks may not do much in his backfield, but they will scare him and divert his attention (and limited movement) away from the church.

Conclusion:

In closing I would like to wish you and your opponents many hour of gaming enjoyment and frustration in trying to win this scenario. Even if you win, you probably will have no fingernails left. Bold and aggressive action is called for on the part of both players. Use every dirty trick in the book.

Have I mentioned SMOKE?



There's no crying in ASL!



—SAYS "OLD SARGE"

We don't give worms a chance in my outfit . . . a dog with worms is not fit, and a pushover for other serious illnesses. We clean 'em out, quick!

Regulations say Sergeant's Puppy Capsules for pup recruits; Sergeant's SURE SHOT Capsules twice a year for old-timers. Sure way to kill worms.

The *Sergeant's Dog Book* tells all about worms, and how to help build the patient back to health with Vitamin Capsules (Vitapets). Get it *free* at any drug or pet store.

FREE SERGEANT'S, Dept. 68-S, Richmond, Va. Please send me a free, 40-page, Illustrated Sergeant's Dog Book.

Print
Name
Address
City State



Sergeant's DOG MEDICINES

- Obstacle Tactics
- Expert Analysis
- Scenario Design HOW TO
- 12 Brand New Scenarios!

CRITICAL HIT

ASL MAGAZINE

Vol. 3, No. 1 $12.95



THE Independent Journal of the ASL Hobby



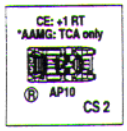
HoB re-releases GSTK Featuring New Map

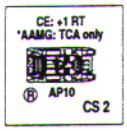
Eddie Zeman and the boys at HoB have re-released thir Arnhem module GSTK. The big news is the inclusion of a new, professionally printed map depicting the terrain previously represented by the old map. We received a sample copy of the new map kust before press time and must admit it is a big improvement over the old version. Gone is the supposedly "muddy" look, ostensibly created on purpose in the old version to give the player a feeling for the wet, dreary weather the battle took place in. We'll take the new, brighter and crisper map over the old version. Also, you won't have to piece the thing together from a bunch of color photocopies. See their ad on the back cover of this issue for ordering details. That's Eddie with one of his former fellow-actors on the set of the HBO television series "First and 10". (Eddie is on the left in the photo).

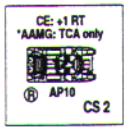
George Bradford and AFV News to the rescue!

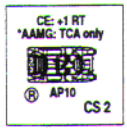
We go on record here thanking George Bradford and his venerable magazine AFV News for the incredible line art of overhead AFV and vehicle view provided for the creation of CH counters. We highly reccomend AFV News; we own just about every back issue available. The magazine is jam packed with material of interest to the ASL hobbyist, including articles about rare AFVs which have yet to see action in any scenario. We'll be working with George to get those tank engines fired up and get more of your cardboard tanks out of your storage container and clanking their way across ASL maps soon.

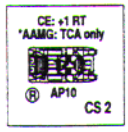


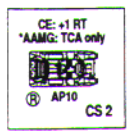












AFV NEWS

"The magazine for anyone seriously interested in tanks and armored vehicles"

AFV NEWS is the official publication of the AFV Association and has been in print for over 30 years now. During that period it has featured articles by most of the more prominent armor authors of our time, and explored aspects of armored combat not normally encountered in commercial publications.

Emphasis is placed on WW2 historical research, quality photos, graphics and plan views, plus in depth book reviews of titles pertaining to AFVs and armor history. If it is tanks you want to learn about you need look no further.



SUBSCRIPTION RATES: This magazine is published three times a year in a 24 page format. The annual subscription rate worldwide is $15.00, personal checks accepted. Back issues are readily available and are updated in the latest issue. All subscribers get FREE use of space in the magazine for personal ads.

Published by:
GEORGE R. BRADFORD, RR.32, CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, CANADA N3H 4R7



Holding the Line

a review of obstacle work in ASL

by Rob Modarelli

The principle of concentration at the decisive point of attack applies to the allotment of mines and laying of minefields as much as to other aspects of war. Small dispersed minefields are useless. {Colonel Ward A. Miller, Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College}

The mortar rounds whirred over head, arching toward the unseen enemy trenchline shrouded in the dust ahead. They impacted with a muffled thump, not the sharp blast of normal HE rounds. Instead of a geyser of dust and dirt thrown skyward, Sergeant Peter Wiggins saw the gentle billow of dark grey smoke begin at each impact point, spreading slowly into a low blanket 200 meters away.

"Sappers forward!" The shout came down the line. Wiggins grimaced, turning to the two soldiers crouched beside him. "Right! Come on lads, now for it!"

The three men rose and began their dash forward. Bent low, running in a half crouch, they sprinted across the hard desert floor. To the men waiting back in the assault position they soon became indistinct outlines, dark shadows of men disappearing into a cloud of dust and smoke tinted red by the westering North African sun.

Wiggins flung himself down onto the ground a few meters from the wire, his two companions doing likewise. Over their heads, a deadly crossfire whistled, lines of tracers snapping by as the British machine guns sought to silence their German counterparts. The Germans, for their part, seemed to be firing blindly through the smoke. "They know we're coming," thought Wiggins as he slithered forward on his belly, "but they don't know where..."

In moments they were at the wire. Another salvo of smoke shells sailed over, but Wiggins didn't notice it. "Cutters, Tom! Come on!" Corporal Allen thrust the wire cutters into his sergeant's outstretched hand. Rolling onto his side, Wiggins began cutting through the wire. His eyes stung with dust and sweat, and his hands were soon bleeding despite the heavy gloves he wore for this work. Beside him, Allen and Private Bourne pulled the wire apart as he cut his way forward, opening the lane.

"Did you mark it?" Wiggins shouted to be heard over the growing din, as he struggled to cut through a particularly tangled spot.

"What?" shouted Bourne.

"Did you mark the start of this bloody thing?!!"

"Yes, sergeant!" came the answer from his left.

"Sergeant!" screamed Allen from the right, groping for a grenade. Wiggins looked up. The swirling smoke and dust thinned suddenly. A mere forty meters away, there was no mistaking the three rounded shapes silhouetted above a small wall of piled stones. The Germans must have seen them, for they swung their blazing machine gun around as Allen rose to his knees and threw.

The grenade dropped into the sangar even as Allen was flung whirling back to lie in a heap on the wire. A muffled blast, and suddenly the machine gun was silent. "Oh Lord," thought Wiggins as he scraped forward another meter and frantically worked the wire cutters. "Oh dear Lord. Not Tom!'

"Sergeant! Corporal Allen's down!" Bourne was shouting.

"I know!" Wiggins looked back. "Look, they'll never find the markers in this dust. Head back, they're going to need a guide. Lead them in this way!"

"But Corporal Allen..."

"I'll worry about Corporal Allen!" screamed the sergeant. "Go!"

Bourne disappeared into the dust. Wiggins cut the last strand of wire, dragging it out of

the way, before clawing his way back to where Allen lay. "Still breathing," he thought. "Come on, Tom!" Lying beside the wounded man, he grabbed him across the chest and began crawling forward. The wire trailed along behind them, clawing at their torn uniforms as if unwilling to release its grip. After what seemed an eternity, they reached the sangar.

The shattered machine gun pointed skywards, its ammo belt gleaming dully where it lay draped over the dead crewmen. Wiggins dragged Allen over and into the sangar, drew his pistol, and peered into the swirling maelstrom. His eyes burned, from the sweat, the smoke, the dust — and the tears. "Come on, you bastards! Where are you?" He cursed silently, and waited, hoping desperately that the next shapes to emerge from the dust would be British.

Once battle is joined, terrain is the one thing you cannot change. Units can be moved, fire can be redirected, but the terrain of the battlefield is a constant once the shooting starts. For this reason, it is essential that a careful terrain analysis be done before planning and setting up.

In ASL, unfortunately, the terrain you will fight for is dictated for you. You don't have the luxury of Buford at Gettysburg or Wellington at Waterloo. So, in most ASL cases, the choice is not *what ground to fight* but *how to use the ground you are given.* You're stuck with the setup area assigned, but what you do with it can determine the outcome of the fight before it even starts.

Obstacles provide you with the ability to alter that terrain to support your plan. In this article, we will examine how to get the most out of your obstacle work. As in previous discussions, we will not spend much time on the actual rules for how obstacles work and how they are cleared. The ASLRB is on the whole quite clear in these cases, and there's no need to simply restate the rules here. Instead, we will look at the impact these rules have on how the ASL battle develops. The defender must know how to use obstacles to their best effect, while the attacker must determine how best to counter them.

First of all, remember that an obstacle's mission in life is *not* to kill the enemy. They do not attack his men (except incidentally), but are instead directed at attacking his ability to maneuver. Any casualties inflicted by them in the process are added bonuses, but should not be relied upon. The obstacle's real job is to make it easier to kill the enemy by fire.

Within the scope of ASL, most obstacles encountered are more in the nature of what are called hasty protective obstacles. These are not the complex obstacles emplaced by engineers with special equipment, but rather simulate the less complex, hasty obstacles put up by forward units, using supplies generally carried at battalion and brigade level, and manpower from the fighting units themselves. As in real life, such obstacles can be a significant hindrance, but are also less complete and imposing than engineer-emplaced fieldworks, and so are somewhat easier for attackers to breach or circumvent — characteristics that ASL rules mimic well.

As the planning process proceeds, remember to have a reason for what you are doing! What exactly do you want these obstacles to do? Trap him? Scare him away from a weak flank? Keep him out of a village? Close a road? The uses are numerous, but in general it pays to keep in mind that obstacles usually perform one of four functions: blocking, turning, fixing, or disrupting.

Blocking obstacles are large, complex obstacles designed to completely close an avenue to enemy movement. They usually include a combination of roadblocks, AT ditches, wire, mines, or road craters. Except in DYO or CG situations, you will probably seldom encounter a true 'blocking' obstacle in ASL.

Turning obstacles, as the name implies, are usually emplaced on the flanks to 'turn' the enemy force off its line of advance, preferably causing him to turn in to your kill zone. Wire and mines make excellent turning obstacles. The obstacle should be angled slightly, and should gradually turn the enemy in the direction you want him to go. This will allow him the illusion of forward progress, which often lures him even deeper into the kill zone.

Fixing obstacles are designed to 'fix' the enemy force, or hold it in place for a period of time. These obstacles are usually placed in the kill zone itself, to hold the enemy in place while he is destroyed by fire from the defensive positions. In ASL, wire is the most effective fixing obstacle, especially when combined with mines.

Disrupting obstacles are usually placed fairly far forward, and are designed merely to disrupt the enemy advance, break up his formations, and generally cause problems as he deploys for the attack. These are the simplest obstacles, requiring minimal resources.

WIRE AND ROADBLOCKS AND MINES, OH MY!

There are several good rules of thumb to follow regarding placement of any kind of obstacle:

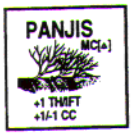
1. Obstacles should always be tied into existing terrain. Three wire counters in the middle of an open field do not provide much of an obstacle (although still possibly a disrupting effect). If easily bypassed, obstacles will not present the enemy with much of a problem. Instead, think of them as a means of *reinforcing* existing terrain features. Tie them in with woods, buildings, crags, cliffs, marshes, streams or other difficult terrain. This will reduce the enemy's ability to bypass them, forcing him to either breach through (under fire, of course — see item 2) or move through tougher terrain that will further slow down or CX his units.

In order to tie obstacles firmly in with natural barriers, it is often necessary to place them in woods or building hexes. In woods, wire can greatly increase movement costs for advancing troops, and will prevent enemy infantry from using bypass in those woods hexes. Note too that victims of minefield attacks in woods *do not* receive the +1 TEM benefit. In building hexes wire is not allowed, but mines can still be placed, where they will attack units entering, exiting, or bypassing the building through non-building hexsides (again, without the +2/+3 TEM of the building).

In addition to standard wire and mines, numerous other types of obstacles occur less frequently in ASL. Blazes and rubble are very effective barriers to enemy movement, and if you have the potential to create them to enhance your obstacle plan, don't overlook them. I am not a fan of deliberate fire-setting as a so-called 'tactic', but the rules do permit it. In the PTO, panjis are a seldom-encountered but highly effective obstacle, which combine the slowing effects of wire with the casualty-producing potential of mines. Integrate any and all of these into your basic obstacle plan if possible.

2. Obstacles should always be covered by fire. This is a classic military maxim, and it is completely true. A very proficient commander once told me, 'An obstacle not covered by fire is not an obstacle — it is merely a pain in the ass.' To defeat your enemy, you need to be more than a pain in the ass. Uncovered obstacles are easily breached or bypassed, and should not present the experienced attacker with any major problem. *All obstacles should be covered with direct or indirect fire.* Note that an OBA observer with LOS to the obstacle is sufficient to fulfil these criteria — if you're confident he'll get the rounds when he calls for them!

Within the confines of an ASL scenario, this rule can be bent, but be careful. With limited numbers of turns, sometimes the 'slowing' effect of wire is all you need to hold off the enemy until time expires. This



PANJIS: BAMBOO SPIKE JUNGLE TRAPS

An *Intelligence Bulletin* published by the Military Intelligence Service of the War Department in October 1944, stated "Panjis—bamboo spikes sharpened to a needle point—are formidable weapons." In ASL terms, a Panji MC (G9.31) can cause a unit to suffer all the consequences of a MC (EXC: Heat of Battle) without enjoying the benefits of any leader present *and* may suffer Casualty Reduction on any MC DR <12 (i.e. a "12" DR will only cause the unit to suffer Casualty Reduction *once*, not be eliminated). Furthermore, G9.42 tells us any "vehicle that enters a Panji Location across one of that Panjis Covered hexsides is immediately immobilized unless it is fully-tracked AFV/Dozer [EXC: a Ridden motorcycle entering thusly is immediately eliminated, and its Rider(s) must Bail Out...].

If we move ahead to Note 20 of Chapter G, we find Panjis described simply as "split bamboo stakes about two feet long, sharpened and driven into the ground at an angle of 45 degrees facing in the same direction. They were usually implanted to form a dense belt of stakes perhaps five feet in width. The function of a panji belt was akin to that of wire: to channel or impede movement..." This basic description gives us the general idea; but just what *is* going on in those panji hexes to cause so much damage? A bit of additional insight is available from the following passages, describing the uses of panjis, and presented here to augment the *description* of panjis provided by the above note, and to serve as an explanation of the results one must face when entering such a hex.

"Here are a few ways in which panjis are used:

PANJI PITS: A pit—4 to 6 feet deep, 4 to 6 feet long, and 3 to 4 feet wide—is dug in the middle of a jungle trail or at a stream crossing. A number of long, sharp panjis are placed upright in this pit, with their fire-hardened points slightly below ground level (see fig. 1). The pit is concealed by a flimsy lid, which is nothing more than a bamboo lattice covered with a few bamboo creepers. Last of all, a natural camouflage garnish of mud or leaves is applied, to blend with the surrounding terrain. Anyone falling into the pit is instantly impaled on the spikes.

continued on page 27.

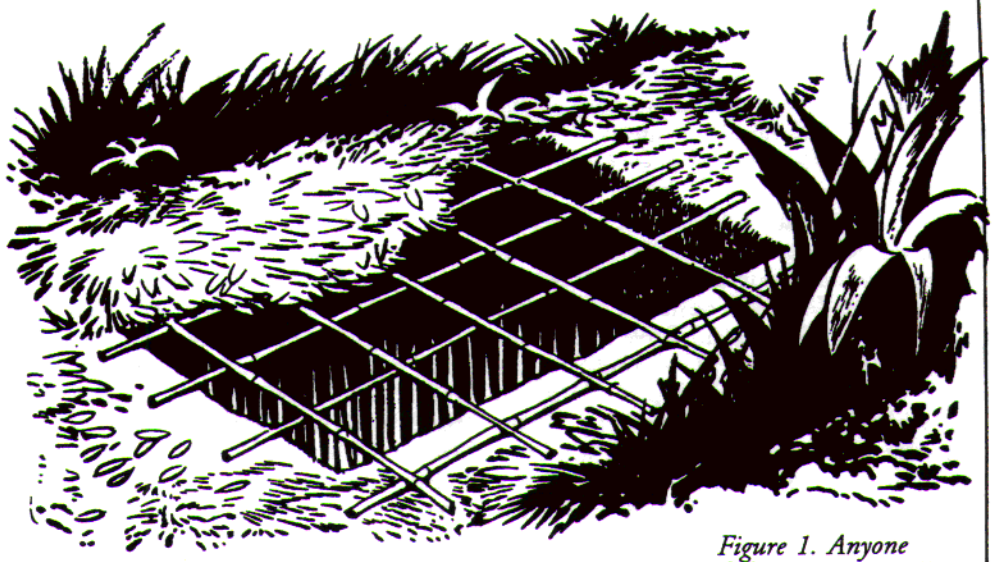


Figure 1. Anyone falling into a panji pit is instantly impaled on the spikes below.

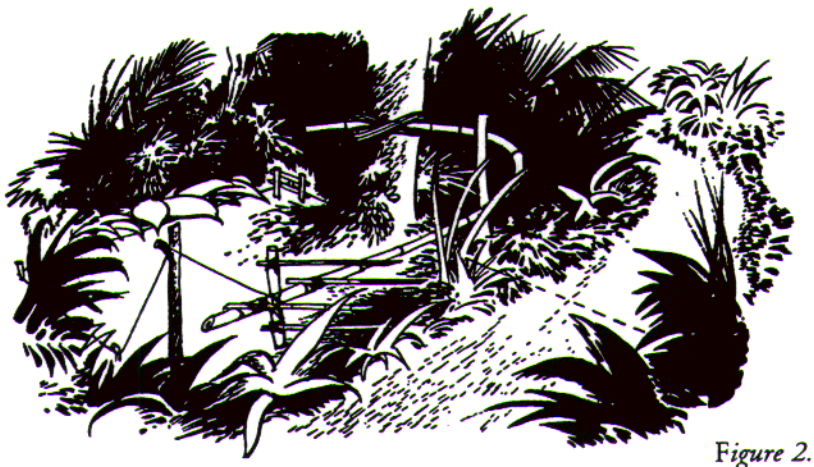


Figure 2. If a bamboo whip is concealed by branches, the enemy is much less likely to detect the trap.



Figure 3. A bamboo pole deploys with deadly effect upon an unsuspecting enemy.

makes uncovered obstacles occasionally a viable alternative. In general, however, your obstacles will be much more effective if covered by direct fire. Combining the obstacle with fire allows you to attack his movement and fire capabilities at the same time, a devastating one-two punch that will be much more potent.

3. Use obstacles to force the enemy to conform to your will. This is the hardest thing to achieve, but also the most rewarding. As the defender, obstacles allow you a chance to seize the initiative from your opponent. While he will, of course, expect your obstacles and have a plan for them, he will not usually know exactly where they are until he runs into them. Place them in such a way as to force his attack away from areas of weakness, and into areas where you are strong and prepared.

There is a psychological element involved here as well. If you can anticipate the enemy advance, place your obstacles to counter it. Turn him away from threatened positions, or deny him positions from which he can threaten you. The subterfuge is complete if you can actually reinforce his own tendencies, i.e., if you know he wants to go a certain way, place your obstacles to 'help' turn him in the direction he already wants to go. This can often give him a false sense of success, and lure him into your primary kill zone. In other words, convince him that he is doing what *he* wants to, when in fact he is doing exactly what *you* want him to!

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

As the defender, you must of course tailor your obstacles to meet the expected enemy threat. The composition of the enemy force will have an impact on your decision as to how to best use your obstacle resources. For example, wire is much more effective against an infantry threat than against tanks. AP mines, too, are much more intimidating to infantrymen than their armored counterparts. AT mines, AT ditches, and roadblocks, on the other hand, are effective vehicle barriers that have little effect on infantry movement. Note that even regular trenches are barriers to truck and halftrack movement, and will force tanks to risk a Bog check.

Keeping this in mind, it is often possible to construct obstacles whose main purpose is to break up enemy formations, and disrupt any close cooperation between his vehicles and infantry. When faced with a combined-arms enemy force, one of your key goals should be separating his tanks from his troops, preventing them from working in concert to destroy your defence. The two best ways to separate advancing infantry from their escorting vehicles are OBA and obstacles.

Remember, obstacles don't kill people — people kill people. Casualties inflicted by mines are bonuses, but you should not plan on them. The greatest advantage of minefields is in their ability to influence enemy movement. The surprise element will often pay off in a broken or reduced squad, or perhaps even a burning AFV. But after that initial attack, the enemy will breach or avoid the minefield, naturally. So make sure you place it with an eye toward restricting his movement, not just ambushing a squad or two. In other words, think about what impact this minefield will have *after* he's found it. Try to place it where even if known, it will still have an effect on his maneuver options.

Don't neglect the usefulness of dummy minefields. Rule F.7B allows for non-OB given extra dummy minefields in any scenario with OB-given dummies or at least 24 Known factors. As the defender, make maximum use of these assets to further channel and confuse the enemy. Even though he may know some of your mines are dummies, he cannot know exactly which ones are, and so will at least be forced to move around them, or to waste time and energy Searching and probing the belt for gaps. The deterrent effect of even Known minefields can have an adverse effect on his maneuver ability, which you will want to exploit to the fullest.

Remember, too, that wire is at best a capricious ally. One enemy squad may be stuck for several turns, while another sails through the same hex with a '1' dr. This reflects the incomplete nature of most 'protective' obstacles hastily thrown up by forward units under battlefield conditions. This is another good reason not to rely on the wire alone to slow the enemy, but to ensure coverage by fire. Good uses for wire



Figure 4. These two tank traps built by the Germans near the border town of Schonberg proved to be no obstacle for advancing American armor, they were merely bypassed. An American officer puts his foot on one of the posts in the foreground designed to hold up tanks at the border, while in the background is a deep V-Shaped anti-tank ditch. (Signal Corps Photo, 15 Sept. 44)

are limited only by your imagination. They are excellent as final barriers, 1-2 hexes in front of your forward positions, to slow attacking troops before they can move in to melee your squads. If the enemy has flamethrowers, put your wire three hexes out — it'll hold him up outside of FT range, but well within reach of your MGs.

In addition, if you have pillboxes to defend, it almost always pays to put wire on top of them. This severely restricts the enemy's ability to CC the pillbox occupant, prevents him from using DCs against the pillbox (until he successfully gets under the Wire), and can buy valuable time for your troops outside the pillbox to 'scratch its back' and brush off the would-be assailants with fire that will not harm the pillbox occupants.

With the exception of panjis, there is no restriction on combining certain obstacles in a hex. Wire in open ground may be seen early, but mines will not. If your bold enemy decides to plow through your wire (after all, it won't hurt him, only slow him down...), imagine his dismay at finding a 6FP minefield in the same hex! While you will probably seldom have enough resources to construct such elaborate barriers, there are times when it is both possible and appropriate.

As an example, scenario A 10, "The Borders Are Burning", provides resources to allow the Finns to construct a classic blocking obstacle by combining wire, mines, and roadblocks. To shut down the board 5 road, the roadblock can be placed in K3 across the K3/L2 hexside. Wire goes in K2 and K4, and mines in L1 and L3, to hinder any attempt to bypass the obstacle with infantry. Squads in K3 itself, as well as K2 and L4, can provide excellent PBF to cover the obstacle and hinder the inevitable clearing operation. Note that the Russian has little choice but to physically clear this roadblock if he wants to move his tanks. Because it is located just around a bend in the road, the Russian will not even see it until he is already in the trap. To ice the cake, an AT mine or two can go in L2 — the Russian grunts won't find them, but as soon as he pulls up a tank to cover his breach....

As with any defense, once you have established your obstacle plan, look at it from the enemy perspective and try to anticipate his reactions. Know where the gaps and bypasses are, and plan fires to cover them. It's OK to have gaps in your wire, as long as you are aware of them and have them covered. Often, these gaps or bypasses make excellent hexes to boresight MGs and other heavy weapons. For example, in scenario A 79, "Mike Red", the German can place his four tetrahedrons in shallow ocean hexes 1079 - 1082. With his bunkered AT gun in hex 162 (CA: 6), this creates a very effective turning obstacle. The Canadian LCs must either take their chances on the tetrahedrons (with potential A-B mines), or maneuver around them, forcing them to sail into the bunker's CA. The German can boresight the AT gun at hex 1083, allowing him an excellent shot at any LCs making the turn.

Naturally, placement of obstacles (especially minefields) in enemy objective hexes also has its advantages, threatening his advancing units with possible breaking and loss of GO status just as he moves to claim the win. Since this usually entails obstacle placement behind your own lines, make sure the potential benefit in the endgame is greater than any you may have gained by using them to slow him down earlier.

Of course, nothing prevents you from setting up your own units in your own obstacles — this can be particularly nasty at night. His units will undergo minefield attacks as they advance to CC yours, (or be stranded on wire, which hampers his CC abilities) hopefully pinning or breaking them before the melee even starts! This tactic can be very effective, as long as you are aware of the risk to your own units should they need to leave the hex (especially if they break and are forced to rout out). Again, at night your units won't rout so easily, and so could cower quite happily in the middle of the minefield, waiting for the enemy unit that tries to sweep in for the 'easy' kill.

Be aware of special considerations pertinent in the scenario. In deep snow, minefields are slightly less effective. In the desert, dust and other LV hindrances may force you to set up closer to your obstacles to ensure adequate covering fire. On the other hand, if these hindrances are absent the long LOS' of desert terrain may allow you to set up much further back, while still providing good covering fire.

At night, make sure your obstacles are within NVR of your forward positions! Also, have a good plan for illuminating your wire once the enemy hits it — forward OPs or leaders within NVR can light up his attempted breach, so your heavier firepower can hit him from further back while he's still hung up. In any scenario, if you have OPs or other forward units who start *forward* of your obstacles, make sure you have a well-planned route for them to follow through their own wire to reach the safety of their fall-back positions. In the PTO, as at night, LOS' and ranges are generally very short, so your obstacles will probably be much closer to your main line of resistance.

Remember too that *all* Fortifications can begin the game HIP, and even in Open Ground they are only revealed when an enemy unit gains LOS. If your enemy enters from offboard, make sure you keep all your barriers hidden until he completes his off-map setup, starts his entry, and begins to gain LOS. No point in tipping your hand and showing him everything before he even sets up.

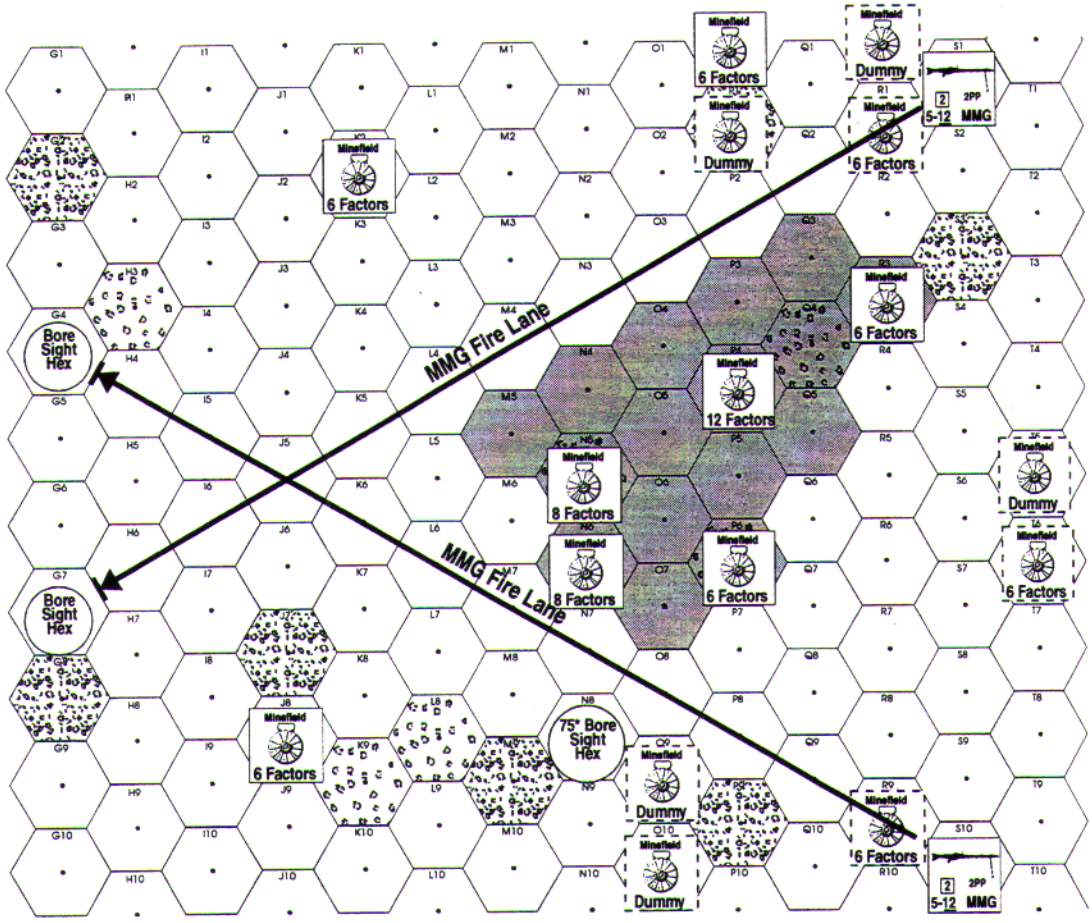
Be wary of enemy 'sleaze plays', such as using dummy concealment markers to force you to reveal your obstacles. If you stop his dummy stack in mid-move, roll the dice, and tell him to reveal a real unit, he'll know he's found something. Why else would you be asking? The only way to counter this is by ensuring your obstacles are covered by direct, observed fire. In this way, you can expose those dummies by other means before they hit a minefield and force you to say something that might tip your hand.

Finally, it is important to remember that as the defender, obstacles should be used only to *augment* your defense. The plan should never rely on the obstacles for success. In fact, obstacles should be one of the last things you place. Make your defense plan as if you have no obstacles. Place your MGs, heavy weapons, and leaders first, then your squads, and *then* your obstacles. Have a plan for how you will fight if none of your obstacles work. This will ensure that even if the dice are horribly against you, and the enemy cruises unmolested through your barriers, you will still have a good chance of holding the line.

SAPPERS FORWARD!

As the attacker, obstacles present a whole range of potential headaches. The best you can do before the scenario starts is anticipate likely sites for enemy obstacles, and prepare contingency plans to deal with them as they are revealed. With experience, this can be done fairly easily.

Whenever you must attack an enemy with prepared obstacles, special planning must be done. As always, start with a careful terrain analysis. Try to anticipate likely locations for enemy wire and mines, and have a plan for dealing with them once they are revealed. Remember, the defender will use these to attack your maneuver options. He will also use them in an attempt to channel you into kill zones. Finally, the defender will try to fix you in place with these obstacles while he hammers you with his firepower.. Your job is to avid these eventualities; the best way to make sure this doesn't happen is by allowing for them in your plans and having a response for each before-hand.



Example 1.
The heart of the German defensive network in A GOOD PARTY. The intersecting fire-lanes will be used to close off the dier to supporting elements after the enemy has entered this key terrain feature, to prevent reinforcement or extraction of the units who have reached it successfully. Note that all minefields set up as Known are denoted by a dashed line while HIP minefields are denoted by a solid line.

The first step is, of course, to find the obstacles. For this, the erstwhile half squad is eminently suited. Alas, those heroic expendables, the scouts of the old *SL-COD* days, are gone! These are the times we miss them most. But in fact, the use of half squads for such duties is both more accurate and realistic. Remember, cold though it may seem, these guys are expendable. Don't waste your high-quality troops here. If you have sappers, don't shove them forward looking for minefields! They should be held in reserve, and brought forward to breach only *after* the mines are found. The same caveat naturally applies to flail tanks, or what ever special assets you may have.

These advancing heroes should make good use of the Searching rules (A 12.152), even around known minefields if dummies are present.

In standard US military doctrine, the first step when confronted by an obstacle is to look for a bypass around it. This applies equally to ASL. Usually, a one or two hex detour around an obstacle is preferable to trying to cross it under fire. Of course, you must bear in mind that your devious opponent will have anticipated this, and most 'obvious' bypasses will be covered by enemy fire. If pressed for time however, this still may be a better option than a lengthy and difficult breaching operation.

Most often, however, time or the enemy will conspire to force you to 'power through' the obstacle. This is not always a bad thing, especially when you consider that obstacles usually indicate somewhere the enemy *doesn't* want you to go — by going there anyway, you may find yourself hitting a weak point and causing him serious discomfort. Recognize the obstacle for what it is — an attempt by the defender to strip the initiative away from you, and make you start following *his* plan. Deny him this!

Designate an obstacle breach force before the scenario even begins. In breaching operations, it is usually best to have three elements: an overwatch force, which suppresses enemy defenses by fire to cover the breach; a breach force, which conducts the actual clearing of the obstacle; and an assault force, which will push through the breach and exploit the gap. The size and composition of each element can be tailored to the tactical situation.

In general, your overwatch force should be augmented by MGs and good leadership. Your breach force itself naturally will include any special assets you have (flail tanks, sappers, DCs, etc.). The assault force should be mobile (possibly mounted), and capable of good close-in fighting if necessary. Once the breach is opened, you'll want to exploit it rapidly, before the enemy can adjust the defense to close the gap.

A deliberate breach should be covered in 4 stages, and is only used when you want to physically *clear* the obstacle, rather than simply move through it. If instead you intend to just cross the obstacle and take your chances with the dice, it still pays to follow the same tactics outlined below. If you're fortunate, a simple crossing operation can be completed in 1-2 turns, whereas a clearing operation can take 2-4 turns.

Begin by laying as much smoke as possible. You want to obscure the enemy LOS to the breach site, as well as drop smoke directly on any overwatching MG or AT positions. There is no penalty to the clearance DR for clearing while in smoke, so don't be afraid to drop smoke right on top of your breach site — it could be welcome cover for those sappers, especially if in open ground or attempting to clear a roadblock (which is Hazardous Movement).

Following the placement of smoke,

overwatching positions should fire to break or pin any enemy positions capable of interfering with the breach. Since these enemy positions will usually have some protective TEM, and may be obscured by the smoke, it usually pays to have good leaders directing this suppressive fire, as well as some multiple ROF systems like MGs or light mortars.

In the MPh, the actual breach assets can move forward and go to work. Sappers are best, but even regular squads will do. The more troops breaching, the better your chances of an early clearance, but beware of stacking heavily unless the enemy is thoroughly smoked and suppressed. Clearance is difficult, so you will want to improve your odds of an early breach as much as possible. This is another good place for high-powered leaders to lend their DRM. Note also that heroes can assist breach operations, bringing another -1 DRM. Even with all this help, though, you will probably need the added benefit of a few Labor DRM. In most cases, a full-scale clearance operation will take 2-3 turns to complete.

Once the breach is open, the assault force must move through rapidly to exploit the success. Secure the far side of the crossing site, suppress the enemy defenses further, and move quickly before the enemy can reorient.

The type of deliberate breach outlined above is very time and resource intensive, however. Most ASL scenarios do not allow for such complex operations. Instead, you will concentrate more on simply *getting through* the obstacle rather than actually *clearing* it. The same principles apply in this case — smoke the site, suppress the enemy, and move through as rapidly as possible. Note that PRC can be carried through wire fairly easily, as their transport vehicles are only required to make a Bog check. Ride through the wire if you can! AP minefields, too, can be driven through, with caution. An average 6 or 8 FP AP minefield has virtually no chance to kill a tank or German halftrack, and will only immobilize it on an 'eyes' DR (roughly a 2.8% chance). (Note: American halftracks beware! The 0 AF renders these lightweights the same as 'unarmored' for AP mine attacks, which means they use the * vehicle line and are *very* vulnerable.) If mounted in armored vehicles, riding through AP minefields is clearly the best way to go. In addition, any fully-tracked vehicle successfully crossing will leave a trail break for others to use free of attack.

Of course, AT minefields are a completely different story. Infantry should definitely cross these on foot, where they are immune to its effects. Vehicles should bypass if possible, or hope for good rolls and drive on. Again, the first fully-tracked vehicle to cross will leave a trail break, and the minefield will become a non-factor after that. Any AT minefields set up on paved roads, bridges, etc. are easily cleared by infantry, who can bypass normal clearance rules and need only expend 1 extra MF to eliminate the menace at the end of the MPh.

There are numerous other 'non-standard' methods for clearing obstacles, which usually require special assets and are not very dependable. FFEs can clear wire or mines with an original KIA DR, but this is rare. DCs (including Japanese DC-heroes) can also be used against wire, but again they require an original KIA. Most often, your DCs can be better used elsewhere. Fully-tracked vehicles who pass a Bog check DR with a 1 cdr also clear wire, but this is obviously a rare bonus and hardly constitutes a 'planned' breach. Roadblocks are vulnerable to any kind of HE attack, not just FFE, but again a KIA is required, so only large ordinance has any real chance of success.

Bottom line: as the attacker, when you hit the obstacle, you must make a few quick decisions. Your options are to seek bypass, plow through it, or mount a set-piece clearing operation. Whatever you choose, it must be done swiftly. Be ready to exploit your breach as soon as possible — nothing is worse than laboring two turns to clear a roadblock, and then realizing there's no one ready to go through it! You may then be forced to sit agonizing through another enemy MPh as he manhandles his AT gun into a new position to cover the breach. Don't let this happen to you!

Above all, smoke everything in sight. Smoke in all its forms is always vital in ASL, but it is especially important in breaching operations. It may well mean the difference between success and failure. By the time you find the wire, it's too late to start checking where the mortars are. The employment of your smoke assets must be planned in advance, and they must be kept in readiness for use on a moment's notice.

Take a look at scenario T7, "Hill 253.5". The German attack plan must account for the wire and mines in the Russian OB. Expect a few turning obstacles on the flanks to prevent any attempt to turn the defense from the side. In addition, there are almost certain to be a few fixing obstacles on the front slope of hill 621, to slow the German push uphill. The German plan should be to lead with half squads, in an attempt to find the obstacles as rapidly as possible. The German OBA observer hangs back on the high ground of hill 538, ready to bury the obstacle in smoke as soon as it is located. The Panthers maneuver to positions like Y4 and W6, from which they provide overwatching MG and main gun fire to suppress the enemy defense. Once the smoke is down, the 838's can move in with FTs and DCs, using their "3" smoke exponent to cover any gaps in the smoke screen. The 467's can then clear mines, with the 838's poised to exploit the breakthrough and finish off any nearby defenders with FTs, DCs, and PBF.

PARTYTIME

To illustrate the main points outlined above, let's take a look at scenario A 56, "A Good Party". This gem features a night assault by an elite British Guards battalion against a fortified German position in North Africa. The Germans have only mines to build obstacles with, but they have plenty of them — 60 hidden factors, 24 Known, and 4 OB-given dummies. For our example, the German makes an extra dr per F.7B, rolling a "3" and thus receiving 1 extra dummy counter.

A survey of the terrain should quickly tell both sides that the deir, located in the center of the board, is the only 'cover' available to the advancing British. As such, the German determines that a likely British course of action will be to attempt to occupy the deir with a supporting fire element, while his main attack drives down a flank. The German setup, therefore, will focus on denying the deir to the enemy, while maintaining the flexibility to orient maximum firepower onto the flanks should the need arise.

The German first sights in his heavy weapons. The two MMGs, manned by elite half squads, go in HIP foxhole positions at S1 and S10, boresighted on G4 and G7 respectively. This allows them to lay intersecting firelanes that will close off the deir. These firelanes can serve to drive a wedge down the British center, splitting his force. Most likely, though, they will hold off laying firelanes until the enemy enters the deir. Once laid, these firelanes will isolate the deir, preventing reinforcement or extraction of enemy forces who've reached it successfully. The 9-1 German leader directs the fire of the southern MMG.

The mortar goes in AA3, on the reverse slope of the hillock at the back of the German position. It boresights R3, the tip of the deir and most likely location for a potential British "support by fire" position The 75* INF gun sets up in U6, boresighted on N8 to help protect the northern flank. The OBA observer,, an 8-0, goes in Y5,

with a view of the whole battlefield. Two LMGs, manned by elite squads, go in W2 and X8, from which they can lay firelanes closing off the exit from the deir. They are also sighted to provided firepower to the flanks should the main attack develop there.

The rest of the squads go in defensive positions in two trench lines, U4-U5 and Y5-Y6. One squad with LMG occupies the hillock summit, AA6. An HIP squad goes in Q5, to cover the inside of the deir. Lastly, two LP/OP half squads take positions in L1 and K9, to provide early warning and illumination. All German units begin play in foxholes, sangars, or trenches, with all leaders and SW HIP per standard night rules.

The German now has a strong defense, capable of severely handling any British drive to occupy the deir, and also flexible enough to reinforce against a flank drive. The next decision is how to employ the considerable mine assets to reinforce this plan (see Example 1). The German intent is to drive the enemy off the flanks and into the center (anticipating that the British player may himself want to move into the deir, the German will try to reinforce that desire, giving the British player as much rope as he wants). Once in the center, the German wants to hold the British player there while he destroys him with OBA, MG fire, and the other weapons in his arsenal. To do this, the German places his mines in the following manner (* indicates placed as a Known minefield at start):

6FP minefields: K2 / J8 / R9* / R1* / P0 / P6 / T6* / R3*
8FP minefields: N4 / N5 / N6
12FP minefield: P4
Dummy Mines: P1 / R0 / O9 / O10 / T5

Working from the front line back, we see two small minefields provided to cover the OPs, and buy them an extra turn to illuminate or withdraw. It is likely the British will swoop in to scoop these guys up 'on the fly', and they will probably hit these mines early. The second belt of mines, in hexrow N, is strung across the entrance to the deir. These are all hidden at start, and all are 8FP. This is a classic fixing obstacle, designed to hold the enemy in place while he is fired upon. The HIP squad in Q5 overwatches this obstacle, providing illumination on it as well as direct fire.

A third belt of obstacles, about 50% dummies and 50% Known, is in hexrows O and P on both flanks. These are turning obstacles, designed to channel a flank advance into the MMG firelanes. They also prevent the British from 'bum rushing' the MG positions as soon as they are revealed. In the R hexrow, a secondary belt of protective obstacles, again 50% dummies, provide another line of defense for the MGs and prevent the British from rapidly overruning them. These foxholes at night provide +3 TEM, as good as a stone building against ranged fire, so the German is more concerned with a British swarm coming in to CC his MGs. The last group of obstacles goes in hexrow T to similarly protect the 75* INF gun once it is revealed.

Finally, there are two 'rogue' obstacles, the 6FP in P6 and the ominous 12FP in R3. These are basically sited in the two positions the Brit will most likely want to occupy once he's in the deir. They will serve to deny the enemy use of these two potential firing positions, which he would need if he wants to drive a wedge down the middle to isolate a German flank.

Note that each obstacle, with the exception of the turning group in row O, is within the 3 hex NVR of an overwatching German unit. The turning group in row O will have to be illuminated to be covered, but this should not present a major problem. All the major gaps are covered, either with boresighted MG fire or other small arms. A clever Brit may well allow the German OPs to fall back, watching their movement in order to identify the passage lanes they use to get through the mines. This is why the German has boresighted firelanes to cover these gaps.

This basic German setup is a good example of what can be done with a generous supply of mines. I have not detailed the entire setup, only those points that illustrate the obstacle work, but note that of course extensive use of concealment dummies will be made, especially behind the hexrow N, O, and P minefields, to create the illusion of a second defense line 120 meters in front of the actual one (which is set up entirely HIP). With fake mines in front of fake units, the German may well induce the Brit to waste time and effort deploying and assaulting a phantom position. This could buy a turn or two for the German, and leave the Brit frustrated and disorganized (and hopefully smoke-depleted) as he swarms in on a group of dummies who happen to be just inside NVR of the real position 3 more hexes back.

So essentially the Brit is faced by a German defense lead by two OPs, followed by 3 dug in defensive 'belts', each within NVR of the next, and each protected by minefields to deter close assault. Due to HIP and concealment, not to mention the hidden mines, it will take some time for the Brits to even figure out the layout of this defense. Since the Brit can win immediately if he gains 16 CVP, this defense is designed to ensure he will have to come deep into the German lines before he can possibly approach that total. A tough nut, indeed! So, what is a Tommy to do?

First of all, don't despair! Monty and his scenario designers have given you ample tools to handle this (I will reserve for the moment my own opinions of the Viscount's generalship...). The Brit has almost a 2-1 advantage in squads, and they are all elite (although SSR unfortunately makes them Lax as well). The leadership is much better than the Germans', and there is also an ample supply of those smoke-happy, IR capable light mortars. He can designate up to four squad-equivalents as sappers. Best of all, he gets a 120mm Creeping Barrage, which is convertible and can provide some punishing FFEs as the game progresses.

I believe the best British course is to proceed deliberately, with the intention of penetrating the German defense on a flank, and then rolling up the defense from north to south (or vice versa). Although the open terrain will mean almost total freedom of movement for the German once a British unit is lit up, the barrage should serve to keep his men deep in their foxholes and trenches. Because the English troops are Lax, straying will be a problem until the Germans make themselves known. Once they are seen, keep them under illumination: with the wide open LOS', one Known German illuminated virtually anywhere should keep the whole British OB free from Straying.

As always, half squads lead the way, advancing right behind the barrage. Make extensive use of searching as they advance. Behind them comes a leader-led platoon, with LMGs, to lay immediate suppression on any Germans revealed by the scouts or the barrage. The sappers follow this group closely, ready to go to work on the mines as they are found. The smoke mortars should hang back a few hexes, ready to smother the German MG positions and provide cover for the sappers.

The real advantage of the creeping barrage is its ability to strip concealment from the Germans, and dispose of any dummy stacks. Once converted, this 120mm beauty will even help reduce or clear minefields on a DR 5 or less, which makes it as effective as, if not better than, a sapper squad! This scenario is won on CVP, so the Brit must concentrate on exposing as few of his men as possible, while capturing or destroying every German unit encountered. In all, I think this scenario is fairly well-balanced, and definitely provides an excellent challenge for both players.

Hopefully, this article has provided you with some new insights in to how best to use those wire and mines in your OB. Remember the main points: as the defender, cover your obstacles with fire! As the attacker, have a plan *before* you find the obstacle — don't try to wing it on the fly. And smoke, smoke, smoke! Move hard, strike fast, finish rapidly!

PANJIS, continued from page 21

BAMBOO WHIP: A 3-inch bamboo pole can be bent back across a jungle path in such a way that when released, the force of the blow will kill a man walking along the path. To ensure effective results, panji spikes can be attached to the end of the whip (as shown in Fig. 2). The whip is held in position by a bamboo creeper or by a wire, with a peg at the end of the wire pressing against two horizontal sticks. Contact with a trip wire across the path withdraws the lower stick, allowing the heavy bamboo to whip forcefully across the path.

OTHER PANJI TRAPS: Panjis placed under water in a river or at a beach, with the points 2 inches below the surface, will rule out swimming as an enemy mode of travel and will puncture the bottoms of ordinary rubber boats. Sometimes a bamboo knife, pointing downward, is attached to the far side (from the expected enemy approach) of a low limb overhanging a jungle trail. A man bending low to pass beneath the limb will receive a severe wound in the back when he straightens up. Panjis may also be prepared by snipers lying in wait to ambush hostile patrols. Along the sides of the trail that a hostile patrol is likely to use, sharpened bamboo spikes, 18 inches long, are placed at intervals of about 1 foot and are pointed toward the trail at an angle of 45 degrees. When the hostile patrol appears, it is fired on by hidden snipers. On hearing the first shots, the instinctive reactions of the members of the patrol is to seek cover. If they dart into the growth beside the trail, they are impaled on the bamboo spikes.

Top 10 Reasons why I like ASL better than D&D:

10. Reality arguments actually might apply.
9. All the players can agree on how weapons should work.
8. Instead of just making up rules on the fly, we can reference how others have officially made up rules on the fly.
7. Only had to buy one rulebook.
6. Both dice are the same shape.
5. Snipers make perfect rational sense. Saving rolls don't.
4. I can write articles without buying parchment and a calligraphy pen.
3. It's more socially acceptible (but still bohemian and politically incorrect) to recount old war stories in public places.
2. The scenario ends.

and the number one reason is ...

1. Hollywood has given us John Wayne, and given them Dolf Lundgren.

by Tom Huntington



"B" Company

P.O. Box 4163, Clifton, N.J. 07012

PH: (201) 473-2900 FAX: (201) 473-4144

Specializing in Historical Wargames and Magazines;

Wargames; Avalon Hill, Australian Design Group, Avalanche Press, Clash of Arms, Columbia Games, Critical Hit, The Gamers, Decision Games, GRD, GMT, Games U.S.A., Victory Games, Moments in History, 3W, Xeno, XTR and many others!

Magazines; Command, S&T, Competitive Edge, The Wargamer, Counterattack, 3CI, The Art Of War, Canadian Wargames Journal, Critical Hit, C3I, Europa News, The General, Fire & Movement, Operations, Paper Wars, Mind, Map & Maneuver, Moves, Zone Of Control and others!

Hard to find titles; Azure Wish, Ludo Press, Simtac Spain and others!

Out of Print; Games, magazines, & counter sheets

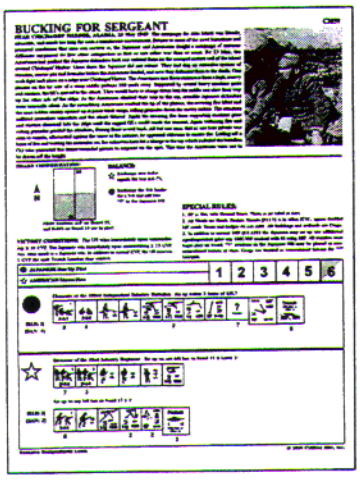
Gaming supplies, accessories, books, miscellaneous, etc.

We carry the complete line of ASL items as well as the entire line of products from Critical Hit.

Our prices are comparable to anyone's

Call, fax or send for a free catalog

VISA and MASTERCARD accepted



Over My Shoulder

Beginner-Expert Analysis

by David McGuire and
Steven J. Pleva



David McGuire is a self-described beginner at ASL. David, who hails from Wheaton, Illinois, took on this project gamely after sticking his neck out in an effort to help our collective cause. CH's own Steve Pleva needs no introduction. He is the premier tournament player of these times, racking up first prize at five of the last six major tourneys he has attended. We believe Steve has the credentials for this type of article, which is prepared in good faith as an effort to point out the little things that separate champions from the rest of the rank and file of the ASL hobby. You won't find any magic bullets in Steve's approach, just a habit of paying attention to the details and a plan for the eventualities we all face in the myriad fire-fights we fight out across the map in our own home towns across the globe. Ed.

This article was born in response to a letter sent by the author to this magazine complaining about a perceived lack of material aimed at the ASL novice. An envelope quickly arrived in my box containing a yet unpublished scenario and an invitation to put my money where my mouth resides. See what happens when you complain to these guys. I was invited to analyze the scenario, set up the Japanese and record my thoughts. Only *after* agreeing to do so was I advised no less an ASL personage than Steve Pleva, the CH in-house Top Gun, would be analyzing MY analysis and critiquing it!

In the way of a brief introduction, I have been playing SL from the time of its release through GI: Anvil of Victory. I then found myself without any gaming opponents. I enjoyed the game system so much that I bought ASL and all the published modules in the hope of finding an opponent one day. About the time I did, about ten years later, I also discovered Critical Hit and the hobby attached to ASL. 'Nuff said.

The scenario chosen for my article is BUCKING FOR SERGEANT. I was a bit intimidated at first by all the new troops, terrain and yet unplayed-on boards. I admit to having almost tanked the whole assignment right then and there. After reading the historical information, I was intrigued enough to give it my best shot. It also represents my first step before setting up; I read the history in order to get a feel for what happened. It may not be necessary, strictly speaking, but it is a step that puts me in the right frame of mind and may even reveal a few hints of the designers's intent which could yield a few hints for my set up. The historical write up also sets a bench-mark in my mind to gauge my progress at game's end. Just how did I do compared to my counter-parts in real life?

Realizing I was a little out of my comfort-zone at this point, I broke out my rule book for a refresher course on the Japanese. I then focused on the terrain rules. My set up is based on the SSR in this scenario which turns Hammada into Crags *and* Concealment Terrain, and treating the on-map Wadi hexes as Gully hexes. This is Alaska, after all, so I guess it makes sense. My next step is to set up the boards and look over the terrain I'll be fighting over. My first thought is to always look for the high ground. I quickly note that hex 25L7 is the center of a Level 4 hill. Setting up within 3 hexes of this will enable me to set up a line of trenches on the high ground. I can shuttle troops along the line, under cover. I also note there are many cliff hexes that will need to be covered to prevent climbing troops from surprising me. The next thing that jumps out at me is the fact that his big guns occupy the opposing high ground. This will enable enemy mortar and machine-gun fire to reach out toward me very effectively. Despite the high firepower he can throw at me, there is a lot of open ground for him to cross; maybe I can deal out enough damage to him as he is exposed during the inevitable valley crossing to reach "my" hill. The presence of SSR created Ground Snow does not change the battlefield much.

After my map exercise I review the scenario Victory Conditions carefully. Do I need to eliminate units or hold ground? Or both? In this particular scenario I need to keep the American from eliminating *me*. I also need to hold onto the trenches I initially occupy. There are 5 trenches in my OB; at 2 CVP each, the American player can achieve over half of his needed CVP total by capturing my trench line. He can gain further points by grabbing the Level 4 hill hexes. He still has to take out a good portion of my OB to win. I can also win by eliminating about half of his force. This seems like a tall order to me in the face of the American firepower. I plan to play a conservative game. Let him come to me and dig me out!

My attention is next focused on the enemy force opposing me. The American OB looks tough, has lots of firepower, but lacks leaders. The paucity of leadership modifiers is somewhat made up for by the existence of a Hero in the American OB, but his -1 DRM is only going to be applied against my line if he is manning a machine gun. The group which sets up on board 15 on level 3 or greater is obviously designed to provide overwatch fire for their comrades assigned to cross the valley. A .50 cal. combined with two heavies and two mortars can hurl a lot of lead at my lines. The remaining force of ten squads still outnumbers my OB by almost 2-1. Trying to cross the valley may lead the American to sit and snipe at me most of the game, then make a late game charge to grab trenches.

The first thing I have to when reviewing my OB is head back to the rulebook in the form of Chapter H and learn about the capabilities of my 70mm INF gun. I note it can fire in the usual direct fire mode as well as fire like a mortar. This may add a little flexibility to my line. I then begin teaming the SW to their handlers. The

INF gun gets one crew. I use another crew to man the 50mm MTR, in order to free up a squad to protect the line. The two remaining crews get a MMG each. This frees two more squads up for protection, as well as allowing for two 6 FP stacks. Not "killer stacks" by any means, but respectable. For the final SW, I chose a squad to man the HMG. This combination can generate an 8 FP attack out to 8 hexes and 6 FP out to 14 hexes. That should be enough to make my opponent think twice before moving.

Before I move to the placement of my troops two caveats must be issued. First, if there appear to be any glaring mistakes it is because I treated this set up as if there was someone sitting across from me at a tournament, ready to play. For that purpose, I went mainly with whatever rules knowledge and expertise on play that I brought to this assignment, with about an hour's worth of setting up and rules look-up time allotted. Despite that fact, most of the preparation and the analyses in the preceding paragraphs did not change. The final placement of my units did, especially after the ongoing, closer examination of the rules this scenario led me to undertake. Secondly, and on a more personal note, the knowledge that a "name" would be critiquing my work gave me the shivers. Nothing like knowing your defence is going to picked apart by an expert to scare you to death in your first published article. Oh well, on with the show.

My trench line was set up in the following hexes: **25I7**—this sets my left flank; **25N7**—this sets my left flank; **25K7**—this is the center of the line; **25J6**—this hex offers covering fire for I7 & K7 and can fire along the cliffs; **25L7**—this hex forms a point and is able to fire all along the front covering 25N7 and the wadis to prevent an outflanking attempt. With this trench line my entire front is covered, with units on Level 4, everyone can see the approaching enemy. I can shuttle troops along the entire line under cover. Every approach by the enemy must cross either a cliff hexside or a double crest line.

My right flank is covered by a MMG+2-2-8+? in 25I7. The cliffs protect this unit from 2 sides and the open ground to the north will discourage most attackers from approaching from there. Additional support for this flank is provided by placing the INF gun and its manning crew in 25J6 utilizing HIP. This position places it on the reverse slope. I am going to use the gun as a mortar, but will need a spotter. I chose this configuration to offer some protection to my gun; it is safe from direct fire. This spot also helps with the minimum range constraints and because it can switch modes from Area to Direct Fire, it can cover 3 of 5 hexes in the event my lines is overrun. Finally, I chose this hex based on the limited number of HIP positions available.

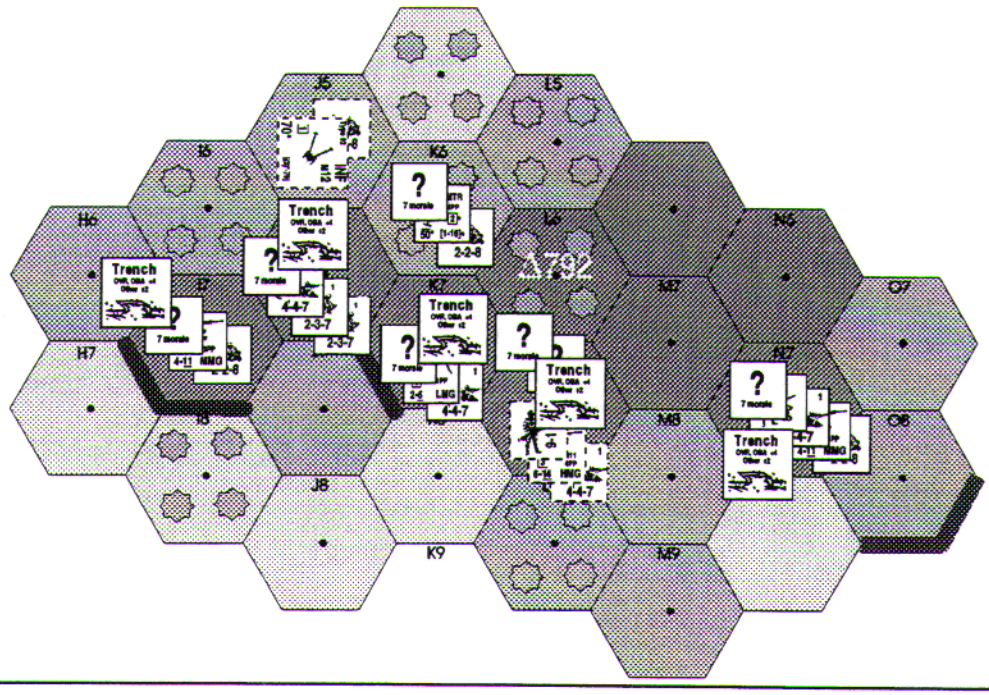
My left flank is protected by a MMG=2-2-8+4-4-7+8-0+? IN the 25N7 trench. This position must hold its own due to the distance from the main force. It can generate 12 FP at 2 hex range and 8 FP out to 4 hexes. This group can also cover the entire trench line and the approach to it is over mostly open terrain. I provided a leader to rally anyone who breaks. This seems to make for a very good strong point.

The 50mm MTR goes in 25K6 with its crew under a concealment counter. This spot can cover 4 of 5 hexes of my trench line and minimum range is not a factor from this position. It is also in a reverse slope position for protection, leading to the need for a spotter. This seems a small price to pay for the extra protection. My HMG+4-4-7+9-1 fire-team is placed in 25L7, and set up using HIP. This is the only other place I can use HIP and it works as bait to draw the American in and can give them a nasty surprise when the position opens up. Even if he doesn't fall for it, at least this position can cover my entire line. With the help of the 9-1 it should make things tough for anyone foolish enough to assault this position. The LMG+4-4-7+? I placed IN the trench at 25K7 is there to cover more of the trench line, and to fire-group with the HMG team once they open up. This squad can also reinforce 25L7, only one hex away.

My need for two spotters led me to deploy a 4-4-7 to yield two 2-3-7 HS. They are placed, along with a 4-4-7 IN the trench at 25J6, under a concealment counter. This was a tough decision based on my need for troops to protect my line

Figure 1: David's Set Up

In this example, we see a cut-out section of board 25 with David's defensive set up. HIP units are denoted by dashed lines. David, like Steve has chosen to use Spotted Fire for his indirect firing weapons, the 50mm mortar and the 70mm INF -gun. (Note that not all terrain is included in this diagram)



balanced with the need for spotters for my two weapons. This hex offers a good view of the battlefield and is adjacent to both the 70mm INF gun and the 50mm MTR. The 4-4-7 is placed there to protect the two 2-3-7 HS; they will be busy enough spotting to provide for their own security. The squad can also reinforce adjacent hexes if needed.

My last units placed were 2 x ? IN the 25L7 trench. This "fills out" my trench line. Since my HMG team is HIP, I don't want to tip my hand by leaving an empty hex. That may make the American player suspicious, leading him to avoid the obvious trap and work his attack around the edges.

That's all for my set up. I hold the high ground and have good fields of fire. I can throw a few nasty surprises at the enemy. Maybe I can stop that pesky Private Pleva. As I look at my defence again, I think there may be some alternate spots for a few things. I suppose if I spent a week planning there may have been more. I see my opponent coming over to sit down so I'll close with a wish that you have as much fun reading this article as I had writing it.

Steve Pleva writes:

I must admit that I was a little apprehensive when Ray asked me to write this article. What is the value in critiquing a beginner's set up? Why not present the readers with the perfect set up? After further consideration, I began to see the benefits of an article in this format. Identifying and correcting common errors is the fastest way to improve. Presenting the best set up for a particular scenario is useful only when playing that scenario. My goal is to provide you with concepts that can be applied to all of the scenarios that you play. First, I will analyze the beginner's set up, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of this set up. Second, I will offer suggestions for improving the set up. Last, I will present an American set up and basic attack outline.

Looking at the set up I was impressed by the adherence to two basic military concepts: defend the objective and maintain mutually supporting elements. He has placed his entire OB on the objective. While I would have placed an element or two off of the objective (still supporting it, however), it is usually better to err on the side of defending the objective too much rather than too little. I have seen many scenarios where the defender contests terrain that is immaterial to the victory conditions. There are scenarios where a fall-back defense is appropriate. In this scenario there is neither the time nor the room to execute a fall-back defense. Units that begin in the K9-N9 area would be chopped to pieces by the time they reached the main line of resistance. Also, this set up maximizes the utility of the trenches. Any unit caught in +1 TEM or less is in trouble against that abundant American firepower.

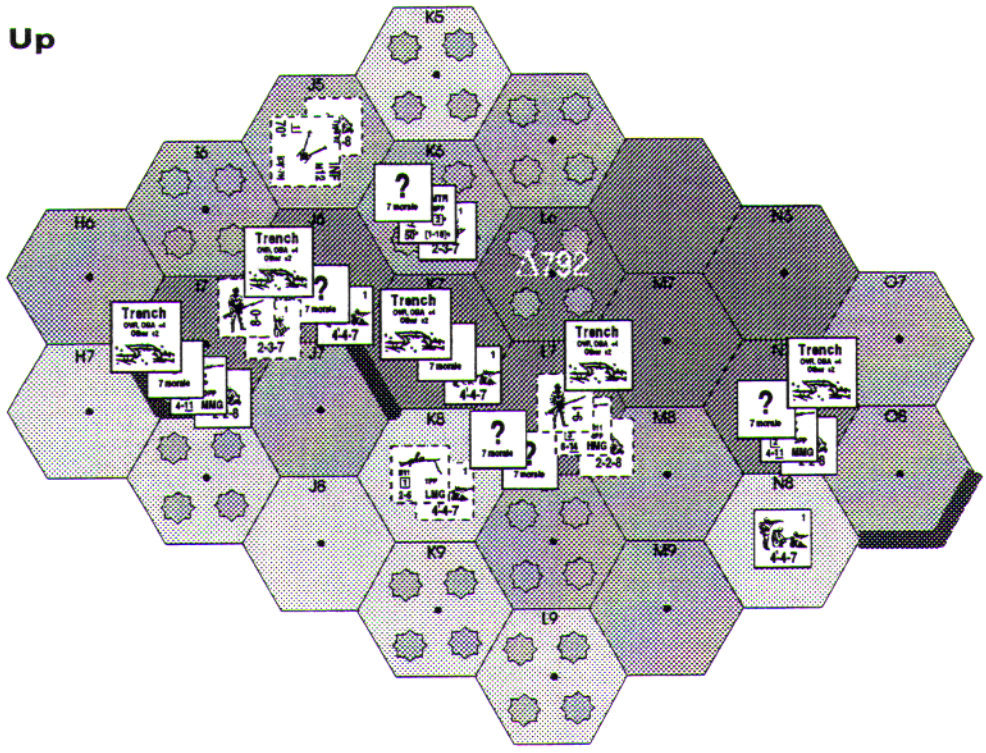
All of the units are mutually supporting. All too often I have seen set ups where defending elements are placed in remote locations. These units are usually out of the game once they are broken. With this set up, in order for the American to defeat the Japanese, they will have to defeat the entire Japanese OB. This concept should not be taken lightly — it applies to almost every single scenario published. Also, mutually supporting elements usually give broken units a chance to rally where unsupported units are engulfed by the attacker.

I really like the placement of the 70mm Inf. gun. This is an excellent role for this piece. He is making full use of this unit's capabilities, dramatically illustrating the uniqueness of this piece. It is a real luxury to be able to use this piece against the enemy's overwatch elements during the initial stages of the battle while remaining immune to enemy fire. Inevitably, when the Americans will attempt to occupy the heights, this gun is in a perfect position to dish out its heavy firepower in a direct fire capacity.

I have identified two main errors with this set up in order of importance: stacking and non-crew use of the HMG. While the later is a forgivable oversight, the first one is a grievous error. I cannot overstress the importance of not stacking, especially when facing the Americans. Stacking will only increase the effectiveness of the American's firepower while not providing any defensive benefit. Three MMC is J6 is inexcusable. I apologize for the excessive preaching, but this is one of the most important concepts in ASL (as in modern

Figure 2: Steve's Set Up

In this example, we see a cut-out section of board 25 with Steve's set up. It's the little things that make the difference in ASL play. His spotters are set up HIP to give them a chance to spot for indirect fire that much longer. His squad in K8 is optimally placed to delay the attacker at what will likely be late in the game. (Note that not all terrain is included in this diagram)



military doctrine).

Looking at G1.611, it says that Japanese ATR/MMG/HMG fired by a Japanese squad/HS has its breakdown and ROF lowered by one. Instead of Breakdown on an eleven or twelve, the weapon will Breakdown on a ten and Disable on an eleven or twelve. That's a one in six chance of Breakdown/Disablement. Again, I am sure that this is an oversight, but it will probably become very important in this scenario.

Another oversight is that the extra HIP squad-equivalent was not utilized. A minor error is the placement of the 8-0 leader. Who is going to rally those half-squads in J6 when they break? The benefits of placing this leader in N7 are minimal. A better spot for this leader would have been behind the hill.

How would I change this set up? I will offer my set up while attempting to keep the flavor of the original set up.

I7 Trench, ?, MMG, 228 — This unit can fire into three key approach hexes: F10, G9, and H8. J6 Trench,(HIP - 8-0,237) ?,447 — The 8-0 and 237 will be recorded as the spotters for the Infantry gun and the mortar, respectively. I placed the ?,447 because it would look suspicious otherwise. I will move the 447 as soon as possible. I do not want to give the Americans a chance to take advantage of this stacking. J5 (HIP 70mm Infantry gun, 228) — I have already extolled the virtues of this position. K8 (HIP LMG, 447) — This position covers hex J8 with a 12FP even shot while remaining out of LOS of those American nasties on the hill. K7 Trench, ?,447 — This unit fills out the trench line. K6 ?, MTR, 237 — I would probably be inclined to place the mortar in K7 manned by a full squad, but I am trying to maintain the flavor of the original set up. Use Smoke on the American overwatch positions. L7 Trench, (HIP 9-1, HMG, 228) ?, ? — HIP should allow this unit to get the first crack. If this stack gets a few ROF shots on the first player turn it could really set the Americans back. Sooner or later the American firepower will reduce this position; hopefully, this stack can exact a severe toll before that happens. N8 447 — I don't mind leaving this unit unconcealed at start, it will gain concealment before play starts and I like the idea of deterring the American from making his attack toward this position. Even though this is a tight approach, there are only a couple of good hexes (L7 and N7) that can fire into the O10-O8 gully. Also, concealment is better used elsewhere. N7 ?, MMG, 228 — Again, this covers the O9 approach and the American hill.

What to do as the American? Spread out and pound any Japanese that are bold enough to stick their heads out. Stacking is to be avoided by the Americans for two reasons: lack of substantial cover and six morale units. The eight broken side morale level will not allow the Americans to quickly return to battle because there are no natural rally points. Units that break could conceivably stay that way for a long time. Keep the mortars next to the .50cal HMG in order to re-man that weapon if its original crew breaks (as it probably will). Threaten as many of the approach points as possible to keep the Japanese spread as thin as possible. Filter units primarily through the J8 and H8 choke points. Use six 666 squads and all MG to pulverize exposed Japanese elements. This group represents 60FP factors. A formidable force considering the size of the Japanese OB. The scenario comes down to a question of time. The Ground Snow (E3.72) makes movement up the hill very slow. Can the Americans work their way up the snow covered hill fast enough to take the heights?

R6 236, 236 X5 MTR, 346 X6 Foxhole, HMG, 346 X8 546 Y6 Foxhole, .50cal, 346 Y7 Foxhole, HMG, 346 Y8 MMG, 667 Y9 667 Z5 7-0 Z6 MTR, 346 Z7 9-1 Z8 666 Z9 666 AA9 666 AA10 149, 546, 666 BB9 8-0, 666

Well, I hope that you enjoyed this article and maybe learned a thing or two. Pesky Private Pleva, huh? I like to think that I have already bucked up to Sergeant Steve. Here's hoping that you do too...





A little taste of things to come above and to the right. Above is ASL'er Tom Campbell and his equally ASL playing girlfriend Michelle gunning it up at Wild West Fest '96; Steve Pleva attended and reports back that Michelle not only knows what she is doing out there, but she took Tom down in a game of GUARDS COUNTERATTACK. She states a preference for the defense. To the right is CH correspondent Chris Maloney and the best news he ever got, Mrs. Maloney. She prefers ASL'ers over non-gamers and Chris will tell you all about it in his next installment of "Married Man's Guide to ASL" which returns in our next issue. We also await a full report from Tim Wilson on the goings on at WWF '96. Stay tuned.

- Rangers in Action
- New Columnists
- Armored Assault Tactics
- More New Scenarios!

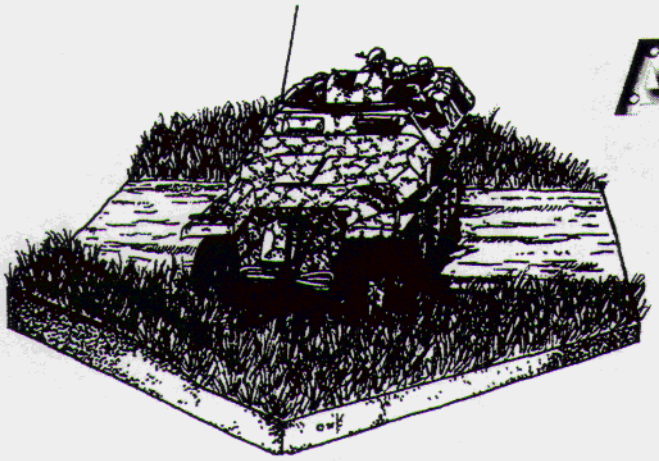
CRITICAL HIT

ASL MAGAZINE

Issue No. 4 $10



The Independent Journal of the ASL Hobby



ARMORED ASSAULT TACTICS

by Captain Robert Modarelli III

The Sherman roared past, a rooster-tail of mud spewing up to paint the platoon of halftracks parked alongside the road. Fortunately Sgt. McLaughlin and his squad were hunkered down in the back of A 211 loading magazines. A 211's crew commander and machine gunner, Cpl. Hamblin, was not so lucky. "Aw, fer Chrissake!" he groaned, wiping thick, gluey clods of Belgian mud from his face. "Have a little consideration, ya bastards!" he shouted after the disappearing tanks.

Sgt. Felix 'the Cat' McLaughlin allowed a brief smile to crease the grime caked on his own face. He liked Hamblin, and the two made a potent team. The small, sharp-nosed New Yorker knew how to handle his M3, and a knowledgeable track commander was a damn rare thing these days, McLaughlin knew. Beyond that, 'Mouse' Hamblin understood he was meant to provide more than a free ride to the front for the grunts. He figured if the Army saw fit to hang a machine gun on his track, he may as well put it to good use. Inside, though, McLaughlin knew there was a little part of the Mouse that always wanted to be a tanker.

"Hey, Mac," grunted Hamblin as he leaned over into the passenger compartment. "The heavies are moving up. Better get 'em ready."

McLaughlin looked up and nodded. "You got it, Mouse? Same as last time," he said. "Eltee says we're gonna dismount along that woodline there." He motioned vaguely to the east, towards the dark black line a little over a mile off. "After that, real slow, along the woods to that barn on the left. See it? Any Kraut machine guns open up, you hammer 'em. Don't worry about snipers, we'll handle them. Got it?"

"Yeah, don't worry" called Hamblin, shouting now to be heard over the roar of the halftrack's engine as the driver brought her to life. "Same drill. Just make sure your little bunch of debutantes keeps the Krauts at arm's length. I don't need any of their damned rocket-things coming my way!" He pulled his goggles down over his eyes and put out a hand.

McLaughlin grabbed the outstretched hand. "Don't worry," he shouted. "They wouldn't waste one on you anyway!" Hamblin smiled, and his mouth silently formed the words "Good Luck!" Then he turned and settled into the gunner's pulpit, immediately starting a functions check on his gun.

The halftrack lurched into motion and accelerated rapidly down the muddy trail. McLaughlin stood in the front of the passenger compartment, braced against the driver's wall, his men crouched low behind him. Snow-covered woods whispered past, then the world was blinding white as the platoon emerged from the trees and into a meadow. A211 lurched wildly off the road to the right, as the platoon went on line and plowed across the field. The men swayed wildly, the veterans well-braced and retaining their crouch, while two of the rookies fell, scrambling for their weapons. The others helped them back up. The halftrack slewed wildly left. Suddenly, a lot of things began to happen at once. A salvo of shells ripped the sky apart overhead and slammed into the trees the platoon had just left, sending geysers of mud and snow skyward. At the same time, the Mouse opened up, hammering away at a German machine gun nest just inside the woodline. The snow flew around them as the vehicle surged forward. "Up, up!" shouted McLaughlin, shouldering his own rifle. The squad sprang up, some firing blindly over the walls of the lurching vehicle. Over the roar of the engines McLaughlin heard the unmistakable "tac-tac-tac" of machine gun rounds punching through A211's thin armored hide. One of the rookies started crying and covered his ears.

Hamblin was screaming to be heard over the noise, shouting commands to his driver, who spun the vehicle wildly over yet again. It slid to a halt sideways a meter from the treeline, throwing the troops around in the back like rag dolls. "Go, go, go!" screamed McLaughlin, grabbing the crying kid and shoving him towards the back hatch. The others were piling out rapidly, crouching against the sides of the halftrack as Hamblin's machine gun continued to bang away overhead. The vehicle lurched forward again, at a crawl now, as the men moved slowly alongside and behind, advancing towards the barn ahead.

McLaughlin watched his men as they advanced behind the cover of the halftrack. The ride in was always the worst part, but they had made it. The rest of it, he knew how to do. He looked up briefly. Above him, Hamblin continued to lay down a steady stream of fire. Just below the gunner on the pulpit wall of A211, nicked by enemy bullets and faded by weather, a painted cat rode a painted mouse across the vehicle's olive-drab hide. Sgt. McLaughlin silently thanked God and turned his face back toward the smoke-shrouded barn, as a steady rain of brass casings clinked down across the painting from Cpl. Hamblin's red-hot gun above.

Since ancient times, the mounted warrior has played a special role on the battlefield. Ancient cavalry had several advantages, even in the somewhat limited warfare of the classical period. The mounted warrior was higher, able to see more of the battlefield. His height also made him harder to hit with the limited arms of the day. He possessed great speed, a potent weapon, allowing him overtake and destroy foot soldiers, or ride about to hit them from flanks and rear before their cumbersome formations could turn. Most dramatically, he possessed the capability to produce that intangible known as 'shock effect'. The noise, speed, mass, and power of a cavalry charge were overwhelm-

ing to ground troops, who almost always broke in the face of one.

Some of the earliest recorded 'mounted assaults' occurred in 334-330 BC, during Alexander's conquest of the Persian Empire. Time and again, the elite Companion cavalry (Alexander's 'shock troops') launched massed charges, overwhelming the Persian infantry with the speed, violence, and force of their assault. In medieval Europe, the mounted warrior was the 'tank' of his time, and ruled the battlefield virtually uncontested. Through the ages, though infantry weapons and tactics have changed considerably to counter him, the mounted soldier has remained a potentially decisive force on the field.

What, you may be asking, does this grand, sweeping pageantry of history have to do with the humble halftrack? A great deal, as we shall see. Mastering the intricacies of mounted assault is one of the keys to mastering ASL. While time, tactics, and weapons have changed, the key ingredients of firepower, mobility, and shock effect, brought together and combined in the mounted soldier, can still be decisive.

This article will deal with some of the peculiarities of mounted combat in ASL. It will not dwell on the rules themselves, but on the implications of these rules, and how they will affect operations on the cardboard battlefield. As the primary concern is a discussion of mounted troops in the attack, I have deliberately not addressed defensive concerns except as they bear on the topic at hand. It is important to note, however, that most of the offensive principles and tactics discussed are equally applicable to a counterattacking mounted force (which, while defensive in nature, is actually carrying out an offensive operation). If you are ever fortunate enough to play a scenario wherein the defender enjoys the luxury of a mounted reserve, or mounted reinforcements, these principles may be just as useful.

In addition, the discussion will not dwell on the 'nuts and bolts' of mounted operations, such as the mechanics of loading/unloading, towing weapons, etc., as the rules are generally very clear in these areas and need no illumination. Instead, let us look at how best to use the advantages of mounted troops.

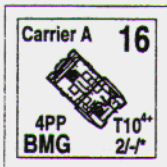
For our purposes, a mounted assault is one in which the attacking soldiers are transported by vehicle *to* or *through* the main line of resistance. In reality, mounted assaults can be made with cavalry, motorcycles, bicycles, and carriers, but the most common modes of transport are trucks, tanks, and halftracks. Each of these three primary modes of transport has unique characteristics and planning considerations. While some may seem better than others, all have their place in the experienced player's 'tool box'.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE TURN 1

First, there are in ASL some general considerations applicable to all mounted troops which must be kept in mind when planning a mounted assault. Mounted troops generally move faster and enjoy better protection (especially crossing open ground) than their dismounted counterparts. Their unique status even allows them to drive right into an enemy-occupied hex for overrun, and subsequently dismount in the hex for TPBF Advancing Fire and CC. This one-two punch, especially the overrun, is the 'shock effect' part. The speed with which a halftrack mounted platoon can act can be very disconcerting. If a mounted platoon begins the turn on one side of the board, and by the end of the turn has crossed the board, overrun the enemy skirmish line, and dismounted in the midst of the enemy position, you can be sure you have achieved 'shock effect'!

If broken while in a truck or halftrack, passengers can continue to be transported forward, possibly self-rallying at a later point without ever 'routing' backwards. On the downside, however, mounted troops suffer from a higher degree of vulnerability than infantry. While mounted, they may even be immune to small arms, but if their vehicle is hit, they will usually suffer a collateral attack, and if it is destroyed, they must risk all on a CS roll. There is no breaking, no rout and rally to come back to the fight. If they fail, that's it. This is a very high risk, and one to consider long and hard before committing yourself too far forward.

The decision of how to use your assets in a mounted assault must be based on several considerations. A good analysis of your mission is essential. Know the enemy's AT capabilities, and how to neutralize them if possible. Ensure the terrain will support your operations, with blind zones for dismounting, and good trafficable avenues for movement. Ideally, mounted avenues should be 2-3 hexes wide, to allow for flexibility, though 1-hex wide routes will do in a pinch (and if the vehicles are escorted by infantry). Don't rely on threading the needle bypassing three buildings to get into the enemy position. It may be effective to infiltrate a single vehicle this way, but don't choose such a route as a main avenue of attack. An experienced defender can detect this quickly and usually



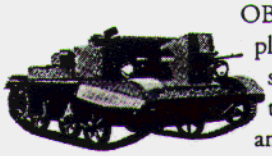
The Case for Carriers

The use of carriers in ASL rarely reflects their function as a "mobile assault" element as quoted in Chapter D Footnote 8 in the rule book. Our experience reveals few players *ever* have their carrier-borne troops dismount to proceed to the objective on foot. This may be due to an lack of appreciation for the flexibility inherent in the various carrier models provided in ASL.

Heading back to Chapter D, we note rule 6.82 states "...their inherent crews are really 2-4-7 HS (or 2-4-8 if representing an elite unit) that, due to their unique training, need not pass a TC nor have a leader present (A1.31) to recombine after Dismounting..." This rule serves to address the capabilities of the *inherent* carrier HS, and also may serve to throw the prospective commander of these units off the scent of effective use of these diminutive APCs.

Carriers can serve the purpose of transporting men, weapons and ammo (C10.13) if towing a gun, forward. A review of D6.82 reveals the statement "Any Carrier can also carry ≤ eight Rider PP (as per 6.2)." That fact leads us to examine the "typical" carrier's 4PP passenger capacity, which combined with the ability to carry Riders from 1943 on, leads us to conclude this vehicle is looking more like a transportation powerhouse. A Carrier A, for example, can carry its inherent HS, a leader and a dm HMG (or dm MMG) *inside* the vehicle as Passengers, and another HS *outside* the vehicle as Riders. The Riders can also carry a LMG and the Carrier may have its BMG removed as per D6.631. Now think in terms of using this vehicle's speed, or throw a few Vehicular Smoke Grenades (F.10) or use the inherent SD5 (1944-on) to get past a tough spot and place this group on the objective.

A review of the inherent capabilities of the Carrier is in order for those Tunisia and Normandy scenarios where you may have previously allowed these valuable military assets to simply wander around the battlefield playing an insignificant role. Next time you have some carriers in your OB, why not deploy a couple of squads, assign them a leader, and get moving!



shut it down with minimal effort, and your vehicles will be stuck with no way to turn around or redeploy.

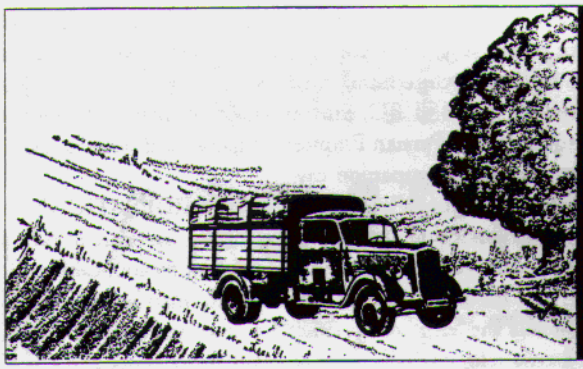
Choose tactics that are suited to the vehicles and caliber of troops you will employ. Lastly, ensure that the time factor is considered. The pace of a mounted assault must be fast and furious, and has to hit hard to keep the defender off balance. It will usually force the issue to a speedy conclusion, either good or ill. Longer scenarios give plenty of time to set up an assault, but shorter ones may not (or, alternatively, a shorter scenario may leave you with no choice but to attack mounted).

Keeping these considerations in mind, let us look at the three most common types of mounted assaults: those involving truck-mounted troops, AFV Riders, and armored infantry (halftracks).

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

First, let's consider truck-mounted infantry. Truck 'assaults' generally are the resort of those nations who recognized the need for rapid motorized infantry, but were unable to equip their troops with modern, armored carriers. Such situations are usually found in scenarios featuring early war Germans, Italians, French, and Allied and Axis Minors. It is important to remember that the trucks were never meant to actually carry the fighting man *into* battle, rather they were meant to carry him *to* the fight, and then let him advance on foot. In this capacity, the truck is actually a very valuable asset.

Of the three methods, however, the truck-mounted assault is probably the least-preferred, for several reasons. First, the vehicles themselves are horribly vulnerable to enemy fire. CS numbers tend to be higher, so more of your troops will survive, but why take chances? Also, truck passengers have their inherent FP halved as mounted fire. If the truck moves, the AFPh FP of the passenger is *again* halved (in effect, quartered) for having moved. Truck passengers cannot fire group, and trucks themselves are usually unarmed and can provide no support to the troops after dismount.



Use covering terrain, such as a tree-line or hill to mask the dismounting of truck-borne troops, or stay out of the effective range of enemy small arms and mg's

In addition, trucks suffer from a quirk of the rules that prevents them from providing cover until they are destroyed! (Though I understand the intent of this rule, I still don't entirely agree with it.) As a result, troops dismounting from trucks in open ground are subject to a -2 DRM, and cannot benefit from any sort of 'armored assault' as they advance.

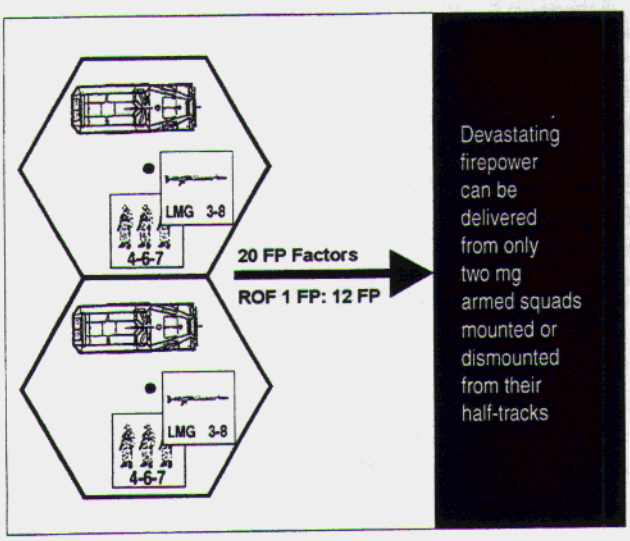
On the plus side, trucks are *fast*, particularly in the desert or on roads. They are a rapid way to get your men forward to the battle. If driven boldly against light opposition, many trucks are capable of crossing a board lengthwise by road in under two MPhs (though it usually pays to be a little more cautious). At any rate, trucks generally feature some of the highest MPs around, an advantage that must be exploited to maximize their potential. Cross country performance is poor, however. Once you leave the road, the truck's movement is severely degraded.

For all these reasons, a truck-mounted assault usually consists of transporting personnel up to a dismount point as close as possible to the enemy without exposing the vehicles to undue risk. From there, troops can dismount and proceed on foot. Only in the most desperate of situations (final-player-turn-and-I-need-those-last-two-exit-VP type desperation) should they attempt to actually *attack* mounted. Note that trucks can conduct overruns alone (1FP) or with passengers (who add 1/4 of their FP), but losses are guaranteed to be appalling.

With this in mind, careful terrain analysis is needed in truck assault planning, particularly in light of the vulnerability of the vehicles. As always, look for covered approach avenues. Selecting your dismount point becomes critical, as this is the most vulnerable point of any mounted action (the vehicles are stopped/stationary targets, and the troops are vulnerable to FFNAM). If covering terrain is not available to mask the dismount operation (a hill, building, or woodline), at least take care to select a point beyond effective range of enemy small arms and machine guns.

A classic example of a truck mounted assault occurs in ASL 58, 'Ci Arrendiamo' (yes, the Italians *can* actually win this, in fact I think it favors them slightly...). The Italian enters with his entire force mounted. Knowing the British setup area restriction, the Italian should plan to detruck just beyond long range for the British small arms. From there, the troops walk in. Armor support ranges forward, ahead of the trucks, to draw fire away from the trucks during the vulnerable dismount phase. Most of the British heavy weapons will focus on the armor and ignore the trucks until the men are safely dismounted. Afterwards, the Italian proceeds slowly, never stacking, laying down huge fire groups of adjacent hexes, while their armor helps crack the stubborn positions. The trucks can either creep forward just behind the infantry for potential later use, or (in a more 'sleazy' variant) actively run deep into the British lines to overrun broken units. Any that get destroyed will provide cover later on. Also, they will help find lanes through all those British minefields.

Let me say here that I am one of those who really doesn't like non-historical 'sleaze plays'. Waves of trucks rushing forward to find minefield gaps is a terribly bogus tactic (except perhaps for Russians), but nothing in the rules prevents it. It is up to the players to inject a level of realism into this game (and avoid plays like the other time-honored favorite, the AFV crew bailing out to claim a building hex....).



Devastating firepower can be delivered from only two mg armed squads mounted or dismounted from their half-tracks

RIDERS ON THE STORM

The second form of mounted assault is that conducted by riders. 'Riders' is a term used to describe troops being transported on vehicles not specifically designed to carry soldiers into battle, such as tanks, assault guns, and tank destroyers. Because their role as transports is usually rather ad hoc, these vehicles don't provide their riders with many of the advantages of purpose-built troop carriers. Due to a chronic shortage of personnel carriers and trucks, the Red Army relied heavily on tanks to transport its infantry forward and lend velocity to the assault. As a result, riders will be used often in scenarios featuring the Russians. In addition, mid- to late-war German, British, and American OBs tend to feature the assets and conditions necessary for a rider mounted assault fairly frequently. Rules for riders differ significantly from those for passengers, so be aware of the differences!

The advantages for riders are few, but important. First and foremost, of course, they can cross ground faster. They don't get a +2 CE TEM, but neither are they vulnerable to FFMO/FFNAM, allowing them to cross open ground at +0. This is a huge advantage over advancing on foot. Also, their conveyance is usually a heck of a lot more survivable than a halftrack, and not likely to get shot up by a lone machine gun. In CC they only suffer a +1 DRM, as opposed to +2 for halftrack and truck passengers.

Finally, tanks and SP guns usually have good smoke-making capability, which can be fired just prior to dismount to screen the debarking troops.

Now for the bad news. Riders cannot button up — they are always vulnerable to enemy small arms, as well as collateral attacks from shots aimed at their transport. They cannot fire SW at all, and fire inherent FP at 1/2 for mounted fire (1/4 during overrun, or if they moved during the turn). While they can fire group with the vehicle's AAMG (if manned by a CE crewman), they cannot fire group with troops on the ground or other vehicles, so the sort of massed platoon fires available with halftracks just aren't possible here.

Worst of all, the rider may be forced to Bail Out. In the old days of *G.I.*, riders even had to Bail Out if the vehicle fired its MA! While no longer the case, there are still numerous things that can force this risky action. Riders must Bail Out if a vehicle enters certain restricting terrain (including orchards!), or if on a turreted vehicle that changes TCA. In addition, if pinned or broken by enemy fire, they must Bail Out. Bailing Out requires yet another NMC, so a squad hit while mounted could be casualty-reduced in one shot (failed MC, followed by failed Bail Out MC). Because of these risks, as a good rule of thumb only elite, high-morale troops should enter battle as riders.

Before committing to send your troops in as Riders, though, be sure to consider the natural alternative — armored assault. Using armored assault, a moving MMC in the open has a +0 TEM (+1 if using assault movement). This is the same as if he were riding, but without the double-break risk of Bail Out, or the potential for loss if the AFV is destroyed. It all comes down to how far they need to go. Armored assault is almost always preferable to using Riders. The only exceptions are when you need to cover large distances quickly (i.e. faster than the troops can move dismounted).

Despite these drawbacks, there are times where a mounted assault conducted by riders is both necessary and appropriate. A good example is Scenario A8, 'The Agony of Doom'. If the Russian holds his armor back and advances at the pace of the infantry, he may well run out of time. If he rushes the armor forward without support, it is vulnerable to panzerfaust and ATMM CC counterattacks from the village garrison. The best solution is to mount a platoon of infantry on the tanks and run them in under the guns on turn 1. Using the blind spots and the board 5 forest road, they will be deep in the woods by the end of turn 1, having endured minimum exposure to potential German AT shots (especially Mr. Tiger on Hill 522). The infantry can then dismount under cover of the woods and press forward ahead of the tanks, the combined forces laying down a base of fire and tying up the German defense while the remaining Russian infantry (truck mounted and on foot) comes forward.

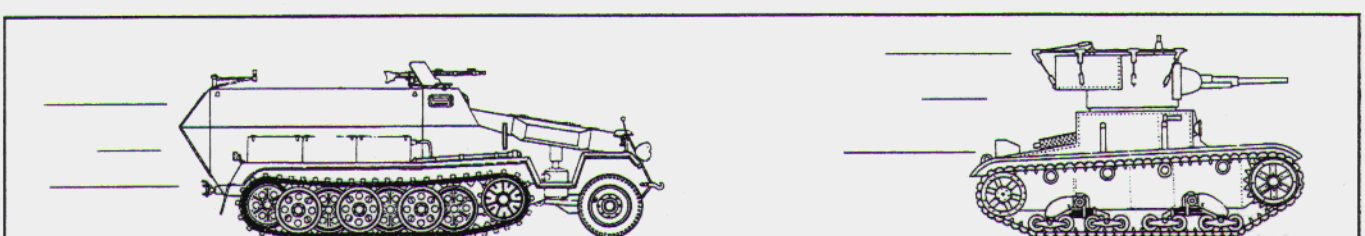
Note that armored assault is not a preferable option here, as a leader-led stack, even at Double Time, could only reach 5H3, where both it and its escorting tank are vulnerable to fire from Hill 522. Carrying Riders, the tanks can cross this danger area and reach the safety of the woods before stopping, instead of halting in the open under the enemy guns.

Anyone who has played this scenario knows this is a very simplified way to describe a complex tactical problem. It will not by itself win the scenario for you, but it is a good application of tank-mounted riders in support of the assault. Without the capability to mount some troops and bring them forward ahead of his main body, the Russian would face a much tougher fight here.

Although better than troops attacking in trucks, it must not be forgotten that tank-mounted infantry is really a stop-gap measure. The vulnerability of infantry while riding clearly shows that this tactic should be used sparingly. More importantly, the extra considerations involved in transporting riders often distract the AFV from its primary mission, or severely handicap it. It cannot enter certain terrain, and cannot even traverse its turret without potentially breaking its passengers. In essence, tanks usually have a lot more important things to do than carry grunts around the battlefield. Another vehicle, however, is designed specifically for that purpose — the halftrack.

HALFTRACK AND ALL HEART

Because a rather high level of industrial capability was necessary to produce such a complex vehicle, few nations ever fielded a large amount of halftrack-mounted soldiery. The U.S. unquestionably led the way, fol-



Many accounts exist of early-war German half-tracks chasing down Soviet tanks using their "anti-tank" machine guns. This form of extra fire support and protection can be provided to German infantry by the SPW 250/1 and 251/1 against the BT and T26 series tanks (Side/Rear AF of 1) prevalent in the early part of Barbarossa. Point Blank Modified TK #'s are 5 against the side and 6 against the rear facing. These are odds which are too high to ignore.

lowed by the Germans. Halftracks will usually occur in German scenarios through out the war, with the quality of the vehicles improving (both in armor and weaponry) as the war progresses. In addition, U.S. OBs naturally frequently feature these vehicles. Most other nations (Britain, Russia, Free French, etc.) relied on Lend-Lease supplies, and will only rarely field halftrack-mounted troops.

The halftrack is at once both one of the most common and least understood vehicles in ASL. This odd hybrid seeks to combine the mobility and armor of a tank with the speed and cargo capacity of a truck, and at first glance appears to fail in all respects. But a closer look at the halftrack within the ASL world reveals a marvelously versatile vehicle, more than a mere battle taxi or roving +1 hindrance.

First off, the halftrack is invulnerable to small arms (except from firers with elevation advantage). Since at least 60% of the average OB FP is small arms, this is a pretty big advantage! Passengers can also enjoy this invulnerability by buttoning up. Further, even CE crew and passengers usually get a +2 TEM for fire directed at them. This is the same advantage as a wooden building or foxhole, only better, because it can move! In addition, those CE passengers can cross open ground with a +2 protection, instead of a -2 liability. Halftracks also provide a +1 TEM cover/hindrance at all times, unlike trucks, which provide no benefit unless wrecked.

Even better, there's almost always some sort of weapon mounted on that halftrack, too. Most have at least an LMG, sometimes up to 2-3 HMGs in the U.S. and later German OBs. This firepower can be added to fire group with troops in the vehicle or to *dismounted troops in the vehicle's hex*. In addition, *several halftracks can fire group their inherent machine guns just like adjacent squads can!* In a pinch, don't forget you can also dismount those machine guns and use them as ground weapons if necessary, although this usually requires the inherent crew to abandon the vehicle. In addition, supporting halftracks of all kinds abound, with AT or INF guns mounted, or even mortars and FTs.

A real advantage of halftracks as opposed to all other modes of transport is that passengers do not have their firepower halved for mounted fire. This means, as long as the halftrack hasn't moved and is not in motion, the passenger squads can fire at full strength (including any possessed LMGs), forming a fire group with the inherent machine gun of the halftrack if desired. An average German panzergrenadier platoon (three 4-6-8 squads, with one LMG, all mounted in adjacent SPW 251/1's) can lay down a 24FP fire group attack (with 12FP RoF potential) in any PFPh or DFPh, while all squads enjoy a +2 TEM (vs. +1 if dismounted beneath the vehicles). In essence, IFT columns being what they are, the three halftracks *double* the FP of this platoon, from 12 (actually 15) to 24, while also providing protective TEM and much higher mobility.

In addition, these halftracks give the squads overrun capability, each halftrack with passengers being capable of executing an 12FP overrun (16FP if the squad has an LMG)! And that is only the 'regular' Germans. More potent squad and machine gun FP make SS or U.S. mounted troops truly terrifying. A U.S. armored infantry platoon in M3 halftracks can lay down a 30FP fire group (36FP if in M3A1s), and up to three 16FP overruns (20FP in M3A1s), almost equal to the average tank overrun FP!

'Think of your halftracks as mobile machine guns, for once they drop off their troops, that is exactly what they are.'

As transports, halftracks are also much better than trucks. Their cross country mobility is markedly superior, though they are still stopped by walls and bocage. Halftracks can also be used to tow ordnance, but in general it's better to leave that to the trucks, which are usually blessed with a higher MP allowance.

Think of your halftracks as mobile machine guns, for once they drop off their troops, that is exactly what they are. Their high mobility makes them perfect for encircling moves, end runs, and other quick strikes on open flanks. Your enemy's confident, smug demeanor will begin to crack when he notices just where those halftracks are going...they suddenly turn up in his backfield, cutting off routs, laying down encircling fire on key positions, and overrunning DMed casualties.

This is where you can really upset your enemy's plan by getting creative with the halftracks. Most players are loath to use up their heavy AT firepower defensive fire shots on halftracks, as there are usually bigger targets around. If they remain somewhat inconspicuous, halftracks will usually get pretty far before the enemy is forced to pay them any serious attention. When he finally realizes the danger, he will have to come after them, drawing assets away from other places in the defense. Remember, of course, that once he comes after them, he probably will get them...but that's ok, too, if you're prepared for it. If they've caused his defense to lose focus and become dissipated, reorienting and fighting in multiple directions, they've achieved their goal. Unless CVP totals are a real concern or you, their loss is usually survivable.

The single greatest drawback of the halftrack, however, is its vulnerability to even light AT weapons. Usually, losing a halftrack is not going to cost you a scenario, but losing a squad, and perhaps even a leader, can really set you back. This is why fighting mounted, despite all the advantages outlined above, is not usually practiced. Dismounting the squad and having them assault move with the vehicle is the safest way to go. True, they give up a +2 TEM for a +1, but more importantly, they can't be killed outright if the vehicle is hit. The firepower of the squad/vehicle FG is the same, but the squad is much less vulnerable. Even if hit, at least it may only break and run, instead of having to stake everything on a CS roll (usually at much worse odds than a MC would require). In addition, when dismounted they present the enemy with two distinct targets, instead of one, causing him to use up more of his defensive fire options. Also, dismounted infantry beneath the vehicle will not suffer collateral attacks that CE passengers would be vulnerable to.

There are, of course, a few other marks in the minus column. For one thing, halftracks are notoriously thin skinned. Although most halftracks are small or very small targets, which helps, with a few low rolls even a LMG can kill one. Heavier ordnance which hits is virtually guaranteed a kill. Crew survival numbers, which also apply to passengers, tend to be rather low on most halftracks.

Halftracks are also limited in their mobility. The biggest problem here is their inability to cross walls and bocage, and the bog risk associated with crossing hedges. Time and again I have seen halftracks helplessly channeled into enemy AT kill zones by walls and hedges...you never really realize just how long those hedges can be, until you have to go around one the long way! Since almost everything else in ASL *can* cross walls and

hedges rather freely (except trucks, ACs and motorcycles), we tend to get used to not regarding them as obstacles, merely as nuisances. When you have plans to use halftracks, train your eye to see these as impassable barriers. You will begin to see 'lanes' and 'routes', sometimes highly channelized, that your vehicles will be restricted to. Remember that if necessary you can cross hedges, but a Bog check must be made. Know where these barriers are ahead of time! Don't get stuck in one of these alleys with three loaded halftracks and an enemy 75L at the far end! Also, halftracks are banned from entering buildings — leave that for the big boys!

Halftracks generally lack smoke-making capability, but their PRC do not! CE inherent crews of armed halftracks can throw smoke grenades as per F.10! In fact, almost as a rule, save 1 MP for your crew to attempt smoke grenades right before the troops dismount. It could provide them with valuable cover during that vulnerable phase.

As a good example of halftrack/infantry tactics, take a small vignette from a recently played match of KGP I. The stone house at R24 in Roua is held by two determined U.S. squads, one of which has a bazooka. German assaults on the flanks have cleared most of the U.S. AT weapons. Surviving U.S. AT guns are fighting for their lives, and generally pointed at Panthers. A German SS grenadier platoon has been waiting patiently, engines idling, vic. R30, cloaked by the extremely heavy mist. Sensing that U.S. AT positions on the flanks are now heavily engaged and unable to support the enemy center, Peiper orders the platoon forward.

The SPWs pull up on line in R27, Q27, and P26, 3 hexes away and at extreme range for the bazooka, especially in the extremely heavy mist (even risking desperation to avoid Case C3, the American needs an 'eyes' to hit, which would incidentally K/1 the firer). The mist (which at this density adds a +1 Hindrance per hex) provides some cover as the men dismount. U.S. Defensive First Fire and Subsequent First Fire are ineffective, the U.S. player divvying up his defensive fire attacks in an attempt to hit each squad, instead of massing on one [which is still only a 12 (+3)]. In this AFPh, the German will put a 16 (+6) fire group attack on the American.

The German squads still collect the +1 TEM of their halftracks throughout the U.S. Turn, in which they can now lay a 30 (+6) FP attack on the farmhouse. U.S. squads of 6 morale will not stand up to this punishment for very long (even 7-morale troops will be challenged). On the next German Turn, the platoon uses armored assault to assault move 1 hex forward. Realistically, they may take some losses here, perhaps a broken squad. The halftracks are still fairly safe, the bazooka needing a DR of 5 to hit if it risks desperation (any hit would also guarantee at least a NMC for the firer). The AFPh 16 (+5) FP fire group attack follows.

In the U.S. Turn, German defensive fire is heavy, as the squads again fire group with the halftracks for another 30FP attack. If any U.S. Squads are still intact, the next German turn finishes them. One squad lays smoke, the others advance adjacent. The halftracks go in motion and encircle the house at Q24 and S25, preventing routs. In the AFPh, their AAMGs lay fire on any U.S. units still in the farmhouse, the squads advance in, and by the end of the turn it is all over.

'Don't get stuck in one of these alleys with three loaded halftracks and an enemy 75L at the far end!'

Imagine trying to do that without the halftracks! First, the reserve would have to be much further forward, and therefore more vulnerable, as the troops simply could not react quickly enough on foot. After deploying, not only would they have 1 less TEM shielding them, but all their firegroups would be much less powerful (one to two IFT columns lower). Finally, during the actual assault, it would be much harder for the three squads to encircle the house and ensure the destruction of the enemy troops.

Granted, it has an element of risk in it — but the risk is calculated, and everything has been done to make it as minimal as possible. Although KGP mist rules forced the fight at much closer ranges, the same synergy of weapons systems can be achieved in a 'normal' scenario, by simply moving the dismount point back 2-3 hexes to compensate for the increased visibility. In this case, in clear weather, the halftracks would probably deploy along the R29 - P29 road, again at extreme bazooka range. The armored assault would then proceed from there.

These tactics are even more effective when used against enemy squads with less inherent range than your own, such as Americans against Japanese or SS, Germans against Russians or British, etc. In these cases, a dismount point just outside his normal range, but inside yours, will allow you to hammer him while braving only desultory return fire.

In fact a playing of KGP I provides an excellent opportunity to experiment with how to use halftracks, mostly for the German. By the night of the first day, most of the fighting is in the village proper, much too close and nasty for halftracks. But the halftracks can easily swing around the village to the south, and cut it off from the rear. U.S. reinforcements must cross the open under multiple AAMGs to get to the village, and the ever-popular encircling fire and interdiction opportunities are numerous (mist permitting). If he decides to go after the halftracks, so what? They are quick enough to evade any determined assault (and it hurts a lot less to lose one of these than, say, a Panther), and if he weakens his front to deal with this threat to his rear, so much the better for your assault troops!

As with all ASL operations, if you happen to roll badly and your opponent rolls well, that's the breaks. But the employment detailed above is tactically sound, realistic, and a far better use of halftracks than some you may have seen. (In KGP, they are often found hanging around the rear waiting to have their gas siphoned out for the tanks!) Also, to be honest, *this is exactly what halftracks were designed to do* — carry troops to the battle position, and then provide cover and covering fire for the dismounts. It is directly in line with the doctrinal mission assigned to them at the time.

Too often, we tend to look at the squad and the halftrack as two separate entities — usually, the halftrack is only important until the squad dismounts in the objective area. How many of us then give all our attention to the squad, while giving the halftrack short shrift? Think of the squad and its halftrack as a *team*, each existing to compliment the other, and you begin to get a better realization of the original concept behind these vehicles. Working *together*, they are far more potent than each is separately.

This is another example of the marvelous simulation of this game, in that doctrinal use of your forces actually translates into advantage on the gameboard. The tactics and doctrine of the time make sense in game terms, and if you fight the way the soldiers and equipment of the day were trained and designed to, not only will you experience the 'historical' simulation at its finest, but I

daresay you will find yourself winning more, and *for the right reasons*. In other words, you'll be winning because you *outfought* your opponent, not simply because you know the rulebook, its loopholes, and how to use them better than your opponent.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Here I will use ASL A69, "BROICH BASH" as an example for analysis. This typical late-war action centers around a U.S. Armored Cavalry group's attempt to seize control of a small German village. Their assault is resisted with unusual vigor by the local garrison. I have personally found this to be an enjoyable, well-balanced scenario that provides an excellent opportunity to exercise mounted operations as discussed earlier. What follows is a brief outline of a possible U.S. plan of attack, based of course on some supposition as to potential German setups. Any final plan would naturally be refined based on how the German actually lays out his defense.

A quick analysis of the situation should lead the American to realize that conditions are well-suited to mounted operations. The mission entails occupation of key buildings, which also necessitates dismounted operations. Mounted overruns are thus unlikely, but there are other factors involved. The enemy AT capability is fairly limited — one PSK, one HMG (a threat to the halftracks and truck), and one SPW 251/10 with a 37L mounted. Of course, inherent panzerfausts and ATMM must also be considered, as well as the light mortar and LMG, but the bottom line is that at greater than 3 hexes, the German AT threat is very low. From the front, the 37L is unlikely to kill the M24 Chaffee's in the U.S. OB. In addition, SSR 4 even strips the AT halftrack of it's inherent PSK!

The terrain involved is also well-suited to mounted operations. Fairly open terrain surrounds the village, allowing for a lot of vehicular maneuver. A gully restricts operations in the north of Board 24, however, while several hedglines limit options on the southern approach. The west is wide open, though a large wood separates the village from the fields beyond.

The U.S. is given a powerful and flexible OB to accomplish his mission. Though only 6-morale squads, these troopers still have the high FP and smoke exponents necessary to get the job done. Support weapons are adequate, as well. The leadership ratio is good, though the quality of the leaders leaves a bit to be desired. The vehicles provided are well-suited to the task, and provide great flexibility, as they include tanks, halftracks, and a truck.

The time allotted is sufficient, but the American cannot waste a single turn. Digging enemy troops out of buildings takes time, so these cavalrymen must be into the village by Turn 3 at the latest, to allow enough time to claim the necessary buildings.

Having considered these factors, the American can see that a mounted assault will be the best way to quickly move into the outskirts of the village. Speed and surprise are vital to the American plan. The U.S. player can decide, after German setup, which board edge to enter on (except east). This has two important implications. First of all, the German must set up prepared to meet a thrust from south, west, or north. He will have to disperse his troops initially to present an even frontage on three sides — a tall order for his thin OB. Secondly, once the U.S. does commit, the German will be rushing everything he has to the threatened sector. For this reason, it is essential that the U.S. player crack the outer defense early (Turns 1-2), and be into the village proper before the redeploying German defenders are able to reinforce the defense along the intended axis of advance.

Like any good commander, the U.S. player makes a quick survey of the ground from the German point of view. The dominant terrain (and the only Level 2 terrain) is in building 24V3. As the German must plan against three contingencies, and has three main AT systems available, it is likely he will place one on each axis initially, and hope to redeploy them later. The 2nd level of 24V3 is a natural for the HMG, which can dominate the southern approach, and also use long range fire to influence the other two. The PSK can best be deployed in the west, where extensive woodlines will allow its manning MMC to move concealed to multiple firing positions. In the north, the 37L AT halftrack can easily shut down the road bottlenecks at the 24F6 bridge and the 24K7 gap in the woodline. Also, as the most mobile of the three, it can rapidly reposition to meet the threat. Finally, expect the mortar to be positioned where it will have the best chance to hit enemy troops in treelines for airburst (probably vic. 24N7 or P7, to cover the woods both north and west of town).

Note that the German has no HIP and no OB-given concealment. This means, what you see is what you get. He does have a truck in his OB, obviously there to allow him to try to confuse the American as to the location of his 37L halftrack.

Against most German setups, I feel the American is best to choose an approach from the south. There are several reasons for this. First, building 24V3 is worth 3 VP, over half the required amount. A southern approach allows for quickest capture of this landmark. Second, it is the best avenue for a mounted approach. The northern approach is too restricted. The only mounted avenues in are bottlenecked at the bridge in 24F6, and at a narrow, twisted bypass route vic. 24H0 and down in between two treelines (panzerfaust central), which is also bottlenecked by hedges and buildings, allowing only a narrow bypass exit at the end of this route. The west looks inviting, but distance to be covered is greater, and once the troops dismount into the woodlines, the vehicles will have to circle all the way around the woodlines (or thread through a narrow gap) to get into the village and assist the squads. Going through narrow gaps is OK, as long as your infantry has cleared and secured both sides first. In this scenario, the U.S. doesn't have time for that. In short, the terrain here does not support combined operations.

As a result, the U.S. decides on a southern approach, planning that the German HMG is in the upper level of 24V3. The overall U.S. plan is to break the German initial perimeter by the end of Turn 2, encircle building 24V3 by the end of Turn 3, then seize building 24R4. After that, they will hold off the redeploying Germans while follow-on troops complete the seizure of the encircled and isolated 24V3 building for the win.

Here, in a nutshell, are the opening moves:

Turn 1: The tanks enter first. The lead tank enters on GG3, and works forward to Y2, where it fires smoke mortars into 24W4 to (hopefully) obscure the HMG's LOS to later moves. The second tank enters on GG1, accompanied by a leader and two squads with an MMG using CX armored assault. They move along the east board edge to BB1, the squads then veering off to AA1 while the tank ends in AA2, oriented on building 24V3. If there is a 5/8" concealment in the vicinity, the tanks continuously present frontal aspect to it. The two squads sit tight in AA1, which is a blind hex from the upper levels of 24V3.

The goal of this platoon is to work forward to building S3, then isolate the east flank of building R4, and finally storm it from the east. The tanks will position themselves so that one can smother the HMG in WP smoke on Turn 2, while the other moves to circle behind building V3 and cut off all

rout/reinforcement routes. If the 37L halftrack shows up in this area, it will of course be a natural target. Once building V3 has fallen, the tanks will maneuver to smoke, isolate, then encircle building R4.

Next, the halftracks enter, one carrying a squad, a leader, the bazooka, and the mortar, the other with 1.5 squads. They enter on the GG5 road, dashing down the road to Z8/AA8, both blind to 23V4, where they dismount their squads. The squads advance into Y8 and Y9 during the advance phase, to protect the halftracks from any German counterstrikes in the upcoming German player turn. The half squad takes the mortar, and looks eventually for likely firing positions vic. 24T9/T10, from which it can provide smoke in support of the squads, or put HE fires on repositioning Germans.

This platoon's mission is to work through the brush vic. X7, using armored assault or with infantry advancing just in front of the halftracks. The goal of the squads is to clear the V7-X6 woodline, and seize building S8. From there, the squads and halftracks together conspire to isolate building R4 from the west, and ultimately if necessary storm it from the west. Because it is usually pointless for the German to take on the U.S. tanks with the 37L halftrack, I expect it to maneuver against the halftracks, and so assign the bazooka to this platoon. The bazooka is not only to be used against the 37L halftrack, but can also lay WP in support of the squads' maneuver, and helps dig any German squads out of building positions (especially S7 or S8).

Finally, the truck enters, with the remaining 2.5 squads, a leader, and an MMG. Hopefully the HMG fired at the halftracks and fixed its CA facing south, so the truck should be able to enter on 24GG10 or 19GG1 and maneuver safely to 24AA9. Even if the enemy HMG is still active, the truck may move cross country using blind hexes to from 24GG10 to 24AA9, remaining in motion with troops still mounted.

On Turn 2, with the HMG thoroughly smoked (or, repositioning), the truck moves forward to X5, where it dismounts its platoon. These squads then spread out into the woodline and advance on 24V3, their primary objective.

A couple of notes to explain the above. I opted not to use riders on the tanks, as the 6 morale squads are simply too vulnerable to a Bail Out double-break situation (these are not the 8-morale heroes the Russians have in 'Agony of Doom'). Using armored assault, they receive the same TEM benefit (a net of +0) without that risk. It also frees up one tank to get further forward early for some smoke-laying. If the distance to the village outskirts were any greater, however, these guys would have to ride. As it is, they can just make it to shelter with a double time, leader-led push.

In essence, due to set up restrictions on the German, only the HMG on Level 2 will be able to engage on the Turn 1 approach. As it is, he is being presented with 4 viable targets, roughly in order from least vulnerable to most vulnerable. This is designed to tax his patience — he will be tempted to wait for the truck, but with so many other targets moving in so close, he will probably commit earlier (against the halftracks, most likely), both fixing his CA and, hopefully, losing his RoF.

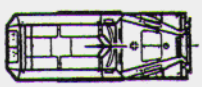
If he does hold until the truck enters, that is OK too. At a minimum, it means the others all reached their turn 1 positions safely. The truck will expose itself as little as possible, but the truck platoon is the least essential of the three elements. If hit, note that the truck has the highest crew survival number in the U.S. OB, so it is very likely at least *some* of this platoon would survive a hit. Even if this middle platoon is completely taken out, the two encircling platoons will drive to take building R4, keeping building V3 cut off, while the tanks pound V3 into submission with HE. One or two squads can then drop back from the R4 perimeter to secure V3.

Throughout the scheme of attack, the squads, halftracks, and tanks always maneuver so that they can mutually cover each other. In the close terrain of the western brush/woods, close cooperation of the halftracks and infantry is essential. The halftracks provide crucial MG support to the ground troops, while the squads protect them from panzerfaust ambushes. Note that the 'tracks will be CE most of the time — Purple Heart time for the crews, but that's what they get paid for.

As always, note the extensive use of smoke. The tanks (smoke mortars, crew grenades, and MA s5 and WP7), the halftrack crew grenades, the 60mm mortar, the baz '45, and the squad exponents all will get a workout here. As in any real-world mounted operation, U.S. success will depend on surprise, speed, shock effect, and violence of execution.

Mounted assaults are some of the most challenging and rewarding operations one can experience in ASL. By combining the effects of vehicles and infantry, and using them to compliment each other's strengths and offset each other's weaknesses, one can begin to get a real sense of the impact of combined arms operations. Just remember to maximize the natural strengths of the mounted soldier — firepower, mobility, protection, and shock effect — and don't forget those halftracks! Use smoke whenever you can — and as always, move fast, strike hard, finish rapidly!

SPW 251/1



ID# Place Malfunction/Disabled markers and Cloaked Passengers as appropriate

A	AAMG	PASSENGERS
B	AAMG	PASSENGERS
C	AAMG	PASSENGERS
D	AAMG	PASSENGERS
E	AAMG	PASSENGERS
F	AAMG	PASSENGERS

INTENSIVE FIRE '95

by Pete Phillipps

Intensive Fire is often risky, but for Neil Stevens, his risk turned into a Critical Hit.

OK, so it sounds corny, but to be honest, it is the only way to describe the success of Intensive Fire '95, the UK's first ASL convention. A risk? Sure, trying to organise the first ASL convention in a country, unsure of the response you would get. A Critical Hit? Definitely, since 60 ASL players turned up (three times the number Neil hoped would attend), making it probably the biggest ASL gathering outside of the United States.

THE VENUE

Intensive Fire '95 was held at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, near Swindon, from Friday 3rd November to Sunday 5th November. Accommodation was available in the college's Halls of residence at a cost of £35 per night, which included all meals. The gaming was held in the college's purpose-built Conference centre, with three large open rooms being used.

"The organisation was superb, I don't think I've ever seen anything that is even close. Of course, since this was organised by people with ties to the military, maybe that was to be expected?"

Patrik Manlig.



Neil Stevens of the U.K. on the right playing the unknown ASL'er

Located in the 'Headquaters', a room set aside for non-gaming activities, were a couple of PCs (which were running Steel Panthers, Battleground: Ardennes, and a copy of the unofficial ASL GAP produced by Steve Zundel), playtest copies of the Kampfgruppe Peiper II mapsheets and The Third Bridge, copies of God Save The King! and Soldiers of the Negus. Copies of various fanzines were also on display and available for purchase (these went very quickly, especially Critical Hit! 3).

Many people seemed very happy with the bar prices. 80p for a pint of lager - haven't seen those prices for years. Strangely enough though, few people seemed to frequent the bar during the evenings, although a few four packs were consumed.....

"Saturday evening was great fun. I tried to get a game going, but ended up drinking beer and talking ASL with assorted people. Very enjoyable."

Pete Phillipps.

The atmosphere throughout the weekend was very friendly and easy-going. The only formal time was during dinner, which was taken in the Officers Mess and thus required a jacket, shirt and tie.

THE TOURS

One of the attractions of Intensive Fire '95 was the opportunity to visit the college's small arms armoury, the AFV hangar and their wargaming laboratory. These are not generally open to the public, but as a serving Army officer studying a degree there, Neil was in a position to offer those arriving on Friday the chance to visit all three, and strangely enough many took advantage of the opportunity.

The most impressive sight in the AFV hangar had to be the King Tiger, although also on display were a T34/85, and a number of modern MBTs, APCs, and scout/armoured cars. All but the Tiger were fully operational, and there are plans for the Tiger to be restored to full working order by 1997. We were allowed into all of the vehicles on display, and many seemed to become CE 6+1 Armour Leaders for an hour, with the Tiger probably being the most popular, even though it could only be accessed by the rather small driver's escape hatch unde the hull (and having struggled to get through that hatch, I can understand why CS is so low for many vehicles).

"I'm back from my foray into the international ASL scene. I had a great time at the Intensive Fire tourny. The tours were a big hit - where else can you try a King Tiger on for size! This is definitely the place to be next year if you can sell it to the wife."

Bob Schaaf.

The small arms armoury contained examples of 20th century small arms from around the world, as well as a number of LATW such as the Panzerfaust, the Bazooka and the PIAT. An arms expert talked us through some of the more common German and British weapons of World War Two, after which we were allowed to walk around the room and handle many of them. No live firing opportunities unfortunately.

In the Simulation and Synthetic Environment Laboratory we were shown some examples of military computer wargaming. The first was an operational level game, set around the Darlington area (simply because they had maps available for the area) for up to three players on each side. This game was used to provide combat data on weapon systems, both real and hypothetical. The second game was a 3D shoot-em-up type vehicle simulator. Although not graphically impressive compared to some home PC games, up to 200 people could be linked together at once to play a real-time engagement! We were also shown a video of a similar American operation where units engaged each other in the

Gulf of Mexico without leaving their bases, simply by having all the data from their onboard computers transmitted to each other.

THE ACTION

The tournament itself commenced on Saturday morning and was based on 14 Fireteams of 4 players. Over the course of the weekend, each team would play 4 matches, with each having two scenarios so in Fireteam A two players would play one scenario, one as attacker and the other defender, and the other two would play the second.

Saturday Morning - Le Manoir and North Bank.

"I used to compete in figure wargaming competitions but was put off by all the cheating and arguing (and sometimes crying and fighting!) that went on, I expected similar goings on at Intensive Fire, how wrong I was! I had one 'argument' over a dodgy LOS when an opponent fired so out came the string. After checking he said there was no LOS, but I disagreed. On closer inspection there was a single dark green printers dot about a 10th of a millimeter wide on the other side of the string! Well I suppose the rules do say that if the terrain is visible on both sides of the string LOS is blocked, but in this case the width of the white center dot and where you put the string made a difference, I would have given him the shot, but he wouldn't take it and lost his fire."

Arthur Garlick.

Saturday afternoon - No Better Spot to Die and Cold Crocodiles.

"Guys. Intensive Fire '95 is rocking and rolling here at Shrivenham, UK. After the first two tournament rounds the Belgique team and the Swedish team are showing us all the ropes and both teams are neck and neck in terms of points scored. Just as well they are playing each other tomorrow then!"

Message posted on CompuServe by Jon Williams while at Intensive Fire '95.

Sunday morning - Tettau's Attack and Not Out of the Woods Yet.

"My only real claim to flame was burning 2 Shermans in the Wooded Hills in Not out of the Woods Yet ('95 Annual) with 2 Panzerfausts. Subsequently the WHOLE hill was on fire with about 25 Blaze Counters. A pretty impressive sight especially on the 5th November 'Bonfire Night'".

William Roberts.

Sunday afternoon - Ranger Stronghold and Gavin Take.

"I lost all four of my games, what an awful performance. Just shows us all the difference between FTF and Email and the fact that we have so much time in which to think of our moves. It was a lot of fun and I look forward to next year."

Steve Cocks.

Scenarios were chosen to keep the first Intensive Fire relatively easy, so that it would be open to as many players as possible.

A number of unofficial friendly games were also played in the spare time that players had during the evenings, particularly on Friday. Nobody tried to play a HASL scenario, although one or two people were tempted.



Luis Calcada of Portugal faces down Patrik Manlig of Team Sweden

THE RESULTS

The Swedish team, consisting of Patrik Manlig, Bernt Ribom, Nils-Gunnar Nilsson and Klas Malmsstrom, were the clear winners of the tournament, winning 13 of the 15 matches they were able to complete. For their superb performance they were rewarded with a set of engraved glass tankards.

Bernt Ribom of Sweden won all five matches he played and was awarded with the Player of the Tournament trophy, a British paratrooper mounted on a stand. Other notable performances were put in by Patrik Manlig (Sweden) and Ralf Krusat (Germany) with 5 wins and 1 loss each, Nils-Gunnar Nilsson (Sweden) and Derek Tocher (England) with 4 wins and 1 loss each, and Alan Smee (Australia), Nick Edelston, Bob Eburne, and Mike Rudd (England) who all won the 4 matches they played. As the top English player, Derek Tocher walked away with a copy of Critical Hit! #3.

"The best thing is the friends I made, both on my team and amongst near neighbours who I did not know existed. There are three guys who play in Blackpool (where I work) and are real eager to get it on for some serious dice time in the near future."

Trevor Edwards.

Mention must also be made of Christian Koppmeyer who managed to play seven games during the tournament (winning 2, losing 5) and Michael Rhodes who managed to lose all five games he played. Never mind Michael. A Critical Hit consolation prize is on its way from the organsiers!

"I played 7 matches, lost 5 and won 2. It was this convention that showed me the difference between a good player and me. I thought if I had played ASL for four years then I would know the game. Wrong, Wrong, Wrong !!! So I came back at home not only with new ideas but with new aims too."

Christian Koppmeyer

AFTERMATH

To Neil, William, Jon, and Duncan; congratulations on a job well done. For all the time and effort you put in to organise the convention, you are all hereby promoted.

"That was a great weekend. If they do it again next year I sure will be there."

Luis Calcada.

Look for news about Intensive Fire '96 in forthcoming issues of View From The Trenches. Intensive Fire '95 was organised by Neil Stevens, Jon Williams, William Roberts and Duncan Spencer. They wish to express their deepest gratitude to Ray Tapio and Critical Hit!; the authors of God Save The King!; Time On Target's Mark Neukom; and Philippe "ASL News, Kampfgruppe Peiper, Support ASL in Europe" Leonard for the support they gave. They would also like to especially thank Melissa Schaaf, "who travelled all the way from the States to end up

helping us out by doing the odd jobs nobody else wanted to do!"

"Games without frontiers. War without tears."

Neil Stevens, quoting from Peter Gabriel.

PLATOON LEADER Q & A

1.607 & 1.6194 What Chapter divider? I didn't receive one, was I supposed to? The advertisement states "you will receive 14 typed pages of rules and charts". I received 12.
Ans. Our mistake, there were original plans for a chapter divider with CG charts on it. When the decision was made to face a unknown audience and reception of new "unofficial" rules, investment cost had to be reduced. The chapter divider was the item that took the hit. No, you were not supposed to. The advertisement was written prior to the final typesetting of the manuscript. After typesetting, the text came to only twelve pages
1.2 Objective Hex: May a player declare an already friendly controlled location as an objective hex?
Ans. No, an Objective Hex is a location that is to be reached by an Infantry unit.
1.606 If overstacked, must all units in the overstacked hex attempt escape, or only enough units to eliminate the overstacking?
Ans. No, only enough units to eliminate the overstacking.
1.606 Shouldn't it read "each MMC may portage <= 5PP, SMC <=2PP"?
Ans. Yes.
1.6114 In the second sentence, shouldn't it read, "ing the DR on the 1.6112 MMC Battle Hardening Table..."?
Ans. No. The player must make a choice prior to rolling for leader BH, rather to take the two "free" leaders in 1.6113 or make the DR in 1.6114. (NOTE: This 1.6114 (the first 1.6114) should actually be numbered 1.6113.)
1.6132 Under the drm listings, shouldn't the lowest entry read, "+1 if only non-qualified use possible (A21.13)?
Ans. Yes
1.6134 If I place a DC in a target hex and the Original effect DR is <= 10, do I retain the DC for the next scenario?
Ans. Yes
1.6194(b) Would units set up on the map this way (in reserve) also suffer the +2 CPP penalty of 1.6194(a)?
Ans. NO. They suffer other penalties by being set up in reserve, instead the owner may purchase these reserve units at a lower cost, but there is no assurances that your opponent will attack in such a manner that they will activate and become useful.
1.6196 states that RG given in the initial OB do not count towards this total, while 1.6197 states that RG given in the initial scenario do. Which is correct?
Ans. It does seem like that is true, but the purpose of recording all RG (given and purchased) on the Purchase Record is to keep track of Objective Hexes, SW and Leaders rolled for. OB given units do not count toward the CG MAX.
1.6241 If a Radio/Field Phone is in a now isolated location at the end of a scenario, is it now eliminated?
Ans. If the OBA Module that was assigned to this Radio/Phone was eliminated, then the Radio/Phone is eliminated unless another OBA Module is purchased for that particular Radio/Phone in the very next RG purchase phase. If the immediate OBA module purchase is made, then the Isolated Radio/Phone may be selected for that OBA. (A second Radio/Phone is not received.)
1.731 Are these drm Cumulative? Are only Russian Ski units/Siberians (not regular Russians) eligible for the -1 drm? Would a Russian Siberian Ski unit receive a -2 drm?
Ans. YES. YES. YES.

Intensive Fire '95 SCENARIO W/L STATISTICS

SC #	SCENARIO NAME		PLAYS	ALLY	AXIS	DRAW
13	Le Manoir		14	10	4	-
16	No Better Spot to Die		15	5	10	-
A15	Stand Fast the Guards		1	0	1	-
A25	Cold Crocodiles		14	8	6	-
A38	North Bank		14	6	8	-
A33	Tettau's Attack		13	5	7	1
A73	Not Out of the Woods Yet		14	6	6	2
F	Paw of the Tiger		1	0	1	-
T1	Gavin's Take		13	6	7	-
T3	Ranger Stronghold		7	3	4	-
G19	A Tough Nut to Crack		1	0	1	-
ASLN60	Call Them Ironsides		1	0	1	-
CH26	Close Order Driel	1	0	1	-	
BB5	Going to Church		1	0	1	-
BB10	Surrender or Die		3	3	0	-
	Totals		113	52	58	3

THE TEAM TABLES

TEAM	P	W	D	L	PTS	PLAYEDPTS
1st TEAM 7				20.50	15	22.00
Patrik Manlig	4	3	0	1	5.00	
Klas Malmstrom	3	2	1	0	3.50	
Bernt Ribom	4	4	0	0	6.00	
Nils-Gunnar Nilsson	4	4	0	0	6.00	
2nd TEAM 10				18.00	14	20.50
Peter Bennett	3	2	1	0	3.50	
Bob Eburne	4	4	0	0	6.00	
Nick Edelston	4	4	0	0	6.00	
Paul Case	3	1	0	2	2.50	
3rd TEAM 5				13.00	12	17.50
Philipe Leonard	3	2	1	0	3.50	
Pedro Ramis	2	2	0	0	3.00	
Serge Bettencourt 3	2	0	1	3.50		
Roger Cook	4	1	0	3	3.00	
4th TEAM 3				18.00	16	17.00
Carl Sizmur	4	2	0	2	3.00	
Aaron Sibley	4	2	0	2	4.00	
Derek Tocher	4	3	0	1	5.00	
Trevor Edwards	4	3	0	1	5.00	
5th TEAM 13				13.50	13	16.50
Kevin Beard	3	3	0	0	4.50	
Chris Littlejohn	4	2	0	2	4.00	
Chris Courtier	3	1	1	1	2.50	
Dominic McGrath	3	1	0	2	2	



Don't whine on-line, call or fax direct!

ROASTING CHESTNUTS *or* HOW NOT TO LEAVE A TRAIL OF BURNING WRECKS TO MARK YOUR ADVANCE

by Ted Bleck and Alan Freedman

Tuning up small chestnuts like TEST OF NERVES and OPERATION NORDWIND poses an interesting challenge. Actions of battalion or larger size are frequently "self balancing." There is greater latitude for the late arrival of critical assets such as a needed OBA or a needed pause to regroup an attack that has faltered. One mistake by a player will not usually decide the contest. In contrast, during a short five or six turn scenario the pressure to avoid that one catastrophic mistake is there from the start and remains ever-present during the entire game.



TEST OF NERVES

Our initial playtest of TEST OF NERVES demonstrated the above described principle. At first, the British held the upper hand in the form of a series of repeat victories. The pair of 57L ATG's assigned in the original British OB appeared to be insurmountable obstacles to German victory. Their high rate of fire, special ammunition, and use of HIP were particularly lethal. A five turn game length prevented the German infantry from developing the British position. Ultimately, the press of time forced the Tigers to make themselves vulnerable to the anti-tank guns. Immobilized and wrecked Tigers would soon litter the German line of attack. Our conclusion: one of the 57L ATG's had to go.

The loss of that one ATG shifted the balance dramatically. In subsequent games the German player was able to overrun the final British AFV positions with a massed group of Tigers. The altered scenario looked to be a veritable German walkover. With careful conservation of AFV assets, the German player would feel out the British AFV positions with infantry, an easier task with only one ATG to find. Once unmasked, the gun, Cromwells and the Firefly would die fiery deaths to the lethal power of the 88's.

A first look at the Orders of Battle created additional consternation. The presence of a 100mm+ OBA module for the British seemed a bit excessive for such a small unit action. The module represents divisional assets of a battery of OQL 4.5 inch Howitzers or OBL 4.5 Guns. Historically, a module representing battalion or company heavy weapons would be more appropriate. This only served to weaken the under strength British. Besides, in the majority of playtests the 100mm+ OBA had little more effect than to add intimidation value. Ultimately we chose to depict armored support artillery with a 76mm module provided by a battery of battalion mortars off map.

Any balance would have to come from adjusting the German Order of Battle. This was accomplished by first giving the German 5-4-8 Elite squads instead of 4-6-8's The rationale was that according to Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr.'s HITLER'S LEGIONS: THE GERMANY ARMY ORDER OF BATTLE, WORLD WAR II, Panzer Lehr had just reorganized and refitted in northern France just prior to the Normandy invasion. The 5-4-8's are more brittle to ELR failure degrading to conscripts with just two ELR failures. Given the German ELR of 3 for the scenario, this could be critical in the course of play. The above changes brought the scenario into better balance, though the scenario still favors the German player in a 55/45 split in our experience.

The British Perspective:

The British player has only a few options open to him. They do not have the forces or the strength to engage the Germans head-on. Neither can the British player give ground. Simply put, there is no ground to give! The best overall strategy is to play a delaying game. Use your infantry and occasionally your tanks as DIP (defend in position) units. These may also be euphemistically referred to as "die in place" units. Their sole function is to delay the German advance. Their positions, in all likelihood, have few means of escape. Use your infantry and HIP tanks wisely in this role (i.e. take as many of the enemy with you and slow him down as much as possible with each of your units expended in DIP missions).

The British player needs to remember a few key facts at all times. You only have one tank that can kill the Tigers from the front. Due to its thin armor-plate, it will probably only destroy one vehicle before it is bypassed or eliminated. Secondly, the rest of your tanks are nearly worthless against the Tigers, but can kill infantry or the Panzer IV. Third, all of the British AFV's have weak armor in the face of the 88s, PSK and notably the 31 TK of an inherent PF. In all but one playtest British artillery was *not* a decisive factor in the game. Don't rely on your OBA to any great extent. Its sole value is one of intimidation and channeling the German attack. Finally, just remember the VC's; You win the scenario if any of your AFV's have a LOS to T3, T4 or S4.

British Strategy Tips:

Use your infantry wisely. Spread them out so they can delay the German infantry. In all but one playtest it was the German infantry which scored the decisive final kill of the last British AFV on the last game turn. I would recommend placing infantry in building R6, S3, S8 and U4. The AT gun could easily be placed in U4 or T6. Personally, I would place it in U4 since it will be less likely to incur the limited movement in LOS penalty (C6: case J1 and J2) when it fires. The infantry are in a good position to support the gun and delay the German infantry. Building R6 might seem a little exposed, but one or two squads here can delay the Germans for a turn or two. Remember to set up your

forces in places where they can gain concealment prior to the start of the game.

Each of these building locations offer simple (and protected) ways in and out, except for R6. However, you need to know when to leave R6 (usually in a hurry) before the German player can cut you off. Don't worry about the tanks isolating these troops since the German player will usually try to avoid exposing his tanks until he has located the AT gun and the Firefly (Sherman VC). The PIAT should be placed in S3 or T6 in support of the gun. Remember that the PIAT does not have any nasty effects when it is fired from inside a building. We would prefer seeing the PIAT in S3 because it can cover the road in case the gun is knocked out and can provide some protection from a German infantry advance along the south side of the map.

Placement of the tanks is an altogether different matter. Try placing the Firefly in U5 using HIP. This will (hopefully) allow it to kill at least one Tiger before its burning fuel sets the woods on fire. While its victory may be pyrrhic, it does remove at least one nasty tank from the German arsenal. Place a Cromwell VII in X1 or W3 using HIP. The Cromwell VI can go in Z1 as the revealed AFV. Make liberal use of smoke to slow down movement and hinder German LOS. Remember that it is more difficult to fire out of smoke than into it. Also, the other Cromwells have WP in addition to smoke. A NMC can strip concealment and may occasionally cause some casualties. Note that these positions for your tanks each have a LOS to at least one Victory Condition hex.

The fourth tank, a Cromwell VII, presents somewhat of a dilemma. It does not have HIP and must be set up out of sight of any potential starting German AFV location. We prefer T7 for its solitude and LOS to P7. If the German tries to sweep over the hill, this tank and the infantry can slow them down a bit. On the other hand, if the German goes towards the center and south sections of the map it can be moved to support other infantry actions - but only after the German tanks have all been located.

The German player doesn't have time to dawdle in this scenario, so it is very likely that the ATG will be into action early if located in U4 with a CA of T3/T4. Use your special ammo (APDS) against the Tigers. If you run out, use AP and go for deliberate immobilization. While it will usually work, your gun crew may feel a bit shaky about having a heavily armed tank immobilized in front of them. Even if this happens, remember one thing - it is one less tank that can threaten your chance for victory. The gun is also useful in delaying the infantry by using its limited HE. Even if this runs out, large caliber bullets (AP) using the 2 IFT column in conjunction with a rate of fire (ROF) of three can usually give the Germans pause.

Here are several suggestions: first, don't squander your resources by losing them unnecessarily. Second, disperse your forces so they can cover several avenues of approach without having to relocate. Third, defend aggressively - use everything you've got because you don't have the depth or resources to allow a fall back defense. Breaking enemy units will slow them down and you don't have the troops to go in for the kill. Fourth, use the OBA to restrict enemy movement. The possible LOSs for the observer are very restricted and OBA should not be used as the sole means of delaying an attack - of course, it might cause some KIAs which is a good thing too. Finally, I again remind you to remember the victory conditions - you will need to trade troops and tanks for time.

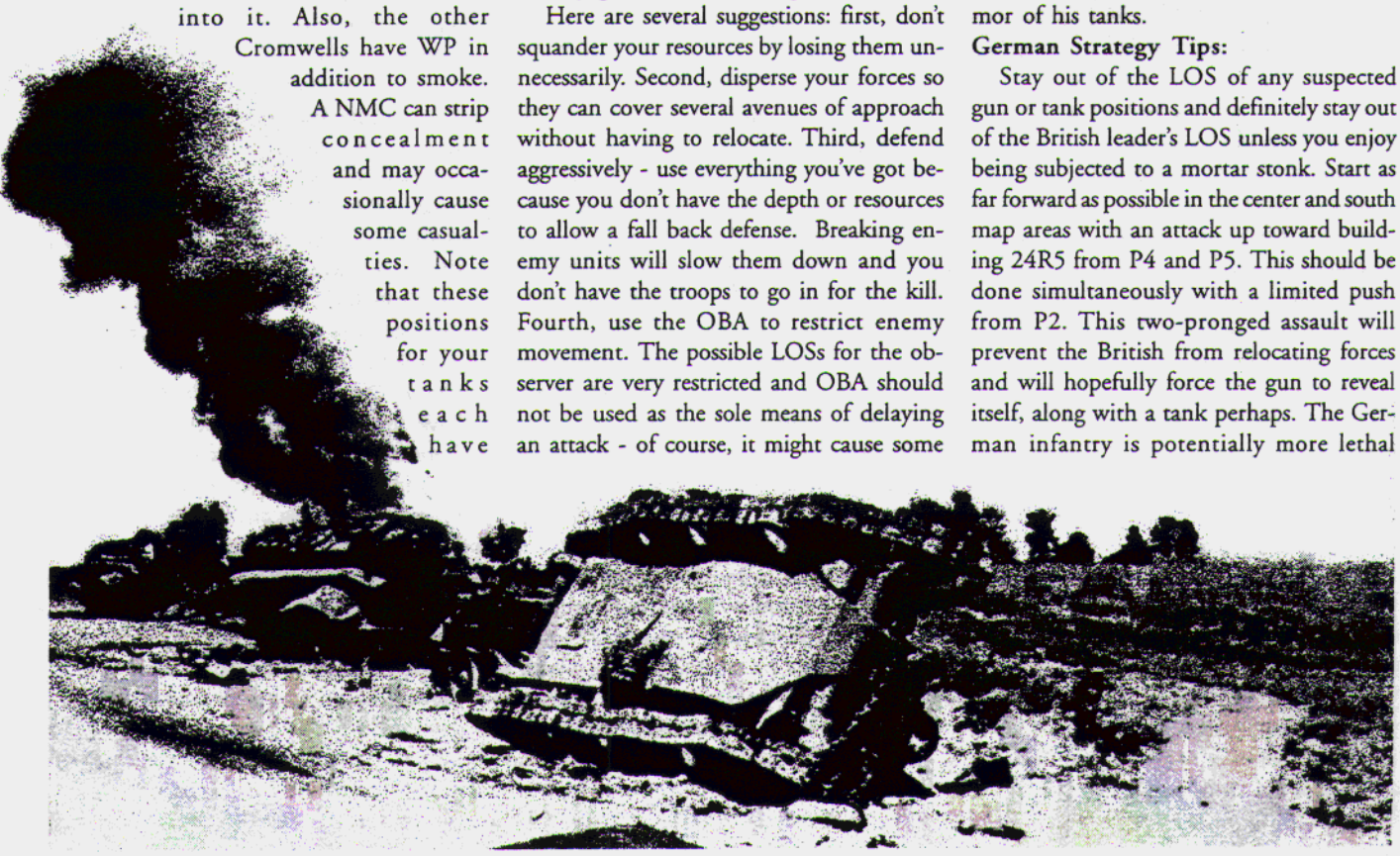
The German Perspective:

The German player has numerous options open to him. First, he has more troops and better tanks than the British player. Second, as the attacker, the German player has the luxury of concentrating his forces at one point. Third, the German has more, and better leadership than his opponent. This does not mean that he has the luxury of wasting or squandering his resources. To the contrary, the German player cannot afford to waste anything. In fact, the first game turn is a wash for the German player because he has to essentially hide three of his tanks and keep the fourth out of British LOS since the British player moves first.

The Pz IV has some interesting uses. It can kill any of the British tanks, but it is not particularly well armored. Its primary use should be to support the infantry assault by firing smoke. The British player only has four squads and smoking one in could cause the collapse of one sector. The German player has more resources than the British, but he cannot afford to squander them needlessly. The only real weak points for the German player are the lack of time to achieve the VC and the side armor of his tanks.

German Strategy Tips:

Stay out of the LOS of any suspected gun or tank positions and definitely stay out of the British leader's LOS unless you enjoy being subjected to a mortar stonk. Start as far forward as possible in the center and south map areas with an attack up toward building 24R5 from P4 and P5. This should be done simultaneously with a limited push from P2. This two-pronged assault will prevent the British from relocating forces and will hopefully force the gun to reveal itself, along with a tank perhaps. The German infantry is potentially more lethal



than any of their tanks, although you should go to great lengths to avoid firing from inside a building with a PF/PSK.

Hide the tanks in the wheatfields O1/O2 or in the woods behind the fields. These positions will allow you to respond with several tanks against any British tanks that reveal themselves. Hide at least two Tigers and the Pz IV. This gives you the flexibility of smoking in any enemy positions, but also makes good use of three hidden tigers. This gives you the flexibility of detailing the Pz IV in more of a support role.

The key German thrust in this scenario is for speed. Close with the enemy for two reasons: You don't have time to dawdle; You need to find and eliminate all of the British tanks. By closing with the enemy, the British player risks harming his own units if he brings down his battalion mortars. Use a pair of half-squads to search along your axis of attack. Their loss is not catastrophic, yet they can kill enemy tanks at close range while searching out enemy positions. The British player cannot afford to ignore them.



OPERATION NORDWIND

Of the two scenarios our group playtested, OPERATION NORDWIND proved easier to balance. The German Order of Battle had enough resources to get the job done and enough time to do it. The primary concern was ability of the American forces to stand up to the German firepower and armor and still have a chance at victory. Oddly enough, the first thing we did was reduce the 57L At Gun HE depletion from its original SSR increased 9 to merely having the benefit of an extra +1 for Elite status. We resolved that this was more realistic than the original value.

Initial playtests had inconsistent results. Most scenarios were German victories, yet a few US victories did occur. We discovered that this had to do with two factors. The location of the AT gun along with the deployment of the German AFVs proved to be crucial in determining victory.

With ample time to develop the American position, the German player could conserve units for a late game rush on the bridge of his choice and still have enough troops to maintain control of the Victory Locations. The American player would be hard pressed to have enough troops to mount the inevitable counterattack with any hope of success. Subsequent testing indicated that the Americans could attain the VC, but only at a high cost of men and material.

Balancing options considered included adjusting the length of game and altering the OB's. Shortening the game by a half turn only served to push the scenario more firmly in the pro-German column. The Americans needed the extra half turn to mount a late game attack to save the bridges. Chopping the scenario a full turn pressured the German player into taking unrealistic risks with his assets, especially with his AFV's.

Another balancing option considered was to allow HIP for a single squad while adding another bazooka to the OB. The US OB could be further augmented by the inclusion of two foxholes and four concealment counters. If combined with a full seven turn game, as opposed to 6 1/2, this option swung the scenario too much in favor of the US player.

We also evaluated the German winter camouflage availability. We discovered that it had little effect after the first or second turn since the range rapidly dropped to the point where its effectiveness was negated. However, the ability to advance in open ground while maintaining concealment opens up some interesting options for the German player, even close in. For that reason we decided on its inclusion as an SSR.

Even the German armor assets were scrutinized. The Flamm-Hetzers are so potent that their intimidation value could force a position without having to squirt a drop of napalm. However, they are extremely vulnerable to side shots. A well-placed AT gun can eliminate one or both as a threat. In fact, we debated right up until this scenario went to the publisher whether the Germans should be allowed one or two flame tanks due to the apparent fact that the complete elimination of the flame-tank threat from the German side could end any hopes of victory for the Nazis.

We ultimately opted for giving the American player hidden initial placement for 1 squad equivalent and any support weapon and/or single man counter stacked with it. This gave the American player the opportunity to hide either both of the anti-tank assets (the ATG and the Bazooka) or his heavy weapons. The uncertainty as to where the deadly American weapons where hidden forced the German player into a more cautious advance, increased the tension in the scenario, and conserved more of the American forces for the ultimate end game showdown. The "Fog of War" was also increased by adding four concealment counters to the American OB. We also gave the Yanks two foxholes for some added protection. The Germans were aided by shortening the game to 6 1/2 turns, thus removing that last ditch US counter-attack option. The original balance for this scenario was a 65/35 split, pro-German. The introduction of the US balancing factors change this remarkably to a 55/45 pro-US scenario.

The American Perspective:

The American player has many options open to him. Unfortunately, these options are mediocre at best. The OB provides enough forces to offer a layered defense or a weak defense in-depth. With all the open ground between defensive positions, there are not enough leaders to adequately cover all sectors of the playing area. More often than not, some US units will have to depend upon self-rally for recovery. The support weapon mix is as meager and diverse as the leadership.

There are two bright aspects in this diversity. First, never underestimate the Firepower and rate of fire of the .50 cal. HMG when you want to reach out and touch someone...over and over again. Second, being January 1, 1945 the 60mm mortar now has WP ammo. Besides the smoke hindrance, causing a few morale checks upon your opponent is generally a good thing - provided you have the ammo. Note the limited cover available to the Nazi makes WP a viable option.

Conserve your resources as long as possible. You cannot stand up to a shooting match with SS troops due to your morale disadvantage. A maximum of two units should be designated as DIP units (die in place). These are the few lucky units who have the unenviable task of slowing the German advance with little chance of withdrawing. Put the rest of your troops in cover so that they can defend the bridges.

Under no circumstances should you allow the German forces to close with your troops. Do not become enamored of shooting unnecessarily. A broken unit will usually take at least one turn to recover. Stop the moving units before you have your machine-guns dilly-dally over the pinned squads. Where possible break up any large fire groups and kill tanks if possible. Finally, you need to be the last one to occupy both bridges.

American Strategy:

The key defense should be centered upon the bridges. Consequently, we found the best location for the AT gun to be in 13FF4 with a CA of EE4/EE5. This provides the greatest field of fire against armor as well as the possibility of some side aspect shots against SP guns moving in against your infantry. Keep the Gun hidden as long as possible and wait for a good shot against an SP gun. Use it against infantry as a last resort only. You may wish to HIP a HS in 13GG4 to provide some close-in support for the gun. That will only leave you a HS to HIP elsewhere.

The .50 cal., a squad and the 9-1 leader can do very well in 13AA9. It's far enough back to get in some good shooting and may draw a Flamm-Hetzer trundling into the midst of the defense to get after it. Another squad can go in the building at 13BB5. The mortar can ideally be placed in 13FF7, IN a Foxhole. All of these units have the best cover and defensive values for the playing area. Long range is as good a defensive measure as the building walls. The gun and the mortar have large fields of fire. The mortar should be manned by a 1/2-squad to defend against assaults on the east side of the pond. The mortar fire will slow many advancing units.

A squad can go into each of the following locations; 13W4, 13AA3 and 13FF4. The MMG should go with the squad at 13AA3, but don't plan on getting out of their very often. They get the DIP assignment. I would not deploy further north than that since the German infantry and armor can get close enough to shoot and burn you out of the position. The best position for the bazooka and the HS possessing is HIP where your opponent does not expect it! This unit needs to take out an SP gun *or* stay HIP long enough to slow down a cautious opponent. Remember the value of simply remaining HIP for both the AT-gun and the bazooka manning HS. One spot to consider as a trap is 13U4 with the aim of zapping a Hetzer that casually comes up to waste your squad in 13W4.

The remaining squads should be placed in the stream near the bridges. Cresting them will allow them to fire, as well as re-take any bridge locations. The HIP support HS in 13GG4 may also serve the role of manning the gun if the crew is ever eliminated. Having unskilled users fire the gun is better than having the gun out of action. The 8-0 leader can easily be placed in 13BB5. This will allow him to rally the forward units as they rout or low crawl south (the lucky ones) and it will not place him at risk of being cut off from the rest of the forces.

Kill every AFV you can. This is a simple statement to make and a harder one to fulfill. The easiest kill from the front is the StuH 42. It is the best fire support vehicle the German player has. The JgPz 38(t)F are well armored and useless at long range. The German player is likely to be very careful about moving them until the gun location has been identified. You can do three things to kill the flame tanks. One, pray for a critical hit. Two, hope for a side shot. Three, deliberately immobilize the thing. The last two prospects are the most viable, but in nearly every playtest at least one was immobilized and the other kept out of range. On a few rare occasions prayers were answered, but only the most pious should make the attempt. Speaking from experience, a CH is generally followed by a dud for penetration - so make your prayers count.

The German Perspective:

You have some time to work with (not waste) and maneuver your forces. The terrain is only slightly worse for you than the American player's area. The primary risks are moving in the open and having the AT gun finds you before you find it. The German player has some outstanding infantry and AFVs in this scenario. There are three leaders of relatively poor quality to balance keep your men moving up. The support weapons also leave something to be desired.

The equalizer in this scenario is your ability to select a specific area and concentrate your forces. The AFVs are purely for infantry support. Do not use them as armored chariots until the gun has been neutralized since their armor from the sides or rear is little better than that of a half-track. Use your forces and time wisely. It is better to focus on one bridge at a time than to try and take both off the march.

German Strategy:

Move your armor and infantry as rapidly as possible along the eastern half of the playing area. The best avenues of advance are from 18B to 18F. Use double-time movement and avoid potential LOS from US units. Stay off of hill 18C2 unless you have a very good reason since nearly every American unit can see that location. One squad might want to enter as a rider on the assault gun. Your first AFV on the map is also your weakest in terms of armor. Constantly think about locations for the enemy gun.

Many ASL players like to kill enemy forces by using HE ammunition. The use of smoke over HE is preferred here. It is likely that you will miss or that the HE shot will not adversely affect the enemy troops. However, smoke is easier to place and provides the smoked-in troops a +4 penalty to shoot out of smoke which allows your troops to advance up to or around the position. Well placed smoke also can serve to hinder enemy fire from a number of different positions. The armor might want to fire from behind the hill gap at 18E3. This will generally allow you to fire on the building at 13AA3 with relative safety.

You may have the time to organize your advance, but you don't have the time to engage in duels with enemy infantry. Smoke them in and move forward. Use smoke to neutralize the gun and machine-gun positions. With a depletion number of 9, you should be able to get off some smoke rounds before running out. While moving, use your smoke discharger to cover the advance of your troops. Don't forget the infantry smoke exponents either.

The best infantry advances seem to be from the woods on the board 18/13 border near the center of the paying area. A secondary attack can also take place along the eastern edge of the map. The main attack should aim for the orchard and building area in the center of board 13. This offers the best protection for your troops and allows the assault gun to go hull down behind the wall along hexsides 13Z4-13AA4.

Use the late arriving flame AFVs to intimidate or burn the enemy out of your path. Keep the front of your vehicles aimed towards the south edge all times. You may also want to load a couple of squads on them as riders. This gives you a relatively rapid response section. Use the flame tanks aggressively, but not wastefully. We usually use them together for the intimidation value, but one can easily be used to support the attack on the east side of the pond.

Remember the victory conditions. You need to be the last one to occupy the two bridge locations. As you roll the American forces back, chew them up as much as you can. Their low ELR will help in this regard, but you need to prevent a last ditch recapture of the bridge on Turn 6 *only*. Turn 7 is all yours to make the final moves onto the bridges with your MMC. You don't need to kill off every American unit or seize US positions away from those critical spans. Focus your efforts on getting to the bridges yourself. Restrict the American ability to interdict you by using fire.

continued on page 44

Book Reviews

THE KAMINSKI BRIGADE:
A History
by Antonio J. Munoz
Axis Europa, Inc.
53-20 207th Street
Bayside, NY 11364
56 pages. $24.95 + $3.00 S & H

To most military history fans the story of Bronislav Kaminski and his band of irregulars starts, and finishes with the readily available accounts of the Kaminski Brigade's actions during the Warsaw insurrection. The unit ended the war as part of the army of turncoat Russian General Vlasov after years of fighting partisans in Central and White Russia from 1941-44. By the time the remnants of the Kaminski Brigade reported for duty in the 600th (Russian) Infantry Division, part of the "Vlasov" army, the men had been reduced to a looting, drinking, raping rabble.

When I first received word that a review copy of Munoz' book was on the way, I thought the price a bit high for a work of 56 pages. I compared it in price to the typical Osprey books available on the rack at most large book stores. Once I received the CH copy, it became immediately apparent that this was an original work, chock full of rare photos, original maps and complete orders of battle. The book is published in a large 8 1/2" x 11" format with a color front and back cover on gloss stock.

The author brings the reader through an examination of why the Kaminski Brigade was formed, The major anti-partisan campaigns are covered, as well as an account of the unit withdrawing with the Nazis as the German tide on the eastern front receded west-ward.

What made THE KAMINSKI BRIGADE stand out to this reviewer was the readability of the work. While there are other books that offer in depth research materials, Munoz' gives the reader an account of this unit full of anecdotes, asides and bits about the fighting men, their battles and the civilian dependents that followed these irregulars like a baggage train. Mr. Munoz offers his own original conclusions throughout.

The author personally traveled to archives in Eastern Europe as well as Germany while researching this book. The fruits of this labor and expense are obvious. This reviewer owns a library of over 1,000 books on the subject of WW II history. These are rare photos you just won't see outside of a trip of your own to Lubljana. We see German troops on anti-partisan patrol, lying on railroad flat car, part of an armored train on anti-partisan patrol. In that particular photo, a French Char B1 tank in German service is sitting on an adjacent flat car to lend extra fire-power. Other photos include men of the unit during particular campaigns, and each image is accompanied by a detailed caption listing date and location for many of the photos.

A number of tactical level maps depict the actions of the Kaminski Brigade in major anti-partisan operations. There are also a series of maps depicting Soviet partisan concentrations during different period of the campaign in Russia. The strategic maps break down partisans by type, including communists, mounted cavalry and Polish or Ukranian Nationalists. The maps are prepared in a fashion in order that one may view the areas of partisan concentrations, at a glance, across the length and breadth of the eastern front.

Detailed Orders of Battle for the Kaminski Brigade, down to the individual man, anti-tank gun and other weapons is provided for different periods during the war. The author examines unit size of the brigade as quoted by earlier sources, mentioning and striving to debunk some inaccuracies along the way.

In addition to the Kaminski Brigade, the reader will find extensive information about the entire anti-partisan war fought by Germany and their native Russian, Lithuanian, and other local peoples on the eastern front. This book deserves to be on the shelf of the serious student of the Russo-German Campaign of World War Two.

CHESTNUTS, *continued*

CONCLUDING COMMENTS:

Both TEST OF NERVES and OPERATION NORDWIND present unique challenges. If played by savvy, experienced ASLers, the scenarios will go to down to the wire with each game in the balance to the last throw of the dice. TEST OF NERVES has a pace that will keep both players at the edge of their seats throughout the entire game.

At first glance, OPERATION NORDWIND may seem more exciting when played from the German perspective. Yank frustration mounts as a well coordinated German attack reveals the inherent brittle nature of the GIs when playing the American side. Still, a good American defense will leave a trail of abandoned support weapons and burning tanks to make the German line of advance. A sloppy German attack can be fended off quite easily in this scenario.

Regardless of the side you choose, good gunning as you tackle these two gems from the ETO. (*In a play of Nordwind just before going to the presses, Gary Fortenberry squared off against our own Steve Pleva at Winter Offensive '96. Gary responded to Steve's offer to play this one by grabbing the Germans in expectation of proving the scenario less than balanced. It came down to the last turn, last DR, and resulted in an American win. I spoke with Gary and Steve after the tournament and it sounded like Mr. Pleva won a real barnburner on his way to a second consecutive WO title. We hope all your games come down to the wire.* Ed.)

Next Issue:

Capt. Rob takes his 'troops' into the night and defends a Tit from the rest of you

Romanian Forces, a scenario AND maybe a counter or two to play with

JATKOSOTA: Designer's Notes and more Finns in ASL

Platoon Leader Replay

...and much, much more

- ✪ Finnish Tanks
- ✪ Tigers in Tunisia
- ✪ Desert Tactica
- ✪ New Scenarios and Variants

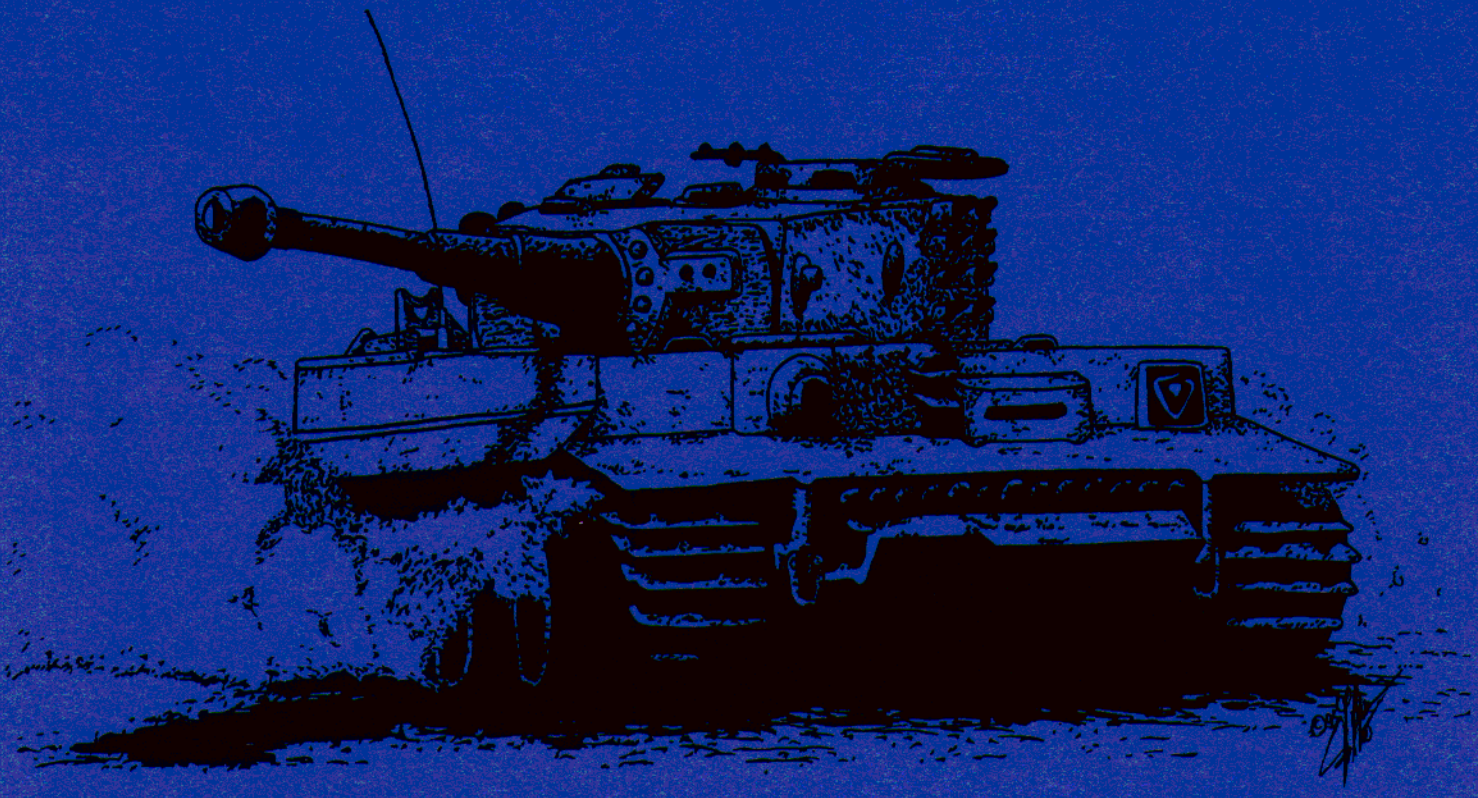
CRITICAL HIT

SPECIAL EDITION

$15.95

SPECIAL EDITION

Tanks!

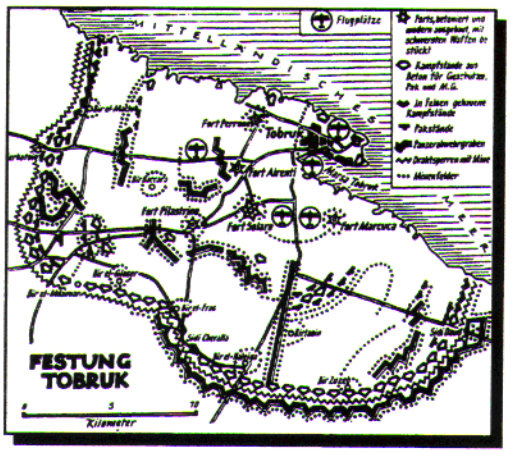


OUR 3RD YEAR OF PUBLISHING THE INDEPENDENT JOURNAL



Desert Tactics

by Rob Modarelli



North Africa may well have been the theatre in which the war was waged in its most modern guise...It was only in the desert that the principles of armored warfare as they were taught in theory before the war could be fully applied and thoroughly developed. — Field Marshal Erwin Rommel

The barrage was lifting at last. Sottufficiale Luigi Ricciulli peered over the parapet of the trench. His eyes stung from the dust and smoke, his ears rang, his throat was parched and raw. An other salvo howled over head, hammering the earth a hundred meters behind him. Rocks and dust splat tered all over the trenchline like infernal hail. Luigi cringed instinc tively, thinking to himself"no, not lifting, shift ing!" That meant only one thing.

He turned and began working his way down the trench, rousing his squad-mates from crouching in the shelter of the trench walls. "Come on, get up, you bas tards!" he roared. "The Tommies! Get up!" Some of the men scrambled to their fir ing po si tions, while others con tinued to cower, their faces buried in the sandbags of the trench wall.

Ricciulli came upon a pair of his men, who turned to face him. Looking down at their cringing forms, he could see the terror etched in their pale faces. Just farm boys, from the Po Valley, he remembered. In a moment of pity, he almost decided to let them stay there.

Luigi was forcibly removed from his battlefield reverie by a sound that made the hair on the back of his sweat-grimed neck stand on end. "Tanks!" Now Ricciulli himself had to fight the same panic he saw rising in the men about him. "Get up, damn you!" he screamed, kicking one of the men in the groin. "You want to be killed like dogs?" He shoved a rifle out to the other man and watched him clamber, weep ing, to the firestep while his comrade, unfortunate enough to be used as an example, writhed in pain, on the bottom of the trench.

Away on the left, a machine-gun opened up with its staccato bark; its wel come chat ter was soon silenced as dust and debris fouled an ancient feed mechanism. The rum ble from the tanks grew louder, and Ricciulli leaned flat against the trench wall, try ing to see where the threatening sounds came. Through the dusty haze he fi nal ly saw them: he counted five behemoths, Matildas, about a eighty meters apart. The monsters were crawl ing for ward like great, dun-colored beetles. Be hind them, the in dis tinct shapes of enemy foot soldiers were seen, clinging to the shelter of their beasts, as they rolled forward.

"Fire!" shouted Ricciulli. But what was the use? A few of his men obeyed, but their shots disappeared into the swirling dust without any apparent effect. Why was the AT section silent? He wanted to ask the lieutenant, but he was shel tering in the command bunker with the rest of the company officers. Not that he could have helped anyway.

To his right, he saw one of his men — Corporal Cammarano rise up and hurl a grenade at an approaching behe moth. Now there was a fighter! The grenade bounced off the front of the tank harmlessly. A brave gesture, but all it had done was draw at ten tion to their posi tion. Several vehicles pivoted in unison and began to bear down on them with ma chine guns blazing.

"Down!" he screamed, diving for the trench floor as the tanks ground their tracks overhead. The next few minutes were as close to Dante's inferno as any man had ever imag ined. The oil-dripping met al monsters ground back and forth, spanning the trench, ma chine-guns raking back and forth across the walls. Their engines raced and screamed as their heavy treads col lapsed some of the walls and sent a show er of dust and ripped open sand bags upon the men, cring ing below. All were scream ing now, Ricciulli, the officer, as well as the young farm boys.

After an eternity the tanks rumbled off. Ricciulli, gasping for air, clambered to his feet. The young boys' corpses were buried under dirt and rubble. About half his squad was still alive, rendered hors de combat by fear. Two of the men scram bled back to the fir ing step and were shooting wildly into the dust. The rest were plainly done in. Ricciulli could hear the shouts of the enemy soldiers as they approached, be hind the now halted tanks.

He grabbed a tattered tarp and draped it over his rifle, then rose to his feet and began waving it. He shouted to his men to cease firing as the British closed in. In moments, the Brits were at the trench, muzzles and bayonets pointed down at the rem nants of his squad. Ricciulli looked up at their grim, dusty faces and knew he

had done the right thing. He had saved his men — that was the best he could do. This wasn't his damn war, anyway.

◆◆◆

The desert has unique characteristics that fundamentally effect the ways in which armies maneuver and fight. All the nationalities who fought in North Africa went through a 'learning process' wherein their troops gained a better un derstanding of the advantages and disadvantages, to both offensive and defensive oper ations, peculiar to the desert battlefield. These 'lessons' were often dearly bought, as at Halfaya Pass, Sidi Rezegh and Kasserine, but once learned they were seldom forgot ten. The experience gained was quickly assimilated and distributed to all units, and operations by all sides soon reflected a recognition of the special factors involved in desert warfare. Every side brought a comprehensive, complete doctrine for mobile modern warfare to the desert, and every side was forced to modify its doctrine (or re-learn it!) to meet the challenges faced in this theater.

Most ASL players experience a similar 'learning curve' when first turning to the desert. Since almost all of us learn the system using European battlefield situations, we first become familiar with the tactics, options, and battlefield decisions that domi nate in that type of terrain. When initially turning to the desert, we (like the Germans, Italians, British and Americans) tend to bring these proven tactics and transplant them wholesale into the new milieu. Sometimes a few costly defeats are necessary before we discover how to modify these methods to suit the new arena.

I must admit, there is a special place in my heart for the desert. Having spent four years as a tank commander at the Army's National Training Center, located in the middle of the Mojave Desert in southern California, I developed a love/hate relation ship with the desert that continues to this day. No other terrain is so well suited to mounted warfare, and yet so unforgiving to those who fail to master its principles.

Aside from the physical effects of desert operations on armies (mechanical problems, soldier health and welfare, and other things usually gradually reduced by acclimatization), the impact of the desert arena is usually greatest in three areas: visi bility, cover and concealment, and mobility. In ASL, the Chapter F rules do an excel lent job of portraying these characteristics, creating a battlefield situation very different from standard NW European settings. A closer look at these three areas will help us get a better understanding of how they impact on the standard tactics of ASL, and what modifications may be required to fight and win in this barren waste.

As in previous articles, we will focus here on tactics, not mechanics. The em phasis is on how these rules influence the tactical decisions one faces when fighting in the desert. A better understanding of how these rules affect the dynamics of ASL play is essential to fighting and winning in "the big sandbox".

DESERT CHARACTERISTICS

One area in which the desert is unique is visibility. On most desert boards, LOS is almost completely unrestricted. The blind zones, grainfields, and other hindrances so common in other theaters just don't exist here. This has several implications for both sides. For the attacker, it means approaching forces will be observed and come under fire much earlier than is usually the case. There are no 'covered and concealed avenues of approach' allowing you to sneak from blind zone to blind zone as you work your way forward. Concealment for attackers is virtually impossible to maintain. Security, therefore, depends on speed rather than stealth.

For the defender, the lack of LOS obstruction means the general layout of your defense will be apparent very early on to the attacker. Any reliance on repositioning or deployment of reserves is risky, as any movement within the defensive zone will be easily spotted and brought under fire by the attacker. Concealment is lost easily, and almost impossible to regain — the 'move back, advance forward' or 'skulking' defense so popular in the ASL version of NW Europe is extremely difficult to pull off here. Defenses, therefore, tend to be much more fixed and 'strongpoint' oriented, rather than based on concealed maneuver from position to position.

Long LOS' mean that in most engagements, opening ranges are much greater than is normally the case. The differences between *, L, and LL guns become much more significant for both sides in the desert, as do the effects of gun caliber on penetration at long ranges (TK Modifier Case D).On some of the smaller caliber weapons, especially light mortars, the maximum range limit becomes an important consideration.

There are also several unique LOS hindrances inherent to the desert. Most are LV hindrances (i.e. they do not negate FFMO), and most become greater as ranges increase. Heat Haze, Sun Blindness, and varying degrees of Dust all tend to reduce the effectiveness of fire in the desert, but generally do not degrade the actual LOS or ability to 'see' out to long ranges. Only very high dust levels (Heavy Dust or higher) and Vehicular Dust are actual LOS hindrances that negate FFMO and can potentially block LOS. Also, remember that Heavy Winds cause an extra +1 LV modifier to any attacker shooting 'into the wind', even in Light Dust conditions. FFEs tend to raise more dust as well, causing a +1 modifier per hex rather than per FFE. Finally, varying levels of dust can restrict the illumination radius of starshells at night.

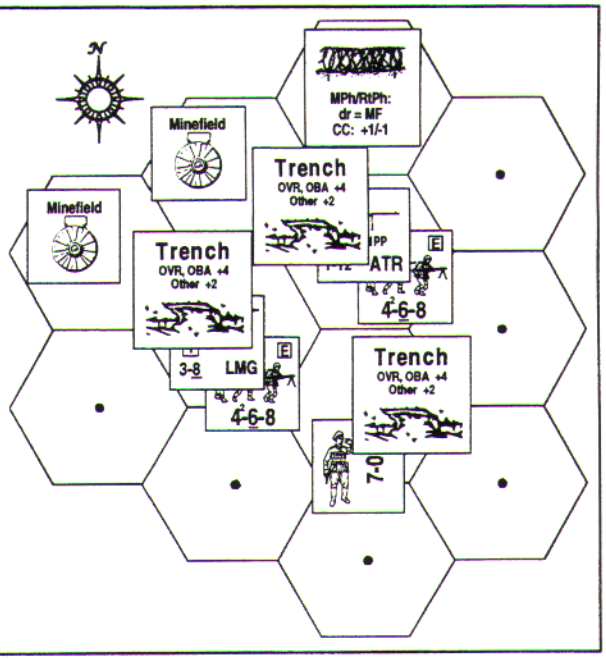
These desert LV hindrances are often the only 'cover' available to combatants in the desert, especially to attackers. Pay close attention to the ranges associated with them, and maneuver to maximize the benefit to your troops while making the defender's shots as difficult as possible.

The second unique facet of desert operations concerns cover and concealment. Obviously, there isn't much there, so you

Figure 1:

Typical Platoon Strongpoint

Note that units can quickly reorient, under cover, to face threats from SE and SW if needed. The position is constructed for all-around defense. One extra trench with a leader provides a haven for either squad to rout to if broken. Multiple trenches also provide the squads with covered movement options, making it much harder to keep them under the effects of encirclement. Another alternative to this set-up is to place the wire and mines in the trench hexes.



have to make the best of what you are given. Natural concealment terrain is limited to scrub, but don't forget that infantry set up concealed at start in Open Ground will retain and lose concealment normally. HIP, however, is most likely going to be limited to scrub, since HIP units in OG are revealed (as concealed units) as soon as the enemy meets the LOS requirements. This makes it much easier for an attacker to anticipate defensive Gun positions and HIP squad locations. For the defender, it limits the number of places you can put your gun, since they can only be Emplaced in scrub, sand, or trenches.

As for cover, there are few natural sources. Wadis, hillocks, dunes, and deirs are about all that can normally be found, and none of these are very good. Most provide a +1 TEM or HD benefit at best, and most (dunes, hillocks, deirs) provide no TEM at all vs. FFE / Indirect Fire. The best cover in the desert is usually man-made: foxholes, trenches, and sangars. These operate essentially the same as anywhere else. Make maximum use of the ability to 'connect' sangars and adjacent trenches (F 8.6). This gives the defender his best chance to shift from one position to another with minimal exposure.

A final word on hillocks: know this rules section inside and out. These are common in desert scenarios, and knowing how they effect LOS is absolutely essential. If used correctly, they can provide covered avenues and allow you to move outside of enemy LOS. When defending, pay attention to the effect of hillocks on entrenched units' LOS. Mastering the hillock rules is absolutely essential to winning in the desert.

Two other 'artificial' sources of cover/concealment merit mention: vehicles and smoke. Vehicles can provide a critical +1 TEM or hindrance for attacking infantry, and armored assault can provide a welcome relief from the FFMO modifier. Also, Vehicular Dust in effect enables the vehicle to maneuver a +2 Hindrance around at will, laying it down as a screen for troops to advance behind. It often pays in the desert to move vehicles first, using their inherent +1 TEM, smoke capabilities, and Vehicular Dust to set up a screen for subsequent maneuver of your infantry. Smoke is, as usual, vital. Any and all smoke sources must be exploited, especially by the attacker.

The third area where desert terrain has the greatest impact is mobility. Lack of obstructing terrain means vehicles and troops can freely maneuver, making possible dramatic sweeping moves seldom seen in other theaters. The difference is most striking for wheeled vehicles, because the cost for Open Ground has dropped from 4 MP to 1MP, in effect quadrupling the distance a truck can cover in one MPh! The attacker benefits most from this condition. As stated before, speed is the best security in the desert.

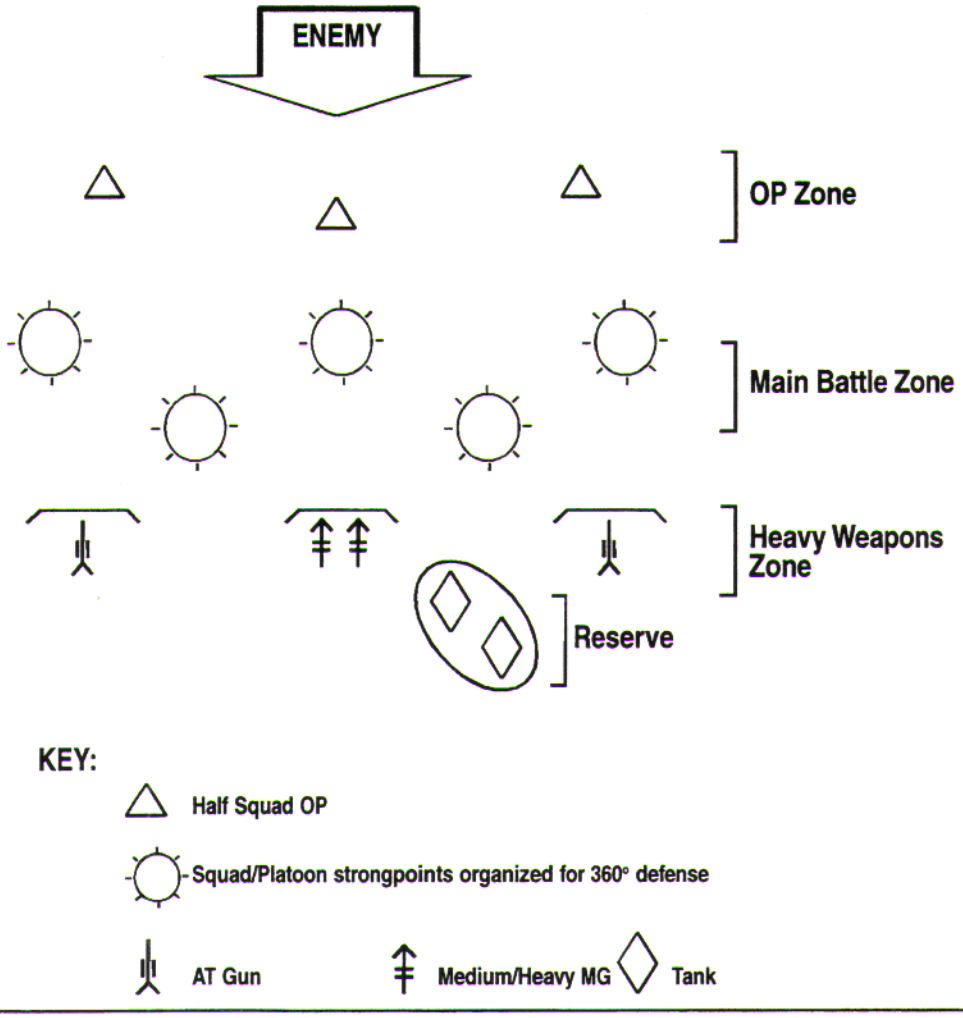
There are some obstacles in the desert, but they are usually few and easily bypassed. Sand and hammada can be nuisances, but careful maneuver will negate these problems. Note that fully-tracked vehicles can practically ignore hammada immobilization checks. Sand is a bigger problem and should be avoided. The Bog checks for 'accessible' hexes are usually easily reduced by expending extra MP.

The most difficult obstacles encountered in the desert are the usual variety of man-made types: wire and mines. These can be handled just as in other theaters. Defenders must maximize use of both natural and

Illustration 1:

Overall Defense Layers Outline

The sketch at right outlines the overall defensive 'belt' which should be strived for in any desert scenario or CG. The HS observation posts to the front strip concealment early and lay down enough firepower to force advancing enemy element to deal with them while your guns and SW are brought to bear on the attacker. In the event of a Gazala style mine "box" a minefield/wire belt may be part of or in front of the HS observation post portion of your line. See Figure 1 for the contruction of the individual strongpoints in the Main Battle Zone.



man-made obstacles to hinder enemy movement and slow down the attack long enough for the defenses to take their toll.

BUILDING SAND CASTLES

Defensive tactics in desert warfare include many of the same principles applied in other theaters. The unique nature of desert terrain and weather dictate some modifications, however. These modifications are most easily classified in terms of their effect on the tactical employment of various combat systems — men, heavy weapons, vehicles, and fortifications.

When deploying infantry for desert defensive operations, dispersion is probably the most critical principle. The lack of cover for approaching enemy forces means advancing troops will be subjected to the -2 FFMO/FFNAM modifier almost continuously. This means low firepower shots (4-6 FP) have a better chance of inflicting damage than in other theaters. In short, there is less need for stacking in the desert. *Use SW, not stacking, to increase the firepower of individual positions.* (This is a good rule for *any* theater of operations, but especially in the desert.) Another option is to use adjacent-hex firegroups. In any case, the benefits of stacking are just not good enough to justify the risks involved. Remember, one of the attacker's most deadly weapons in the desert is the AFV overrun — stacking just gives him more tempting targets.

If you must stack a couple of MGs with a good leader, use half squads to man them. Economizing on manpower will also help cover the wider defensive frontages usually encountered in the desert. Even a half squad in a forward OP position can lay down a 2 (-2) attack on advancing troops, something the attacker cannot ignore. HS-manned MG stacks should always have at least one squad position nearby to provide covering fire and FPF protection against any enemy attempt to 'rush' the MG position.

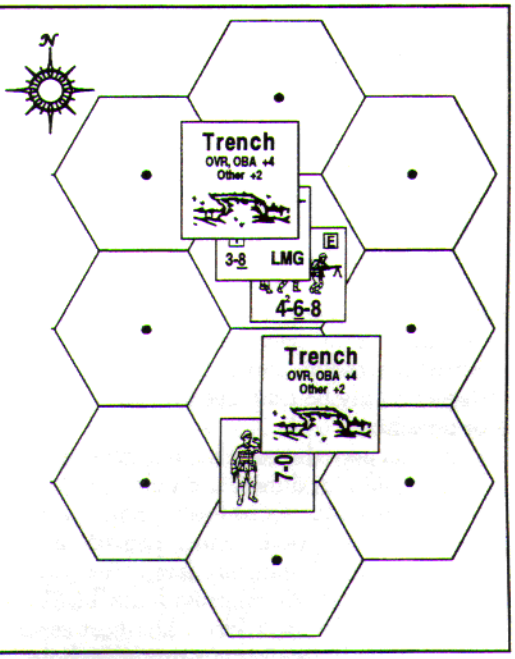
The dispersion of infantry will naturally be limited by the cover available. Make maximum use of wadis, deirs, hillocks, and dunes to cover your troops. Any fortifications available should be placed in critical areas, and usually make good fallback positions or MG strongpoints due to their high resistance to overruns and OBA. Although spread out, infantry positions must be within normal range of each other to provide interlocking supporting fires in front of and within the main defense line.

Due to the wide open terrain and the increased mobility of the enemy, *positions in the desert must be prepared for 'all-around' defense.* Try as much as possible to tie them in to whatever terrain is available, but recognize that the enemy, especially if mounted, is very likely to be able to make an end run and get around your positions. Alternatively, he may drive right into them and force a fight within the defense line itself. Dispersed squad-sized positions can be easily cut off and encircled, which is why interlocking fires and support from neighboring positions is crucial.

Figure 2:

Typical Squad Strongpoint

The use of two trenches provides for a covered position for units to move to in order to avoid or remove the effects of encirclement. Wire and mines may be used in the same manner as the Platoon Strongpoint if available. Note that stacking is avoided, forcing the attacker to silence numerous points of resistance one by one.



Placement of support weapons is as important as always in the desert. However, the wide open LOS' may allow you to *set up MGs and light mortars to the rear of the main defense line*, perhaps as far a 5-6 hexes back (out of squad inherent normal range). With a line of squads in front of them providing protection, these key weapons will be less vulnerable to initial enemy attacks and will stay in action longer, in return delivering covering fire for the troops in front. If you do choose to put them in the front line to take advantage of long range shots early, be sure to withdraw them to prepared subsequent positions further back as the enemy closes.

Boresighting is usually less important in the desert, but can be useful if terrain overlays restrict the enemy approach route. Gaps between sand or hammada hexes make excellent boresight points, as enemy vehicles will probably use them to avoid Bog checks. Keep MG firelanes in mind as well — the open terrain ensures they will usually be quite long, and Dust DRMs do not apply to their resolution.

Placement of leaders is particularly hard in the desert. Lack of buildings and woods means most squads simply rout to the rear, and most will probably use Low Crawl to avoid interdiction. Leaders with rally duty should be located under cover if possible, only a short distance behind the main line of resistance. High-powered leaders will of course be married to key SW as usual. OBA observers should be as far to the rear as setup allows, and HIP if possible. They should have no LOS problems regardless of how far back they are.

Positioning of guns is actually easier in the desert than in more built-up terrain. Simply put, there is usually no where to hide. Conversely, no matter where the gun goes, it will probably be able to hit just about any enemy approach route. Range is the main factor in siting in guns. Again, they should be well to the rear of forward infantry positions. Each gun should have a squad position nearby or adjacent to provide extra support against a dismounted rush by enemy troops. Guns are often the key to a defense in the desert, and must be guarded well.

A tougher question in desert fights is when to open fire with your guns and drop HIP. Long LOS' mean most of your guns can open up at long range, and though this means the enemy may spot them sooner, the extra shots are usually worth it. For the few turns when he is approaching, your gun has all the advantages. It presents only a small, emplaced target, while the tank's shots will be modified for motion. It is best to get off as many shots as possible while the odds are still in your favor, for once he closes the range and stops to fire, the advantage may turn his way. Holding fire for that surprise flank shot probably means your gun will sit idle for a few phases waiting for the enemy to draw near. This is usually a mistake. Unless the scenario has some special situation that calls for it, don't focus on HIP gun ambushes. Set the gun up where it will be best defended and able to fire as much as possible. This is more important than hiding it.

Don't put guns in sangars unless you have a very good reason. The only possible advantage of a sangar over normal Emplacement (C 11.2) is the +3 TEM against OBA. Otherwise, the sangar is a death trap, since any fully-tracked AFV mobile at the time of overrun on a sangared gun destroys that gun outright, regardless of other overrun results. In addition, an HIP sangar will be

revealed as soon as the enemy gains LOS within 16 hexes, possibly revealing the location of your gun before you are ready to shoot. Despite a similar problem, trenches are often good positions for AT guns, since they offer Emplacement and a +4 TEM vs. OBA/overrun. If Emplacement is not an option, look for wadis, deirs, or other terrain to provide at least some cover, particularly if it is an ART gun, mortar, or other weapon without a gunshield.

Both Guns and infantry should think about setting up in sand hexes, especially if the enemy has OBA or is armor-heavy. Sand not only halves any incoming HE fire, but it is a real deterrent to overruns because of the Bog checks and high MP expenditures associated with it. The only negative is a reduction in foxhole/emplacement TEM, but this is often worth it. Be aware, however, that sand does not modify a Direct Hit (C 11.4) on a gun; it only halves HE FP vs. the crew on a Near Miss (see the example at F 7.4).

For vehicles, mobility is the key to survival in the desert. Don't employ them as fixed AT gun platforms. *Use any available vehicles to fight a mobile defense,* reinforce threatened flanks, or counterattack. I prefer to set them up to the rear as well, where they can engage the approaching enemy with long range gun and MG fire, then counterattack against any exposed flank or enemy penetration. Make extensive use of wadis and hillocks to gain HD status — it's the best cover around.

Make maximum use of all available fortifications. Wire and mines should be employed to channel enemy movement into AT kill zones. Use fixing and turning obstacle groups to limit his maneuver options by tying them in with sand, hammada, and wadis.

Individual trenches and sangars are easily surrounded and overrun. Instead, *construct mini-strongpoints of 2-4 connected sangars/trenches.* These will allow your units to reposition under cover, and often give a safe haven for broken units to Low Crawl back for rally. These strongpoints are also much harder to Encircle, since Encircled units in them will have one or two hexes available to escape into. (See enclosed Figure 1)

A good, solid desert defense adheres to all of these principles, and generally tends to be constructed in three 'belts': a forward security line of half squads, a main defense line of squad and platoon strongpoints, and a final line of heavy weapons and MGs. Reserves and vehicles may occupy a fourth position even further to the rear, or may stage out of the third line. (See Illustration 1)

When the battle starts, the security line of half squad OPs provides early warning, strips enemy concealment, and slows down enemy movement. Dispersed squad positions in the main line break up the advance, while the heavy weapons combine with squad FP to separate the attacking infantry from their armored support. AT weapons in the rear and flanks take the enemy armor under fire *early* and at maximum range (there is seldom a good reason to hold your fire in the desert, unless your weapons are so inferior you require close ranges to score kills). The series of mutually supporting mini-strongpoints in the main line finish the destruction of enemy infantry. (See Illustration 1)

The main priority of the defense is to *kill enemy armor.* Once that is done, infantry attackers can be finished off. In standard European fights, those AT guns often wait out the tanks' moves, patiently anticipating a shot at a halftrack full of men and valuable leaders. This kind of fire discipline is important, because killing a HT with troops aboard is sometimes much more important than taking out a tank. In the desert, however, this is not the case. Shoot the tanks first. Your infantry will get plenty of shots at those troops later. These desert fights are not taking place in 1944-45 — there are no PIATs, no panzerfausts, and very few bazookas. The only way you're going to kill those tanks is with AT Guns, CC, and other tanks.

The enemy's most lethal weapon is often overrun. With your infantry forward in trenches or other cover, and your AT guns back, his advancing tanks must make a decision. If they stop to overrun the infantry, they will be spending lots of MPs in range

Illustration 2:

Laying in the Attack
A Sample Plan:

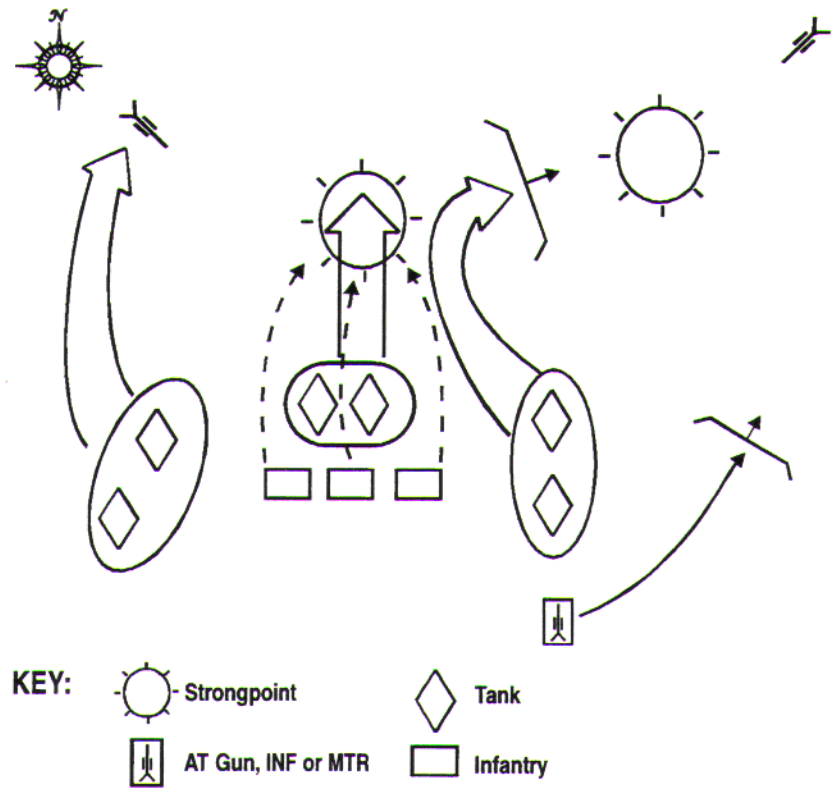
1) Tank Platoon A overruns the western AT gun.

2) Tank Platoon B overruns the western strongpoint

3) Infantry follows Tank Platoon B and mops up/occupies western strongpoint

4) Tank Platoon C moves to blocking position, fires to suppress eastern strongpoint and uses vehicle hindrance and vehicle dust to screen flank of advancing infantry

5) AT/INF/MTR moves to blocking position and fires to suppress/SMOKE eastern AT gun



and LOS of the AT guns. If they ignore the infantry positions, they risk getting cut off from their own dismounted escorts and become vulnerable to CC and ATR / MG rear shots.

These defensive tactics — well-sited, interlocking strongpoints, covered by mines and overwatched by AT gun lines — were eventually adopted by all sides in the desert war, and it is easy to see why. They are remarkably similar to the tactics used by the Germans on the wide steppes of southern Russia as well, for obvious reasons. As always the defender seeks to do three things:

1) Separate enemy armor and infantry using OBA, obstacles, and small arms fire;

2) Isolate and defeat enemy armor in detail as far forward as possible;

3) Finish off enemy infantry in detail using counterattack and massed combined arms firepower.

An additional factor to remember in constructing the defense is the enemy VC. If you must hold a piece of ground to win, consider setting a strongpoint on the objective, and siting the AT guns out on flanks away from the objective area. This forces the attacker to make an uneviable decision: should he storm the objective first, and endure the flanking AT shots? Or should he go for the AT guns first, thus eating up time and diverting his forces from the main objective? A classic example of this occurs in CH 49, "High Danger". The British player can strongpoint the hillock summit with a series of trenches manned by infantry, while the AT guns are positioned wide on the flanks to take flank shots on any armor assaulting up the middle, and generally distract the enemy tanks and dissipate their effect by drawing them away from the main goal.

BULLY IN THE SANDBOX

The attacker is faced with a unique series of challenges in the desert. Lack of cover and concealment means the advancing troops are exposed to fire almost as soon as they enter the board. Although LV Hindrances may provide some relief, the -2 FFMO/FFNAM is usually unavoidable for infantry. Vehicles can expect to come under fire early, too, usually from small caliber, high RoF guns with multiple hit capability. The answer to this dilemma is simple: speed. Let's look at some of the considerations for attacking forces in ASL desert fights.

For infantry, dispersion is the key. Unless you really need the leader MF bonus, there is usually no good reason to stack anyone. Move in individual squads, ending the MPh and APh adjacent so you can lay down large, multi-hex FG attacks while presenting lots of small targets in return.

Seek to use what cover there is on your approach. Hillocks and high dunes can screen movement effectively, so make sure you understand how these features affect LOS. Wadis provide good covered routes, as well as good crest-status positions to set up overwatching fire elements and MG / mortar teams. Any vehicles must be exploited to their fullest, as close combined arms operations are essential to success. Armored assault, Vehicular Dust and smoke can all be used to help get the infantry forward.

Keep a close eye on range differences as you close with the enemy. If possible, set your overwatch MG positions beyond his squad normal range. This allows your MGs to rake his forward positions while receiving only slight return fire.

Employment of SW is similar to other theaters: use LMGs with the assault troops to maximize short range FP, while MMGs, HMGs, and mortars should stay back a bit and set up overwatch positions to soften up the defenses.

Placement of leaders is important as well. High quality leaders should direct heavy weapons and overwatching FGs. 8-0's and others dedicated to rally duty should follow behind the troops, 1-2 hexes back, to police up the inevitable stragglers. You shouldn't need the extra leader MF bonus, since there is little difficult terrain here. In any case, be very cautious about stacking leaders up in the front lines. Casualties are inevitable in these desert attacks anyway — no sense in making your leaders easy targets.

Guns and heavy weapons can be big assets for the attacker. The main challenge is getting them safely into position. With long LOS' and greater ranges, there is no reason to unload or push guns anywhere within normal range of enemy small arms and MGs. Let them set up safely back and bang away at the defensive strongpoints. After one or two shots acquisition will negate most desert LV hindrances, and then the defender will start sweating. By that time, your infantry will have moved in close enough to gun him down if he tries to withdraw out of the trenches.

No doubt about it, *the tank is the king of the desert battlefield.* Successful attacks will depend on skillful use of these vital pieces. Tanks must never forget that speed is security in the desert. Any vehicle that sits stationary for more than a turn is simply asking for destruction. Keep moving!

In many desert scenarios, platoon movement is an option that should be seriously considered. Platoons of 2-3 vehicles moving simultaneously can present the defender with a difficult problem, temporarily overloading his AT guns. Sometimes it will produce a psychological effect, causing your opponent some confusion as he tries to decide whether to fire and at whom. It will often cause him to commit his fire too early. Especially when storming an AT gun, platoon movement is useful, since loss of a vehicle usually still allows the others in the platoon to complete the overrun.

Overruns are your most awesome weapon in the desert. If you don't have enough MPs left to overrun, stop in the enemy hex and hit them with TPB MGs as Bounding First Fire (as long as you stop, MGs are tripled and then halved, which in many cases is still an 8 or 12 FP attack)! Then start up again so you can end the turn in Motion, if necessary. Sometimes, the BFF TPB MG attack is even better than an overrun — consider that a German Panzer IIIH, with a total MG FP of 8, can overrun a trench with a 16 (+4) attack, requiring a DR 6 to inflict a NMC. If the same vehicle stops in the hex and fires TPB BFF with MGs, he will have a 12 (+2) attack, requiring only a DR 7 to inflict a NMC.

There are two dangers to keep in mind when thinking overrun, however. First, don't forget that tanks have to make a Bog check when entering trench hexes. The odds are in the tank's favor (usually needing only a DR 10 or less, for normal ground pressure vehicles), but the risk is there. Second, don't overlook the defender's Reaction Fire potential (D 7.2 - .21), especially if you are going to be stopping in the hex momentarily. He will have to pass a PAATC, but if he does,and you are stopped or Bogged, the tank becomes rather vulnerable. To minimize risks, try not to overrun units until they are already marked with First or Final Fire counters — this will cause them to use SFF or FPF in their Reaction Fire, thus reducing their CCV and possibly making them vulnerable to breaking under FPF rules.

The enemy AT guns are the priority targets. Tanks must go after these guys first. Use HE and MG fire to suppress and break gun crews, or smoke them in with OBA and main gun smoke if possible. Once they lose RoF, malfunction or the crew breaks, hit the gas and grind them into the dust. You can't be subtle in the desert. If you try to dance with these guys at long ranges, you will lose. You have to go right for them, moving fast, using smoke and dust to get in close.

The attacker must keep these things in mind as he plans his operation. A typical desert attack could unfold in the following manner:

Half squads lead in, to uncover the nature and disposition of the defense, as well as any obstacles. Any available OBA should be dropping smoke and raising dust all over

the enemy MLR as the advance gets underway.

The advance should be a combined tank/infantry thrust, using armored assault and vehicle dust to screen the approaching troops. The infantry itself moves as a large mass, spread out with little or no stacking. Key SW follow close behind, setting up as soon as possible in overwatch positions to begin suppressing the enemy MLR. Any enemy AT Guns that show themselves become the immediate focus of OBA and all heavy weapons / MGs. During the approach, use can be made of numerous 'cute' desert ploys — like platoons of light tanks, carriers, or other 'expendables' racing ahead of the main force, then reversing at the last minute to raise clouds of dust between the defenders and the advancing troops. A three-vehicle platoon can put out up to a +6 LOS Hindrance of Vehicular Dust, blocking LOS and stripping acquisition. These moves are somewhat ahistorical and smell a bit 'cheesy', but they are creative and totally legal.

Let me digress for a moment on another sleaze play, the 'drive-into-his-hex-and-prevent-him-from-shooting-out' play. Normally I condemn this move as ahistorical rules lawyering — there is just no way a Sherman in France 1944 is going to drive up next to a stone building with an SS squad inside, just so some infantry squad down the road can get across the street without being fired upon. It's totally legal, of course, but it's also totally lame. In the desert, however, I believe it is both accurate and appropriate. Tanks of all nationalities routinely overran infantry foxholes in North Africa, and it was standard practice to drive right up to trenchlines and machine gun them at close range. This was precisely because infantry of the time lacked effective anti-armor weapons. The changing situation by 1944 had rendered such tactics obsolete, but they were still very common in 1941 - 43. For that reason, I think this play is a legitimate option for use by attacking tanks in the desert.

As the enemy defense line nears, the tanks close in for the kill. Overruns and TPB MG fire break up the enemy troops and AT Gun crews, and the infantry sweep in behind to mop up. Positions in sand, or strongpoints that are resistant to overruns, are bypassed and encircled. Attacking troops should try to make good use of the enemy fortifications, seizing trenches and foxholes for their own use.

The attacker must employ good combined-arms tactics, and should always focus on three objectives:

1) Identify and defeat enemy AT systems as early as possible;

2) Close rapidly and destroy enemy positions with massed fire and overrun;

3) Bypass and encircle strongpoints with armor, and finish them off with infantry.

In any case, the attacker must retain a clear sense of his objective in the battle. Don't allow yourself to be distracted by numerous dispersed enemy units. If the VC require taking ground, remain focused on that ground. Take the objective first, then orient for a 360-degree defense and make the enemy come out of his trenches if he wants to eject you. If you need CVP to win, use a systematic approach, massing your forces to eliminate one position at a time. Don't allow your forces to get dispersed and disorganized. If you need to exit to win, pick the point you want to penetrate, mass your forces, and go. (See Illustration 2). There is, of course, a fine line between being aggressive and being reckless. Don't simply charge blindly into the defense after those guns. Assess the enemy setup, get your assets in place, and set the conditions for your assault first. Once you are ready, then you can firewall your tanks and do your best Patton imitation.

SPECIAL DELIVERY

Another type of battle which occurs frequently in desert actions is the 'meeting battle'. Meeting battles were very common in the desert, because once the strongpoint lines were penetrated the battlefield became fluid. As the attacker's mechanized forces fanned out to exploit the breach, the defender's mechanized reserves deployed to locate, surround, and defeat the enemy spearheads.

The result was often a clash between two moving forces, neither of which had time to prepare defensive positions or develop detailed attack plans. Many of the ASL desert scenarios published to date feature just these kinds of actions. In fighting a meeting battle, it pays to remember the principles of offensive and defensive tactics discussed earlier — dispersion, deployment of key weapons systems behind the main line, and fighting a mobile battle with any available vehicles. In most meeting battles, the victor is usually the one who moves quickest to the best ground, and then sets a hasty defense and lets the enemy impale himself. But the standard tactics outlined above do require some modification in execution during a meeting battle.

A good example of a classic desert meeting battle is "Special Messenger", found in this issue of Critical Hit. In the unclear situation following the Allied advance towards Tunisia, the 10th Panzer is committed to counterattack and seize some key terrain to bolster the southern flank of the Axis line. They run headlong into the advancing elements of the US 1st Armored, which has been sent to stall them. Both sides are on the move as the scenario opens, neither side having had time to prepare extensive defensive fortifications.

This scenario features many unique elements that make it very representative of the problems faced by both sides in all desert fights. The terrain includes hillocks, wadis, and the djebel of Board 25. There are no desert LV hindrances in effect, although the Dry EC mean Vehicular Dust will be in effect, and a combination of Winds and Gusts could conceivably bring Dust into effect (F 11.76).

The US has the advantage in numbers, with six Shermans and six M3 GMC, all of which sport the 75 gun standard for this period. This weapon is adequate against the Panzer IV, but almost useless against the Tiger's frontal aspect. The infantry is well-led and well-equipped, though like the tank guns the bazookas will be useful only against the Panzer IVs, and almost worthless against the Tigers. The US player's ace in the hole comes in the form of air support (1 FB). The US player is laboring under several serious disadvantages, however. First, the American is hampered by an SSR which randomly determines how many vehicles he can move per turn (to reflect fuel shortages). Second, his SAN is only 2, and his infantry suffers from a 2 ELR as well. Due to the early date (1943), his vehicles must use red TH numbers. Worst of all, the US has no smoke capability at all beyond crew grenades and squad exponents!

The Germans are outnumbered, but they have a high-powered OB indeed. Their elite infantry is lead by a 9-2, sports an ELR and SAN of 4, and is well-equipped with an HMG and several LMGs. They are bolstered by the two Tigers of the 501st Schwere Panzer Abteilung. While these early Tigers still have a few 'bugs' to be worked out, they are truly awesome for this period of the war and far outclass anything the US can field. The Tigers are accompanied by four Panzer IVF2s, a very good tank in itself and excellent in its role here as escort for the heavy hitters. To round out their force, the Germans have six SPW 251/1 halftracks, one of which will be towing a 20L AA gun onto the field.

The only disadvantages apparent for the German are the fact that he is outnumbered, and that the American moves first. This last cuts both ways, though — it means the US will get a jump on the German in the race for good ground, but it also means the German will have the final move.

To win, the Germans must ensure there are no Good Order US MMC or vehicles north of the road/track that bisects the boards. This puts the burden of attack on the American, since he will have to push

his units forward to get into the victory area, while the German can attempt to move quickly into a defensive position and then simply rely on the Tigers to whack anything that tries to cross the 'line in the sand'.

The American should plan to push hard for the key terrain early. Right off the bat, he could send two M3 GMCs and two halftracks with squads, a bazooka, and the .50 on a race to get into the 25R1/R2 wadi. The HTs can make it INTO the wadi, while the M3 GMC's enter Crest Status (HD Rear) in the wadi hexes. They will be HD to the initial German assault, while the infantry can unload out of sight IN the wadi. This creates a natural 'strongpoint' that puts a sizable US force already in the victory area, and the German cannot ignore it. He will have to come after it early. This is so important, I think the US player should move this element first. If his movement dr is so low he can only enter 3-4 vehicles, they should be these guys.

The other M3 GMCs and the two mortars should set up far back in the Board 26 wadi, in HD/Crest status. They can provide overwatching fires for the R1/R2 position. The M3 GMCs, with a small target size and HD status, will last a bit longer back here.

Four of the Shermans cut straight over to Board 25 and start working through the torturous terrain there. Movement is very restricted, but the hill has the best terrain for shielding their movement and perhaps even yielding some HD firing positions that will overwatch and dominate the fight out on the flats for the R1/R2 wadi. Being on this high ground prevents the German from using the hillocks to screen his move. Two of the Shermans carry squad Riders for close protection vs. the German infantry, while the other two follow and support. The remaining two Shermans can either follow this move later, or make a flanking run down the east side of Board 26, to draw the Germans away from the main effort.

The key to the US position is skilled use of the wadis and the Board 25 hill terrain. Wadis make excellent fighting positions for vehicles, because they can move up into Crest status, conduct BFF, and then back down INTO the wadi, out of LOS. They will take DFF, of course, but the M3 GMCs will be small, moving, HD targets to such fire, and once they disappear back INTO the wadi they will be immune to enemy Final Fire and his upcoming Prep Fire. In addition, they can shed any acquisition by moving within the wadi to come up next turn in another position. The only way the enemy can force the position is by moving adjacent (at some risk) or flanking it on the high ground, which will take some time. The Shermans should be able to stave off any flanking move on the hill.

The challenge for the US is, of course, to get those Tigers. Never let the German player CE these things. If he so much as cracks the hatch, they should be eating mortar rounds. Because the US 75 AP round is almost worthless against the Tiger's front, the M3 GMCs could fire HE at any CE Tigers, for collateral attacks against the crews. If possible, maneuver the Shermans for some flanking shots. Chances are the Panzer IVs will be deployed to prevent just such a move, so they will probably have to be dealt with first.

The FB is a crucial asset — use his bomb against a Tiger, of course, but after that use his MGs to shoot up any Panzer IVs that are left. He can go after the Tigers as well (he will stun them on a TK DR of 3, and kill them with an 'eyes'). Because the plane is so important, the US should target the German AA systems (esp. the HMG and the Flak 38) with HE whenever possible.

For the German, the strategy is much simpler. Get on board, isolate that R1/R2 wadi, and start banging away. The Panzer IV's should be on both flanks, with the Tigers in the center. If the American gets someone into the R1 wadi early, the Tigers should head right up to it and put these guys under the hammer. The position will fall quickly if this happens. The bulk of the German infantry should head for the hills, looking to block any US attempt to come down off the high ground, and dominating any movement by US forces out on the flats of Board 26. At least one Panzer IV needs to be up on the northern hillock, to prevent the US from using the southern hillock as a screen or HD position.

The enemy FB is a concern, so get the Flak 38 unloaded and set up quickly. Make sure it is far enough forward that the R1/R2 position is within the gun's 8-hex range for AA fire. Site the HMG to cover any area out of range of the Flak gun. With the flak, HMG, and the six AAMGs of the halftracks, that US FB will have plenty to think about. It will force the US player to be conservative in committing this decisive piece. Just make sure you keep your tanks under this 'umbrella' at all times — never stick a tank out too far, where the FB can get a full strafing run in without coming inside normal (aerial) range of your AA systems.

In general, I think this scenario is closely balanced, though I'd give the Germans a slight edge. The US movement dr limit is significant, because it means the US will rarely be able to capitalize on his numerical superiority and 'swarm' the panzers. Casualties on both sides will be high no matter what happens, but it only takes 1 MMC or tank to win or lose the game.

Hopefully this article has shed some light on the more basic aspects of desert tactics in ASL. Many players decry the desert scenarios as 'dice fests', where the play balance is too often upset by the random factor. True, because LOS' are so open, more shots are taken, the dice are rolled more often, and random things like Snipers, Heat of Battle, malfunctions, etc. tend to occur more frequently. This applies to both sides, of course. I don't think this is an unbalancing factor, though. In a standard NW Europe fight, for example, an AT gun often gets only one or two shots before it is revealed and dealt with. What if it misses? Or rolls a '12' on its only shot of the game? At least in the desert, it'll get a chance to try a few more times! The high number of rolls, in my opinion, adds to the excitement of these games, because every roll is a potential critical hit (so even those Tiger drivers in "Special Messenger" will be nervous taking up to 12 TH DRs each turn)! Anything can happen, and the tide of battle can turn any minute. That kind of tension and drama is what makes this game so great.

So dig out that desert module and jump into the big sandbox. That's where the real men fight it out, without all that wimpy terrain to hide behind. With good desert tactics and an appreciation of the unique terrain, you too will emerge triumphant. Remember, on the defense, disperse in strongpoints, and kill tanks. On the attack, be fast and aggressive — but not reckless —and get the AT systems first. Roll low, and don't forget to bring your SMOKE! Move fast, strike hard, finish rapidly!

Submission Guidelines:

Articles, scenarios, PL Campaign Games, you create it, we publish it, everyone enjoys it. Can we be more succinct? Good. And we don't care if you write it on your lunch bag with a grease pencil or carve it into a pumpkin. Just send in your submission without delay. Of course, submissions are OK on an IBM diskette in Wordperfect 5x, Word 6, or ASCII. You may also E-mail your submission to R. Tapio directly at 75320.3623@compuserve.com (an upload is OK, too if you are on CIS or use BinHex 4.0 compatible compression for sending material across the internet).

It is suggested you hand draw illustrations or graphics you wish to go along with your articles, PL CG's, or scenarios. We welcome sketches that can be made into full color overlays and maps, too. All submissions become the property of Critical Hit, Inc. on the date received unless alternate arrangements are made.

SARGE, continued from page 6

You might even get lucky and get a WP critical hit (look it up, lazy!) or watch them break with a high roll. Either way, you reveal them if WP is placed and the resulting same hex smoke hindrance (an additional +1 for same hex) will help you placing unit get away to fight another day. So if you find the other guy's orders (a scenario card to you) include hidden stuff, think in terms of starting the game off with your very first shots consisting of 'searching' WP fire. For you first looey dreamers that been stealing the Infantry Journals (Critical Hit mag to you) off the coffee table in the day room see #2 (the Moyland Replay) for the use of this very tactic by a grunt named Pleva that's heads and shoulders above your sorry butt when it comes to smokin out the bad guys.

Disss-misssed! Until next time lets hope some of this smoke stuff has stuck in yer puny heads.

Who is Sarge? My name is David P. Roth. I am 42 years old, divorced with three children, and born and raised in Arizona. My three children are two girls, aged 8 and 12, and my boy, who is 7. My current employment is in retail management, but I am striving to get into the law field. I have degrees in Paralegal Studies, Journalism and Mass Communications. During my career I have received awards from civic and business organizations including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the City of Mesa (Arizona), NBC Radio Networks and PBS. I enjoy pistol and rifle target shooting, tennis, handball, motorcycling, fishing, camping and restoring my '69 Pontiac LeMans. My oldest daughter shows little interest in gaming, but my two youngest do. I am starting them out with Chess, Backgammon, and Dinosaurs of the Lost World (AH). My first military games were Stratego and Risk. These lacked the detail I craved, leading to my purchase of Tactics II. A purchase of the original Squad Leader in 1980 led me to answer an opponents wanted ad in the General (I thought I was the only wargamer in Arizona!) led to the formation of our group known as the Arizona ASL Players Association. While I play other wargames, ASL is my favorite and takes up some 90% of my playing time and interest. In my first ASL tournament (1988) I was 'perfect' at 0-7. It did nothing to dampen my enthusiasm. Some of the best fun I have ever had, and the best buddies, have been connected to moving those little cardboard pieces around a map. As I tell my bewildered non-ASL friends, it's more than a hobby...it's a passion! I am proud to receive some space in the form of a beginners column here in CH and hope you guys get some entertainment, and a few pointers out of my efforts. Write to me c/o Critical Hit with your comments.

Sarge



"B" Company

P.O. Box 4163, Clifton, N.J. 07012

PH: (201) 473-2900 FAX: (201) 473-4144

Specializing in Historical Wargames and Magazines;

Wargames; Avalon Hill, Australian Design Group, Avalanche Press, Clash of Arms, Columbia Games, Critical Hit, The Gamers, Decision Games, GRD, GMT, Games U.S.A., Victory Games, Moments in History, 3W, Xeno, XTR and many others!

Magazines; Command, S&T, Competitive Edge, The Wargamer, Counterattack, 3CI, The Art Of War, Canadian Wargames Journal, Critical Hit, C3I, Europa News, The General, Fire & Movement, Operations, Paper Wars, Mind, Map & Maneuver, Moves, Zone Of Control and others!

Hard to find titles; Azure Wish, Ludo Press, Simtac Spain and others!

Out of Print; Games, magazines, & counter sheets

Gaming supplies, accessories, books, miscellaneous, etc.

We carry the complete line of ASL items as well as the entire line of products from Critical Hit.

Our prices are comparable to anyone's

Call, fax or send for a free catalog

VISA and MASTERCARD accepted



Jatkosota

Designer's Notes and Tactical Commentary

by Ray Tapio

The idea for JATKOSOTA was born shortly after receiving word from our Finnish cousin Jussi Tammelin that he would be bringing the family for another visit to the States during the fall of 1994. I had long been interested in the 20th century wars of the embattled nation of my forebears and the Continuation War appealed to me partly due to the relative unknown quality of the conflict and for the ferocious nature of the eastern-front warfare that prevailed during the ensuing battles. I was soon prompting Jussi to get his hands on this book, that map, and the project was on. For those who lack the pleasure of knowing the redoubtable Mr. Tammelin, suffice it to say he has long had a knack of getting his hands on things. For years, Jussi ran an import-export business from the Helsinki offices of Rovax, OY. He can be in the pilot's seat flying his own twin engine aircraft to set up a deal to get a couple of thousand electric motors into (formerly) East Germany one day, and the next be moving a million tampons into the Soviet Union.

Then came the first delay to the Jatkosota project. Jussi's past as a long time, heavy smoker apparently caught up to him one day during the fall of '94. The next thing he knew, as he put it, "...I was naked, all I had was my f*&%$n keys and I was in the helicopter." Jussi was rushed to the hospital after suddenly collapsing. Part of one lung was removed and a heart operation forced Jussi to sell his plane (he picked up an wood-hulled, deep vee hulled Baltic cruiser to mitigate the damage to his machine loving heart) and curtail his active life-style. Needless to say the get-together in New York was postponed. Not for long, though. The whole Tammelin gang came in during February 1995 for a ten day stay.

This writer can state from first hand experience that Jussi Tammelin can still drink Finlandia like normal humans drink water (an admirable trait which served his Finnish countrymen well when negotiating with Stalin's gang a half-century ago...they got the Anglo-Americans drunk and took advantage of the western urge to be 'polite'). A little huffing and puffing when climbing to our seats at the Jersey Devils game. No other signs that our favorite Finn was any worse for the wear and tear (that is, with the exception of a scar which virtually circled his body and which led to the author's decision to quit smoking after being provided a viewing with that exact goal in mind). As if things could have been better, Jussi never forgot about our little project and came loaded for bear with Finnish language books, source materials, and his father's maps from WW II (Jussi is in his mid-forties).

The design and research staff was soon augmented by a "Finn and 1/2" in the form of Tommi Syrjanen, of Espoo, Finland, recently mustered out of the army, and scenario designer and man of half-Finnish descent (his mother), Peter Mudge. Tommi was soon running errands all over Finland for us and Pete started putting together his usual dramatic and creative designs. Tommi was really the MVP of the Jatkosota project and as this writer sits on his screened-in porch on a warm summer night, typing away on a portable computer, a glass is raised in Tommi's honor. Houva Oola! While all this was happening, R. Tapio learned a bit of the Finnish language, and it was soon discovered that one should never ask a Finn if they would like some "Bosco" chocolate syrup on their ice cream. (I'll admit a couple of things here: "Bosco" is an expletive in Finnish which means "sh&t" and as a child I always felt a rush of pride and a feeling of excitement upon every reading of the Ballantine book "Winter War". Later, as an adult and history major, my admiration was for the incredible political feats of the Ryti/Mannerheim governments, elicited by the Finnish handling of the dominant tyrants of their day, Hitler and Stalin. I think of the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948-? in a similar vein as the Finnish War of Independence-Talvisota-Jakosota-Lapinsota and still find excitement in reading of the exploits of Zahal, Division Tal, and the Israeli Centurions and Pattons of the Six Days War).

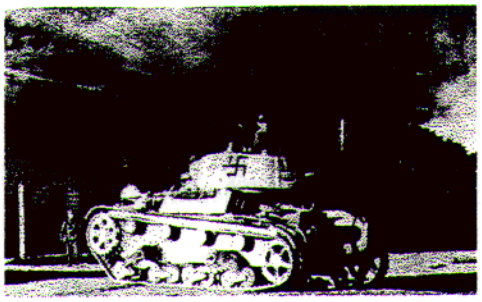
The design and development of Jatkosota revolved around some simple precepts. Choose the right situations for scenarios, write up a little historical booklet, and make sure to get the whole thing playtested. Even with the inclusion of the historical booklet, it seemed a simple enough assignment at the outset. That was before the detailed, translations of Finnish AAR's began coming in. It soon became apparent the flavor of the Continuation War could not be captured within the confines of the current ASL counter mix. Some vehicles, like the BT-42 were not available, and others, such as Rus-

sian T-26 and T-34 models in Finnish service would have to be represented by counters from the Russian OB for both sides. Incorporating the Lahti-Saloranta and Maxim machine guns would have required using minor counters and before you know it we would have had a hodge-podge of different colored counters on the map in quick fixes which the designers felt would have taken away from the focus of playing the Finnish side with any "flavor" intact. New counters, and notes to go with them, would have to be added to the mix to do it right.

In addition to new color counters, extras such as the actual 12 page historical booklet and the need for a revised rules page for the Stz. Komsomolets counters resulted in upward pressure on the price point of the project. It represented a serious problem when considering distributor sales, originally committed at the price of $8.00 retail per unit (distributors typically get at least a huge discount off of retail price, and the manufacturer, CH in this case, pays the shipping). While the hobby likely would "eat" a price increase for pre-ordered sets of Jatkosota, it was decided to send our appreciation for the patience of everyone that ordered at $8.00 by honoring that price right up to shipping time and we have had nary a complaint from this policy. The counters themselves, well that was another story.

By the time most of you read this CH will have a new set of four color overlays in circulation in the Platoon Leader expansion set "Cemetery Hill." There are more color counters coming out soon and professionally printed, overlays and inserts, too. While most owners of Jatkosota own a set of the super-crisp color counters, the journey to that point in our first color output was not so easy. It was the result of hands-on experience with little things like color correction, trapping, and other concepts most ASL'ers don't want to hear about. Just "give us our counters and mount 'em next time even if it costs more money" seems to be the train of thought in the hobby. We went to school with the Jatkosota counters and "graduated" when the first set was thrown out, along with the expense, to give way to the second edition. Anyone still in possession of the first edition set of counters can send us a S.A.S.E. to get the second edition at no charge.

You will also note we have provided a new set of counters for the Finnish BT-42. After reconsidering the impact of this AFV in game terms, and some new insight provided by comments provided by the curator of the Finnish tank museum in Parola, an update was in order. Discard the previous version and note this new game piece takes precedent over the earlier one.



TOAST VICTORY WITH VODKA: TVWV was the first translation completed for the Jatkosota project, and the first scenario to be designed. The action depicted is a city fight involving men and tanks of Osasto (abbreviated as Tst.Ost., meaning 'Task Force' or the equivalent of the German term *Kampfgruppe*) Lagus as they moved into the capitol of Soviet Karelia, Petrozavodsk. This portion of the Finnish 1941 offensive bursts the commonly held myth that the Finns only 'took back' the territory invaded by the U.S.S.R. during the Winter War of 1939-40; Soviet Karelia was never a part of the Finnish nation; no matter the moral authority referenced by post WW II historians, this was the conquest of a an enemy city populated by civilians of another nation.

The Finnish player faces the challenge of gaining VP via the exit of forces and/or by seizing key buildings within the Russian setup area on board 20. The VC's require the Finn to gain 35 VP; there are only four buildings on board, representing a maximum possible total of 8 VP. The Finns will have to exit forces off the east edge during this battle.

The Finns have a force which is capable of getting the job done. No less than five T-26C tanks (representing the T26 M37 Russian tank in Finnish service; you get color counters for these in Jatko), and a 9-1 armor leader accompany 16 squads in the Finnish OB. While such a large number of ML '8' squads capable of self-rally sounds daunting, their building objectives are widely spaced apart and consist of numerous locations to clear of enemy MMC's. And a numerous enemy it is; in the historical engagement the Finns were actually outnumbered by Soviet troops. While the scenario's OB is nearly equal man for man, the fact that most of the Finnish squads are 5-3-8's precludes gaining better than a 1-1 attack in Melee, and forces them in close to apply real firepower on the enemy. The decision for the Finn here boils down to where to strike and seize *two* buildings, while shielding the remainder of your main body from enemy fire while opening a corridor to the east edge for exit VP. The Finnish can greatly aid this effort by dropping a curtain of HE between your force and an opponent trying to scramble to redeploy and meet your main thrust.

The Russian can't afford to dig in too deeply at any one point during this fight. An eye must always be kept on possible Finnish exit of units. While there is no doubt seven game turns is enough time for the Finns to travel the distance they need to go, a delay forced upon the attacker that leads them to looking at two or three remaining turns to get the job done can lead to anxious moments, and perhaps some foolhardy risks for the Finnish player. The mobile forces that enter on the south edge have a long way to go to reach the northern-most buildings. The Finnish on-board forces don't have the strength to get the job done on their own against any significant defences. Your dilemma as the Russian player in this scenario is just how to balance your defence network to avoid overcommitment against either the exit threat or possible enemy capture of terrain.



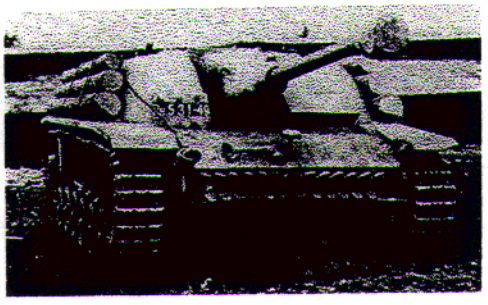
AT THE GATES OF VIIPURI: ATGOV finds us fighting on the outskirts of another city, in this case the "liberated" Finnish city of Viipuri. It's not going to be liberated for long as this scenario takes place almost three years later and the Russians are on the attack with strong infantry and armored forces during their summer 1944 offensive. In the historical action the men of the Finnish 20th Brigade exited the battlefield without orders, leaving their BT-42 wielding comrades alone to face the Soviet horde. While the story that the men of the unit pulled back after one platoon "received" erroneous order to pull back is still disputed, in game terms the Green soldiers suffer from a low ELR and the need to take a 1 PAATC to attempt to attack enemy tanks in CC.

ATGOV debuts the BT-42 in ASL service. This unique SP-gun is armed with the 114mm OQF 4.5-in. Howitzer received from the British during the Winter War. While packing a 20 FP wallop against infantry, this piece of ordnance is practically useless against Russian armor. To make matters worse the armor of these AFV is easily perforated by any tank of the '44 era. It doesn't help that they are facing JS-II (known as IS-2M tanks in ASL) tanks. The Finnish player will have to consider his fields of fire for these vulnerable units carefully, providing an escape rout for any SP-gun

that plans to be around for long.

Fortunately for the Finn, there is plenty of additional AT capability built into his force in the form of two German AT-guns, a Psk team, including a Hero, which sets up HIP. Finally the Finnish MMC may attempt panzerfaust usage on a dr of "1-2" for a squad and "1" for half-squads. Three roadblocks and MOL capability go even further in making the outskirts of Viipuri a dangerous place for unsupported armor on this day. There are plenty of multi-Location stone buildings and that giant cemetery for the Finns to lurk in with their bottle bombs and 'fausts waiting for oncoming metal monsters.

The Finns are going to need every advantage they can get The Russian force totals 20 squads and six AFV. There is no excuse for allowing your AFVs to wander forward without infantry support. With both sides setting up on board, enemy troops in the front line will not be able to start the game concealed. That means there will not likely be more than a token delaying force up front to delay your advance. Move your armor in and choose firing positions to drive any Finns from 2nd Level or roadblock positions on the outskirts of town and let the set piece assault begin. Don't forget that 14S9 counts as a victory objective building and use your 2-1 numerical advantage to best effect.



BACK TO THE V-T LINE: It's summer in Finland and the nights are long and bright. This scenario depicts a wild and wooly night action which opens with a NVR of "6" and a minimum NVR of "4" by SSR; this scenario is certainly *not* for the faint of heart. The Finns are making a desperate bid to regain their defence line, known as the Vammelsu-Taipale line, which has just been overrun by the Soviet juggernaut during June of 1944. The long range NVR gives this night action a truly unique feel and while enemy forces may be swirling around out there a few hundred meters out of reach, the battlefield never closes down to the point where an attacker can attempt to pass through a narrow opening. This leads to an advantage for the Finns, as they can mass at any one point, while a defence in depth is more difficult to execute effectively due to the distance between the defenders on the three maps.

This scenario was designed from a very detailed Finnish after-action report that provided all the minute detail every ASL scenario designer longs for. A reading of the historical write-up provided on the scenario card details the advance of the Finn's StuG III's, with the point AFV changing after the *Sturm* of Lt. Saartio, the unit commander was struck by fire, damaging the gun (the elusive K-kill, non-existent in ASL with the exception of rolling a "12" on a TH attempt and using your imagination...). There are panzers a-plenty, *and* a plentiful variety of AFV's here to keep the most rabid Finnish AFV aficionado happy.

The Finns threw everything at the enemy to retrieve the situation. We give you that, *and* the veritable kitchen sink to work with in th scenario. The Finns start off by pasting the Russians with no less than *two* pre-game OBA FFE:1 attacks. They then deploy twelve attacking AFV's, 15 squads of the highest caliber, towed gun and armor leaders. Two of the Finnish AFV's are Landsverk Anti II A-A tanks never before seen in the ASL system. The Finns even get a couple of those diminutive artillery tractors, the A-20 (the Russian Stz. Komsomolets, otherwise known as the 'official AFV of Critical Hit, in Finnish colors), towing a pair of captured Russian artillery pieces. They have a long way to go, and the other guy keeps throwing reinforcements in their way. Right in front of the jump-off line, an enemy machine gun platoon lurks behind a minefield. Before it's all over the Finnish commander will have to stare down another company's worth of infantry, numerous marauding tanks, and artillery falling down around them. There's a number of different strong-points that can be used by a wily defender to slow the Finnish advance until an eight turn game starts looking pretty short and the attack becomes a race against time.

The Soviet OB is forced to echelon in depth by the set up restrictions. The final group, which sets up on board 13, finds itself manning the stream/raised road on that board SSR'd to represent the trench line of the V-T Line. This particular SSR actually works quite well. It saves the Russian player the time and trouble to set up a large number of trench counters and has a 'largeness' and interlocking design not typically seen in ASL trench lines. 'Back' makes for a good multi-player game for the Russian side; each integral part of the OB has its own 'sector' of the map to hold out on. No matter how many play them, the men from the U.S.S.R. must take a bit of flesh off the Finnish main body as it makes what is hopefully a difficult, and long passage to *reach* the V-T Line on board 13, before even laying in an assault on the trench line found there.



THE GODS OF WAR: Tapio may mean the name of the god of the forest to a Finn, but artillery is among the gods of war to the Russian soldier as scenario designer Pete Mudge shows us in his epic by the same name. The men of JP-2 have been ordered to hold at all cost; the Soviet juggernaut is about to up the ante in the form of a vicious rocket barrage to open the battle among the forests and paths near Kuuterselka. In this scenario the Russian player is allowed to pre-designate no less than two pre-game 200mm Rct OBA strikes. They are also provided with an 82mm Battalion Mortar OBA. There's going to be a lot of steel flying in this one.

The SSR's calling for the Finns to have one "shot" of APCR for each of their two AT-guns was designed in for the same reason the Suomi side gets only one Fire Mission of OBA for their 150mm module. It was decided this would recreate a feeling of conserving ammunition by the Finish command, saving it for the most important shots only, without leaving things totally to chance in the form of lowered special ammunition numbers or the use of low ammo.

It is the Russian artillery that presents their main advantage to attack behind. With only a 3:2 advantage in manpower on the ground, and the myriad obstacles presented to AFV deployment, the Russian player needs to choose an avenue of approach, plan to smash it with the Katyushas, and close up quickly with tanks and mortar fire to keep the pressure on before the Finns can re-deploy or reinforce. With the variability inherent in any use or artillery, this one is more of an experience, and a battle, than a tournament contest.

The Finn is going to have a tough time covering the long front. He will have to carefully examine the openings on board 5 the Russian will have to come through and use his mines and wire to stop, or slow movement onto board 42. The Finnish platoon that comes in as reinforcements on the

west edge of board 42 can go a long way toward plugging any gap; they are also toting the radio which communicates with their thrifty 150mm battery and a PsK for added punch against enemy tanks. Stripping away the Soviet armor support is not a trivial goal. Destroy, immobilize or send them packing for home means immediate victory for the Finns. To make matters worse for the Russian, the Finnish player is allowed to roll for PF usage by SSR, and while they only get one APCR shot for the AT-guns, *they do get that one shot.* The wary Russian commander will not be wandering around with unsupported tanks. Isn't it funny how often Jatkosota scenarios punish that kind of ASL tank silliness!

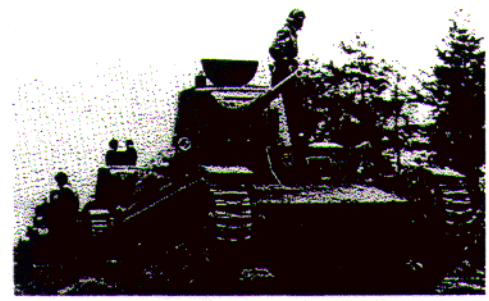


BROTHERS IN ARMS: Although not one of the author's design's, this writer would be lying in the absence of an admission that this little gem is his personal favorite from the entire set. The original concept came from an after-action-report translated by Tommi Syrjanen; Tommi then fleshed out the original design for Pete Mudge to 'dial-in' the exact boards, victory conditions and SSR's. BIA represents a first in a well populated world of ASL scenarios: a Finnish vs. German action. The Finns were doing everything they could to show their Soviet allies they were complying with demands to eject German soldiers from Finnish soil; in the meantime maximum cooperation was conveyed to their erstwhile allies to effect an orderly retreat north. The pressures of close contact between, combined with local command led to the inevitable flare-up. Combat ensued in a number of hot-spots, leading to what became known as the Lapinsota (Lapland War).

In this scenario we see a German attack on a Finnish roadblock covering a stream crossing. Not surprisingly, the German must press the Finns back over the stream, making sure there are no Good Order enemy MMC's north of a perimeter mainly defined by the stream itself. The Finns must hold out against a combined arms force until their own armored reinforcements can arrive to tip the balance. It was a tight contest in most every playtest outing and has the right size and composition for tournament play.

The German finds himself at a 2-1 advantage in manpower once the Turn 1 reinforcements arrive; a total of 12 squads face down only 6 1/2 of their Finnish counterparts. These 120 stalwarts are led by a pair of -1 morale level leaders. While this would not normally lead to listing leadership as an 'advantage', the absence of any terrain with better than a +2 modifier makes their modifier much more dangerous and basically precludes the Finn from setting up in stacks. The German can utilize a combination of 4-6-7 squads, medium and light machine guns to throw out some '8' and '12' FP attacks against defenders sitting in '0' or '+1' modified terrain. Even with his ML '8' squads, the Finn is not advised to sit back and absorb those shots for long. And it is just that use of combined arms that makes this German force so dangerous. With the high morale and self-rally capabilities of the Finns, the German must be attuned to openings that allow his AFV's to move in and eliminate enemy units once they break. Due to the slow MP of the AFV's the German finds himself equipped with here, such opportunities will only be available if he maintains close contact with the enemy front line during the fight; otherwise these crawling-slow metal monsters simply will never *reach* any advantageous positions. To throw away that capability by laying back forfeits the major advantage of armor: mobility. Considering the low firepower coming from these outdated tanks, movement may well be their best weapon. Finally, the advantage of that world-beater S-35 tank must be added in to the German appraisal. It may be 1944, the year Panthers, JS-2 and King Tiger tanks roam the earth. But in this corner of the desolate Arctic tundra the Somua still reigns supreme. The children of the arms race should be no strangers to the fact that in war, everything is relative. With a frontal armor factor of '6' and a side/rear of 'boxed 4' the S-35 has little to fear from pop-gun equipped Finnish T-26C tanks. Their 45L weaponry has to make some low roll magic happen for success to result: a Basic TK of '10' vs. an AF of '6' represents long odds when return fire from the S-35's 47mm gun is looking at a comparison of the same Basic TK of '10' vs. a frontal AF of 3. These relative figures break down to a Modified TK number of '4' vs. '7'. This leads to a one-on-one advantage for the German AFV in a situation where he will likely get the first shot.

The Finns are blessed in this scenario with six of their best squads, three machine guns, two of their excellent 20L ATR and a German 50 MTR to hold off the German infantry advantage. They are going to need every edge they can get; enemy forces hit at the Finns in this 'bridge-head' with every type of weapon in their arsenal with the exception of OBA. We can now boil the Finnish defence down to a very basic element: defend in the south-west corner of the map, north of the stream. Cover the German approaches to your lines with fire, not manpower. Place some minimum force in the north-west part of the battlefield to make sure the enemy has to deploy some portion of their force in that direction to meet their victory conditions. Setting the majority of your defenders in the south-west portion of the map insures your armor the opportunity to reinforce before the German armor can be brought to bear against your unsupported force. When your armor arrives, try and seek positions from which to bring fire to bear from all three tanks against your one main AT threat, the Somua, or avoid it altogether and seek to bring fire down on the FlaK truck or those Pz 35R(t)'s which lack an adequate response once you begin to engage them. At minimum, your armor will divert the attention of these enemy assets away from your infantry and assist that last pocket of Finnish MMC's to hang on to a toe-hold north of the stream.



MANNERHEIM'S CROSS: This scenario was originally entitled "Heino's Sotka" in equal parts due to the Finnish corporal of the same name who stars in the action depicted and as a tongue in cheek reference to the former German television entertainer by the same name. The need for a less ridiculous sounding moniker soon dispelled any reference to the Finnish nickname for their T-34's (*sotka* has no direct translation into English, but it the name of a water bird in Finnish) and led us to reference the *two* scenario star players, and winners of the coveted medal, the highest military decoration in Finland.

The Finn has a tough go here: they must control at least ten stone buildings on board 42 *and* exit at least 7 CVP off the east edge before it's all over. To do the job, Tst.Os. Hynninen is provided forces which combine mobility and firepower. What makes things interesting here is that this unit does not have a great deal of either capability. Four trucks are provided, giving the Finn-

ish player the capability of making a deep thrust or threatening to exit enough infantry to fulfill their exit requirements. The only problem with this plan is the fact that the enemy is literally all over the map with units that strike fear into the hearts of truck drivers everywhere. The best plan is for the Finn to keep his combined arms force together in one *schwerepunkt*, pressing against each penny-packet of Russian troops one by one, eliminating or neutralizing them, before moving on. They have by far the best tanks in the field in the form of that T-34 and the two T-28's; twice the number of men, with better morale doesn't hurt either.

On a tactical note, consider the power of a T-28 tank, led by a 9-2 armor leader, using Armored Assault in conjunction with a 8-3-8 squad and 10-1 leader. Move right up on a pesky enemy hex with this one stack and watch the fireworks fly! Many ASL players this writer has encountered seem to *never* attempt these game breakers. After 10 years of tournament going, it can be said with some authority that the 'direct' approach to an assault never seems to surprise the defender who fails to mutually support his positions. Just make sure the above assault detachment will not end their battle due to failure to rout and watch out for cheap encircling shots by the defender which may be used to force you to surrender if you break while adjacent to the Russians.

It looks like the Russian player is coming out from behind the eight ball here until one examines the most important obstacle facing the Finnish player: time. There is quite a distance to travel, across fairly thick terrain, to exit the board. The ridge on board 39 basically shuts off this flank to the attacker, while the defender has some nice positions on the heights from which to lob mortar rounds into the attacker's midst. A platoon of T-26 tanks, combined with two towed guns, provides the defender enough mobility to pinch off any point and to keep things interesting compared to the typical, static defenses found in ASL scenarios. Even more interest will be provided, no doubt, by the first flame-thrower bunker ever seen in an ASL game, especially if it is protected by some AT-mines, which, naturally our wisdom-endowed defenders will be covering by some machine-gun fire.

The Russian will have to think about interlocking the parts of the defensive network, albeit the parts that support each other may not come together until the tanks and guns enter the fray. Nevertheless, the formula for success here is to avoid the trap of a rushed set-up, expecting to deal with any eventuality through mobility. Plan which parts of your line the reinforcements will plug *before* they enter. You can always make any changes on the fly.



FORESTS OF THE NORTH: The offspring of dispersed Finns, Pete Mudge, comes at us again in FOTN which features a unique OB for both sides. German soldiers from SS-NORD found themselves fighting under Finnish command after their comrades bugged out for the rear screaming about Russian tanks. The remainder are represented in the scenarios by SSR created 6-5-7/3-4-7 MMC with an ELR of "2" and the risk of replacement by 4-4-7/2-3-7 MMC.

When you play this one be sure to note the errata which points out that the Germans get one HMG, *not* three, and be sure to note the Russians all have an ELR of "3". While some have pointed out that the 4-2-6 squads should have a lower ELR, since they are "forced laborers", the designer never expressed such an intent. Hey, if you had a T-35 tank by *your* side you might feel a little braver too!

FOTN introduced the T-35 tank for the first time in any published ASL scenario. Toss in the use of the SdKfz 2 "Kettenkrad" and the use of 37L AT-guns in an infantry support role and you are looking at something a little off the beaten track.

The Finnish/German player is assigned the task of digging the Russians out of their forest stronghold on boards 5/32. There are two ways for the Axis player to win this one. They may grab the 4 buildings within three hexes of 32D3 *or* they can clean out the trenches and pillboxes between rows H and M of Good Order Russians. They have the men and equipment to do the job. They don't have an abundance of manpower; those 6 1/2 *SS Nord* squads are hampered by a front side morale of "7" and an ELR of "2". Failing replaces them with 4-4-7/2-3-7; consider these guys represent the members of Himmler's finest that did *not* flee through Finnish lines screaming about oncoming tanks and we may be looking at the low point of the Waffen SS during the entirety of the Second World War. They're under Finnish leadership now, and it's their northern co-billigerents that will have to be assigned the yeoman's duty to dig those Russians out of their holes.

The flame-thrower goes with a 9-0 leader until it breaks. The Finns' self-rally capability may even make assignment of one demo-charge each to your remaining leaders worth considering. You can always send them back to lead and rally your men once they throw their satchels. As for the German portion of your force, can you say "firebase"? The three AT-guns, the OBA and your infantry/MG firepower adds up to a mighty total when used in support of 103 'assault-Finns' at the point of the attack. Call that a plan a and simply decide on whether you'll go for the trench/pillbox clearing or the building-grab. Just be sure to pick one objective and stick to it, Heino!

Russian commanders are faced with an embarrassment of riches if coin is counted in firepower per man. Ten squads are provided no less than five machine-guns, two mortars and an ATR. It may be worth a moment of your consideration to make your best effort to deploy these assets in a manner which avoids having them fall into enemy hands early on. Make your own judgement call on SSR2, which gives you the choice of taking 8 wire counters if set up in full view, as compared to 5 if set up HIP, subject to G.2. Your wealth of fortifications, 20 mine factors, and two guns, allow you to set up interlocking fields of fire to your heart's content. You'll need to do just that; those ten Finnish squads can provide a lot of firepower at the point of the attack and you only have those ten defending squads to weather the storm until your headquarters personnel come marching to the sound of gunfire.



ARCTIC STRONGPOINT: This scenario stars the two non-Finnish belligerents of the war in the north, namely Germany and the Soviet Union. Designer Ray Tapio brings us *his* version of the frozen tundra in this night fire-fight. Say good-bye to any buildings, woods become brush, and all walls and hedges become drifts of snow. Orchard hexes become crag by SSR and extreme winter is in effect to make this one of the least hospitable places ever to conduct an ASL battle. Whether slogging forward or hunkering down while sentries patrol the perimeter, it is suggested you let you take moment to examine the battlefield and the ramifications of the weather.

The German force in ARCTIC STRONGPOINT may seem more like a small group of well-armed grunts fighting in Hue, 25 years later, than their WW II counter-parts. These guys are well armed for a small group! They had better be. The choices for victory mean taking all the pill-boxes the Russians would prefer to spend *their* winter in or grabbing a prisoner and heading back across the Litsa River to exit the west edge of board 40.

This group of German troops may seem equal to the task of overpowering the small number of unsuspecting enemy troops waiting on Hill 615. It's even-up odds with your advantage coming in the form of choice of the point of attack. Experience suggests you craft a more artful plan. You will certainly be able to overwhelm the defenders at first, undoubtedly. However, once that has been accomplished, they'll be returning fire at your men in the open, or at best in brush. Once you start getting those gun-flashes placed on your men as the fight opens up, those annoying defenders on the flank will start bringing their firepower to bear in the form of two HMG's and an 82mm mortar. You'll have a hard time returning their fire and dealing with the enemy in your midst if your entire force is on Hill 615.

Set up a German fire-base to provide overwatch fire from Hill 520. You can get the HMG's and 81mm mortar assembled and ready for action, leading the MG's with mister 9-2 for maximum punch. Lie in wait as your assault force moves up on Hill 615. Once the enemy opens up on your point of attack, *you* will be prepared to deal out the firepower from hill to hill. You may even draw the fire from enemy positions on the hill near 40CC8, instead of having it directed at your assault units. Either way, your fire-base will be choosing targets of opportunity to deal with, and they may include the flank elements, too. Once your assault units reach the hill, you can be flexible in this scenario, unlike most that have variable victory conditions. If the opportunity arises, by all means grab a prisoner and head west under the covering fire of your fire-base. Otherwise, plan to slog it out all ten turns to get those pillboxes.

As the Russian you have to face facts: the German is going to 'surprise' you. Be prepared to lash the hill with your MG's and mortar from the 40CC8 hill, while setting up *your* two 82mm mortars to deal with any possible German units waiting to provide support from Hill 520. This scenario provides a unique feels as the units fire from hill to hill while an assault takes place on the hill mass of Hill 615. Make sure you have someone sitting IN the pillboxes while your supporting units pick off attackers on the outside looking in.

The Village-40 Overlay:

The Village-40 overlay included with this issue is designed to provide a new village/hamlet to use with board 40, the 'narrow-river' board. The following terrain and placement notes are provided for your reference:

PLACEMENT: Place the overlay on matching hexes. The overlay actually replaces these specific hexes on board 40.

UNIQUE TERRAIN: The Village-40 uses terrain not found on standard ASL geomorphic maps.

1) Tanks: Hex M7 is a Tank. Use O9 (found in RB) for this terrain.

2) Culvert: Hex D6 is a Culvert. Use O7 (found in RB) for this terrain. Note that ENTRY (O7.2) may only be made INTO the D6 Culvert from IN C6.

3) Lumberyard: Hex L7 is a Lumberyard (B23.211).

4) Village Terrain: The following hexes are treated as Narrow Street. Use P5.1 (found in KGP 1 & II) for the following hexes: D8, J5, K6, L5, and L6. For hex D8, all Narrow Street rules apply as if a vehicle was Bypassing the building in the same hex (EXC: the vehicle is *not* moving along the hex-spine , but is actually moving through the hex, though not entering the building if moving along the road). All other rules for Narrow Street apply (P5.1-5.15) on the Village-40 overlay.

5) Hex E7 is a Steeple. Use P5.2 for this terrain (found in KGP I & II).

6) Hex K8 is a Single Hex Two-Story House. Use P5.3 for this terrain (found in KGP I & II).

7) Sewers are marked in some building hexes. They are *not* in play for any of the scenarios provided in this issue.

No IF CS 4
No IF CS 4
No IF CS 4
No IF CS 4
No IF CS 4
No IF CS 4

AFV NEWS

AFV NEWS is the official publication of the AFV Association and has been in print for over 30 years now. During that period it has featured articles by most of the more prominent armor authors of our time, and explored aspects of armored combat not normally encountered in commercial publications.

Emphasis is placed on WW2 historical research, quality photos, graphics and plan views, plus in depth book reviews of titles pertaining to AFVs and armor history. If it is tanks you want to learn about you need look no further.

"The magazine for anyone seriously interested in tanks and armored vehicles"



SUBSCRIPTION RATES: This magazine is published three times a year in a 24 page format. The annual subscription rate worldwide is $15.00, personal checks accepted. Back issues are readily available and are updated in the latest issue. All subscribers get FREE use of space in the magazine for personal ads.

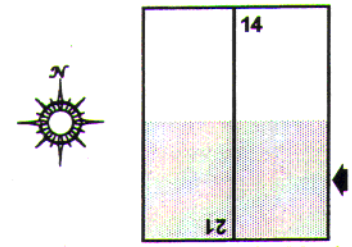
Published by:
GEORGE R. BRADFORD, RR.32, CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, CANADA N3H 4R7

AT THE GATES OF VIIPURI

Updated Version 2

VIIPURI, FINLAND, 20 June 1944: For eleven days the Russians had pushed back the Finnish defenders in the once famous "Summa Sector." Finnish morale dropped as the weary soldiers found themselves facing overwhelming odds in the seemingly continuous Soviet assault. The Finnish 20th Brigade, which was positioned to defend Viipuri from attack, was low on all type of supplies, especially ammunition stocks. Worse, most of its men were green troops who had just completed military training and had yet to see combat. The Er. Ps. K., commanded by Lieutenant Sippel , was sent to strengthen the feeble defence. Nine BT-42 assault guns took positions among the weary and frightened soldiers just as the menacing outlines of Soviet T-34s were seen advancing through the morning mist on the defender's positions in and around Ristimäki Graveyard. The defenders engaged the Russian armor with HEAT ammunition from the obsolete 114mm howitzers of the Finnish assault guns. Their armor proved far too thick to be effected and the BT-42s shifted targets to the enemy infantry with far greater effect. While the initial assaults were held, on the north-east side of the old city one Soviet ISU-122 and four T-34s advanced into the midst of the Finnish defence, only to be destroyed by close defence squads using Molotov Cocktails and a German supplied Panzerschreck. Despite this success, a curious panic overtook the defenders. The retreat was on after one platoon received false orders to withdraw. Sippel's BT-42s stayed the course for a while longer while their infantry support melted away. The assault gun unit suffered heavily: 5 of 9 AFV were lost, including Sippel's command vehicle. The routing of the 20th Brigade allowed the Russians to seize the ancient city at little cost. The BT-42 assault guns were withdrawn from front line duty due to their performance against Russian armor at Viipuri.

BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



(Only hexrows A-P on board 21 and R-GG on board 14 are in play)



FINNISH Sets Up First
RUSSIAN Moves First

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win if they Control 9 multi-hex buildings at game end. If there are no Good Order Finnish MMC in the 21M4 Graveyard (18 hexes) at game end it is counted as 2 buildings toward the Russian VC's.

SCENARIO BALANCE:

RUSSIAN: Replace one Russian MMG with a HMG.

FINNISH: Replace the Finnish 9-0 leader with a 10-1.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.

2. The 14P7-P8-O8 Rowhouse is counted as *one* multi-hex building for VC purposes.

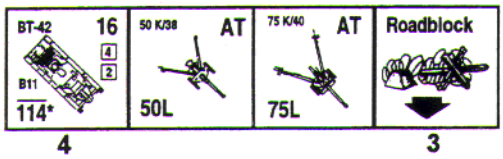
3. All Green Finnish MMC are subject to a 1PAATC unless accompanied by a SMC of any type (i.e., Hero *or* Leader) in the same hex (not Location). PF usage is available to the Finnish with an additional +1 to the usage dr. [EXC: crew/SMC may not check for PF.] All other PF rules apply for Finnish usage, including the range, in keeping with the date of the scenario. The Finns have MOL capability.

Elements of the 20th Brigade and Er.Ps.K. set up on board 21 and/or on board 14 in hexes numbered ≥ 5:



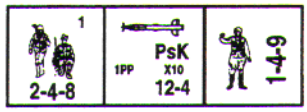
2 7 3 2 2

[ELR: 2]
{SAN: 4}



4 3

Set up HIP on board 21 and/or on board 14 in hexes numbered ≥ 5:



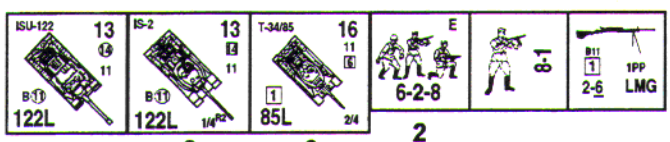
Elements of the 30th Karelian Army Corps set up on board 14 in hexes numbered ≤ 4:



2 16 2 3 2

[ELR: 2]
{SAN: 4}

Enter on Turn 1 along the east edge with all Personnel entering as Riders:



2 3 2

Scenario Design: Raymond J. Taplo

The Abilene Bidding System:

The rules below, known as the "Abilene Bidding System" were originally published for use in an ASL tournament held right here in the Lone Star State. The rules presented apply to both scenarios published here in the pages of CH

. Bid scenarios have lost popularity over the last few years. Designed originally as DYO, they allowed players to make up their own scenarios at a time when few were available elsewhere. The proliferation of ASL-related companies has ended that dearth with their own scenarios and campaign games.

Even so, Bid scenarios should not be dismissed so readily. They offer distinct and unique advantages over pre-formatted ones. First, the players are able to design a force according to their own style of play. By choosing the units, they are able to concentrate on their strengths such as favoring armor over infantry tactics, for example. The scenario's replay value will be higher since the forces will change and appropriately, the strategies as well. In addition, Bid scenarios are also a more accurate measure of experience. They must understand the abilities and limitations of every unit down to the half squad. During bidding, the player must know if a building could be taken with 4 1/2 squads rather than the five. Or can it be done with four?

The major criticism of Bid games is that they often produce wildly unfair scenarios, with one side winning easily and by an extreme margin. That fault is not unique to Bid games. Usually the more experienced player will win anyway whether it is by better tactics or rules knowledge. So the best games, defined by being close, is between equally experienced players. That is true in Bid games as well as conventional ones.

The Abilene Bid system attempts to minimize those effects though. First the players bid down. They have to decide the minimum number of units to meet the victory conditions. Conversely, they have to plan defensively at the same time and determine how small of force with which to defend and still win. That is the balancing mechanism with bidding. Since players alternate bids, if they think a particular game favors one side, it is in their best interest to try and get that side, albeit, slightly weaker than the previous bid. This is much different than the early bid systems that allowed only one bid per side. Those games were enormously unbalanced. The early DYO system was inadequate since the point ratio was usually fixed. For example, the attacker always received 150% of the defenders points. Features like terrain or special considerations (low morale, low ammo, etc.) were rarely accounted for.

Another refinement in the Abilene Bid system is that the available forces are limited. Rather than giving players a huge list from which to pick, this is smaller and generally includes only forces needed to win. While flexibility is granted, the process is simplified and obvious waste of points is avoided.

Inherent to the issue above is the overriding concern that the scenarios still are designed and tested just as pre-formatted ones are. The victory conditions, game length and selection of forces are intentional. Early bid systems were often an hastily designed and left to the players find balance. DYO is restrictive in the format does not produce many interesting scenarios. A point spread is given in the Abilene system to give players a reference from which to bid. Within this spread is the value that designers feel the game is balanced. Players are encouraged to bid as they see fit but to give consideration or values outside this range.

Bid scenarios can be fun and challenging but players must understand they have the same limitations and abilities as pre-formatted ones. Do not hold the faults of the older systems against new Bid games.

Abilene Bidding System:

Scenario sides are determined by bidding, with the low bid receiving that side. Each scenario will list the available forces either as 'Given Forces' (allowed to setup prior to play or as reinforcements to be moved on after play has begun) or 'Bid Forces' (units that one side may attempt to purchase).

One side, The Bid Side, will present only a short list of Given Forces along with an 'Bid Forces' column listing units and an associated point value. The Bid side will automatically get the units listed under 'Given' column. However, it is the units in 'Bid Forces' column the players attempt to purchase.

Looking over the scenario, considering such factors as number of turns, the nature of the victory conditions and special limitations, the players determine their initial bid values from those units under the 'Bid Forces' column, adding the point value for the type of unit and the quantity. No units outside of this list may be used. Occasionally, there will also be restrictions concerning the quantity or quality of the units, but those will be explicitly stated by the scenario.

After both players have determined their initial bid total, they make a DR. The low roller (in the case of ties, keep re-rolling) reveals his total first. The other player now decides to either 1) accept the opponents bid, or 2) offer a lower bid himself. If he offers a lower bid value, the roles are now reversed and the other must decide to accept the new bid or lower the total again. Bids may be lowered by any whole number. This process continues until one player accepts a bid value. The player offering the lowest accepted bid value is the Bid Side.

After one player accepts the bid value, they assume the appropriate sides and prepare for Setup. The Bid Side may now purchase and select the units based on the accepted bid point value. Of course, the bid value may not be exceeded and any restrictions stated in the scenario must be followed. The other player is allowed to examine the purchased units prior to any setup. He should also verify the purchase total does not exceed the bid value and that any restrictions are enforced.

Each scenario will list a recommended point range. While players are free to select outside this range, be aware that higher or lower values may skew play balance. Please carefully consider values outside of this range. Naturally, each player will have to make that decision for himself.

Other considerations * Agree on any options before the bid begins. IIFT? Rules versions, etc.

* Scenarios Unless stated otherwise explicitly by the scenario, the following rules apply. 1) HSs may not be purchased, although normal Deployment is applicable afterwards. 2) Half-hexes that would form the edge of a setup area are not allowed for setup. 3) EC is dry, no wind. Weather die rolls are not used. 4) The Battlefield Integrity is not used. 5) Units entering on the same hex do so sequentially; that is the second unit pays twice the COT MF/MP to enter, the third unit pays three times the COT MF/MP and so on. 6) Sewer Movement not allowed. 7) No unit may begin concealed.

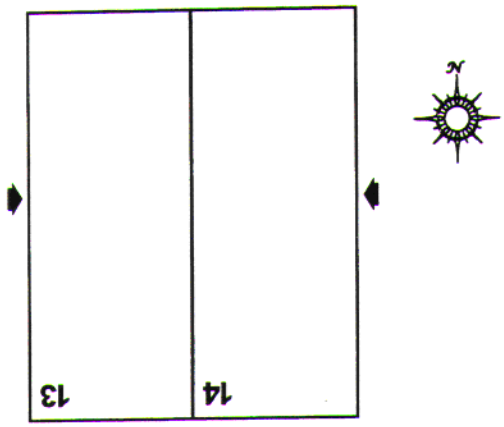
* Advice for Bidding In determining the point total for a side, consider several factors. The length of the game, the nature of the Victory Conditions (exiting troops, casualties, occupying terrain, etc.) and special scenario limitations. Take special care to read about the weapons used and understand those restrictions or abilities. The Recommended Point Range offers play test results for opponents of similar experience. Please carefully consider accepting bids outside of this range. Naturally, account for your abilities, confidences and experience level when deciding on bids. However, when in doubt, bid high and negotiate down to a lower value.

[Any questions may be addressed to the author: Robert Delwood 707 S. Illinois League City, TX 77573]

IVAN'S ROADBLOCK

SOVIET UNION, July 1941: As Barbarossa was unleashed against Russia, the entire front reeled back as one army after another was surrounded. However futile, some pockets continued to resist and fought on bravely. For many Russian soldiers, their war ended just as the epic defense of the Motherland was beginning.

BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



RUSSIAN Sets Up First
GERMAN Moves First

★1	2	3	4	5	6

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win if they eliminate the roadblock *and* if they have Exited 22 VP off the west edge.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.

2. The roadblock may be placed anywhere within the limits of B29.1.

3. The road continues between 14Y2 and 14X5 via 14X2-X3-X4. The hedge in 14X3/X4 does not exist.

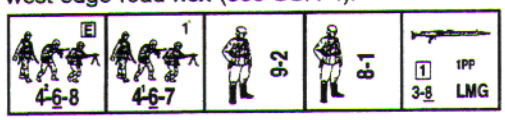
4. All German Personnel must enter as Passengers.

5. To reflect a lack of training, concealment is NA for Russian units.

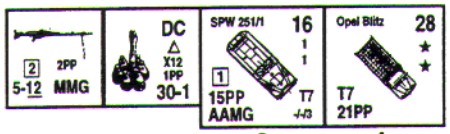
6. The stream is Deep.

Attacking Elements enter on Turn 1 on any west edge road hex (see SSR 4):

[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 2}



2 4 3



2 4

BID FORCES (Range 60 - 80)



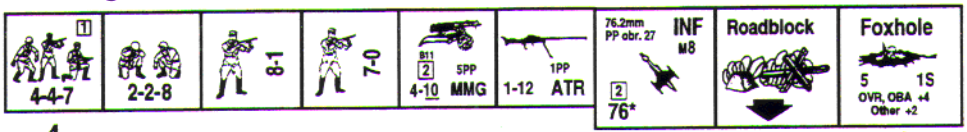
[7] [9] [11] [9] [10]



[9] [6]

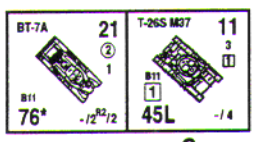
Defending Elements set up ≤ 6 hexes from the roadblock (see SSR 2):

[ELR: 2]
{SAN: 4}



4 4

Reinforcements enter on Turn 1 along the east edge:



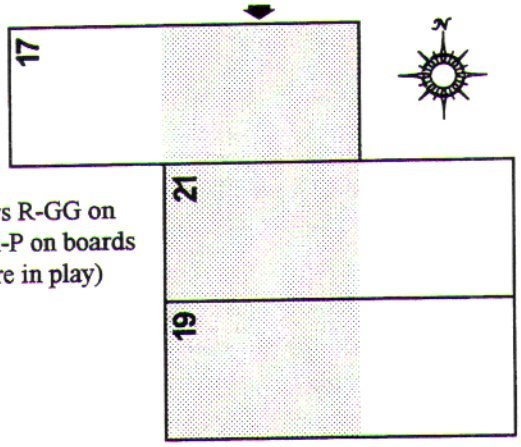
2

Printed with the permission of Robert Delwood

THE CHANTILLY PRELUDE

FRANCE, November 1944: As the Allies approached the German border, enemy resistance increased. In one town near Strasbourg, the Americans captured one of the last remaining supply lines of the retreating Wehrmacht. The Germans promptly counter-attacked, starting a fire-fight which lasted through the night. As word of the heavily armed relief force reached battalion HQ, the Americans, too, rounded up a scratch force to throw into the fray. Neither side found itself ready for the sudden role of attacker thrust upon each; the ensuing fight would be a precursor of much of the fighting soon to take place within the borders of the Reich.

BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



(Only hexrows R-GG on board 17 and A-P on boards 19 and 21 are in play)

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win if they Control the two Victory Buildings (see SSR 2A).

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet, with no wind at start. Players may implement Ground Snow and/or Light Mist by mutual consent.

2. Set up on board 21 as follows: A) Kampfgruppe Hassler must place two MMC, one each in a different stone building. These two buildings are the Victory Buildings. The leader and HMG may also be placed with either MMC at this time. B) The American then places the three units of Task Force Nixon in any non-Open Ground Location at least 3 hexes away from the nearest enemy unit. C) The German then places the remaining two MMC, and any remaining leader and HMG in any non-Open Ground Location at least 4 hexes away from the nearest enemy unit in non-occupied Locations. D) The American then sets up the Relief Force. Deploying is NA for both sides during set up.

3. No unit of TF Nixon may move until the MPh following the first time a LOS can be drawn to any unit of the Relief Force.

4. Rowhouses do not exist. Treat them as normal buildings, ignoring the black bar.

SEQUENTIAL SET UP (See SSR 2)
AMERICAN Moves First

1	2	3	4	5	6

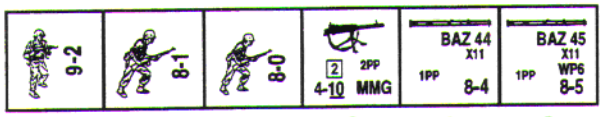
Task Force Nixon set up on board 21 (see SSR 2):



3

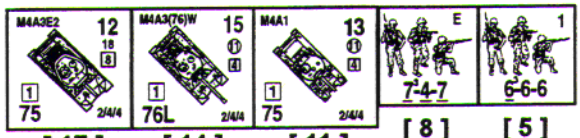
[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 4}

Relief Force set up on board 19, not in LOS of any German unit:



2 2 2

BID FORCES (Range 130 - 150)



[17] [14] [11] [8] [5]



[7] [4]

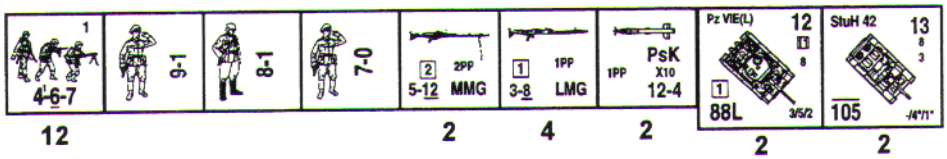
Kampfgruppe Hassler set up on board 21 (see SSR 2):



4

[ELR: 2]
{SAN: 4}

Reinforcements enter on Turn 1 on any north edge road hex:



12 2 4 2 2 2

Printed with the permission of Robert Delwood

The Hun's ...Corner

"Learning the Law of the Curved Fire Gun"

by Tim Hunsdorfer



For most players, their first trip to Chapter C involves light mortars. These weapons are quite basic--included at the platoon or company level in most armies. They are also prolific in ASL scenarios, so prolific, in fact, that ASL players are faced with them within their first three or four playings.

The mechanics are pretty simple. Make a to hit roll and then resolve a hit on the IFT (or IIFT). However, while the concept is simple, the practice is easily misunderstood.

There are important things to remember. Mortars ALWAYS use the Area Target type (not the same as area fire). You MUST place Area acquisition when using a mortar, so you cannot "track" a unit. The firepower equivalency of a mortar is always halved (except if it scores a critical hit, in which case it is doubled instead of halved). Do not confuse this with area fire, a common mistake. Case K penalties do not apply (unless they would otherwise apply.) TEM, likewise, does not apply to the "to hit" roll.

EXAMPLE: A mortar firing at a known unit in woods 6 hexes away needs a 7 to hit (assuming no bore sighting or acquisition.) If it is firing at a concealed unit, it needs a 5 to hit (because case K does apply.) In both cases, resolution FP would be halved, barring a critical hit.

Lesser players are inclined to discount light mortars for their low firepower to PP ratio--but consider the ROF. Light mortars can be excellent weapons when used against the right target--especially those in treelines. Some nationalities' light mortars have special ammo, like s7, IR or WP8. It's also important to keep in mind that some mortars are much better than others:

You can rate them how you want, and each is has advantages in each situation. Generally, though, the Japanese mortar has two kinds of smoke, can be fired at adjacent targets, and can be portaged rather easily through the jungle (where MF are at a premium.) These assets make up for the fact that it has but a 2 ROF. At the other end of the scale, the Polish mortar has a minimum range of "3", which can be very important. The Chinese mortar has a short range, a dismal ROF, and the lack of the air burst modifier is keenly felt on this small caliber mortar, to say nothing of it's un-reliability.

And a word should be said here about unreliable mortars. ROF accentuates your B11 problem, because more shots, of course, mean more breakdowns. Unlike MG, which has a greater likelihood of repair with improved ROF, the mortar is saddled with a 17% chance of repair, and a 17% chance of elimination. Further, DR's mean snipers--and if your SAN is high, you need to think about shots. Of course, this can work both ways--if your opponent's SAN is high, make him take those PTC and NMC which can result from a number of mortar shots.

Mortars which can use SMOKE are a big plus, as they can fire smoke and keep ROF, although depletion numbers are low enough this generally isn't a factor. For this reason, Japanese mortars, despite their lower caliber are generally considered among the best in the game by savvy players. British and late war U.S. mortars are also valuable in this capacity. Experienced squad leaders know the value of SMOKE, and don't necessarily squander this ability early in the game.

The variance in light mortars, along with the relative complexity in the mechanics, makes it a good idea to study them a bit on the side, without the distractions of a scenario. Try this exercise:

Take two sides' mortars and half squads. Give them any board and let them duel it out until one side is eliminated. Use historical ELR's and a SAN of 4 for the side moving first and 3 for the side moving second. Switch nationalities and or half squad type and try it with different mortars and crews. Using SAN is very important, as light mortars generate a lot of dice rolling and it's an important element to remember when using light mortars.

Observe every aspect of firing the mortars. Notice the dynamics of moving them and firing them. Keep in mind air bursts and fire at moving targets. Attempt dismantling and assembling the mortars and other skills which you will use in a scenario. The use of acquisition counters and special ammo is important. You also want to add an extra half-squad and attempt spotted fire.

Writing down what happens, to confer with a more experienced player is an excellent idea. Possibly, one or two newer players can try this exercise while a more experienced player stands by to answer questions. Often during down times at a local tournament, there are people standing around who could help you (or whom you could help) by doing a simple exercise like this.

Things to notice about toting mortars around:

Dismantling them helps move them around faster, but you lose a phase or two where you could be firing.

Half squad tote mortars just as fast as full squads. Half-squads have 3PP capacity, just like squads.

Leaders can help lug light mortars which are assembled. This is a GREAT use for 6+1's or 7-0's which you intend to leave behind to rally the stragglers.

Lt. Mortar Flowchart:

101. Setting up
102. Read the ordinance notes for your mortar
103. Good lines of sight?
104. Opportunity for spotted fire?
105. Take into account advantages of special ammo.
106. Bore sight!
107. Plan to take advantage of air bursts.
108. Conceal yourself
201. Target becomes available.
202. Preliminary estimation of the Basic To Hit.
203. Is the hex acquired?
204. Is the target moving?
205. Is spotted fire necessary?
206. Judge costs/benefits of hitting
207. Calculate the TH
208. Check LOS after firing
209. Keep track of ROF
210. Sniper!
301. Calculate the FP of the hit
302. Hits are resolved at =BD FP of the mortar's line on the IFT
303. Critical hits are resolbed at 2x the FP of the mortar's line on the IFT and reverse TEM (except air bursts!)
304. TEM applies, except for Woods, where a -1 air burst applies.
401. Morale Checks/Pin Checks
402. Sniper!

Things to notice about the "to hit" process:

Acquisition improves your chances of a hit by around 25%. When you consider a 3 ROF in most cases, acquisition builds up fast. Don't squander it by firing all over the place. You also lose acquisition when firing your inherent firepower--which is why many squad leaders stack their mortars with half squads. Acquisition usually means the difference between a 7 and a 9 to hit--an important distinction.

The range to target doesn't really make much difference on the area target type. The basic to hit actually increases from range 13 to 24.

Also note that the +2 for smoke is a modifier to the basic to hit number, not the DR. It's EASIER to place SMOKE than a regular round. But remember using SMOKE costs you your acquisition (though acquisition can be used to place SMOKE).

Light mortars are the only SW which may bore sight--always use bore sighting when allowed. Don't forget to apply the -1 FFNAM and/or FFMO to your to hit roll--you don't get to use it later in the resolution of the shot. As SW, light mortars can be leader directed. You probably don't want to have that 9-2 hanging back with your Brixia, but if you have an 8-1 behind to rally troops that need to come back fast, putting him with a mortar gives him something to direct in the meantime. He cannot, however, direct the fire if he is spotting for the mortar.

Spotted fire has interesting costs and benefits. A unit may retain HIP while firing with the use of a spotter (as can the spotter), provided no LOS exists from an unbroken enemy unit to the mortar. Concealment is kept as well, again providing no LOS exists. But a +2 (Case I) applies to the "to hit", and the ROF is reduced by one. While spotted fire has it's uses, especially when you are required to set up in a city, when I have the hill, say in Defiance on Hill 42, I prefer the improved "to hit" chances and higher ROF to maintaining concealment.

Things to notice about the resolution of hits:

Firing at a unit in woods, allowing a -1 airburst modifier, increases your effectiveness by 15% or more, and makes your light mortar almost as good as a MMG (3 ROF, but you have to hit).

The corollary is units with good TEM. Any positive TEM erodes your firepower. The low IFT/IIFT equivalency of light mortars means that a +3 makes a very low roll is necessary in order to score even a PTC.

Now, if you consider yourself a very low roller, you can hope for the critical hit, where FP is doubled and TEM applied as a negative modifier, but for those of us in the real world, we tend to aim our light mortars at targets with low TEM.

Consider using WP instead of HE. You get a MC AND there is smoke in the hex. You also get to apply the +2 BTH modifier resulting in an easier hit.

Remember the firepower of a light mortar critical hit is doubled. Not halved and doubled--doubled. And the TEM applies as a negative modifier. So, if you place a mortar round on a stone bunker with your M2, you get a 16FP-7 attack (from outside the bunker's CA.)

If you think light mortars are worthless--DO THIS EXERCISE. It will convince you otherwise. At least, it will show you that some mortars are less worthless than others.

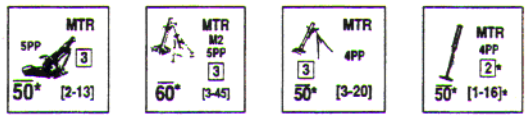
For the initiated veteran, this exercise may seem stupid. But for a newer player, learning the process of light mortar fire is important for playing almost ANY scenario. Even later on, learning the different capabilities of the Japanese light mortar or limitations of the Italian light mortar can be accomplished with this simple exercise.

It's simple, gives you ample opportunity to consult the rulebook as necessary, can be done solo, doesn't take a lot of time and WILL improve your play. The TO HIT process of light mortars is easily misunderstood and mistakes are easily made.

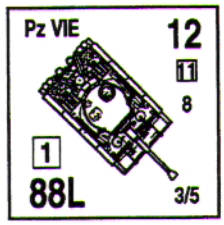
Light Mortar Comparison Chart:

Mortars	MM	IFT	IIFT	Range	ROF	PP	Notes
German	50	2	3	2-13	3	5	
Russian	50	2	3	3-20	3	4	
US M2	60	4	4	3-45	3	5	WP7_5, IR
US M19	60	4	4	2-18	2	4	WP6_5, IR
British	51	2	3	2-11	2	4	s7
British (Air)	51	2	3	2-8	1	3	s7
Italian	45	2	2.5	2-13	2	4	B11
Japanese	50	2	3	1-16	2/1	4	s7, WP6 *
Chinese	40	2	2	1-6	1	2	B11, Air Bursts NA!
French	50	2	3	2-11	2	2	Crew
French	60	4	4	3-42	3	5	IR_2
Belgian	50	2	3	4-14	2	3	B11
Polish	46	2	3	3-20	2	4	B11

*Japanese ROF depends on ammunition and range
!Chinese mortars do not benefit from Air Burst



The Tiger in ASL Terms:



by Italian Correspondent Andrea Mateuzzi

One may wonder how the real-life Tiger I, as portrayed in the ASL game system, holds up to scrutiny. First, we'll examine this AFVs' most potent characteristic, its gun. The principal armament of the Tiger was the KWK gun 36 from 88/56, derived from the Flak 36 with the following ammunition: · Pz.Gr.39 AP (TK#20); Pz.Gr.40 APCR (TK#23); Spr.Gr.39 HE (TK#18/IFT-8/ antitank); Pz.Gr.39/40 HEAT (TK#14).

When the Tiger I first entered service, the KWK 36 was very lethal against all existing front line enemy tanks; in fact, with an AP TK# of 20 and an APCR TK# of 23, Tigers can successfully engage all models of the T34, and the M4 Shermans with success out to at least 1 Klik (25 hexes). Against the KV model tanks, the APCR projectile against the better armed models' frontal armor is used, with the AP round having a reduced, but still decent chance of success. With the entry in line of the T34/ 85 and of the SU 122/152 model AFVs the assignment becomes a little bit more problematic, but, due to the inferior armor of the antagonists and through exploitation of their problems of observation (Red TH#'s) and of mobility (for the SU), this German panzer is able to maintain a certain superiority in the tank against tank arena.

From their western enemies, there is no problems in the realm of penetration unless that enemy has an M4 jumbo or a M26, of which against the first, given his light armament, it could be easily dealt, while the second, was very rarely met. With the Comet , the clash becomes interesting, while the Challenger could hope to do something only with the first hit, as must be sought for by all the thinly-armored varieties of self propelled Allied tank-destroyers (M10, M18, M36, Achilles).

The only true Allied adversary, then, is the JS II and the JS IIm, with which you need have much experience to be rid (and also much luck !!!) of.

The '88' gun is also lethal to enemy infantry. With an IFT value of '16' the punch from an HE round delivered by this weapon is usually enough to, at least, convince those '6' ML Americans to run for the woods; the usual '7' ML Russian and British foot-sloggers face long odds whenever one of these large projectiles is placed on the target. There is the 'usual' German AFV MG protection for close in defence and over-runs, making the Tiger I a potent anti-infantry weapon.

The frontal target facing of the Tiger has an armor value of 11 in the hull, and 14 if struck in the turret. These values protect the tank from the hits from 76L Russian guns, found on most of that nation's AFV. Survival can also be anticipated against Russian APCR from these weapons. The Tiger has good possibility of survival against the 85L (17/19 TK# respectively for AP/ APCR) when struck frontally. The Tiger starts to have problems when it becomes the target of Russian ordnance of the 152mm, 100L and 122L variety. When these tubes place rounds on target, all that is left to do is hope your opponents roll boxcars with the subsequent throw of the dice. The only advantage is that the 152 and the 100L are on SU/ISU self propelled hull, with their many tactical limitations, while against the 122L on a JS hull, it is best to run and hide or set up an ambush to get in the first shot against a flank.

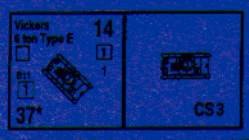
Against the western Allies the problems begin against the 76LL and with the subsequent distribution of the APCR ammo and APDS that make the 76L American and the 57L British much more than pesky peashooters. With the distribution of the 76LL APDS and of the 90L APCR the Western allies reach qualitative parity with the Germans in the field of antitank ordnance. They will still have to stay in position to deliver the first hit, however, as their field platforms don't ever match the power of their ordnance in the case of most front-line AFV in WW II.

As concerns mobility, there it's not much to complain about for the Tiger, considering that the AFV, with 12 factors of movement, is not significantly less agile than an M4. The problems come in when one considers how often to risk starting, and stopping due to the lack of mechanical reliability denoted by that RED movement number. That changes at the end of 1943, when the existing mobility can be fully exploit the weapon's heavy armor due to BLACK a movement number. Everything changes however, when he must exploit to the maximum the coverage given by the ground: his mobility remains in acceptable levels (if compared to a Churchill the Tiger is a Ferrari!!). A big point against the Tiger is the high ground pressure (Bog DRM's) and the tall outline (To Hit DRM's in the receiving end). However, until the end of the 1943, the first of 1944, it could be exploited on the Eastern front, as a fire support of the Pz IV in the long distance antitank role or against difficult adversaries like KV and SU/ISU (no tanks is more mobile than a Pz.Gr.40 round!); after the first of the '44 his best use is in support against, infantry, abdicating his original role to Panthers or tankhunters like the Jpz.IV L/ 70 or the JPz. V. On the Western front Tigers could be used it their original antitank role until at the end of the war, trying to exploit the best the ground and counting on weak Allied armor.

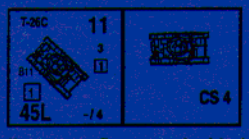
In conclusion, the Tiger is an excellent panzer when the fight doesn't impose rapid advances, but only short offensive thrusts to throw the adversary off guard. The Tiger is not, however, the proper weapon to attacks in depth after 1943. That assignment is best left to the Panzer V. The Tiger remains better suited than the Panther, as an excellent tank for support against enemy infantry, due to the higher payload from the principal armament and to the superior side armor. [NOTE: in 1945 the Sprengranade was not used very often, instead the HD39 HEAT as dual use ammo was often employed. The antitank assignment was more and more important and the precious AP40 in tungsten became rare. This could be simulated by assigning an +2 IFT DRM when shooting HE, (as the HD39 contained less high explosive) and by changing the HEAT value to 14 for an AP shot.]

FINNISH VEHICLE LISTING (PARTIAL)

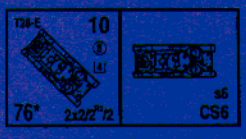
Name & Type	WGT	Dates	Size	AF	TA	OT	CS	MP	GP	GT	MA	ROF	B#	BMG	CMG	AAMG	PP/T#	Notes
T-26 C	10	40—45	0	3/1	+SR		3	11-R		RST	T45L	1	11	*	4			6, A
T-28E (Postijuna)	32	40—45	[-1]	8/4	-F/+SR		6	10-R		ST	T76*			2 x 2	2R2			9, A, s6
Vickers 6-tonner 'Viku'	7	33—40	[-1]	1/1	+F		3	14-R	L	RST	37*	1	11					5, C
BT-42	14.5	42—44	0	4/2	+SR		4	16-R		RST	T114*							12, A, B
T-34 m1941/42 (Sotka)	28.5	41—61	0	11/6	-F		5	17	L	RST	T76L			2	4			13, A, A4
T-34 m1943	31	44—61	0	11/6			5	16		RST	T76L	1		2	4			14, A, A4
Stu 40 G(L)	24.5	43—66	[+1]	9/4*			4	12		NT	B75L	1				2**		20, A, s6
Landsverk Anti II	10.7	42—66	0	2/1		●	5	13		T	T40L	2						22, A
A20	4	40—7	[+1]	0		●	4	16	L	NT	BMG	1		2			5PP/T9	23, A



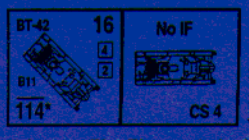
5. Vickers-Armstrong 6-tonner Type 'E': A Total of 32 of this widely exported tank model were purchased from the United Kingdom in 1933. Purchased without armament or optics, the tanks were fitted with French Puteaux 37mm gunsin time to see service during the Winter War (Talvisota).[6]This was the tank model that represented Finland's Main Battle Tank circa 1939-40 and it was a unit of Vickers which first saw action as the *Panssaripataljoona* (Armored Battalion) in the counter-attack at Honkaniemi, the Finns only use of armor during the Talvisota. The Vickers Type 'E' first entered service during 12/39. A total of 24 Vickers survived the Winter War, after which they were upgraded to better match the Russian T-26 through a variety of means, including armament with captured 45mm guns, as well as Russian and Finnish machine-guns..



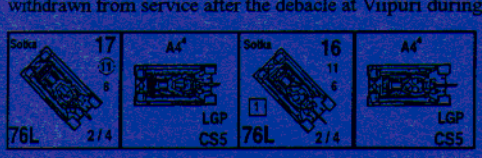
6. T-26C: This was the Soviet T-26S M37/39 (pg. H21, note 6). Captured T-26s of various models formed the core of the Finnish armored units, and later the Finnish Panzer Division. In 1933 the Finns purchased 32 Vickers-Armstrong 6 tonners ("Viku") which were purchased less any armament or optics. They were first armed with the Bofors 37mm anti-panzer cannon, a Maxim 7.62 machine-gun as the CMG (Model 09 or Model 32) and a "Suomi" 9mm SMG was fitted as the BMG. The 24 of this model which survived the *Talvisota* were up-gunned with captured Soviet 45mm guns and machine-guns and re-designated T26-E. 14 T-26 m1931 (dual turreted Vickers 6-tonners, also used by the Polish armored forces as the 7TP dw) were captured and repaired. They saw action in 41-42 and later, their twin MG turrets were replaced with one Russian 45mm turret mounted cannon. 61 T-26 m1933 (designated T-26 B by the Finns) were captured, along with 34 T-26 m1937/39 (the T-26C provided in the game). Many OT-130 and OT-133 flamethrowing tanks were captured. Most had their weapons replaced with 45mm cannon, but 7 were kept and used in original condition until 1943. 19 of the OT-133 were converted to the same specifications as the Finnish T-26 C. The game piece provided represents the T-26 C. The T-26 model tanks in Finnish service were withdrawn from action after suffering heavy losses during the Soviet summer '44 offensive, and then only after facing JS II and T34/85 tanks.



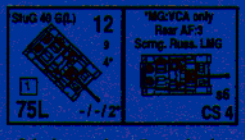
9. T-28E: This was the Soviet T-28 M34 (pg. H21, note 11/12). The Finns captured two during the *Talvisota* and another 5 in 1941. The tank was nick-named the Postijuna (Mail-Train) by its crew due to its size and slow speed. The T-28E were used by the Finns as "heavy" tanks despite their nominal designation as *medium* tanks. All of the earlier model T-28 M34 models were up-armored with bolt on armor by the Finns to match the specifications of the Soviet T-28E M40, before they were assigned to combat.



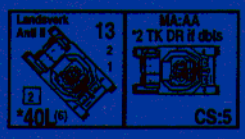
12. BT-42: In 1942 all of the surviving 18 BT-7s possessed by the Finns were converted to the "BT-42" by fitting a locally manufactured larger turret and the 114mm OQF 4.5-in Howitzer (page H69, note 15). The British had provided 25 of these weapons (and 25,000 rounds of ammunition) during the *Talvisota*. The Finns only had HE ammunition for these guns which proved useless against Russian AFVs, but were quite successful against infantry. All of the remaining units were withdrawn from service after the debacle at Viipuri during the Soviet summer '44 offensive.



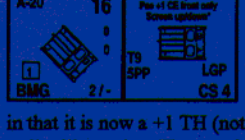
13, 14. Sotka: The first intact T-34 was captured by the Finns on October 2, 1941, and was pressed into service immediately. A total of 4 T34 M41 models were captured by the Finns and served until 1961. The nick-name "Sotka" is a local water-fowl and the name was given the T-34s from one tank-man's joke. It stuck, and the T-50 captured by the Finns was known as the "Pikku-Sotka (little-Sotka). Another 3 T34 M43 were purchased by the Finns from Germany in early 1944 and 7 T34/85 models were captured during the summer of '44. Game pieces are provided to represent the T34 M41/42 (17 MP) *and* the T34 M43 (16 MP) in Finnish service.



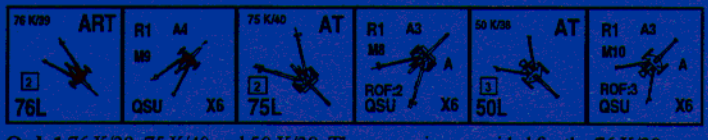
20. StuG 40 G(L): This is the German StuG IIIG (L) which the Finns purchased 59 of in '43-'44. They were used efficiently by the Finns, especially in ambush and counter-attack roles in the forested environment. A total of 82 Soviet tanks were knocked out by the Finnish assault guns for the loss of only 8 of their number. Some had extra concrete armor applied and additional protection in the form of logs hung on the sides of the vehicle were not uncommon. Photographic evidence also indicates the units obtained by Finland not only had the extra concrete armor, but the rare Saukopf cast gun mantlet. Their AAMGs were replaced with Russian DT LMGs. The game piece represents the StuG 40 G(L) with concrete armor and hung logs resulting in an increase in the front/side AF to 9/4. Note the rear AF remains at 3. The speed of the unit is reduced to 12 MP due to the extra weight of the concrete armor.



22. Landsverk Anti II: Six AA tanks were purchased from the Swedish firm Landsverk in 1942. The unit saw service in the Finnish army until 1961 and featured a 40mm Bofors AA cannon in an open-topped, fully rotating turret. The Landsverk AA tanks were assigned as an anti-aircraft support platoon in the Finnish Panzer Division, notably shooting down 4 planes, while driving off 6 more, during the fighting at Kuuterselkä in 1944.



23. A20: The Finns pressed 202 captured T-20 Stz. Komsomolets artillery tractors into service, consisting of both the m1937 (A10) and m1939 (A20) models, which are indistinguishable in game terms. Note the new counter supersedes the previously produced piece from Issue #1 of CH magazine in that it is now a +1 TH (not +2 as on the earlier counter). The new counter also lacks th trailer illustration. The remaining rules for this unit (CH59-59.6 apply).



Ord. 1 76 K/39, 75 K/40 and 50 K/38: The game piece provided for the 76 K/39 represent the captured 76.2mm P obr. 39 pressed into service by the Finns. Use German PaK 40 an PaK 38 counters to represent the 75 K/40 and 50 K/38 weapons. The Finns obtained 210 an 27 of these weapons respectively. Table 1 provides the original, and Finnish designations fo ordnance used in the front lines in an AT (and support) role, as well as notes and Specia Ammo for each. In the scenarios, the German counters are depicted to represent the Finnis 75 K/40 and 50 K/38 weapons provided in the OB. New color counters have *not* been pro vided for these units at this time.



Finnish HMG Counters: The Finns used three derivatives of the Maxim machine-gun. All three types were 7.62 caliber Heavy Machine Gun models. Their model designations were Maxim Model 09, Model 21 and Model 32. The main difference between the Maxim Model 32 Heavy Machine Gun and the ASL Russian HMG is the ability of the former to be dismantled (as per the "may be dm: 2PP" on the rear of the counter). Use any convenient dm mmg/hmg counter to represent the Maxim 32 in a dismantled status. Note the Maxim 32 has *no* FP while dismantled. **NOTE: Captured Use penalties are NA for use of Russian MGs by the Finns.**

FINNISH VEHICLE NOTES:

A. All Finnish tanks which saw action in the Jatkosota were retro-fitted with radios; use Black TH numbers and Captured Use penalties are NA.

B. This unit may not utilize Intensive Fire.

* Armor for the StuG 40 G(L) is "3" in the Rear (Case A C7.21 still applies normally).

** AAMG is scrounged as a Russian LMG.

[These partial Chapter H notes are provided from Jatkosota to update owners of that game with the new values for the BT-42 AFV proovided. Those who *do not* own Jatkosota may use this information to play the updated version of AT THE GATES OF VIIPURI which has been provided in this issue of CRITICAL HIT.

- Master Gunner on OBA
- Paratroop Tactics
- Scenario Replay from BdF
- Canadian ASL
- New Counters!





CRITICAL HIT

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING Vol. 4, No. 1 $15.95

GEMBLOUX is here!

FRANCE 1940 Revisited by CH

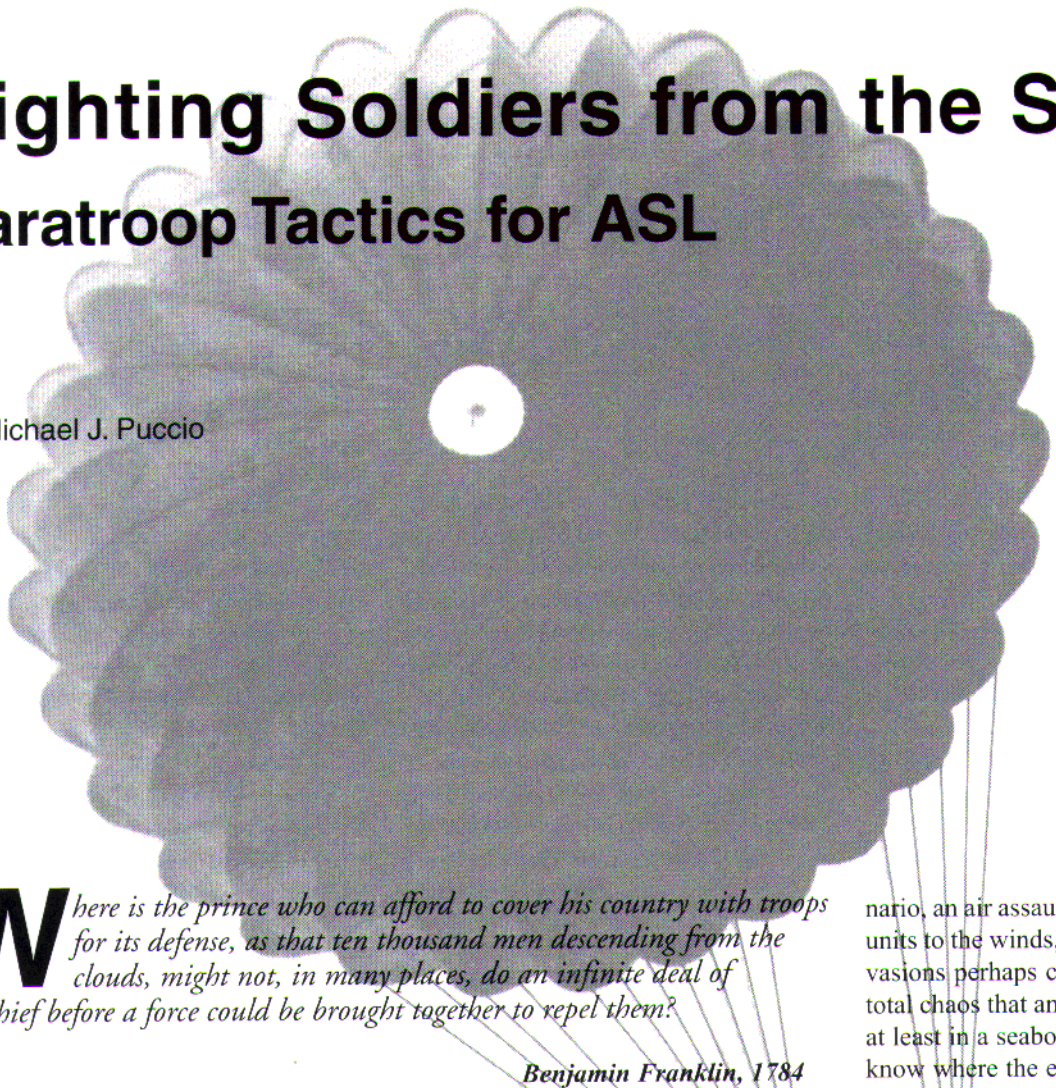


Winner of the ASL 1996
Best of the Year
"Best New Scenario"
Internet
ASLML

Fighting Soldiers from the Sky

Paratroop Tactics for ASL

by Michael J. Puccio



Where is the prince who can afford to cover his country with troops for its defense, as that ten thousand men descending from the clouds, might not, in many places, do an infinite deal of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them?

Benjamin Franklin, 1784

On October 17, 1918, Colonel William "Billy" Mitchell met with General John Pershing, the commander in Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe. Colonel Mitchell, an upstart known for his novel ideas, outlined a daring plan to break the deadlock on the Western Front and hasten the end World War I. In the spring of 1919 when the allied air forces would have a sufficient number of bombardment aircraft, the American 1st. Infantry Division would be attached to the Army Air Service. Given parachute training and armed with a large number of machine guns, these troops would then be parachuted behind German lines. Once landed they would assemble at a pre-designated strongpoint, fortify it and hold it against the anticipated German counterattacks until relieved by Allied ground forces. In the intervening period between the actual drop and relief the Big Red One was to be supplied by airdrop.

Twenty-five days after this meeting the First World War was brought to an end. Mitchell's innovative idea would have to wait over twenty years to reach maturity. The idea of vertical envelopment had been born. To a generation which had sent the flower of it's youth to the mud, barbed wire and slaughter that was the Western Front, the idea of bypassing enemy strongpoints by enveloping them from the air was an exciting one. Strategic level World War II operations, such as the invasion of Norway and the glider landings at Eben Emael, would serve to vindicate Colonel Mitchell and other proponents of this radical concept.

In ASL an air drop scenario featuring paratroopers can be one of the most exciting tactical situations to find yourself in, whether you are the defenders on the ground or the player conducting the air drop. More so than any other type of scenario, an air assault casts the fate of your units to the winds, literally. Seaborne invasions perhaps come the closest to the total chaos that an air drop may witness; at least in a seaborne assault the players know where the enemy is and how they are going to get at them. Neither side has that luxury in an air drop scenario. The best laid plans can come to naught on the first turn of a scenario featuring airborne troops. The trick is to prepare the best you can and make the most of what transpires in the initial landing, whether it be good, bad or indifferent. ASL players may shy away from airborne scenarios as they can become unbalanced one way or the other rather quickly. A bad drop can literally reduce the airborne player's chance of victory to nil; a perfect one will most likely do the same to the defender. In a recent scenario, the writer's Japanese paratroopers landed so badly that my opponent graciously offered to allow me to redo the drop in the interest of preserving the scenario's balance. I foolishly declined the offer and suffered predictable consequences. The sheer randomness of an air assault scenario calls for a different mind set than other ASL scenarios. This article will fo-

cus on the mechanics and tactics involved in planning and executing an airdrop and look at some defensive tactics and strategies that may be used against them.

Hitting the Silk

A player fielding a paratrooper force suffers from one major disadvantage: initially he has very little control over the deployment of his forces. Planning an airborne assault usually involves careful study of the scenario, formulating a well thought out method of achieving your goals and then coming up with some patchwork spit-and-tissue paper plan that gives you a chance for victory when fate intervenes and your troops are scattered all over the playing area. This is what provides these scenarios with their high excitement level, not to mention replay value. Playing an air drop scenario ten times is quite unlike playing, let's say, Guards Counterattack ten times. Things are sure to go differently every time. A player who can think on his feet, react quickly and improvise alternative methods of accomplishing his goals will no doubt excel in this type of fluid tactical situation.

There are a number of steps to be taken prior to scenario setup if a para-drop is involved. If not provided for in SSRs, wind direction must be determined (B25.64). This is done even if there is no wind. Additionally, the paratrooper player must choose drop points for each of his wings which are due to enter during the course of the scenario. Finally, per the 1996 Annual's Briefing, the Hex Grain alignment along which all wings are oriented must be designated. All of these aspects of an air drop will be discussed in greater detail as we examine the mechanics it's execution.

During the Rally Phase of the turn his units are scheduled to make a para-drop, the paratrooper player must divide his troops into *sticks* and *wings*. Each stick is comprised of a maximum one 5/8" parachute counter, which may represent up to one squad equivalent and a single SMC and one 1/2" parachute counter which may represent a single support weapon (including dismantled 76-82mm mortars). Parachute counters of either variety only serve to mask the identity of their contents and do not confer the advantages of either concealment or cloaking to the personnel they represent. The ASLRB chapter E/K divider may be used to hold the personnel counters/SW represented by either type of parachute counter. Personnel represented by a parachute counter may not fire, move or advance until they take their normal counter form at the end of the Advance Phase of the turn in which they land. The counters also serve to render all para-dropping personnel a morale of 7 until they take their normal counter form in the Advance Phase of their turn of landing. While represented by a parachute counter, leadership capabilities may not be utilized and any MMCs in that leader's stick are not subject to Leader Loss Morale Checks. Some nationalities may have their personnel retain the possession of certain support weapons without resorting to the use of 1/2" parachute counters. American paratroopers may retain possession of their light mortars, British paratroopers may retain their light mortars, radios and light machine guns and Japanese paratroopers may retain their light mortars and light machine guns.

Once the player has organized his units into sticks he must group them into wings, each of which is composed of five sticks. Only one such wing in the current turn's air-dropping force may consist of fewer than five sticks. Once the composition of each wing is established, each assigned a pre-designated drop point which was selected prior to scenario set up. These drop points may be any whole hex in the playing area not within five hexes any other pre-selected drop point. This drop point hex represents the target location upon which the assigned wing will center upon.

The para-dropping player then makes a dr for each of his wings: a result of ≤ 3 indicates that the chosen drop point is utilized while ≥ 4 results in a mis-drop. If the wing misses the assigned drop point, the player uses random selection to determine the board of the new drop point. This random selection is made from any board currently in play, including the board on which the original drop point was located. The Drift Placement Procedure (E3.75) is then utilized to determine a hexrow on this board which will serve as the wing's starting location in determining a new drop point. A drift counter is randomly chosen from the complete counter-mix to determine this hexrow, using the ID letter on the counter. This drift counter is then placed on the corresponding hexrow in the number five hex. A random direction DR is made to determine the wing's new drop point. For example, if the "G" drift counter is selected, a random direction DR is made from hex G5. If the results are 3 on the colored die and 4 on the white die, the new drop point will be located in hex K7.

Once a drop point for each wing has been determined, a single stick is placed in that hex. After the initial stick's placement, two more sticks are placed on either side of the drop point along the same hex grain. This hex grain alignment must be the one secretly recorded prior to scenario set up and be the same for all wings. This procedure is repeated until all sticks have been placed in an uninterrupted line with the drop point located in its center.

During the subsequent Movement Phase, a random direction DR is made for each parachute counter on the board. This DR represents the drifting of each parachute counter and is made even in the absence of wind. A separate DR is made for each 1/2" and 5/8" parachute counter, even if they form a single stick. For German parachutists the distance die (i.e. the white one) is halved, fractions rounded up while for Russian parachutists this die is increased by 50%, fractions rounded down. Once these random direction DR have been resolved, one final involuntary adjustment is made: if a mild breeze exists, the parachute counter is moved two hexes downwind, if gusts exists, the parachute counter is moved three hexes downwind and in heavy winds the parachute counter is moved four hexes downwind. Each parachute counter, with the notable exception of unbroken non-German 5/8" parachute counters, are now in their final landing hex.

Hitting the Deck

The actual landing of paratroops will take place at the end of that personnel's Movement Phase. Prior to landing, each unbroken non-German 5/8" parachute counter can adjust it's landing hex by one hex in any desired direction. Once this final adjustment has been made, each parachute is considered to have landed in the base level of it's current hex. Any parachutes which land in either non-frozen water obstacles, blaze or a deep/flooded stream has its contents immediately eliminated. Should a parachute counter land in a bridge location (other than a foot bridge), it lands on the bridge

on a subsequent dr 1-2, otherwise it lands in the hex itself. A drm of -1 is applied if the parachute counter represents unbroken personnel. All 1/2" inch parachute counters are then flipped to mask their identity (and their contents) from both players until they are recovered utilizing A4.444.

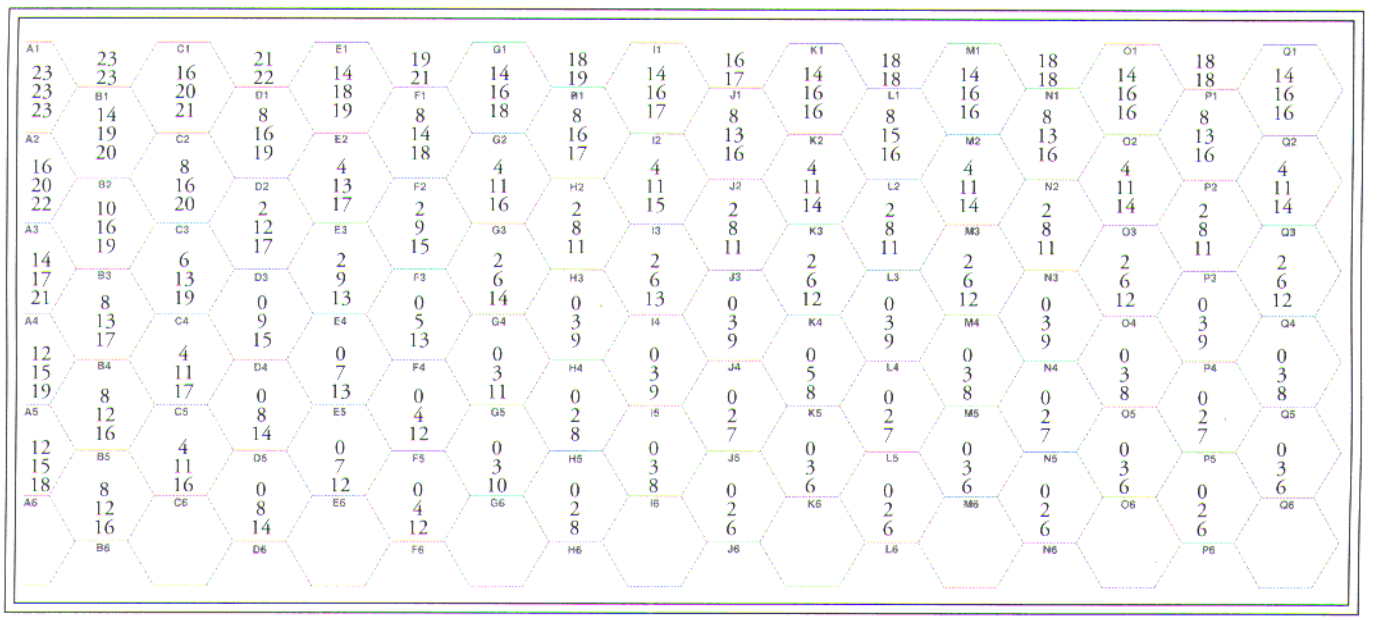
Certain types of terrain require that personnel air-dropping into their locations take either a NMC or NTC. Terrain types requiring NMC include woods, forest-roads, crag, buildings, shallow streams and marsh. All others, as detailed later on, require a TC. For these purposes, the parachute counter's morale of 7 is utilized. These NMC/NTC may be adjusted for prevailing wind conditions: landings occurring during Mild Breeze requires either a 1MC or 1TC and those occurring in Heavy Winds/Gusts require either a 2MC or 2TC.

A 5/8" parachute counter which lands on an interior building hex is moved one hex downwind after taking its NMC. If this hex is also an interior building hex, another NMC is required. This process continues until all the component units of the parachute counter are eliminated or the parachute reaches a non-interior building hex, in which it will then land at the hex's base level.

PTO terrain types have some special rules concerning para-dropping units. Light jungle and bamboo hexes are treated as woods hexes for all landing purposes. Both 1/2" and 5/8" parachute counters landing in dense jungle or swamp are required to take a morale check adjusted for the prevailing wind conditions. Failure of this MC results in the elimination of the parachute and it's component units. Parachute counters landing in rice paddies are considered to do so IN the paddy, not on the paddy's banks. Personnel landing in an irrigated paddy hex are required to take a morale check, again adjusted for the wind conditions, while any 1/2" parachute counters which do so are eliminated. Parachute counters representing personnel landing in a panji location must take a MC if required by the terrain in that panji's hex or a TC otherwise and then the owning player must make a dr to determine if the units comprising the parachute counter land above or below the panji counter. A dr ≤ 6 results in the personnel counter(s) being placed below the panji counter. The only drm modifiers are +1 if the units are broken and a positive drm equal to one half (FRD) of the number of covered panji hexsides within the hex. If personnel are determined to land above the panji counter, they will then be subjected to the normal panji morale check (G9.41).

Parachute counters which drift and land off board are not necessarily removed from play, although the results of landing off board may render such units ineffective for the length of the scenario. The reverse terrain order technique (E8.221) is used to determine what terrain off board parachutes will land in. Any applicable MC/TC required by this terrain type are taken. Good Order units off-board may move one hex per friendly MPh. Advance will only be applicable if the unit advances onto a board in the scenario's playing area. Broken units will rally normally but may not move/advance until they do so. The contents of off-board 1/2" parachute counters may only be recovered by personnel who land off-board as well.

As described previously, all those parachute counters which are not required to take a landing MC must take a landing TC, adjusted for any applicable wind force modifiers. Failure results in the deployment of a squad into two component half squads, one of which is randomly determined to drift one hex downwind. A stick which contains two HS and/or crews simply has a randomly determined HS and/or crew drift one hex downwind with no other ill effects. Any SMC which is a component of a stick failing this TC may also be randomly selected to accompany the drifting HS/crew. No further MC/TC are necessary for these drifting units but they will be eliminated if they land in a non-frozen water obstacle, blaze or a deep/flooded stream. It is important to note that such drifting HS/crew will now take normal counter form at this point while non-drifting personnel are still represented by their parachute counters.



The above example shows the total number of dice rolls, out of 36, that would result in a given Stick to drift off the playing area for each Stick's Drop Point. There are three numbers in each hex: the TOP# is for German Drift; the MIDDLE # is for "Normal" Drift; and the BOTTOM # is for Russian Drift. Note that there is only a half-board with hexrows A-Q in the example. In the case of an entire board, a 'mirror' effect takes place, both vertically and horizontally (i.e., the numbers found for hex A2 will be found in A9, GG2, and GG9).

It is a wonder how any military operation could hope for success under the effects of such randomness, even without enemy intervention. In fact, very few large scale para-drops, excepting those of Market Garden in September 1944, were favored by perfect landings. Paratroopers have a 50% probability of landing in or around their pre-designated drop point but a 50% of landing just about anywhere else in the playing area and may land considerably further away, such as off-board. At this point we have not even taken into account the effects of enemy intervention in the form of Defensive First Fire.

Pulling the Trigger

After resolving the drift of all parachute counters during the Movement Phase, eligible defenders may conduct Defensive First Fire. The only defenders which may fire at descending paratroopers are those which use their inherent small arms or those possessing a light AA (E7.51) weapon. Light AA may include HMG, IFE capable AA weapons, and vehicular AAMG/AA capable MA/CMG. Unless an AA capable weapon is marked with an AA counter as per the principles of E3.50, it's ROF is reduced by one for the first AA fire it conducts in the MPh/DFPh. An AA counter is then placed on the weapon and if eligible for further AA fire that phase, it will no longer suffer a ROF reduction. MG which fire at aerial targets lose ROF unless using IFE as per E9.31.

Defenders may use Defensive First Fire and Subsequent First Fire against parachute counters, including those which have drifted off-board. As with all Aerial targets, the range is considered doubled. LOS may be blocked by the presence of a full level obstacle between the target and the firer which is Adjacent to the firer or if the firer is in a pillbox. LOS will also be blocked should the target lie outside the NVR of the defender or a combination of SMOKE/LV/Hindrances ≥ 6 exists. Half-inch parachute targets may be subject to DFF/SFF in an attempt to destroy or malfunction them. Para-dropping units are subject to a -2 Hazardous Movement DRM and will never receive any favorable benefits from Height Advantage, TEM, concealment or Hindrances other than LV/Smoke. Air dropping units may not be attacked by snipers nor may fire-lanes be employed against them. Defensive Fire may only effect one parachute counter per hex and no such counter may be fired upon more than once in the same hex by the same defender. Morale Checks resulting from Defensive Fire are resolved with a single DR for all units within the stick and use the parachute counter's ML 7. PTC/HOB/Pin are NA versus units represented by parachute counters.

Paratroopers may not fire in the AFPh and are not subject to routing, surrender or elimination for failure to rout while they are still in parachute form. All 5/8" parachutes are removed in the Advance Phase of the turn of landing and the personnel they represent are placed on board in normal form, possessing all SW. From that instant on, all normal rules apply to them. Half-inch parachute counters remain on board until they are recovered by a personnel counter.

"...one of the more appealing aspects of a scenario featuring an air drop: both players are engaged in a game of cat and mouse attempting to determine what the other is planning prior to the start of play."

Trooper Tactics

By now it is obvious that a player conducting an air drop will have little control over the initial deployment of his air-dropping forces. Such forces are completely helpless until they take normal counter form in the APh of their turn of landing. To conduct a successful parachute assault, a player must make the most of what little control he does exercise and minimize the risks he subjects his vulnerable parachutists to.

One of the few areas the air dropping player *does* have control over is the selection of his initial drop point hexes. The fact is fifty percent of the time your units are going to land on or around the drop points selected prior to scenario setup. This is as good as it gets for the air dropping player. Great care and thought should be applied in making these selections. You want your drop points to be as clear as possible of all 'chute unfriendly terrain (i.e. buildings, crags, dense jungle and the like). Selecting such areas may mean that your paratroopers are landing in open ground, a situation which may render them almost as vulnerable as the drop itself. This was often the case historically and may not be much of a problem if the initial defending forces are weak or scattered. Unfortunately, the clear, safe areas which make prime DZs are also obvious places to conduct air drops. An astute opponent will undoubtedly attempt to make them killing grounds. This is historically accurate, as witnessed by the experiences of the Allied airborne divisions in Normandy, where potential drop zones and glider LZ were fortified or flooded to prevent an enemy air assault.

Would be parachutists will need to be mindful that his troops cannot do much of anything during the player turn of landing. This effectively shortens the scenario length by one turn. Both sides should plan accordingly. Add to this that his troops may be widely scattered or eliminated during the air drop and many parachuting players may find themselves short of time or the troops to achieve the objective. Again, it is historically accurate to place DZs as close to the objective as possible. On occasions when this policy was not practiced, such as by the British at Arnhem, paratroopers fared poorly, as a more mobile, numerous and heavily armed foe was able to bring superior force to bear. As a scenario VC usually dictate the objectives, said locations will likely be well defended.

You should always attempt to select drops points with terrain providing cover in the form of positive TEM or hindrances once you have landed, as long as it doesn't consist of the terrain types which are 'unfriendly' to air-dropping forces (i.e., requiring MC). These may include hexes containing grain, brush or kunai. Areas crossed by walls, hedges or bocage, all of which have no detrimental affects on air-dropping units, are also worthy of consideration.

Areas out of LOS of the defending enemy units or atop hills, which may confer height advantage on your troopers after landing are also likely candidates for DZ. Hilltops may also be used to block

aerial LOS from any defenders which are adjacent to them. An air dropping player must keep in mind that an airdrop is a risky undertaking. You are simply never going to find an absolutely safe drop point and if you do, consider the distance your paratroopers are going to have to travel to accomplish their goals. If you find one which appears very safe, it is probably too far from your objectives. This was a consideration for the men who commanded parachute formations.

In certain situations, an air dropping force may find it to it's advantage not to land at the safest point but at one close to the scenario's objectives. You may find this to be advantageous even if the terrain around these objectives is forbidding to your parachute counters. The same terrain which may make an air drop hazardous may provide a parachutist player with good TEM right off the bat. Such terrain may also go a long way in restricting or blocking LOS from enemy units to your parachuting forces. A night drop, along with the restrictions imposed by the limits of night vision range, may make this option much more attractive. The selection of such a drop point will not necessitate that the attacking force spend several turns approaching their objective and, in turn, allowing the defense time to redeploy to positions to contest your advance.

The fact that drop point hexes are picked prior to scenario setup, without knowledge as to where the defending forces may be located in order to hinder an airborne assault, confers a big advantage to the defender. Historical instances in which an air assaulting force knew the exact composition of the defending units were quite rare, with the *coup-de-main* at Pegasus Bridge in Normandy (which was actually a glider assault) being a notable exception. This is one of the more appealing aspects of a scenario featuring an air drop: both players are engaged in a game of cat and mouse attempting to determine what the other is planning prior to the start of play. For the air dropping player, this task may be rendered all the more difficult should the defender possess HIP capability or a significant number of concealment counters.

Bear in mind that choosing drop points prior to viewing the defender's initial setup is analogous to a setup in which the defender's OB is entirely hidden. While it is a fact that the parachuting player will, for the most part, see the defender's setup prior to starting play, such viewing occurs *after* the parachutist has committed to a course of action in the form of preselected drop points. The defender works under a similar disadvantage in that he does not know exactly where the airborne troops are going to land. Like a scenario featuring caves, fortifications or the aforementioned hidden OB, a defender need be canny during setup.

Aside from the vulnerability of descending paratroopers, a paratrooper player must also concern himself with the historical reality that his opponent is usually better armed in terms of the support weapons he possesses and may have greater mobility due to the presence of friendly vehicles. These units will likely make their presence known promptly. In contrast, an air dropping player may find himself spending one or more turns scampering about attempting to recover SW which his parachutists could not drop possessing. Armed with only small arms and being as mobile as the distance their feet can take them, paratroopers may find themselves at a severe disadvantage. This problem is exacerbated in the case of pre -1942 German *Fallschirjaeger*, who do not even land with their small arms.

"...two wings dropping on either side of a likely enemy defensive position may be able to bring encircling fire to bear and deny rout paths from the outset. Think of how hard this significant advantage is to achieve in many 'conventional' scenarios."

An air drop right on top of your objective and it's defenders aims to over power them by sheer numbers and surprise. There are definitely occasions when this option should be considered. The player conducting an air drop may be able to bring a concentration of force to bear on the defenders by using the initial, fleeting mobility advantage convey by the air drop itself. This concentration of superior force upon a critical point is in keeping with a well known military axiom. Air dropping forces should bear this in mind and practice it the majority of the time. For example, two wings dropping on either side of a likely enemy defensive position may be able to bring encircling fire to bear and deny rout paths from the outset. Think of how hard this significant advantage is to achieve in many 'conventional' scenarios. Keep in mind to balance this concept of initial mobility with the proper selection of drop points as discussed earlier.

Vertical envelopment will attempt to seize objectives without directly assaulting the enemy front line. On a tactical scale such as ASL, it is probable that the defender's force is insufficient to cover every avenue of approach. He may not even be able to take advantage of your troops when they are at their most vulnerable: during the turn of their drop. A parachutist should *not* fail to take advantage of opportunities to cut rout paths, or force the surrender or elimination of enemy units for failure to rout.

A defender may opt for a hedgehog defense, bunching his forces around the listed objectives. While this may provide for the maximum defending force at the critical point it also will likely concede the initiative to the air dropping player and optimal drop points as well. Given an average air drop, the parachuting player may be able to quickly organize and rapidly move on toward objectives. His force may then have an adequate opportunity to overwhelm a hedge-hogged, and passive defense.

A player defending against a air drop should try to give his opponent a bloody nose from the start. Paratroopers are never more vulnerable than during their descent. Not possessing the heavier SWs, nor the ability to soften up the enemy's position by means of prep fire, penalized by the hazardous movement during their descent and not having the ability to advance fire all conspire to render them helpless. A defender should strive to hurt them in the air and then follow up any local successes with aggressive actions to eliminate those troopers who are either broken or land in an unfavorable position. The defender should not allow a paratrooper player the time to develop a coordinated attack.

Junior Varsity

Now that we have discussed both the mechanics and tactics involved in conducting an air drop, let's put it into practice by taking a look at a real live scenario: DROP ZONE A in this issue of Critical Hit magazine. It takes place during Operation *Varsity* during March 1945, pitting elite British paratroopers against a such a small, rag tag force of German *Fallschirmjaeger*. This particular air drop went off smoothly with the exception of the difficulties encountered by Company B of the 8th Parachute Battalion. It is small, fast and straightforward play, so it serves as an introduction for players interested in conducting their first para-drop. Like almost every published ASL scenario featuring an air drop, it's tactical possibilities are numerous, allowing even the grognards among us to have an interesting experience. Due to the extremely accurate air drop enjoyed by the Red Devils, an SSR is included which greatly reduces the possibility for a missed drop point. This will go a long way in preserving the scenario's balance and allow both players to concentrate on the mechanics of an air-drop.

As discussed earlier, a force defending against an air drop can opt for either one of two options: either the formation of a hedgehog around the paratrooper force's objective(s) or a spread out defense aimed at covering the most likely drop points in hopes of seriously hurting the air dropping troops when they are most vulnerable. Both can be employed with a reasonable chance of success in DROP ZONE A. Let's look at the hedgehog defense first.

The VC state that the British player wins if there are no good order German units occupying concealment terrain with a LOS to hex 10M6. In this instance, the defenders are not required to occupy 10M6 or even prevent the Red Devils from securing it. Simply having a unit see this hex, and thus prevent the British from claiming a cleared drop zone, is enough for a German victory. Thus, the defensive hedgehog we wish to construct has a large degree of latitude with regards to location: any concealment terrain with LOS to 10M6 will do the job. This degree of freedom, along with the support weapons and the fortifications included in the German OB, certainly lend themselves to a hedgehog defense.

Aside from the limitations imposed on us by the scenario's VC, a number of other factors need to be taken into account. A good German player should realize the constraints the British are operating under with regards to the selection of their initial drop points. They need to drop close enough to 10M6 to clear all concealment hexes with LOS in only four turns. While the scenario itself is five turns long, the initial turn will be spent in descent. Thus, there is a strong possibility that our steely eyed British foe will attempt to land directly upon 10M6 in the hope that his superior troop quality and leadership will carry him through. The German should not discount the British reinforcements arriving from the south, because even though they are few in number, they may play a decisive role in the action. More so, these are the only troops the British player has complete control over, the rest being subject to the vagaries of the air drop. Finally, a careful study of the playing area's terrain shows that there are a maximum of seven locations with a +2 TEM: the buildings located in 10H6, 10L3 *and* 10G8 and the foxholes in the German OB. Because the scenario takes place in March, the orchards to the east of 10L3 are not in season and thus do not block aerial LOS. Additionally, grain is also not in season, although these hexes are considered plowed. All these facts conspire to make a defense centered upon the northern portion of the playing area appealing, as it covers the most probable British DZ and also may be far enough away from the reinforcing Red Devils as to render them insignificant in the outcome.

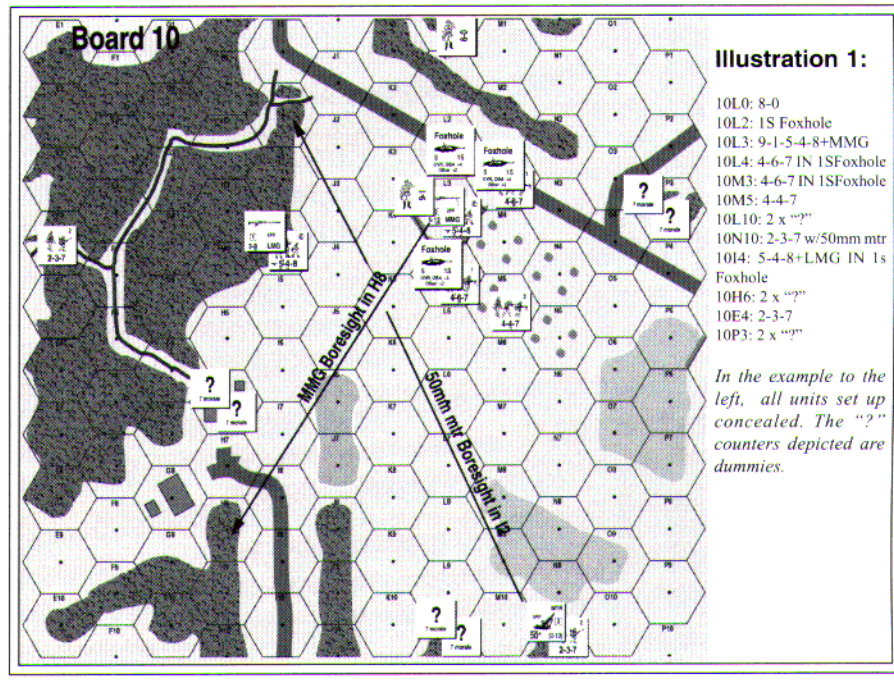


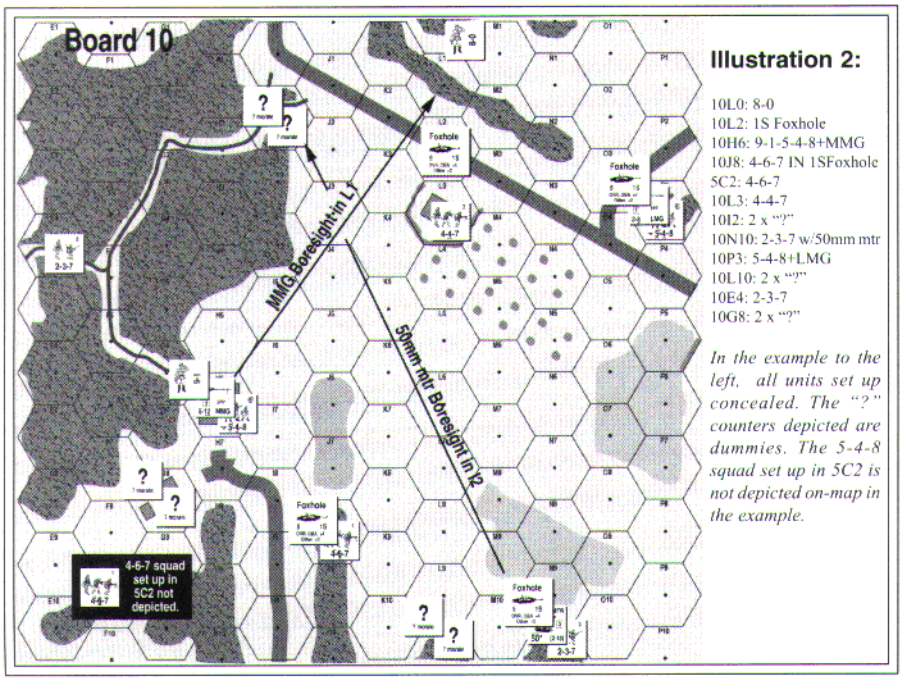
Illustration 1:

10L0: 8-0
10L2: 1S Foxhole
10L3: 9-1-5-4-8+MMG
10L4: 4-6-7 IN 1SFoxhole
10M3: 4-6-7 IN 1SFoxhole
10M5: 4-4-7
10L10: 2 x "?"
10N10: 2-3-7 w/50mm mtr
10I4: 5-4-8+LMG IN 1s Foxhole
10H6: 2 x "?"
10E4: 2-3-7
10P3: 2 x "?"

In the example to the left, all units set up concealed. The "?" counters depicted are dummies.

A defense centered around building 10L3 has a number of reasons to recommend it. Hex 10L3 itself is a good spot for the German MMG, it's manning 5-4-8 and the 9-1 leader. A foxhole in 10L2 will allow broken units to rout from 10L3 to the woods located around 10L0, which will be a safe rally haven should the Red Devils land to the east of 10L3. Another safe rout path can be provided by a foxhole in 10M3, which does not allow a broken unit to rout to the relative safety of 10L0 in a single rout phase but does give the German player another hex, with +2 TEM and a significant LOS to the possible drop zone to the east of 10L3. There are also some good rally locations to the west in the form of the 10L2 woods. Finally, its proximity to the board edge will reduce the probability of British encircling fire.

The defense shown in Illustration 1 has a couple of interesting points. The first is the deployment of the two second line half squads located in 10N10 and 10E4. They both lie outside of the main concentration of German defenders. The role of the HS in 10E4 is to interdict the shortest avenue of approach available to the British reinforcements, the path through the 10F4 woods. A cautious British player, upon seeing a concealed unit in E3, may bring on his reinforcements further east or move up using the cover of the woods themselves. Either approach will serve to use up precious time. A sec-



ondary task for this unit is to block the east-west path which runs through these same woods. Given the hedgehog nature of our defense and the fact that this path is out of LOS to the vast majority of the German troops, it is probable that the Red Devils may use this path to prepare for an assault upon the hedgehog. The half squad in hex 10N10, along with the boresighted mortar on 10I2 provides some long range overwatch into the northern fringes of the 10F4 woods and covers a possible DZ around 5P1. The mortar may create havoc among paratroopers moving through the woods and the Red Devils, due to the range limitations of their infantry, will not be able to reply in kind. Both units, as well as the dummies in 10H6 and 10L10, may serve to force the British to dilute their attack upon the main German position. The paratrooper cannot ignore either the real units or the dummies because a single German MMC with a LOS to 10M6 loses him the scenario. In this regard, the German player should carefully consider when to fire the *real* units. The longer they remain concealed, the greater the possibility that the British will have to attack them, as well as the dummies, and weaken his attack upon the hedgehog.

The 5-4-8 w/LMG in 10I4 also helps cover the southern woods and interdict the reinforcing paratroopers. This squad has an important task: to cover the 10I8-5I1 road with a 1 factor firelane. Other possible British drop zones may either be the open area around 5C4 or 10C5. The main factor which make them candidates for the British drop points is the significant amount of open ground surrounding each of them. Additionally, they will probably be far enough removed from the main German defensive positions. They are close to the board edge, which increases the probability of off board drift and dropping there will also require at least a two turn march to the scene of the action. The paratrooper player may hope that enough of his force lands on the board in good enough shape to move quickly toward the objectives. These units, in conjunction with his reinforcements, may be able to secure the DZ for a win. A fire lane down the 10I8-5I1 road may slow down their advance just long enough to cause them to run out of time.

The actual hedgehog itself is comprised of the four remaining squads, both leaders, most of the fortifications and the single most important weapon in the scenario, the German MMG. As discussed earlier it is positioned in the key building at 10L3, where it will have a commanding LOS to the surrounding terrain. To directly assault this position, the British will have to negotiate an approach through open ground or through any of the woods adjoining the drop zone. The German mortar in 10N10 is quite capable of making an approach through the woods quite uncomfortable for the paratroopers. Finally, the 8-0 is located in 10L0, where he will probably be out of LOS of the descending paratroopers. Should any of the units in our hedgehog break, they will likely be able to rout to this location, where they will hopefully rally unmolested. Any squads which rout here and subsequently rally should be deployed at the next possible opportunity; the more German MMC that are running around, the more the British will have to eliminate or break to win the scenario. One of the possibilities is to send one of the deployed HS to the woods in 10N0, which has a LOS to 10M6. Careful consideration should also be given to deploying the squad manning the MMG as well, in order to create as many maneuver units as possible to confound the British parachutists.

This particular hedgehog defense has a number of weaknesses which should be taken into account. If the Red Devils land in force on another part of the play area other then the open ground to the east of 10L3, they will do so almost unmolested. Given the concentration of the Germans in and around 10L3, it will be almost impossible for them to bring encircling fire to bear on the enemy after they have landed. This should not be ignored by any means, as a parachuting force hurt in descent and then penalized by encircling fire in the subsequent German Prep Fire phase may be reduced to impotence by the end of the first turn German prep fire. Should the British land to the east of 10L3 in good shape, the Germans, despite their superior TEM and the advantages they cannot stand up to a concentrated attack by the bulk of the enemy for more than two or three turns.

A defense which spreads itself out may go a long way in avoiding these pitfalls. The idea is to hurt the enemy while they are floating to earth, encircle them if they land to the east of 10L3 and have a single German MMC, in Good Order, in concealment terrain, with LOS to 10M6 required to claim victory. Spreading out may deny a rout to any broken enemy units resulting in their elimination for failure to rout. Units should not be scattered about willy-nilly, but with a discerning eye toward possible British drop points and with a plan for mutual support.

A typical spread out approach may look something like that depicted in Illustration 2. The positions of the 8-0, the two second line half squads and the dummies remain unchanged from that presented in the hedgehog defense for the same reasons outlined above. The remaining MMC are now spread out in an

attempt to make the probable landing zone to the east of 10L3 a killing ground. The all important MMG/9-1/5-4-8 stack is now located in a central position in 10H6, where it not only covers a likely area of descent but can also move to any threatened quarter in hopes of slowing down the attacker's advance just long enough to keep them from attaining their VC. The 10G8 building also possesses decent LOS to the north and a constricted one to the area around 10C10. This location may also deserve some consideration for the placement of the German MMG stack.

The 4-6-7 squad located in 5C2 serves to cover the open ground to the south and east. While this single squad will not be able to stop the Tommies alone, it may be able to delay them. Do not expect this squad to survive; if it buys time it's a worthy sacrifice. Should the Brits opt not to land in this quarter, the 4-6-7 can use the north-south road running the length of board 5 to head for the woods bordering the eastern edge of the 10M6 clearing *or* hustle off to the west to join the units in the 10F4 woods to stiffen resistance there. In either case, it should try to maintain concealment for as long as possible in order to keep the enemy guessing as to the location of the *real* German units.

In the 'spread' set up number of German units are concentrated in *each* defensive sector of the playing area. In the east we have the mortar crew and a 467 in 10J8. While this unit may be exposed, it's LOS from this locale is too good to pass up. It also helps cover the 10I8-5I1 road. To the northwest are two squads and the German 8-0 leader. The 5-4-8/LMG combination in 10P3 is too exposed for my liking, but covers the northern drop point well, with a LOS which extends to the east, to 5P3. A firelane can be laid down to that hex or to 10K10/L10 to restrict the movement of the Tommies once they are on the ground. Even though the 5-4-8 is exposed, it still may be able to rout or low crawl to the 10L0 woods to be rallied by the 8-0 leader there.

The British have the initiative, in that he may chose to descend in a number of places. He is still constrained by a number of factors. The first is the short length of the scenario. The second is the lack of drop points within close proximity to the listed objectives, aside from the huge stretch of open ground to the east of building 10L3. Remember that the attacker is limited to just two wings; one composed of five sticks and the other of four. There is no altering this basic premise. This is how his OB must be structured prior to the air drop. He is not constrained in the initial deployment of his leaders or support weapons. He cannot, however, retain possession of his two PIATs.

The obvious place to land is the clear swatch of land on the northern half of board 10. It is close enough to 10M6 that even a widely scattered drop can leave a wing of paratroopers close enough to start mixing it up with the German defenders on turn two. The problem is, the German player knows this and in all probability will concentrate the bulk of his troops in this area. Landing all nine air-dropping squads directly in this area is of course an option but remember the initial drop points cannot be within five hexes of each other. Given this, one of the air dropping wings will necessarily be close to the board edge and will probably lose a squad or two to board edge oblivion. For example, the smaller wing can chose hex 10N1 as its initial drop point, and if it lands accurately can lay each of it's four sticks in hexes 10M1, 10N1, 10O2 and 10P2 (remember each wing must have the same alignment). Given average drift DRs, a couple of squads will simply float off the playing area. The larger wing can opt for a location such as 10K6, which is far enough from 10N1 to minimize the possibility of drifting off board. Hopefully enough squads, say two thirds, will land in condition to deal out some damage.

This approach is not for the faint of heart. If the German defense is concentrated in this area, a wild melee will quickly develop. Normal ASL tactics will need to be eschewed, as there is no "front line". Opposing forces will find themselves fighting it out in close quarters. The German has to hope his first turn defensive fire and prep fire inflicts enough casualties on the British and that his advantage in inherent *and* support weapon range *and* the high TEM of the locations he occupies plays a significant role. The Red Devils simply hope that their superior OB will carry the day. This is the ultimate all or nothing gamble.

A less direct approach may be landing either wing along the southern edge of the board junction, say from 10A9 to 5E1. The defending Germans may opt to ignore this area due to the distance from hex 10M6. These troops can join with the southern reinforcements for a concentrated drive on the drop zone. This is a good place to drop the PIATs, as there may be time to pick them up and they can be used with good effect upon the buildings in 10G8 or 10H6. Given that the reinforcements can enter from any souther board edge, a HS could readily be detached to pick up a PIAT which drifted a good distance from any of the air dropping Red Devils. This option also gives the paratroopers cover in which to advance northward towards Drop Zone A. If the German fails to post a unit to cover the path through the 10F4 woods or the open ground between the 10F4 and 10G9 woods, a paratrooper attack can be executed as early as turn three. The western edges of the 10F4 woods will allow for a rapid march using bypass to reach the objective.

The British player has to be concerned with the proximity of the board edge and the possibility that a good portion of his troops may be rendered *hors de combat* due to off-board drift. Besides the possibility of off board drift, the other drawback to this approach is the long march it requires to reach 10M6. The key to this plan is for the paratroopers to move to the most advantageous position to develop the attack given the resources at hand. With just four turns to secure the drop zone, waiting to assemble *all* of the paratroopers and recover *all* of their SW is tantamount to a concession. If a single turn was added, this may not be the case. Move with all possible speed and hope that any squads left behind can contribute something to the fight later on. Additionally, remember that each turn spent en route allows the defenders a turn to reposition their units to contest your advance.

The British may also be able to take advantage of the one hex drift adjustment allowed to all non-German parachutists (due to the presence of risers). This may allow the 8th Battalion troopers to select the drop points located in woods hexes on boards 10 and 5, and after resolving all drift, adjust each parachute counter one to land in terrain more suitable for a parachute landing. Not all counters may be able to accomplish this; some will invariably land in the woods and be subject to a NMC. Enough may be able to land in the clearings or out of German

LOS to mount an immediate attack. Landing here not only means that the British are much closer to their objective but also has a modicum of protection, provided by the woods. The German player may not expect a landing in that quarter and may not have prepared for such an eventuality. As discussed earlier, these woods are an ideal spot for the German 50mm mortar; perhaps some Tommies can knock it out before it does any harm as its LOS to the east is pretty much nonexistent. This option is risky due to the probability of some NMCs which are resolved utilizing the parachute counter's ML 7.

A final word is in order concerning British airborne mortars. They are very important to a successful attack upon the German positions no matter which type of defense is confronted. The fact that they have smoke, with a depletion number of 7, and that the Red Devils drop in possession of them will be crucial in the outcome of the firefight. The British will find themselves assaulting across open ground. One or two smoke counters placed may spell the difference between victory or defeat. I would not even dare to fire HE from a mortar until they have depleted their smoke unless a juicy target presented itself. If their possessing unit is eliminated, you should promptly assign another unit to recover these weapons.

Burying the Chute

We all play ASL because it is fun. Para-drops can obviously unbalance a scenario very quickly but are extremely fun to play out. Each side may be at the point of a significant moment in history, such as the Allied invasion of Normandy. What follows can be a tense, tight and above all, out of the ordinary match. While the rules may appear somewhat complicated, they add so much to the thrill of actually *playing* that they are well worth learning. If you have never tried one, you should because your effort will probably be well worth it. Just remember that after landing, bury you chute lest the enemy finds it...

[The author is the designer of DROP ZONE A which can be found in this issue. Try your hand at paratroop tactics using this very approachable scenario and write in to tell us how you do. Ed.]



Despite a professional athlete being in attendance at a recent regional tournament, everyone wanted to be photographed with plaque-monger Steve Pleva, seen here pouring beer for one of the most fearsome forces in Federal Court, counselor Anthony Flanagan.

"B" Company

PO Box 4163, Clifton, NJ 07012
Phone: (201) 473-2900 FAX: (201) 473-4144

Specializing in Historical Wargames and Magazines

Wargames: Avalon Hill, Australian Design Group, Avalanche Press, Clash of Arms, Columbia Games, Critical Hit, The Gamers, Decision Games, GRD, GMT, Games U.S.A., Victory Games, Moments in History, 3W, Xeno, XTR and many others!

Magazines: Command, S & T, Competitive Edge, The Wargamer, 3CI, Counterattack, The Art of War, Canadian Wargames Journal, Critical Hit, C3I, Europa News, The General, Fire & Movement, Operations, Paper Wars, Mind, Map & Maneuver, Moves, Zone of Control and others!

Hard to find titles: Azure Wish, Ludo Press, Simtac Spain and more!

Out of Print: Games, magazines & counter sheets!

Gaming Supplies, accessories, books, miscellaneous, etc.

We carry the complete line of ASL items as well as the entire line of great products from Critical Hit!

Our prices are comparable to anyone's
Call, fax or send for a free catalog today

VISA and MASTERCARD accepted

Campaign for the Causeway:

A Scenario Campaign Game for ALL AMERICAN

For players wishing to experience some continuity between scenarios but lacking the time to play them all back to back, the following campaign system is provided. This system lends itself to tournaments of a full day or a weekend.

1. Scenarios: First, agree with your opponent how many scenarios you wish to play. You are offered the choice of five, four or three. Table 1 lists the scenarios to be played. Note that alternative selections are offered for players who may not wish to play the one night scenario in the module.

2. Campaign Victory Points: Using the VP listing in Table 2, award points for scenarios won. Only one player can score points for each scenario. The asymmetric nature of the points table is intended to convey the relative importance of winning to each side. A German victory in the first scenario represents a major reverse for the Americans, a psychological blow as well as a physical block, preventing links with the scattered friendly elements west of the Merderet. Conversely, an American victory in scenario five opens the door to a much more rapid clearing of the causeway crossing than was actually achieved.

3. Balance: The American begins the campaign with the Balance Initiative. Before either player commences set up for a scenario, the player currently holding the BI may claim the balance provision for his own force listed on that scenario card. By so doing, that player loses the BI to his opponent for use in a later scenario of the opponent's choosing.

4. Sudden Death: This rule is strictly optional, to be invoked by prior agreement between both players. The first player to reach a total of six Campaign Victory Points wins the campaign, regardless of the number of scenarios chosen to play.

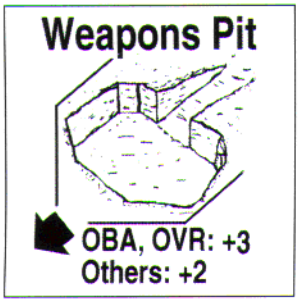
Table 1: Scenario Selection

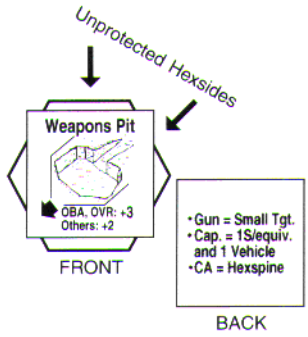
Number of scenarios:	Scenarios to be played:
Five	*Either* 1, 3, 5, 7 and 10 *or* 2, 4, 7, 9 and 10
Four	*Either* 1, 4, 5, and 7 *or* 2, 3, 7 and 9
Three	*Either* 1, 4, and 5 *or* 2, 4 and 7

Table 2: Campaign VP Schedule

Point value of scenario won by:	German/American
Scenario: 1	3 / 1
2	1 / 1
3	2 / 1
4	1 / 1
5	1 / 3
6	1 / 2
7	2 / 2
8	2 / 3
9	1 / 2
10	1 / 2

Concept: Andrea Fantozzi





The Weapons Pit

WeP1. WEAPONS PIT: The term Weapons Pit (WeP) refers to a fortification consisting of a dug in position, often surrounded by sand bags or other locally available materials prepared with the purpose of providing an emplaced position for vehicles or guns. During the war in North Africa both sides made extensive use of WeP, with guns as large as the dreaded '88' dug in to such an extent as to have the barrel almost level with the ground, almost invisible to enemy ground units from even a slight distance.

WeP2. USE OF THE COUNTER: Any unit beneath a WeP counter is said to be IN the WeP, and therefore is capable of claiming its defensive benefits and subject to its movement restrictions.

WeP2.1 PLACEMENT: A WeP may be placed in any non-depression hex (EXC: the following hexes are NA for WeP placement: Paved Road, Sunken/Elevated Road, Marsh, Mudflat, Crag, Graveyard, Water Obstacles, non-Hut/Collapsed Hut buildings, Lumberyard, Rubble, Scrub, Hammada, Deir, Sand, Bamboo, Swamp, Rice Paddy) that is ADJACENT to another non-depression Open Ground hex. No more than one WeP counter may be placed per hex and no other fortification (EXC: Mines, Wire, Panji) may be placed in a hex containing a WeP.

WeP 2.2 ORIENTING THE WeP COUNTER: A WeP counter is oriented with the arrow pointing to a particular hexspine CA. The two hexsides within the WeP CA are considered Protected Hexsides, as are the hexsides adjacent to the WeP CA, forming a contiguous group of 4 hexsides. The 2 remaining hexsides are termed Unprotected Hexsides and do not receive the protective benefits of a WeP counter.

WeP 2.3 WIRE & PANJIS: A WeP is always considered to be placed beneath any Wire (EXC: Wire has no effect on any unit moving to/from IN a WeP only if entering/exiting via an Unprotected Hexside) or Panjis in the same hex. A Panji covered hexside (G9.3) may *never* coincide with a WeP Unprotected Hexside.

WeP 3. STACKING CAPACITY: No more than one vehicle *or* gun may ever occupy a WeP (EXC: a gun may be towed into a WeP, but a Gun IN a WeP may not fire or be (un)limbered if any vehicle/wreck is IN the same WeP). Otherwise, a WeP is treated in the same manner as a 1S Foxhole. A WeP is not a separate Location within its hex (as per B27.13), therefore the presence of units IN a WeP *do* count toward hex stacking limits, however, any Overstacking penalties apply *only* to units outside a WeP.

WeP 4. ENTRY: Vehicles may enter a WeP using forward or reverse movement *only* through an Unprotected Hexside, declaring their intention to enter the WeP before expending MP to enter the hex. There is no cost beyond normal COT for a vehicle to enter a WeP. Once entering a WeP, a vehicle must expend a MP to Stop. A vehicle IN a WeP may make a Motion Attempt (D2.401) provided it does not change its VCA, and is marked with the appropriate Motion counter needed to actually exit the WeP. Guns may be pushed into a WeP through an Unprotected Hexside paying COT. A Gun may also be pushed beneath/out of a WeP from/to the same hex at a cost of 1 MF (which is actually doubled to 2 MF as per C10.3). Infantry enters/exits a WeP in the same manner as a Foxhole (EXC: when entering/exiting a WeP through an Unprotected Hexside, only the COT of the hex entered, including if entering the WeP, is expended).

WeP 4.1 VCA/CA: A vehicle may not change VCA while within a WeP (i.e., to exit, a vehicle must use reverse movement unless it reversed into the WeP). The CA of a Gun IN a WeP may be pivoted normally.

WeP 5 TEM: A unit IN a WeP receives a +3 TEM against any OVR/OBA (Exc: OVR using a FT) or Bomb attack, or a +2 TEM for any other type of attack (EXC: FT and CC), including on-board mortars. A vehicle fired on through a Protected Hexside is considered Hull Down instead. No protective benefit is received for any non-aerial direct fire attack (only) which crosses an Unprotected Hexside (i.e., nor would a vehicle be considered HD and when attacking with a DC the hexside placed/thrown through applies). The TEM of the other terrain in the hex applies for any fire *not* receiving the WeP protective modifiers (only). If the LOF is traced exactly along a hexside, the WeP benefits apply. WeP TEM is not cumulative with any other same hex TEM (EXC: Mud/Snow TEM, Air Bursts). A Gun IN a WeP is considered a Small Target.

WeP 5.1 TEM REDUCTIONS: The TEM received by units IN a WeP may be reduced (to a minimum of zero) by a sufficient Height Advantage in the same manner as Walls and Hedges (B9.33). If the WeP TEM is reduced to < 2, a vehicle will *not* receive HD benefits to that firer. An aerial attack *never* reduces WeP TEM.

WeP 6 DYO: WeP have a BPV of 7 and are purchased during step H1.6 when fortifications are purchased.

★★★★
FEATURING :
ADV. SQD. LEADER
★★★★

CRITICAL HIT

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING Vol. 4, No. 2 $15.95



Yanks & Aussies!

The Return of the Paddington Bears
ASL Club of Sydney, Australia

Focus on the Italian
Semovente 90 da 53 in Action!

Aussie ASL '97

- Paddington Bears Pack -

Designer's Notes



Our scenarios are now voluntarily coded as PBP (Paddington Bears Pack) to avoid possible confusion with AH Pegasus Bridge scenarios.



'A Civil War, Not A Gentleman's War' [PBP 11]

By Mark McGilchrist

ACWNAGW was inspired by a desire to try the Spanish Civil War in ASL, especially with the International Brigade and some 1930s tin-plated AFVs involved. In the 1937 battles, Republican tanks were used en masse, but without infantry or artillery support. The failure of armored tactics in Spain did significant harm to Russian military strategy, because when light tanks proved ineffective against infantry in towns, and vulnerable even to LATW, it was used as proof that tanks had been surpassed (influencing Russian planning for the use of AFVs until 1941). The Republicans initially sent in 75 tanks to 'clear' Villafranca (without result) and a smaller group made the opening attack on Villanueva de la Canada (likewise). During their brief training period, the local tank crews had been drilled by Russian 'advisers', whose limited Spanish ensured only the basics could be taught. On top of the normal problems for inexperienced crews in their first combat, the T-26s got so hot under the Spanish sun that crewmen could no longer speak because of dehydration. Similar hardships were visited on the Republican infantry (both Spanish and International) attacking across the dry hills.

The Republican government needed to divert Franco's forces away from Bilbao (a vital port in the north) and also to focus international attention on the war. The Communist Party (which could arrange Russian support) favored clearing the area around Brunete, 20-30 km west of Madrid, which would also push enemy artillery out of range of the capital. The attack did make an early breakthrough, but then Colonel Lister (communist commander of the spearhead 11th Division) lost confidence and refused to advance further without the reduction of pockets of Nationalist resistance holding out behind him in villages such as Villanueva de la Canada and Villafranca. Defending the area was a Falangist battalion (Spanish fascists, mostly from Seville), which had been recently trained by German officers of the Condor Legion. Although inexperienced, they were well motivated and commanded by their own leaders. These isolated troops effectively held up the offensive for several days, by which time the Nationalist front line had been re-established.

After the attempts by tanks (and a Spanish infantry division) failed, the XVth International Brigade was redirected from the front to clear the bypassed villages. The XVth had been temporarily split into two 'regiments' which operated separately. In Villanueva, the fighting continued until the angry British Battalion overcame the defenders in cruel house to house fighting with many casualties. In total contrast, at Villafranca the weary Brigadiers were bitter about the tactical incompetence shown by some officers, so the attack was not pressed.

♣♣♣

Bibliography

The International Brigades 1936-1939 by Vincent Brome

The International Brigade in Spain (Osprey Elite #53) by Bradley & Chappell

The Spanish Civil War by Antony Beevor

The Spanish Civil War by Hugh Thomas

The Spanish Civil War (Osprey #74) by Turnbull & Burn

The Passionate War by Peter Wyden

♣♣♣

Suggestions

Nationalists (Axis Minor) : The western side of the Board 24 village has the most multi-hex and multi-level building locations, so this is where most of the SWs will need to set up. Initial setup will need to be spread out until the attacker's intentions are clear. Whichever direction the attack comes from, possession of the central hexes will clinch victory or defeat. The 24Q5 stone building (conveniently of three hexes in size) could be fortified at ground level. The ATR should start on 1st Level (with LOS to ground level on Board 11) to take shots at AFVs which approach directly from the north or west. The height of the Steeple hexes (24U4-V3) means an LMG/MMG (with a leader and HS/crew) here has good overwatch potential (apart from blind hexes, olive groves are Inherent). Roadblocks are optional walls which link buildings with a +2 TEM corridor, plus blocking AFV road use. The defenders should avoid stacking in favor of multi-location firegroups, especially ground and first level firegroups.

Republican infantry is better quality, but fewer in number, so attrition will hurt them more. Even if it is possible to send a flanking unit to cut rout paths, the essential aim is to delay the attacker (a Pin can be as good as a DM if they haven't moved). Risks can be taken once all the Republican tanks are committed. The MMG/LMGs are also effective A-T weapons in 1937, with a useful TK # at short range against that thin 1 AF armor.

Republican (Russian) : Although your 4-4-7 squads are superior, the Nationalist 3-4-7s are in the buildings. Build the assault around the 9-1 and two squads with LMGs. Conserve the infantry to capture building locations. This means avoiding low-odds CC and FFMO particularly. An attack through the right flank (west) has more olive grove cover, but the number of building locations is about even on east and west sides (remembering that Lumber Yards are buildings for victory purposes).

The T-26s must act as battering rams to force open the defences. This can be done by in-hex VBM freeze (risky), or by moving close to the enemy and stopping there to fire at point blank range, or by entering a building (to even breach a fortified hexside), but remember rubble/cellars/bog etc. and stay in Motion if there are unbroken enemy MMC there for CC. The tanks are expendable, so be aggressive. Keep tanks in 2 vehicle platoons after entry, with at least one CMG vehicle per platoon.

Platoons of 2 AFVs move faster than 3 vehicle platoons, but it doesn't hurt to have two platoons end movement adjacent to each other to increase your options next turn. Inexperienced AFV crews make anything but point blank fire (1-2 hexes) a waste of time. Don't expect them to pass a TC for non-Platoon movement, drive straight into firing positions (and preferably a hex where a burning wreck might provide helpful TEM later for the infantry, especially when there is an SSR preventing Armored Assault).



Soft Noodle [PBP 12]

By Paul Seage

Designed for CANCON (the Australian ASL Championship), Soft Noodle originally created quite a stir, because when that tourney uses a brand-new scenario, the players only see it at the start of the round. How are 10 second line squads supposed to cross 3 boards, defeat 24 opposing squads with similar firepower and take most of the Huts, all in 8 game turns? In the tournament, the win/loss results for this scenario were evenly split, confirming the playtest results. The aim was to be representative of battles fought during the early part of the Sino-Japanese war, where, with few AFVs to help them, the Japanese infantry would have to face a much larger number of untrained Chinese troops. Soft Noodle represents what the IJA often set out to achieve tactically. This type of scenario set-up was and is uncommon. The theory is that you require an advantage in firepower or numbers to mount an attack.

Let this scenario demonstrate that this is not always the case.

These poorly led but numerous defenders present an opportunity to the attacker, but they are no walkover, even though deployed with an open flank.

This part of southern China was and is a prime grain-growing area (and thus a source of nutritious noodles!), with heavy rice cultivation as well. Thus ETO terrain is mixed with extra PTO features (and works without too much confusion). Chinese country roads in 1937 would have been basically cart tracks offering no significant advantage to marching men or motorized vehicles except for navigation.



Bibliography

History of The Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) by Hsu Long-hsuen and Chang Ming-kai



Suggestions

Japanese : The Japanese player has several important decisions to make. These include which board edges to enter, and whether to keep the enemy guessing by holding troops off-board, or to just burst in with everything at war speed. What to do with the armor? If the tankettes split up they will be more deadly in rounding up Chinese units, but they also run the risk of periods of immobility due to Radioless TC failure. Their potential for Overrun and VBM Freeze in the end-game is crucial so why take a low odds shot and risk MA breakdown? It will be hard to resist flattening a few Huts, but beware of infantry inside (even though the Chinese must pass a 1PAATC, it will eventually happen).

A steady reduction of the enemy will not allow sufficient time to capture enough Huts to be sure of the scenario victory conditions. The Japanese must be bold but not silly (6 FP at -2 DRM with a low DR will eliminate an IJA unit as easily as any other). Use Banzai charges to move quickly or to overwhelm the enemy, but don't do so across Open Ground unless its your final Player Turn (and you have no choice). Remember that your enemies are mostly Lax and that a few of your units are Stealthy (leaders/crews) so look for CC against Pinned/CX Chinese.

Chinese (GMD): The Conscript defending units near the Japanese entry edges must decide either to withdraw from the start or to attempt to stand, with the object of whittling away the enemy until losses force caution on the Japanese and your remaining squads can start to threaten their flanks and rear. This is where the 3MF allotment of conscripts will prove a handicap to their ability to escape or outflank. The lowly GMD leaders are vital, not only for rallying, but for the bonus MF to sprint across the mapboards.

The Chinese must preserve their MGs, which are the only threat to the 'awesome' enemy AFVs. One thing for sure, this battle will be bloody, usually ending with a handful of MMC jousting over the last couple of huts on the Board 38 village overlay (or a forgotten Chinese HS self rallying and stealing hard earned huts from a Japanese side with insufficient units to guard the rear). Have fun!



Marked For Death [PBP 13]

By David Longworth

A scenario originally designed for CANCON '97. It was inspired by an early passage in the book 'Infanterie Aces' by Franz Kurowski, describing German troops thrusting past a village called Holmyly (but since inferred to be actually near Romilly) to seize the bridge, then crossing the river and later holding off a counterattack by French infantry and armored cars. Who wouldn't want that? In play, there was a preponderance of French wins (7 to 4) - enough to indicate that in the original the French side had a slight edge (since adjusted).

The action takes place in the second phase of the Battle of France, with the Germans heading south to force the crossing of the Seine east of Paris. A force from the 13th Motorized Division was detailed to seize the crossing near Romilly-sur-Seine before the French could demolish it. Four truckloads of infantry (pioneers and assault troops) sped through a hail of rifle fire and unloaded in a small wooded area on the outskirts of the village. The Germans then split up, with some troops taking on the village garrison while others moved to the bridge, where French soldiers were cut down while trying to fix charges. The pioneers sprinted across the bridge, silenced a machine gun position on the other side, and took up defensive positions. They were counterattacked almost immediately by French infantry and armored cars. Two AFVs followed by riflemen attacked directly towards the thicket where the Germans were dug in. One Panhard was knocked out by an ATR firing across the river. The other reached the trees, where Rudi Brasche and his comrades used grenades to destroy it and drive off the infantry. The French continued to attack for three hours, without result. The road south across the Seine lay open to the panzers.

In game terms, the number of German squads was set at eight, equivalent to the capacity of four Opel Blitzes. These were picked troops, hence good morale and leadership. The hero represents Rudi Brasche. Less information was available on the French, except for the AFVs, so the number of MMC was set at a competitive level. The battle really started when the Germans dismounted and attacked through woods and brush between the village and bridge, so this is the opening of the scenario. French positions were set by the fact that the village garrison had been bypassed and was unable to interdict the span.

♣♣♣

Bibliography

Infanterie Aces by Franz Kurowski
Why France Fell by Guy Chapman

♣♣♣

Suggestions

German : The first decision to make is how to split your force at start. Some of your troops will have to attack the village defenders, while others will need to cross the bridge and set up a perimeter on the other side. If the French MMG HS has set up to fire on the bridge with FFMO benefits, you will have to set up at least two squads and a leader to suppress them, as you cannot afford to have MMCs gunned down on the first turn. You will need to send at least four squads into the village initially, but bear in mind that after about three turns, some of these should be able to make their way back. An ATR, the 9-2 and maybe the MMG should be kept on the north side to avoid unfortunate accidents (like being unable to rout, for instance).

If the French have set up strongly in the 10Z6 building, consider using Engineer smoke, Hero+DC, followed by squads etc. (and at least one concealed) to beat up on them in CC. In the village, breaking the French is usually enough, then leave a couple of MMCs to round them up and/or stop them becoming a threat. Beware of a late rush through the woods from the DD7 area. Crossing to the south side, you really want to block off easy avenues of French approach - consider hexes such as V4/V6/ W8/Y8/ AA8. Ensure that your units have a rout path, and that the ATRs can cover the roads. Aim to entrench and occupy the victory locations when you get the chance.

French : The first question is what to do with the garrison. If you deploy many troops into the Z6 building, they will probably get mugged very quickly. The value of the garrison is as a force in being, leaving the Boche with no choice but to deploy troops to guard against a counterattack in the end-game. The longer you can preserve them, the better off you'll be. Consider Z2/AA5/ BB5/DD5/EE5 and skulk away from heavy enemy firepower in the first two turns. Second question is where to locate the MMG. X6 is perfect for stopping the Germans but you will get pasted in the German PFPh, nullifying the value of the position. Consider X7 (Firelane potential), Z9 (LOS to Y4), or T6 (well covered). With the possibilities of low German IFT DRs and/ or their own cowering, don't expect this Poilu HS to do very much for you.

The counterattack from the south will depend to a large extent on the state of the game and where the Germans are located. The two woods masses are favored approaches, but you may want to split your force and apply pressure from two

the anti-British colonial movement, and was confined almost entirely to Burmans, the dominant ethnic group in lower Burma. During the 1930s, a revolutionary nationalist movement sprang up, led by the All Burma Student Movement, the Thakins. In 1940, the British attempted to arrest the Thakin leaders. One of these was the Marxist university student, Aung San, who fled in search of aid from the Chinese Communists. Instead, he was captured by the Japanese. Although anti-fascist, Aung San agreed to collaborate with the IJA against the British. In March 1941, he secretly returned to Rangoon to recruit his comrades to be trained in guerilla warfare by the Japanese on Hainan Island. By December 1941, the '30 Comrades' were just over the border in Siam, training a small army of ethnic Burmans to join the attack.

The BIA accompanied the Japanese in their rapid advance into Burma. Moving with Major Sato's battalion of the 33rd Division, the 1300 strong BIA marched rapidly across country to seize the sprawling town of Shwedaung and its three small bridges. What the BIA lacked in experience they made up for in bravado, with many tribesmen believing themselves to be protected by magic charms. This resulted in several suicidal charges by the Burmese, with the loss of approximately 300 troops. After only 36 hours in the front line, the BIA also suffered badly from desertion, losing up to a further 400 men. The low point of the battle was the massacre of some 70 Indian troops in the act of surrender. This proved to be too much for the exhausted Frontier Force units, who withdrew. This engagement was recorded as a famous victory by the Burmese, but curiously the Japanese official history makes no mention of them. This was the only major action of the BIA against the British. 7th Armored Brigade forced their way north past the roadblocks next day, having suffered 400 casualties, and lost 10 Stuart tanks and the majority of their trucks. The brigade joined the rest of Burcorps in a retreat over four months and a thousand miles (1600 km), the longest retreat in the history of the British Army. In a sense the preservation of those Allied units, to be rebuilt and continue the fight, enabled a future victory.

Later in 1942 the BIA was given the more widely recognized title of Burma National Army (and restricted to only 6,000 troops by the Japanese, who had begun to tire of their junior partners). The BNA was only thereafter involved in internal policing duties (mostly against ethnic rivals, such as the Karens).

♣♣♣

Bibliography

Burma - The Longest War by Louis Allen
Defeat Into Victory by F-M. Sir William Slim

♣♣♣

Suggestions

Burmese (Axis Minor) : The Burmese must protect the bridge. Use a fall back defense to impede the British assault on the village and then on/adjacent to the bridge. The stream is a natural defence line, with troops able to move along it unseen, and crest providing natural protection until the enemy is adjacent. The hardest decisions for the Burmese are where to place the SMCs and LMGs. The LMGs must go with 3-4-7s so as to avoid the inexperienced breakdown modifier, (and probably an LMG with each leader, to avoid cowering when laying down firelanes). In the mid-game, firelanes and residual FP are the best methods of slowing Indian assaults through the kunai.

Conserve at least one LMG to fire AP at the 0 AF carrier, when it makes a decisive move. The Burmese leaders are required to start Dare-Death charges, so they too need to be carefully conserved. Remember that all 3-4-7s are Dare Death capable and thus have a -1 DRM in both normal and HtH CC. Dare-Death charges should only be made against isolated Indian units (especially if they are CX/Pinned) or the Carrier, if alone.

Indian (Commonwealth) : The Indian troops have a range and FP advantage, but need to be careful when closing with the Burmese.

Since the Burmese have numerical superiority, the C'wealth force needs to concentrate against a sector at a time and turn the flank of the Burmese line. The Carrier is relatively powerful, but also vulnerable and needs to be protected against PBF, CC and the Sniper. Use its MGs from a distance and wait until at least Turn 6 before risking Overrun of unbroken Burmese MMC, and also keep a HS near it hoping the sniper will take them instead.

The Indians should move steadily to locations that have LOS into the stream, negating Burmese crest positions. Although tempting to use smoke from the 2" mortars at the outset, it is probably best to hold onto the smoke potential of at least one MTR until the final assault on the bridge. The MTRs are also useful in that they may hit units otherwise out of LOS in the stream.



Bloody Ridge [PBP 16]

By Mark McGilchrist

This was inspired by the scenario Alligator Creek. Reading up on the campaign, it was amazing that the battle on Bloody Ridge had not been covered. First of all, the cool name!! Secondly, the size seemed perfect for ASL. The third reason was the desire to feature a night scenario in a tournament, since such games are often avoided for some reason. Night scenarios are enjoyable, and the rules are not too complicated. ASL has a strong infantry focus and infantry rules the night.

The first Japanese response (by Ichiki Force) to the US landings at Guadalcanal was totally repulsed at Alligator Creek. The IJA then sent a follow up landing force, the Kawaguchi Brigade, which circled around through the jungle south of Henderson Field. This slowed and disorganized their approach, resulting in a weak attack on September 12th, finding the Marine Raiders dispersed in the jungle near (as well as on) the ridge. The grassy ridge-top was almost the only clear route out of the jungle south of the airfield. If the attack had been fought with the energy displayed the following night, this could have carried the field for the Japanese, but the troops were simply too tired and hungry.

By the night of the 13th, the Raiders and Para-Marines defending the ridge had been pulled back, and were prepared for the fight.

The night was very dark and a tropical shower was in progress when Japanese officers led the first units forward, some with reflective cloth stitched to their backs to guide those following. They

struggled up the slope onto the end of the ridge, overrunning the right-hand platoon of Raider Company B. In charge after charge, the IJA gained ground and almost broke through. Some small groups infiltrated beyond the ridge, where they were stopped by troops from Marine Divisional HQ and the 2nd Battalion of the 5th Marines. With the airfield only 1500 meters away and seemingly within their grasp, the Japanese charged twelve times in hope of overwhelming the defenders. Knowing there could be no retreat from the last knoll on the ridge, the Raiders stood up to the intense pressure, with Lt. Col. Edson and Major Bailey exerting their authority (and both earning the Medal of Honor). At the crucial stage, USMC 105mm artillery joined in and instantly dominated the battle on the ridge. Kawaguchi's attackers were torn apart, suffering up to 600 dead and 600 wounded (mostly from the artillery and mortar fire) on the literally bloody ridge. The Marine units had lost around 70 dead and missing, and over 180 wounded.



Bibliography

Official History of the U.S. Marine Corps in World War II -Pearl Harbour to Guadalcanal by Hough, Ludwig and Shaw

The Story of the U.S. Marine Corps by J. Robert Moskin

Guadalcanal by Joseph N. Mueller (Osprey Campaigns #18)

Goodbye Darkness by William Manchester

Suggestions

American (USMC) : Essentially the Marines have to hold three of the victory hexes to win. Having made a choice, they should set up on or adjacent to the top of the ridge, in positions no more than 3 hexes apart (and use the dummies to create some bluff positions). Wire should be set up in a continuous frontage, possibly in/adjacent to real USMC positions. There is a choice of either a ring around the centre positions or a line on one flank (in which case the wire should link up to a bamboo hex). The radio and its 60mm OBA pre-designated hex should be positioned to cover the most vital side. A well positioned FFE can force the attacker to take a series of 4 FP attacks to approach the defenders. Remember that the Japanese can assault either end of the hill and will try to get behind you. The 60*MTR should fire IR from the start to allow others to gain LOS and bring their firepower to bear (remember that the ground level of Dense Jungle hexes cannot be illuminated). The USMC must try to prevent enemy Cloaking counters from getting on top of the ridge (especially before Turn 4) or else the Japanese can move too easily if out of your LOS.

Japanese : The Japanese player can opt for an attack on one flank, avoiding part of the defender's set-up, or try a widespread assault over the entire frontage, seeking victory by attrition. In either case, the Japanese units will find it difficult to retain cloaking for long, but it can definitely pay off. Send a cloaked unit (a real one naturally) around and up the back of the hill to outflank the Marines and make even night-time Low Crawl dangerous. After losing cloaking, Banzai charges are really the practical way to move up/across the hill quickly, and particularly through wire. Non-cloaked units moving across a crestline during/after rain pay an additional 1 MF, and entering concealment terrain also costs an extra 1 MF - thus moving uphill into Open Ground requires 3 MF, and uphill into Kunai 6 MF. Cloaking is valuable.

Japanese firepower is respectable, but at night and in rain PFPh/DFPh will usually suffer high +DRM. The more numerous Japanese can stand some attrition, so close with the Raiders and take them out in CC. Rain stops the use of Smoke/WP by the 50mm mortars, but should the rain cease, try WP in particular on US positions. The most intriguing SW for the Japanese is the DC (representing a grenade bundle) and the Hero which can be generated to use it. During its MPh, a self-sacrificing DC Hero can enter a wire hex and attempt to clear it (Whump!), or in full Bushido mode, can enter a USMC position and detonate it there (Brroom!). A DC Hero will attract considerable amounts of defensive firepower, opening avenues for other attacking units to close in with the 'righteous bayonet'.

PLEASE NOTE...
Certain PBP scenarios feature an optional Draw result because failure to meet some victory conditions should not always make you an outright loser. In tournaments, a draw could either be scored as half a Win (because it is not a loss for either player) or be shown as a third type of result, with all players having a three part Win/Draw/Loss score. Alternatively, players or tournament directors can always choose to omit the draw (and use the [A26.4] Attacker loses if they don't win arrangement).
Other PBP scenarios have two levels of victory and/or defeat, so that an decisive result can be rated as such. For points based tournaments, a Decisive Win should be worth 15-20% more than a normal win. For all other purposes, a Win is a win and a Loss is a loss.



Easy Meat [PBP 17]

By Paul Seage

After stopping the Allied advance into Tunisia during December, Panzer Armee Afrika attempted to do something similar again in January. The Allied 1st Army hoped to break through to the coast (led by US armor) south of Tunis, to cut off Rommel's retreat from Libya. Instead, the Germans took the initiative and launched Operations Eilbote (Special Delivery) I & II once the winter mud began to dry. To assist the French division in distress, Combat Command B of 1st US Armored Division was brought out of reserve for the Ousseltia counterattack. This was its first action under the command of Brigadier-General Robinett. In the Tunisian mountains, pine groves covered the hill-tops and much of the ground was soft, thus funneling operational movement into the valleys and along the roads. The terrain on the ridges restricted the tactical mobility of tanks, so the infantry battle for the heights became more significant (and the Allies had the advantage in numbers). Plentiful US artillery and airpower made life difficult for Kampfgruppe Lueder around the Kairouan Pass, but at this date German artillery and airpower were still effective also.

Board 25 has seen its fair share of battles, though they usually consist of troops trying to scale it against a waiting defender.

This scenario offers a chance to have those underrated 6-6-6s and mighty M3 MTs clamber along the slopes and then grab the hamlet from a small German force, only to meet the sort of mixed kampfgruppe employed in Tunisia in 1943.

Bibliography

Rommel In The Desert by Volkmar Kuhn

Road To Tunis by David Rame

Tigers In Combat - Vol.1 by Wolfgang Schneider

directions. If there is anyone alive in the village, head them for the bridge to draw fire. Splitting the AFVs is a possibility, but you will probably need to use the Panhards to enter victory locations at some stage. Don't forget to use 25LL AP (a 1FP CH can definitely do damage) and remember that German ATRs can kill the ACs, so don't be too cavalier while in LOS. Go CE to improve your AP TH chances, if the enemy will more likely be shooting at your infantry.



Under Siege [PBP 14]

By David Longworth

This scenario was another designed for CANCON '97 and revisits a battle whose subject has been used for scenarios since Squad Leader. The original source was Battle Group by James Lucas, an inspiring if not completely reliable volume. The battle portrayed is a classic, Soviet hordes of men and tanks ploughing through the snow to crush the outnumbered German defenders. It was felt that the combination of edge of town terrain, extreme weather, edgy defenders and the alarm company entering at the crucial stage could make a quality, unique scenario.

The German commanders had to decide on which towns or terrain had to be held at any cost, and everything else could be retreated away from until spring. Cholm (German spelling) was a town for which defenders must be found and Major General Theodor Scherer's 281st Security Division was the lucky unit (along with stray reinforcement groups and HQ troops) chosen to dig in. The 281st had fought in the front-line and could be relied on more than other anti-partisan formations. Continual attacks and bombardments made life hell for the Germans. Luckily for the defenders (who had no artillery), the resources of the Russian 3rd Shock Army were strained to the limit to make attacks against Velikye Luki, Demyansk and Cholm in the deep snow and could not achieve a decisive advantage in firepower (especially tanks). Soviet difficulties were increased by the interference of Stalin, unrealistically changing the objectives set for his generals.

The Wehrmacht's Army Group Centre was badly disrupted by the opening of the Russian 1941 winter offensive, battle casualties being added to the large numbers already being suffered because of the extremely low temperatures (-20C to -40C) for which the Germans were unprepared. The weather, although extremely trying for the defenders, also made difficulty for the attackers moving through deep snow. One of the biggest attacks was launched on Red Army Day (23 February 1942). The opening infantry assault was repulsed, but heavy tanks were able to roll through the front line due to the lack of AT weapons and into the edge of Cholm, followed by Soviet infantry into the ruined streets. German 'alarm units' sprang into action, counter-attacking with machine-pistol and grenade, driving back the Russians and restoring the front. Cholm suffered more than 100 attacks before the siege was broken in May.

Historically-minded defenders would always take the G1 bid/balance, exchanging the 75L ATG for a 50L ATG to experience the harsh reality that is indicated by several historical sources.

♣♣♣

Bibliography

Battle-Group by James Lucas
Hitler's Legions by Samuel Mitcham
The Red Army Order Of Battle by Poirrier & Conner
The Road To Stalingrad by John Erickson
Hitler Moves East by Paul Carrell

♣♣♣

Suggestions

German : You need to decide what you are going to hold onto. Taking the victory conditions into account, you will need to hold the large U2 building, but you can't leave the south undefended either. Where to put the ATG is a matter of choice. The relatively low frontal TK# makes this difficult, and if you see a side shot, it's probably worth taking. Try X8 (cover the middle), V2 or W1 (protect U2), or even Y10 (enfilade the road).

Make sure it is covered by infantry wherever it goes. You start with good MG firepower, but Extreme Winter makes this an ephemeral strength. Whether to set up anything forward is a matter of taste, but units in AA3/AA4 can hold up the attack for a turn or two - similarly Z8/Z9. Choose only one of these options, not both.

Once the Russian gets to the street and starts crossing, fall back and wait for the alarm force. Those 548s will cause respect wherever they appear, which will depend on the state of play. Generally, two or three squads will go into the U2 building, with the others being free to go where required. Remember ATMM and the SSR on melees. If you stay in a hex acquired by a KV 76L MA, you need urgent medical attention.

Russian : You have enough troops to spread out on a broad front in this one. Split the tanks up so that the ATG can't take out more than one, and use them to apply pressure to the key positions, particularly hexrow X in the first couple of turns. Use them as cover for infantry to cross the road (and round up stragglers). You won't be needing to move too quickly, so the Bog DRs shouldn't be too onerous - if it happens, you should still have two left. The U2 building is quite important, but if you clear the block within T10-T4-Y2 (and keep it that way) you will win. The Germans have good counterattack capability and move last, so you have to be careful to stop them rushing back (especially round your flank into the undefended rear).



On The Road To Mandalay [PBP 15]

By Mark McGilchrist

Reading about the engagement at Shwedaung and wanting to shine the light of ASL on it, the Axis Minors (rather than partisans) seemed logical for the untrained Burmese. The Burma Independence Army (BIA) had its roots in

Suggestions

American : From the US perspective the challenge is to keep those US squads on the move and to have leaders positioned to quickly rally any cowardly skulkers. The long range and easy rally of the US squads make them ideal for this type of battle though (I'm sure) every attacker will curse the unbroken 6 Morale during the scenario. If that German HMG is entrenched on the ridge and will otherwise dominate the approach to the buildings, the 60*MTRs are obvious contenders for suppressing the German defenders. Of course LOS is normally reciprocal.....

The M3 MTs won't be effectively in action until Turn 2 or 3. If not chomped by the Tiger (unlikely!), those M3 (Lees) will be deadly against unarmored German units. The growling/prowling Tiger is the Deathstar of this scenario especially when insulated by SSR4 from most MA malfunctions. The Lees can either hide from it or, if used correctly, can take it on. Remember that two guns per tank (with gyros - stay in motion, gain acquisition!) gives a fair chance of swamping the defender.

Look for flank/rear shots. Because this scenario involves mostly bad terrain for tanks, the slow approach of the M3s demands excellent coordination.

German : The German player must ensure that his Tiger will be difficult to flank, (take on the Lees frontally and one at a time). This tank vs. tank side show may take several turns to be resolved but the victor will have the advantage of uncontested armor in the end-game. The German must allocate forces with the dual objectives of delaying the US infantry as long as possible (hopefully popping a few back into the box) and also ensuring German units are able to rout, rally and maintain cohesion until the end-game. Leave the village adequately defended, but to forfeit good firing positions on the hill will allow too many US troops to get close (and their firepower would then prevail). A balanced set-up is crucial.

Once the unarmored reinforcements get into position the Tiger can go hunting M3s but caution is needed because if the Tiger dies early (without taking a couple or all the M3s with it), a US victory is difficult to avoid. The AA trucks won't withstand the IFT FP that will be flying around, but if they manage to cut off a few routs or delay the US infantry for a turn, they will have done their job. Placing them behind a wall and/or in olive groves will certainly extend their limited life. Consider the possibility of abandoning the Kfz 1 (and removing the MG) to use the crew as infantry, a LMG firelane might temporarily deter US entry into key hexes or the LMG could be handed over to a squad. The elite squads will be hard to shift out of stone buildings, but there are only two of them. An interesting combined arms scenario this one and both sides have plenty of options, it should go down to the wire unless the Tiger dies early. Did I mention that.....?



Pandemonium [PBP 18]

By Les Kramer

The British campaign that became known as First Arakan was a true 'bungle in the jungle' by any definition. What else could be expected from an attack entitled Operation Cannibal (and it certainly consumed more of its own side than the enemy). Appalling terrain was seen as the worst British handicap, with no roads to allow movement of the huge quantities of supplies required. A 'simple plan' for an attack along the inhospitable Mayu Peninsula by the fresh 14th Division became bigger and more unwieldy, with extra attached units overloading the divisional commander and headquarters.

Jungle fighting techniques were mastered by the Japanese as they attacked through Burma in early 1942, but in early '43 the British were still six months from settling on effective methods for their troops. Difficulty of manoeuvre and absence of secure flanks experienced in the jungle undermined any British hopes of regaining the initiative. The 14th Division resolutely but slowly pushed southwards from December until February, reaching as far as Donbaik, with its steep sided stream-beds (chaungs) running through the jungle down to the sea. The Japanese positions were almost impossible to spot. The area was heavily shelled in preparation for the assault by newly arrived 6th Brigade but the IJA troops and fortifications withstood the barrage. Five British and Indian battalions had already lost heavily attempting to break in and were replaced at the sharp end by the fresh 6th Brigade. Poor planning thus wasted nine Allied battalions in successive frontal attacks on dug-in and determined Japanese defenders at Donbaik. British Army morale in Burma sank even lower.

A couple of recorded incidents of malfunctioning Tommy-guns made an opportunity to simulate unreliable close-range weapons (and their effect on combat effectiveness in oppressive jungle conditions). The widely separated objective hexes will strain the cunning of both sides to allocate enough force to do the job.

♣♣♣

Bibliography

Burma - The Longest War by Louis Allen
The Battle Of The Box by Patrick Turnbull
Official History Of The Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War - Arakan Operations (Indian Government)

♣♣♣

Suggestions

Japanese : The essential Japanese advantage is the difficulty of the terrain for the attacker. Advancing over a crest-line in the jungle will CX the advancing unit. Thus, a British unit attempting to enter into CC with a Japanese defender over a jungle crest line is asking to be ambushed. The opportunity for Japanese units to advance onto CX units below them will similarly minimize the benefits to the British of Double-Timing in your vicinity. Threatening a British stack with dummy stacks assault moving adjacent to them in jungle can draw fire and thus assist a real unit to get in close. The trenches will give the most benefit if set up adjacent to each other across a crestline allowing easier movement/advance.

The spread-out objective hexes force the British to cover a lot of terrain. Remember you only need to hold four Level 4 hexes at game end to win (three for a draw). The Japanese player needs to make every crest line a major hurdle for the British.

Commonwealth : You will need to move assertively to be able to reach the objectives, but be careful of losing your

numerical advantage by unexpectedly entering CC with stealthy Japanese. Single squads in jungle or bamboo will be asking to be ambushed, especially if CX. Having said this, most Commonwealth players will need attempt to attack on both flanks, forcing the defender to split his handful of units and threatening more of the objective hexes. Use the free shellhole placement SSR to make two unfriendly OG hexes into something safer. The western flank is the most open route, so generally the force there will be smaller (from as little as two HS, or as many as a leader and three squads), with the objective of distracting the Japanese by making a small but significant attempt on the two Level 4 Hill hexes there. From the east side, take advantage of the paths, gullies and swamps, but remember the defender can read the map too. Generally aim to fight your way along the main ridge-top from one end to the other (from back to front might give the defence some grief).

Minimize the dispersion of your forces and be selective about PBF attacks, so as to be able to cope with possible MMC quality lost by an attack DR >9. Don't get too worried by SSR4 - Close Quarter Breakdown - a stack with a pair of LMGs could avoid using its inherent FP (sometimes), and the more units firing the better as far as getting a result on the target (random selection hopefully will only pick one to drop in quality). A stack with a leader won't cower, so keep your leaders alive and your 2nd Line troops will still be useful.



House Of Pain [PBP 19]

By Les Kramer

This scenario takes places in mid-July when the German (and Italian) defenders of Sicily were ordered to fall back to the Hauptkampflinie, the main Axis defence line in the north-east of the island. There they dug in and waited for the Allied spearhead units to break through the minefields and booby-traps.

German positions were well prepared, making use of obstacles and terrain to channel the approach of the attacking Allied units.

Despite the high-quality personnel and equipment of the HG Division, it was relatively inexperienced in combat and had recently absorbed many new replacements for the troops lost in Tunisia. They had been learning on the job in Sicily - and quickly. At Gerbini, the desert veterans of the Highland Division found themselves exposed to swift and ferocious combined arms counterattacks (as German doctrine demanded), each time they gained ground. The Jocks were confident in attack, but suffered heavy casualties. By 21 July, the 2 Schw.Panzer Abt. 504 and Panzer Regiment HG were down to 3 Tigers and 20 PZ IIIs or IVs, but they had brought the British assault to a standstill.

For the German to win this one, delaying tactics and keeping those precious infantry units alive are the main requirements. A Tiger can't hold on to a building, but a broken HS or wounded SMC in the top floor of each victory building at game end may be enough to win. Using the plentiful cover available, the Highland infantries must advance briskly to get enough firepower into those buildings to prevent that outcome.

♣♣♣

Bibliography

The Battle For Italy by John Strawson
Hitler's Legions by Samuel Mitcham

♣♣♣

Suggestions

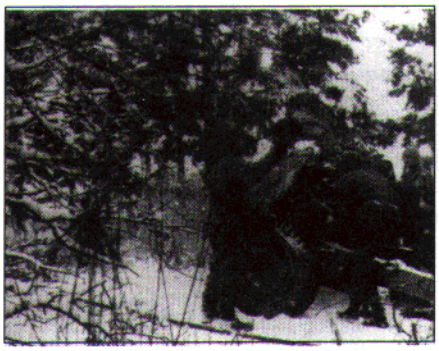
German : The HG grenadiers must choose between either the temptations of forward defence or the reassurance of defence in depth. Deploy a squad, then put the HMG/247/SMC in a position with good LOS/Boresight potential (and where they won't be overwhelmed early on). On 2nd Level in 21DD4 or 21YY3 would add depth to any setup. If a forward posture is chosen (say 20T3 or U3) be ready to dish it out then use retrograde movement to occupy the objective buildings. Use dummies and half-squads to make your initial front-line more threatening to enemy units approaching in the open. Don't put real units in a position where the enemy can manoeuvre around them and cut them off. After Turn 4, make sure your moving infantry remembers the enemy FB overhead. The rubble is definitely two-sided - it gives good TEM and blocks LOS at ground level (thus helping both sides).

Tiger-mania is a big factor, try the legendary long-range shooter in 21Y9 or 21BB9 (and match it with a pair of 5/8" dummies in the other). Once the FB arrives, it will probably concentrate on this target, but will need to be lucky. Don't expose the Tiger's hull to the British Shermans unless you're in a hex where an immobilized AFV will still be useful.

Commonwealth : The entry hexes to be chosen are a poker player's call - do you call the German's bluff or spend precious MFs on using the TEM available. Look at the enemy setup and decide how far you want to get by Turn 3 (half-way point), then pace your approach. The rubble and buildings provide a chain of protected hexes, don't gamble in the open too often. Your elite infantry and leaders must be given the chance to get into the victory buildings so the Shermans will need to be kept close by, to blast German infantry and smoke the Tiger and/or HMG stack. If it can't be killed, Smoke it (sM never runs out). If the tanks don't have MA smoke, the mortars (infantry or AFV) might.

Shermans are almost impervious to early '43 German infantry, so - while they pine for those absent PFs - show no mercy and blast them point-blank (backed up by your elite infantry). It would usually be worth losing a Sherman to immobilize the Tiger (possibly making it worth an infantry CC attack then also). Keep your crews BU (unless you're going to duel the Tiger) because the Sniper will be hunting for them. The FB will almost certainly show up on Turn 5, so no whining if it doesn't make it earlier. It will make it difficult for German infantry to fall back and that may be the opening you need - saving it until the DFPh to point-attack the Tiger can still be fun.

Errata: For the latest CH errata, send a S.A.S.E. to CH Errata, 88 Lodar Lane, Brewster, NY 10509.
GEMBLOUX ERRATA: The Germans in "Lost Sentinels" may purchase P12 (i.e., not P1,2) I1 RGs of Infantry for the CG.
OUR ERRATA compendium will be done for the '97 Christmas Special Edition.



Hard To Kill [PBP 20]

By Captain Nutrageous

The scenario was drawn from the lovingly detailed *Freineux and Lamorneil - The Ardennes* by George Winter. Although the ASL community is no stranger to Panthers attacking Shermans, the chance to develop a detailed village layout and to illustrate the threat of concealed AT guns was too good to pass up. The troop strengths could be set with precision because of the detail in the source material.

While the Fifth Panzer Armee drove towards the Meuse, Allied commanders threw every unit available into the line to prevent a catastrophic breakthrough. Part of 3rd US Armored Division was pushed into the Hotton-Manhay area, split into three task forces. One of these was Task Force Kane, which began probing towards Manhay and Baraque de Fraiture. As thinly spread elements of TF Kane moved near Dochamps, they bumped into advance units of 116th Panzer and 560th Volksgrenadier Divisions, and the US force fell back on the little villages of Freineux and Lamorneil (unaware that 2nd SS-Panzer Division was heading right for them).

The German drive through Belgium east of the Ourthe river had passed its peak, with attrition steadily weakening the units at the point of the spearhead. Fatigue makes even elite units careless, and the crossing of the river became a problem when the far bank was found to be too steep for some of the Panthers to negotiate. With only four tanks across the attack was still pressed. The kampfgruppe was tired and a bad decision had been made. Attacking without reconnaissance, as the Germans did at Freineux, would always be a gamble at poor odds. Having pushed into Freineux and been thrown back, the SS spent the afternoon manoeuvreing around it and bringing down artillery fire from a safe distance.

In a complete reversal of fortune later in the day, a platoon of US tanks crested the rise west of Freineux and approached Fritz Langanke's position. He had ranged the slope already (just in case) and demonstrated his and his gunner's skills by swiftly destroying all five Shermans (from the 14th Tank Battalion). This was insignificant however, because TF Kane had already slowed the German advance sufficiently for the Allied defence to crystallize (and withdrew from the area the next evening).

This nutrageous scenario (a.k.a. 'Easy To Die') was designed for CANCON '97 and provides a serious test for each player. None of the US units can be relied on to stop their SS equivalents (but often will), and the Germans have a demanding victory condition to live up to (and will half the time). US 76L APCR rounds can definitely take out a Panther through the turret front in ASL, but as Corporal Vance demonstrated, ordinary 76L AP is good enough to go defeat the thin side armor.

♣♣♣

Bibliography

Freineux and Lamorneil, The Ardennes by George Winter

Tank Battles of the Waffen SS 1943-45 by Will Fey

The Battle Of The Bulge - Then and Now by Jean-Paul Pallud

♣♣♣

Suggestions

German : As the German in this scenario, you wield a small but powerful force. The key elements are four Panthers, with armor that is tough to penetrate from the front, and six SS squads, rounded out with quality leaders. You will need them all, because you have a long way to go to meet a stringent victory condition against a force with high firepower. The German's main disadvantage is brittleness - a couple of early APCR kills or a bad MC on an infantry stack and your attack may be set back irreversibly.

This is one scenario where the tanks and the infantry will probably have to split up. The tanks will have to go up the middle and take any initial APCR shots on the chin, as the approach avenue is only 5-6 hexes wide. The Panthers will need to exercise caution, as there are a great number of locations where the ATGs can hide. You should be able to scare off the Shermans easily enough, but the infantry will have to sweep for the ATGs before you can move forward. Use the tanks to pound any US infantry positions, particularly the steeple and the edge of the village - they won't hang around when -2 acquisition starts to bite. The infantry will have to be split with two or three squads moving up each side to comb the woods for ATGs and threaten both flanks. You have enough time to work your way up - don't try to be on the outskirts before turn 5, but remember that the US get that final player turn.

American : The US force looks somewhat out-gunned, but your strength lies in factors other than the units. As the scenario defender, you can set up concealed, use boresighting, and have a number of locations for the ATGs to use. Some places include in I8 (right up front), J10 facing SE, N8/O9/P8 facing NE and L0/N0 facing NW (great for flank shots) or even back in the buildings.

Don't shoot too early, and remember that bypass through a gun's hex doesn't reveal it. Remember to Boresight. The infantry setup will depend on where you place the ATGs. A SMC/HS/MMG stack ready to move up into the steeple is almost mandatory. You may well want to put a squad in the I8 building, as this can slow the German down straight away, but cover it with other troops in the M9/L10 area, who will fall back to the wall. On the east side, others can man the hedgeline (and skulk back out of LOS into the buildings when necessary).

Put two Shermans behind the Q6/Q7 wall area and the other tank on the east side - a gambler could put it in I8 or I7 (but be ready to lose it quickly). The tanks roll for APCR shots first up, and then (if unsuccessful and the option is available) for Motion and/or smoke dischargers. Fall back into the village for your last stand, and if you can't kill it, smoke it. Take any available chance to counterattack on the final turn. Remember those M5A1 light tanks have C7 ammo— a giant shotgun for clearing buildings can be useful at the death (literally).

The rest of the PBP scenarios described here are available in the AUSSIE '97 Pack available from CH now for $10.00, plus S & H!





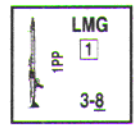
ASL Optional/SSR WALKAROUND

by Andrea Mateuzzi

This compilation has been conceived with a number of purposes in mind. First off, it serves as an extensive design aid for scenario designers and fills that oft requested-for need. For the first time, a large database of SSR is available by category. As a play aid for the imaginative player interested in spicing up their play, both CG, DYO *and* scenarios, variety can be obtained by adding one or more appropriate SSR by decision of both players, as optional rules. Finally, a read through this compilation will give you some insight into where ASL, the game-as-simulation has been.

While all of the SSR have been used in one or more published scenarios. (they are extracted from the author's personal collection of more than 900) many of the SSR here are paraphrased, with content intact, and the appropriate information is provided to enable you to track down and purchase the needed magazine/game/module to get your own copy. We urge you *not* to photocopy from your friends as that long-standing problem remains a cancer to our hobby and hurts those intrepid souls bringing their designs to *you.* For each SSR, the source is specified from where the author has excerpted the rule. The scenario SSR are always quoted as printed [EX: ASLUG 3 = scenario ASLUG number 3]; the Optional-New rules from ASL magazines are indicated with the issue number [EX: ASLUG # mean ASLUG issue #]; at last, the official AH works are reported as commonly known [EX: ASLRB = ASL Rule-Book].







CHAPTER A

A4.53 EXHAUSTED INFANTRY. No player's unit can voluntarily goes CX (i.e. receive a CX counter) [EXC: Minimum Move and Advance vs. Difficult Terrain]. In CCPh the player's units are always considered CX, Ambush dr included, but does not suffer supplemental penalties in CCPh (ASL TAC27).

A7 INCREMENTAL IFT...the new, detailed but controversial IFT table (Annual 89).

A7.213 NO HAND GRENADE. Squad/HS without Hand Grenades cannot use PBF (the FP is not doubled) and the TPBF is treated as PBF (double FP instead triple it). The Squad/HS CCV is one less (squad: 4, crew: 3, HS: 2) (ASL TAC32).

A9.75 OUT OF AMMO. Whenever a Weapon malfunctions on a **TO HIT DR**, there is a chance that the gun has not jammed, but rather run out of ammunition. Therefore, re-roll a dr. A dr = 1,2,3 results in the gun being jammed and subject to normal subsequent repair and possible X# dr. A dr = 4,5,6 results in the weapon being out of ammunition - a fault for which there is no remedy within the scope of the play. Guns capable of firing several types of ammo, however, may continue to fire the ammo type not used when the weapon malfunctioned. (AoS archives).

A10.73 CG LEADERS...Personalized Squad Leaders added to OB (ANNUAL 95).

A10.9 AUMÔNIER...[Chaplain], a non-military leader (TACTIQUE #3).

A10.11 SURPRISE. Units caught by surprise may not fire during Turn 1 unless *awake*. A unit awakens by making a dr ≤ 2, subject to leadership DRM where applicable. If any unit in a hex awakens, all therein are considered awake. Units also awaken if fired upon or attacked in CC - or automatically upon the start of own's RPh of Turn 2. Units surprised are TI, may not fire, move nor voluntarily rout, are automatically ambushed in CC and enemy units are automatically out of their LOS for Concealment loss/gain purposes. (ASL A11).

A11.81 BOCAGE FIGHTING Street Fighting is allowed in the Road Hexes and ADJACENT to a Building/Bocage hex on both sides of that road (TAC 60).

A11.42 AMBUSH H-T-H During each

Ambush dr if both players rolls the same dr an automatic Hand-to-Hand (J2.31) attack takes place [EXC: Vehicles; broken units must still attempt withdrawal]. If Hand-to-Hand occurs Ambush is NA. This location remains locked in Hand-to-Hand until all units of one side are eliminated/withdrawn. Otherwise, H-t-H is NA (HASL KH3).

A12.33 HIP MOVEMENT. During the APh, a hidden unit may retain its HIP status while moving from a woods/building hex/location to an ADJACENT woods/building hex/location if that move is made across a woods/building hexside [EXC: if this is into Difficult Terrain (A4.72), its HIP is lost] (ASL A49).

A12.5 HIDDEN RESULTS SYSTEM...results of fire attacks are revealed only if within given ranges (the Rout Report #18-22).

A13.63 TARGET PANIC. During a Charge, the first time the target unit fires in each fire phase (counting the MPh and DFPh as one), its IFT (or ordnance TH) DR also serves as a NMC on it (but not on any leader directing it). Should such an attack DR exceed the morale level of > one firing unit in a FG, use Random Selection to determine which unit(s) breaks (ASL A12).

A14.1 - A19.1 SNIPER & ELR TABLES...playing aid handouts (FFE dossier).

A15.6 GLORY HOUND. At the start of each own's PFPh in which the original best leader is not (and has not yet been) berserk, eliminated or captured, the player must make a berserk dr. If the dr is = the current Turn number that leader, and all other friendly Infantry in the same location, automatically become berserk. Should the best leader become berserk without benefit of this SSR, all other Infantry in the same location still become berserk automatically and this SSR is ignored thereafter. All Known occupants of the nearest, enemy-occupied location (that is not occupied solely by HIP/Concealed unit[s]) are automatically considered in LOS of the berserk unit(s) as per A15.431 (solely for berserk charge purposes) regardless of actual LOS conditions (ASL RB3).

A19.131 AMMUNITION SHORTAGES...Infantry suffer Unit Replacement; vehicles and Guns have lower circled B# (ASLRB).

A16.4 TRUCE. Should either side have less than half of its original unbroken squads/equivalents at the end of a RPh, that side's best GO leader must take an immediate NTC. This NTC has no effect whatsoever except that if it is failed, or if that side has no GO leader at that time, that side must request [EXC: No Quarter is in effect] a Truce which will end the game if the other side accepts (ASL 16).

A19.132 ELITE REPLACEMENT...underscored Morale Level units suffer Unit Replacement (ASLRB).

A20.6 CIVILIANS. The Civilians refugees are represented by (1)-0-6 MMC. May not use CX, nor may enter deployed. Any Pin or MC failure is treated as Casualty Reduction, but for MMC's only. Civilian units ignore ELR restrictions and will not surrender to enemy units. (ASL Z27).

A22.11 EARLY-WAR GERMAN FT. German 1939-40 FT have 2PP (ASL 49).

A22.41 NIGHT VULNERABILITY. Any unit possessing the FT which is forced to take any MC and rolls a 5-6 on the colored die of that MC suffers casualty reduction and eliminates the FT (which creates an illuminated location as per E1.84) (HASL KH1).

A23.73 ROAD MINING. A Set DC may be secretly recorded on a road hex. The Set DC may be triggered by a set-up designed demolition group. A Final KIA result on the Set DC attack creates a Roadblock along any one of the road hexsides of the hex in which the Set DC was placed. (ASL-N 48).

A23.74 GRENADE BUNDLES. First Line or better squad [EXC: Partisan] may generate grenade bundles if in GO and stacked with a GO leader during any PFPh, DFPh or APh. A grenade bundle is treated as a DC (A23.) [EXC: 12FP, A23.2 does not apply and is always Throw (A23.6); but have not adverse effect on adjacent hexes (including the throwing unit)]. Each squad may generate one GB per scenario and the player must mark the generating squad with a designed counter. Once thrown, the squad generating GB suffer NO HAND GRENADE as per A7.213 above (On All Front's Partisan Leader).

A23.75 BANGALORE TORPEDO. British unit can substitute on a 2 for1 basis any DC received with Bangalore Torpedoes, exclusively designed to Wire destruction (B26.51 and B26.45). This DC is treated exactly as a DC for Wire removal use, but cannot be used in any other function (ASL TAC5).

A23.76 DEMOLITION MINE. Any DC can be substituted with a Demolition Mine, each of with is assumed to have a portage cost of *two* PP. These DC will detonate only if Set (regardless of which side posses it). The player's may secretly pre-designate one unit for each DC in his OB. Each of these units is assumed to pass both its US# dr when Setting a DC and its NTC when detonating that DC (A23.7). A DC attack will *automatically* cause rubble if its IFT DR is a KIA (ASL 29).

A25.111 SS REPLACEMENT...if ELR<5 units suffer Unit Replacement, see also A19.132 (Time On Target #2).

A25.112 SS UNIFORM. All SS infantry are equipped with camouflage smocks and qualify for a -1 DRM to its Concealment dr (A12.122) when in woods, brush, grain, orchard or marsh location (OAF IX'87).

A25.113 GERMAN MARINES...a new class of units (TOT SSR4).

A25.232 SOVIET TANK-HUNTER TEAMS...specialist squad type (Critical Hit! issue).

A25.233 SOVIET PF USAGE. Starting from 1944 on, Russian squads have a PF availability number of "2" (HS/crew: "1"). Such SW are considered Inherent (as per C13.31); however, the +2 TH DRM of A21.12 applies normally. No more than {Squad Equivalent # ÷ 3} PF may be fired by the Russian player during the course of the scenario. All other rules of PF-usage apply normally (ASL A21...and more on Critical Hit! next issue).

A25.234 RED SOLDIER...new historical Soviet evaluative characteristics, comprising **A]** 2nd line units (4-3-7), **B]** LG from 8 to 6, **C]** '43+ OBA w/ 6B/2R (Tactique #5).

A25.234 FACTORY FANATICISM. All Soviet units in a Factory get Fanaticism benefit while in the building (ASL B).

A25.236 BAYONET CHARGE. An unwounded 8-1 or higher Leader of any nationality may declare a Bayonet Charge before to expend the first MF during the MPh. The charge is equivalent to an Human Wave [EXC: Only SQUAD/HS in the same location of declaring Leader can make a Bayonet Charge. Units composing a Bayonet Charge can declare Hand to Hand] (ASL X7...more on GSTK CG27...and more on Time On Target

#1&#2).

A25.237 MARCHING FIRE...The infantry units may use Marching Fire without conducting a Bayonet Charge (ASL TOT12 + Time On Target #1).

A25.238 ATTACK SURGE. In each Impulse, all units of a Banzai Charge-Human Wave (A25.23) must move closer (in hexes) to the enemy unit which permitted the declaration of this Banzai Charge-Human Wave. At the moment that at least one charging unit enters the Location of this particular enemy unit, the other participants of this Banzai Charge-Human Wave may ignore it and charge subsequently (as required above) another enemy unit in LOS. If no other enemy unit is in LOS, all remaining units of a Banzai Charge-Human Wave must attempt to enter the Location of the last enemy unit which was considered their Designated Target. All the other rules pertinent to Human Wave (A25.23) and Banzai Charge (G1.5) remain applicable. (ASL-N 35).

A25.241 PARTISAN SSR. Partisan may not form multi-location firegroups.

·5-2-7 squads (and their HS retain their printed Strength Factor [EXC: treat their morale # as underlined] and Broken morale level, but otherwise are treated as partisan in every way (including a 5-2-7's Replacement by two 2-2-7 HS for exceeding ELR).

·Whenever an armed enemy MMC is eliminated or Reduced, place a Labor counter in that hex Location. A Labor -1 counter is placed for HS casualties; a Labor -2 is placed for Squad casualties. The Labor counter represents the inherent Small Arms weapons of the Reduced or eliminated unit and can be eliminated by the enemy like any SW (A9.73). However, if a Partisan 3-3-7 recovers a -1 "weapon" counter it is transformed automatically into a 4-4-7 squad (or 2-3-7 if a HS); if it recovers a -2 "weapon" counter it is transformed into a 4-5-8 squads (or 2-4-8 if a HS). A SMC may recover weapons (A4.44) but must transfer them to a MMC before they can be used. Partisan units which increase their Strength Factor retain their 5 ELR and if subject to ELR failure (A19.13) are replaced by two broken HS (or Disrupted if a HS).

·Only Partisan can use Path benefits (and any units moving in the same stack with them); move through woods at 1½ MF and brush & grain at 1MF.

·Partisan (and any units moving in the same stack with them) may move/advance/rout directly from one rowhouse hex to an adjacent connected rowhouse hex at any level as if it cost three MF. This does not allow them to form FG or fire through the black bars however (B23.71).

·[EXC: if PTO terrain is in effect, none of the above apply, but the Inherent MF allotment is increased by one, receive a -2 drm to their Concealment dr, do not add two to their Search dr (G1.63) and go into H-t-H CC in same manner as the Japanese (G1.64) but each Partisan H-t-H CC attack receive an extra -1 DRM] (ASL 2, 27, 30, 32, 34, 60, 64).

A25.47 PIPERS...SMC with morale-raising capabilities [humorous] (Annual 89).

A25.487 MOUSEHOLES...British breach (B23.711, B23.9221) (GSTK CG19).

A25.35 FSSF units have underlined Morale; ability to use all SW without captured-use penalties; not subject to Cower; Commando and Assault Engineers capabilities (ASL A19).

A25.43 GURKHA go in Hand-to-Hand CC in the same manner as Japanese (G1.64) (ASL 63).

A25.441 AUSTRALIAN squads may Deploy without leadership by rolling = their current morale level on their Deployment NTC; Australian HS do not require a Good Order leader to Recombine (A1.32) (ASL A42).

A25.53 FREE FRENCH squads have Assault Fire (A7.36) and the A25.45 immunity to cowering does not apply to them (F.8). Moreover, the Free French Inherent crews are considered British when determining their morale as per D5.1 (F.8B) (ASL-N 91r4).

A25.54 MOROCCANS can declare Hand-to-Hand CC if Attacker in CC and receive a -1 drm in Hand-to-hand due to their swords (ASL IDRAC92).

A25.731 SISSI T-H Finns SISSI Combat Engineers may use one Tank-Hunter Hero as if they were Japanese (G1.421) (ASL *"the Beast"*).

A25.83 SPANISH CIVIL WAR...listing of all MMC/SMC of the Spanish Civil War (OAF #119).

A25.831 SPANISH units are considered Russian for Heat of Battle (A15.1) & receive a +1 DRM in attempt to entrench [EXC: Basque, Internationalist, Moroccan] (ASL TAC 13 & OAF #116).

A25.84 HUNGARIAN units use German SW/Guns without any Captured-use penalties. The Hungarians may also use PF (C13.3) as if they were Germans of the appropriate year: however, a separate record must be kept of German and Hungarian PF usage. Unless No Quarter (A20.3) is in effect for the Axis side, all non-elite broken (*including* Disrupted) Hungarian MMC that are = two hexes from (and in LOS of) a Known Western Allied Good Order Infantry unit will rout to a Western Allied Good Order Infantry unit (Allied player's choice if ≤ one Allied unit could be reached by that surrendering unit during the RtPh) - after first abandoning any SW/Guns in its possession - as its prisoner in lieu of making a normal rout. Interdiction is NA for Hungarian units surrendering thusly Hungarians will not attempt escape (A20.55) unless abandoned (TOT 17 & 24).

A25.85 ROMANIAN Romanians may conduct Human Waves (ASL H1).

A25.86 N.K.P.A. North Korean People's Army units are treated as pre-10/42 Russians for all purposes [EXC: Deployment allowed; NKPA may use Dare-Death squads as if Chinese, NKPA squads are allowed to attempt ATMM usage as if they were German]. NKPA T-34-85 have an APCR Depletion # of 9 {or unlimited} (ASL CH35 + PB6).

A.93 BELGIAN squads have Assault Fire (A7.36) capability (ASL 48).

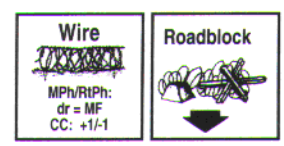
A26.123 CREWS...Inherent Crews cannot be used for Building Control (TAC62).

A26.51 EQUALIZER...a dr/DR reroller (TOT #2).

A26.6 ABS...scenario balance bid; BV thru Partisan! (Fire For Effect #5 & dossier).

A*Z14. HIGHLANDER SMC...a new humoristic Leader & his Sheep (ASL BB).

A"166."CdCorCOMMAND CNTRL...only units in C^2 can move/fire (ASL-News #27); CH Vol. 4, No. 2. for CdC.



CHAPTER B

B2.5 BROKEN ROADS. Hidden-Mines/Entrenchments (including A-T

continued on page 34

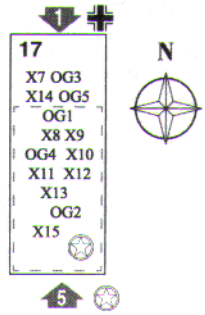
HARD TO KILL

PBP#20

FREINEUX, BELGIUM, 24 December 1944 : Soon after overrunning the U.S. troops at Baraque de Fraiture, the 2nd SS Panzer Division "Das Reich" pushed on to Freineux, which was thought to be lightly held. A Panther company with a reinforced grenadier platoon were detached to take the village (without reconnaissance). Most of the Panthers were delayed in the confusion of fording the Aisne river, but the experienced platoon leaders Fritz Langanke and Karl Seebohm drove south towards the town along with two other tanks. Freineux was being held by a mixed force from 3rd US Armored Division, consisting of Shermans, Stuarts, towed AT guns and dismounted recon troops. Standing watch in his M4A3 at first light (around 0800 hrs), Corporal Jim Vance saw an infantryman running towards him, shouting that German tanks were coming. Vance alerted the rest of the tank crew and scanned the low ridge that masked the river crossing to the north of the village.



BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



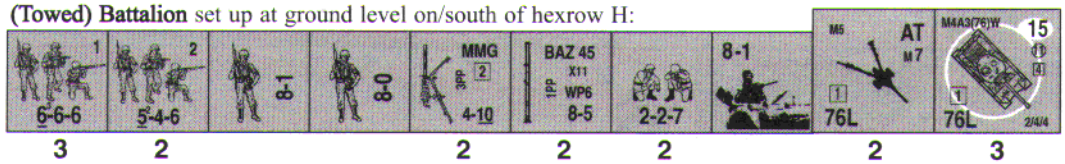
AUSTRALIAN BALANCE SYSTEM:

A3: As for A2 and change 'seven' in line 2 of the VC to 'six'
A2: As for A1 and replace 2 x 6-6-6 US MMC with 2 x 5-4-6 MMC
A1: Boresighting is NA
G1: Delete 9-1 German A/L
G2: As for G1 and replace 8-1 German SMC with an 8-0
G3: As for G2 and US units are Elite for Ammo Depletion purposes

VICTORY CONDITIONS: To Win, the German must Control at least seven Stone Locations at Game End.
(German Decisive Win for Control of nine Stone Locations; Decisive Loss if less than three Controlled).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
AMERICAN Sets Up First							
GERMAN Moves First							

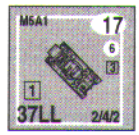
Company D, 83 Reconnaissance Battalion, and elements of Company D, 32 Tank Battalion and 643 Tank Destroyer (Towed) Battalion set up at ground level on/south of hexrow H:



3 2 2 2 2 2 3

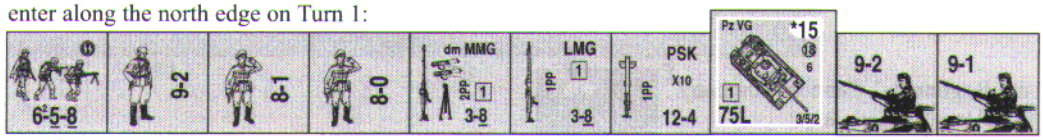
[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 2}

Elements of Company C, 83 Recon Bn. enter along the south edge on Turn 5 :



2

Elements of 1 Kompanie, SS-Panzergrenadier Regiment 3 and 2 Kompanie, SS-Panzer Regiment 2 enter along the north edge on Turn 1:



6 2 2 2 4

[ELR: 5]
{SAN: 2}

by David Longworth

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start.

2. All buildings are Stone and single story, except hex 17oS3 which has a 1st Level and also a 2nd Level Steeple (P5.2) Location.

3. US units use 1945 Ammunition Depletion numbers. Treat M4A3 tanks as Elite for Ammunition Depletion purposes (C8.2).

4. Place overlays as follows: **OG1** on O6; **OG2** on W3-W4; **OG3** on F4-G4; **OG4** on P9-Q9; **OG5** on I5-H5; **X7** on G6; **X8** on P3; **X9** on P1; **X10** on S3; **X11** on T6-U7; **X12** on R1-R2; **X13** on S4-T4; **X14** on I7-I8; and **X15** on W5-W6.

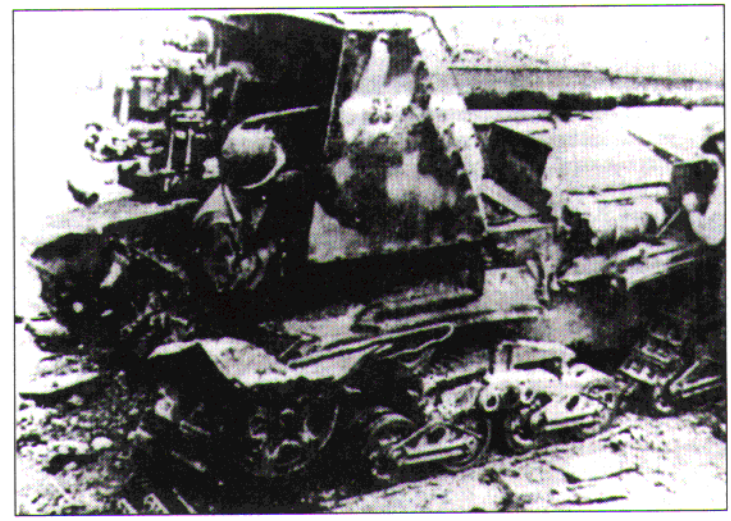
CONCLUSION: Vance watched until he saw four Panthers came over the rise with their flanks exposed to him. With his tank commander still absent at HQ, he jumped down into his own (gunner's) seat and fired the main gun, knocking out the first enemy AFV. After standing up again in the hatch to locate the next target, he fired again, turning Seebohm's tank into a flaming wreck. The tracks of the third Panther were hit and it withdrew, leaving Untersturmfuhrer Fritz Langanke to attack alone. Vance had prudently backed his tank out of sight beside the church by this stage, but Langanke located Sgt. Beckman's M4A3 at the north end of the village and destroyed it. His progress ended when the two 76mm AT guns opened fire, inflicting up to 20 frontal hits. Unable to spot the snow and brush covered guns (and with his new radio operator suffering a total nervous breakdown), Langanke reversed his Panther into nearby trees. The panzergrenadiers, led by their company commander Untersturmfuhrer Erich Heller, then attacked down both sides of the road, pushing forward to occupy the first row of houses, where they engaged in a bitter exchange with US infantry and Sherman tanks. After an hour, with casualties mounting, Heller ordered a withdrawal. With three others, Heller covered the retreat, flaming an M5A1 with a PsK before a 76mm gun rubbled the building on top of him. He survived to be captured. The Germans passed the rest of the day bombarding Freineux from a distance.

© 1997 Critical Hit!, Inc.

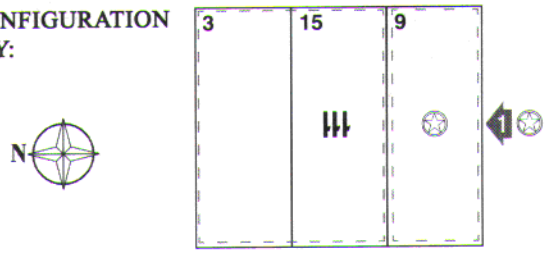
AN ABORTED COUNTER-ATTACK

AFV NEWS #2

FAVAROTTA, SICILY, 11 July 1943: After stopping the Axis counter-attack on the day of the invasion, American units started moving inland. This was not always an easy task. The terrain of Sicily was mountainous and only traversable along a few roads. On July 11, the objective of the 15th Infantry was the encirclement of Campobello. Under Colonel Johnson's plan of attack, the 3rd Battalion would move directly up Highway 123 to capture the high ground west of the town. Meanwhile, in the vicinity of Favarotta, Colonel Venturi, commander of the 177th *Bersaglieri* Regiment, finding some scattered remnants of other units, organized them into a tactical group with his regiment and ordered a counter-attack down the same highway, with the goal of re-capturing Licata. The two forces were fated to meet.



BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



BALANCE:

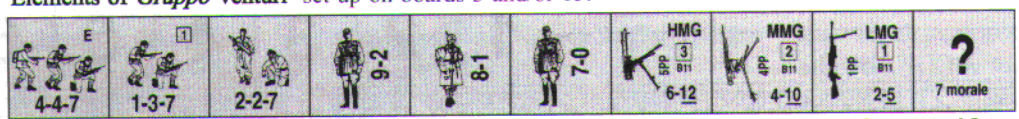
Add two M-8 AC to the at-start American OB.

Add a third SMV 90/53 and Carro Arm. L40 to the Italian OB.

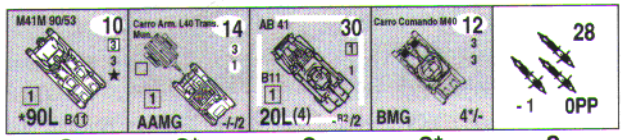
VICTORY CONDITIONS: The American wins immediately upon Controlling four of the multi-hex buildings on board 3.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
ITALIAN Sets Up First								
AMERICAN Moves First								

Elements of *Gruppo* Venturi set up on boards 3 and/or 15:



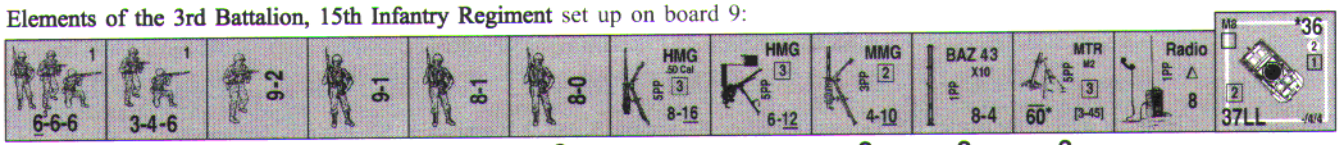
12 2 2 12



[ELR: 2]
{SAN: 4}

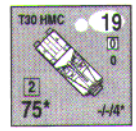
2 2* 2 2* 8

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment set up on board 9:



16 2 2 2 2 3

Elements of the Regimental Cannon Company enter on turn one along the south edge:



4

[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 2}

Adapted by CH

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Dry, with no wind at start.
2. All buildings are stone. All Orchards are Olive Grove (F13.5).
3. The Americans receive one module of 105mm OBA (HE + S).
4. The "Carro Arm. L40 Transporto Munizioni" are SMV 47/32 (Italian Vehicle Note 15) and *must* be used as ammo vehicles for the SMV M41M 90 da 53 (see SMV M41M 90 da 53 vehicle note and E10.) The Italian "Carro Comando M40" are M14/40 (Italian Vehicle Note 9) tanks, but are NT, CT (they may go CE), have no MA, and are armed with a BMG (see note B regarding scrounging of the 4 FP BMG, representing twin 8 mm LMG). They represent command tanks. To represent the sighting instruments and the fire control data being fed to the battery of SMV 90 da 53 SP-guns by attending Carro Comando use the following rule: Any target which is fired on by a SMV 90/53 which is *also* in the LOS of a Good Order, CE Carro Comando while the tank is within two hexes of the SMV use *Black* TH#. When *all* the SMV 90 da 53 have been eliminated, all remaining, mobile Carro Comando M40 *and* Carro Arm. L40 Trans. Mun. are immediately subject to Recall.

CONCLUSION: In sight of Favarotta, the lead elements of the 15th ran into Group Venturi, which was moving on its objective. For four hours the American and Italian soldiers battled amidst the mountainous terrain around the town. American artillery pounded the defenders, scoring with great effect on the enemy armor and artillery. Colonel Johnson of the 3rd Battalion ordered three half-tracks of the Cannon Company forward to lend support. They did, with difficulty, due to the return fire from Italian 90mm guns. Running the gauntlet on a tortious road, the 75mm gun-armed half-tracks made it, and lent their firepower to the outcome as the Italian defenses were overwhelmed and forced to withdraw.

Original Design: Rick Troha

© 1997 Critical Hit!, Inc.

ON DEADLY GROUND

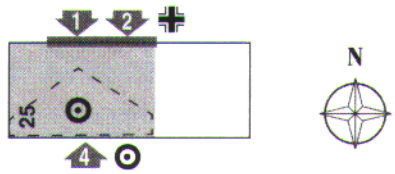
PB-CH (A)

ROUMANA RIDGE, TUNISIA, 6 April 1943 : The end of the war in North Africa was clearly approaching, with the Axis armies being driven from one rear-guard position to another. On April 6th, the battle of Wadi Akarit opened on the 8th Army front. The role of the 5th Seaforth Highlanders was to capture Djebel Roumana, the highest point of the line. The battalion advanced in the pre-dawn darkness, surprising and capturing a number of Italian troops. After consolidating, the Scots infantry had begun to move to the next phase objective when they were driven to ground by a hail of German machine-gun fire and mortar bombs. Several men were badly wounded, and Major Ian McKenzie, the battalion second-in-command, disappeared in the confusion. The D Company commander, Major Jack Davidson, ordered his men to fall back to Point 198 and organized them to defend it against the counterattack now being mounted by grenadiers of the 15th Panzer Division.



BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:

(Only hexrows A-U are playable)



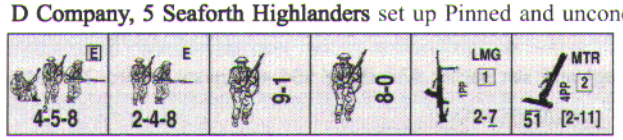
AUSTRALIAN BALANCE SYSTEM:

B3 : As for B2 and replace one German 8-0 SMC with an 8-1
B2: As for B1 and normal Extent of Error dr applies to the OBA
B1: Replace one German 4-6-7 MMC with a 4-6-8 MMC
G1: The British OBA receives a Pre-Registered hex
G2: As for G1 and remove one German 4-6-7 MMC
G3: As for G2 and replace the British 9-1 SMC with a 9-2

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The British Win if there are Good Order British units worth ≥ 5 CVP within 3 hexes of 25L6 at Game End.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GERMAN Sets Up First							
BRITISH Moves First							

D Company, 5 Seaforth Highlanders set up Pinned and unconcealed on/south of A9-M3-U7 (see SSR 3):



5 2 3 2



One module 88mm OBA

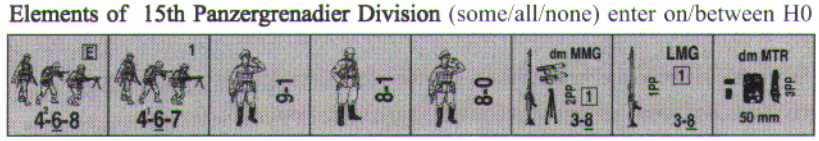


[ELR: 4]
{SAN: 3}

Reinforcements enter along the south edge on Turn 4:



Elements of 15th Panzergrenadier Division (some/all/none) enter on/between H0 and U5 on Turns 1 and/or 2:



3 11 3 2 3 2



[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 2}



by David Longworth

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate with no wind at start. Desert Terrain is in effect. Printed terrain outside the playing area is in effect for offboard movement/entry purposes (only).
2. Boresighting is NA.
3. The British have an 88mm OBA module directed by an Offboard Observer, located anywhere along the south edge at Level 3 (in a hex secretly noted during set-up). If the first Battery Access draw for the module is red, then the second is automatically black (random draw thereafter). The Extent of Error dr for an AR/SR/FFE is always halved (FRU) for this OBA module.

CONCLUSION: The 40 remaining men of D Company were hit by a fierce attack from some 150 panzergrenadiers. If Pt.198 fell, the Highland Division's flank could be rolled up - so the crest had to be held. For several hours, the two sides fought amongst the rocks and crags at very close range, with grenades being the main weapon. Several attempts by the Germans to outflank the Jocks were beaten back. A few reinforcements from the Seaforth BHQ arrived during the afternoon, and the 25 pounder battery supporting their brigade fired continuously. At 1500 hrs the dozen survivors, still led by Major Davidson, finally fell back some 150 meters to below the crest, and there they stayed, to be relieved by the Black Watch at 1800 hrs as the Germans retreated. The Highland Division's attack was secured. Davidson was awarded the DSO for his outstanding leadership. They found Major Mackenzie's body forward at the base of the hill, lying alone but surrounded by cartridge cases and dead Germans.

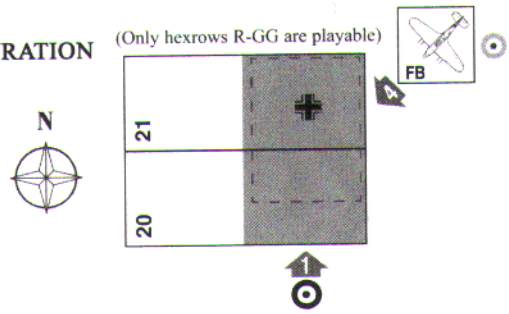
© 1997 Critical Hit!, Inc.

HOUSE OF PAIN

GERBINI, SICILY, 21 July 1943 : By nightfall on 18th July the 51st (Highland) Division had pushed to within 3 kilometers of Gerbini and the large airfields nearby. The Luftwaffe's elite ground unit Panzergrenadier Division 'Hermann Goering' had been ordered to hold these as part of the main German defence line in northeastern Sicily. Infantry of the 7th Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders advanced confidently on the night of the 20th, but taking the main airfield and its buildings from the tenacious grenadiers cost them 18 officers and 156 men, effectively two companies destroyed. The veteran 1st Black Watch then moved up to the lead, passing through the Argylls positions into Gerbini.



BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



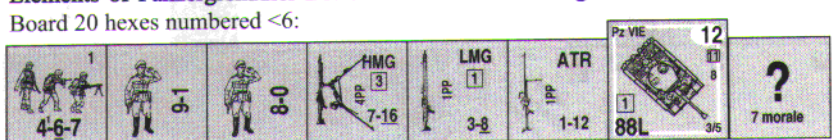
AUSTRALIAN BALANCE SYSTEM:

G3: As for G2 and replace 7-16 HMG with 5-12 MMG
G2: As for G1 and Boresighting is not allowed
G1: Delete ATR
C1: 51 MTR has no Smoke ammunition
C2: As for C1 and replace 9-2 C'wealth SMC with a 9-1 SMC
C3: As for C2 and replace 3 x 4-5-8 C'wealth MMC with 3 x 4-5-7 MMC

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Commonwealth side Wins by having Control of any two of the 21Y2, 21DD3 and/or 21T5 Buildings at Game End. (Decisive Commonwealth Win for Control of all three Buildings; Decisive Loss if none Controlled).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GERMAN Sets Up First							
COMMONWEALTH Moves First							

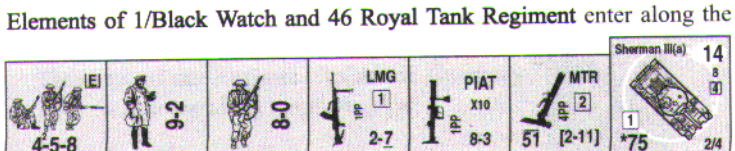
Elements of Panzergrenadier Division 'Hermann Goering' and sw.Panzer Abteilung 504 set up on Board 21 and/or on Board 20 hexes numbered <6:



5 2 8

[ELR: 4]
{SAN: 4}

Elements of 1/Black Watch and 46 Royal Tank Regiment enter along the south edge on Turn 1:



7 2 2



Turn 4

[ELR: 4]
{SAN: 3}

by Les Kramer

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Dry, Weather is Clear, with no wind at start.

2. Place Stone Rubble in 20T3, 20U4, 20Y8, 20Z4, 20Z5, 20Z7, 21S8, 21T7, 21BB8 and 21CC8; and Wooden Rubble in 20U5, 21S5, 21T4, 21T8, 21Y4 and 21Y5.

3. Starting on Turn 4, the Commonwealth side may roll for entry of Air Support which when received will consist of one FB '42 (with no Bombs).

CONCLUSION: Both infantry battalions were supported onto their objectives by the 46th Royal Tank Regiment, which lost 8 Sherman tanks in the process. Each small breakthrough by the Scots infantry was pounced on with violent counterattacks by the resourceful HG Division grenadiers. Showing admirable tactical flexibility, the handful of Tiger tanks of schwere-Panzer Abteilung 504 played a crucial role as the backbone of both offensive and defensive actions around Gerbini. By dusk on 21st July, the Highland Division attack was forced to a complete standstill.

© 1997 Critical Hit!, Inc.

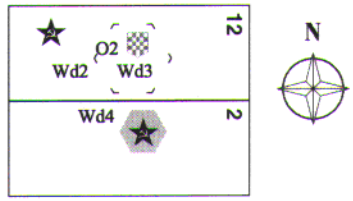
BALKAN DAWN

PB-CH (C)

LIVNO, HERCEGOVINA, 6 August 1942 : After Italian, Croatian and Cetnik forces in Yugoslavia launched an offensive against the Yugoslav partisans, their leader, Tito, had to urgently move his headquarters. Four partisan brigades accompanied it into Bosnia. In that country, the Croatian Ustashi were particularly brutal when 'pacifying' suspect villages. The partisans ensured that this was not always a one sided war. After skirmishing with Ustashi patrols, the 1st Proletarian Brigade approached the solidly built town of Livno, where a German mining crew was working, secured by a force of 90 Ustashi and 500 Croatian Home Guard. The partisan attack on the town began on the night of 4th August. By next day all the Home Guard had deserted or surrendered, and all buildings had been taken excepting those in which the Ustashi and Germans had barricaded themselves.



BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



AUSTRALIAN BALANCE SYSTEM:

C3: As for C2 and replace one 4-4-7 Croatian MMC with a 3-4-7 MMC
C2: As for C1 and Croatian SW suffer from Ammunition Shortage
C1: Croatian MMG cannot set up Possessed by a Croatian unit
P1: Partisan 76*ART has no Smoke ammunition
P2: As for P1 and delete 6 x ? counters from the Board 2 Partisan force
P3: As for P2 and delete last two sentences of SSR 3

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Partisans Win by having a VP score at least 5 greater than the Croatian score at Game End. Each Building Hex Controlled in the Croatian set-up area is worth 1 VP. The Croatian side also gains 1 VP for each Good Order friendly (non-Prisoner) CVP exited off the north edge.

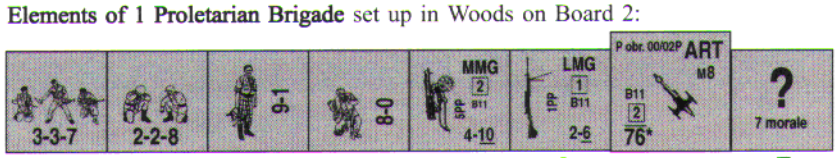
	1	2	3	4	5
CROATION Sets Up First					
PARTISAN Moves First					

Elements of Ustashi Garrison set up in Buildings on Board 12 enclosed within (i.e., not on) the Q1-U3-S6-Q9-O5-M4 road loop, but with no more than one MMC/SMC/SW each hex (see SSR 3):

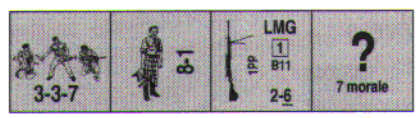


[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 3}

Elements of 1 Proletarian Brigade set up in Woods on Board 2:



Set up on Board 12 *outside* (i.e., not on) the Q1-U3-S6-Q9-O5-M4 road loop:



[ELR: 4]
{SAN: 4}

by Gordon McLelland

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. Rowhouses are NA. All multi-level Buildings are Two Story Houses. Graveyard hexes are Orchards (with Walls as depicted). Place overlays as follows: **O2** on 12T7-S8, **Wd2** on 12S1-T1, **Wd3** on 12M2-M3, and **Wd4** on 2P8-P9.
3. Croatian infantry are Axis Minor. Croatian MMC [EXC: two squads] cannot Move during Game Turn 1, unless prior to the first Croatian MPh a Known enemy unit became adjacent to that MMC. (Restrictions cease at the end of that MPh; the use of No Move counters until then is recommended).
4. One Partisan MMC (and SMC/SW stacked with it) setting up on Board 12 may use HIP. Partisans use Russian SW/Ordnance without captured weapon penalties.

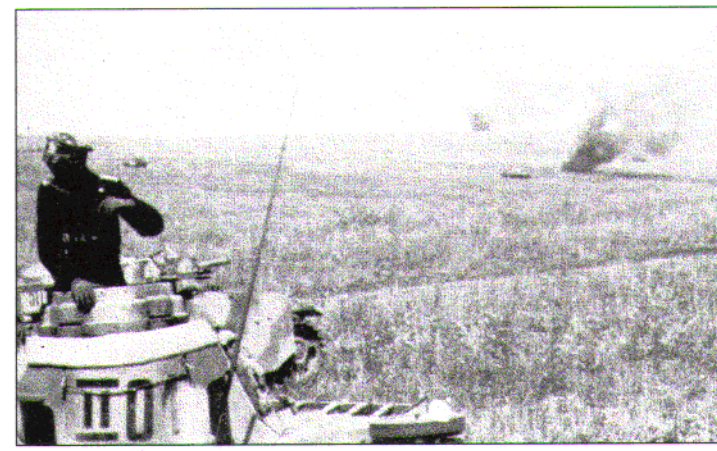
CONCLUSION: The stone houses proved no match for the partisans' artillery piece which had a disastrous effect on the walls and the defenders inside, who had left it too late to escape. On the morning of the 7th, the German head engineer persuaded the Ustashi commander to surrender in hope of reasonable treatment, rather than compelling everyone to die in place. After interrogation by Milovan Djilas and other partisan leaders, all the Ustashi were found to have confessed to 'crimes against the people' and were sentenced to death. That night the Croatians were taken in groups to a gully beside the monastery and shot there, where their friends could hear the firing squads at work (in true civil war style). The ten German mining engineers were spared, and some weeks later the Wehrmacht exchanged a group of captured partisans for them.

© 1997 Critical Hit!, Inc.

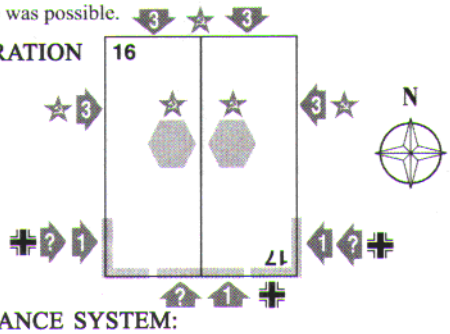
POWDERWORKS

PB-CH (B)

ULYANOVO, RUSSIA, 11 August 1942 : The German Army Group Centre had been planning a pincer attack, named Fall Wirbelwind, to eliminate the Soviet held bulge in the front line south of Rzhev (once summer finally reached central Russia). General Zhukov, the new Russian West Front commander ordered his forces into action before the enemy assault was ready. Gaining confidence with their initial success, Zhukov's tanks and cavalry forced the Wehrmacht 4th Armee to go completely over to the defensive in early August. In the southern sector of the bulge, 2nd Panzer Armee began a solo attempt to gain the Wirbelwind objectives, but bad weather had meant very little reconnaissance was possible.



BOARD CONFIGURATION AND ENTRY:



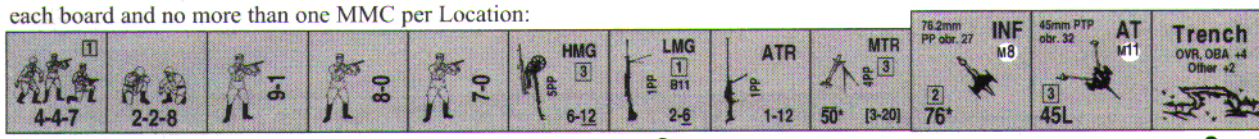
AUSTRALIAN BALANCE SYSTEM:

R3: As for R2 and delete one 4-4-7 Russian MMC
R2: As for R1 and replace Russian 76*INF with a SU-12 SPAA truck
R1: Delay the Russian reinforcements until Turn 4
G1: Replace the 9-2 German SMC with a 9-1 SMC
G2: As for G1 and delete one SPW 251/1
G3: As for G2 and replace one PzKw IIIJ with a PzKw IIIH

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans Win by Controlling either of the 16O3 or 17P2 Building(s) at and by exiting Good Order friendly units worth ≥ 12 CVP off the north edge at Game End. Note that the CVP value of German units exited during Turns 1 to 4 is halved (FRU).

RUSSIAN Sets Up First / GERMAN Moves First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

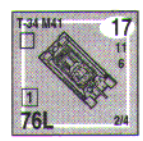
Elements of 61 Army set up within a radius of five hexes of the 16O3 and/or 17O6 buildings with no more than one Gun on each board and no more than one MMC per Location:



12 2 2 2



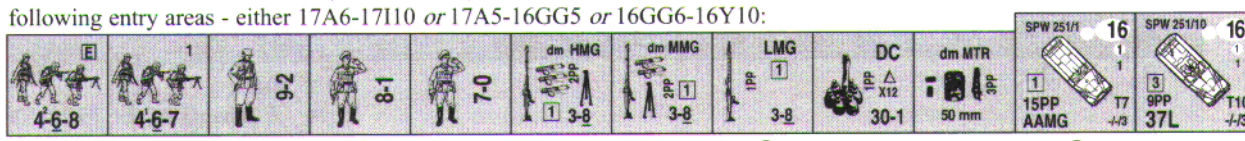
Reinforcements enter Turn 3 by either 16I10 or 16A6 or 17GG6 or 17Y10:



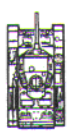
3

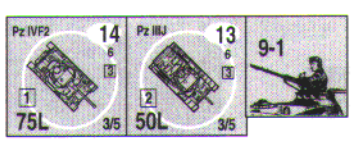
[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 4}

Elements of 11 Panzer Division (some/all/none) enter on Turn 1 and/or any later Turn by *one* of the following entry areas - either 17A6-17I10 *or* 17A5-16GG5 *or* 16GG6-16Y10:



3 8 2 3 3





3

[ELR: 4]
{SAN: 3}



by David Longworth

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet and Weather is Overcast, with no wind at start (but with a -1 DRM to the Wind DR for Rain purposes only :-start/increase on DR 11-12 or stop on DR 2-4).
2. Before Russian setup, German player must secretly note the chosen entry area.
3. Up to six Russian squads may setup in Foxholes if in eligible terrain.
4. No Quarter is in effect for both sides.
5. At start of each Russian MPh, the Russian player makes a Secret dr (revealed at the end of the MPh) and the result is added to the current Turn number to determine the number of MMC which may Move during that MPh [EXC: on Turn 1 only, Russian MMC stacked with a friendly leader are exempt from this restriction].

CONCLUSION: Initial surprise on the first day helped the energetic 11th Panzer to make better progress than any other German division, grinding 13 km toward the Zhizdra river. That day brought the Germans two unpleasant discoveries, the Soviets had fortifications in depth all the way to the river line, and they were reacting with startling speed when compared to the Red Army of previous battles. A Soviet tank corps refitting nearby had not been detected and its T-34 brigades hurled themselves at the German break-in. By August 14th, a tiny bridgehead was gained across the Zhizdra, but then the panzer units were withdrawn for action further to the south and Wirbelwind immediately ran out of puff. General Zhukov was expert enough to ignore German distractions and threw his reserves into the main battle around Rzhev.

© 1997 Critical Hit!, Inc.

For some variety and less omniscience during play, we suggest you use the village 42a overlay (signified by 42/42a, with the manner in which the new board is situated matching the replaced board unless stated otherwise) in the following scenarios:

GEMBLOUX: All scenarios listing the Village 42 overlay as in play; replace Board 10 in the CG "Lost Sentinels" with Board 42/42a.

Scroungin' ASL News: Any scenarios offering the OPT use of the Village 42 overlay, replace with 42/42a.

ASL 17 Lost Opportunities: Replace Board 1 with 42/42a. Hexrows A-X are playable on Board 42. Change the VC to read, "...four multi-hex buildings on Board 42", with Rowhouses counted as mutli-hex buildings, but otherwise treated normally).

ASL A25 Cold Crocodiles: Replace Board 24 with 42/42a. Alter the VC to read, "...each stone building is worth three VP for the controlling side."

ASL A52 Swan Song: Replace Board 12 with 42/42a and alter the VC to read, "...the majority of multi-hex buildings on Board 42."

ASL 24 The Mad Minute: Replace Board 12 with 42/42a and alter the VC to read, "...must Control all 4 of the non-Rowhouse multi-hex buildings on Board 42."

ASL 12 Confusion Reigns: Replace Board 1 with 42/42a.

ASL 16 No Better Spot To Die: Replace Board 24 with 42/42a and alter the VC to read, "...three building hexes on Board 42, east of hexrow L."

ASL 18 The Roadblock: Replace Board 24 and all references to it in the SSR with 42/42a.

ASL G2 Last Act In Lorraine: Replace Board 12 with 42/42a. Alter the VC to read, "...all four non-Rowhouse multi-hex buildings on Board 42."

ASL A6 The Price of Impatience: Replace Board 10 with 42/42a. Replace the reference to 10Y7 in SSR 2 with, "Hex 42oV8 is a Steeple hex (P5.2)." All other references to Board 10 are replaced with the same hexes on 42/42a (i.e., exit 42GG5/6 in VC, Germans enter on 42I1).

ASL I Bucholz Station: Replace Board 3 with 42/42a (and the reference to the south edge of Board 3 in the VC to "the south edge of 42"). Set up American groups as follows: 3Y9: 42Y10; 3Z6: 42Z5; 3W2: 42oU2; 3P7: 42oO6; 3R5: 42oR5; 3R6: 42oR6; 3Q8: 42oQ7; 3S7: 42oS8; and 3R7: 42oR7. German set up remains as listed.

ASL 5 The Whirlwind: Replace Board 10 with 42/42a and the VC should read, "...all buildings within three hexes of 42oT5". Americans set up on Board 42.

ASL L Hitdorf On The Rhine: Replace Board 3 with 42/42a. The VC should read, " ...≥ 4 stone buildings on Board 42..." and all references to Board 3 should be replaced by 42 (i.e., Hitdorf Garrison sets up on 42, reinforcement entry).

Ditches; B27.56, O11.621) may be placed in a paved-road hex that also contains shellholes; mines set up thusly can attack regardless of whether or not the unit entering their Location is using the road rate/bonus (ASL RB5).

B3.6 DITCHES. Ditches exist in all Western Europe unpaved road hexes and WETO Farmland board roads. A ditch is treated as a Shellhole (B2.2-.4) in all respects except that Cavalry/Horse-Drawn vehicles entering a road across a non-road hexside must enter at the two MF rate even though they never receive the protective TEM of a ditch. Vehicles entering a road across a non-road hexside must pay shellhole MP cost (ASL G5).

B3.61 WIDE DITCHES...drainage/agricultural depression (HASL CG KH).

B6.7 DRAWBRIDGE. Is a wooden bridge across a canal. Place a bridge counter as a remainder. When front side is up, use it as a normal bridge. When the back side is up, no passage is possible for vehicles or motorcycles; infantry movement cost is 2 MF; otherwise use it as a normal bridge. The UP/DOWN status may only be changed by an unbroken infantry unit, in the bridge hex, during its PFPh; the unit immediately becomes TI for the rest of the player turn. The drawbridge is considered Inherent Terrain; it has +1 TEM and is a LOS Hindrance. (ASL-N 22).

B6.8 DUCKBOARDS. The pontoon Bridge counter can be used to represent Duckboards, that can be placed only by Assault Engineers. Each Duckboard counter represents two spans of Footbridge (B 6.44) when placed. The portage cost for each Duckboard counter is 5PP. An Infantry unit portaging a Duckboard may not enter a building hex. An unpinned, GO Assault Engineer *squad* may place a Duckboard in an adjacent Water Obstacle at the end of its CCPh with a DR of ≤ 10 (D) by becoming TI at the start of any friendly PFPh. If successfully placed, the Duckboard extends across the Water Obstacle along the hexgrain (place a second pontoon bridge counter adjacent to the first such that they are connected) and is treated in all thereafter as a footbridge. (ASL A78).

B6.9 BRIDGE WRECKAGE. The Setup player may Set one DC in a bridge Location prior to play; any DC Set in a bridge Location prior to play functions exactly like a normal Set DC [EXC: it may destroy no more than one bridge counter; it attacks units in its bridge Location when it detonates on the 16 FP column of the IFT (with no TEM); a bridge counter destroyed by *a DC that was Set prior to play* is flipped over to simulate Bridge Wreckage (see below) terrain]. The conversion of a bridge counter into Bridge Wreckage terrain is *not* considered to be the elimination of that bridge counter, and Bridge Wreckage terrain is treated just like a normal bridge Location [EXC: only Infantry may enter/leave a Bridge Wreckage Location; entering a Bridge Wreckage Location cost all of the unit's MF, leaving a Bridge Wreckage Location cost Infantry 2 MF to cross the Bridge Wreckage hexside (plus the cost of terrain of the hex entered); the Bridge Wreckage Location is considered to be at level -1, and has a TEM of +1; once created, a Bridge Wreckage Location may *not* be destroyed]. (Note that none of the restrictions of this SSR apply to a DC that is Set in a bridge Location *after* play commences.) (ASL TOT18).

B7.6 BOULEVARD. Where applicable (i.e., Board 23), a "canal" does not exist; treat its entire length as a wide boulevard (B7). The bridges over the "canal" do not exist. (ASL 22).

B9.56 BOCAGE FOXHOLE. Each foxhole that set up at scenario start adjacent to a bocage hexside also serves as a passage between that foxhole's Location and each adjacent Location that shares a bocage hexside with that foxhole's Location. A friendly (only) unit may cross the bocage to enter/exit such a foxhole's Location during its MPh/RtPh/APh, at a cost of 2 MF (ignoring the COT of the hex entered), and without having to first exit (or enter) the foxhole. (ASL A77).

B*10.211 ALPINE HILL OPTION...hills block LOS through (not into) them (ASLRB).

B*10.5 ALPINE ABRUPT ELEVATION. When an Abrupt Elevation Change occurs on an Alpine hill, all ground unit MF/MP costs to enter such restricted hex are doubled. Additionally, a vehicle expending MP for entry of/to change VCA in such restricted hexes must make an immediate Bog check DR (D8.21) subject to all Bog DRM: a Final Bog DR = 7 Bogs the vehicle, and a Final Bog DR ≥ 8 immediately converts that vehicle to a wreck. If CE there is a -3 DRM. Vehicles which become wrecks due to a failure of their Bog Check DR roll normally for CS (D5.6); Riders must Bail Out (D6.24). Any non-PRC Infantry in the hex [EXC: Riders that Bailed Out] where the vehicle becomes a wreck must take a NMC. (ASL MJN8a).

B13.3b DIRECT FIRE AIRBURST...Ordnance too can obtain Airburst against Wood hexes (HASL CG KH).

B13.7 FOREST OPTION...woods have higher level, TEM and MP cost (ASLRB).

B13.8 TREE NURSERIES OPTION...a more vehicle-accessible woods hex (TOT SSR6).

B19.6 EFFLUENTS. Gullies become Streams (B20.) if EC = Wet (B25.5); Streams become Gullies if EC = Dry or Very Dry (ASL-News SO#1).

B19.6 FLOODING. Hill/Grain/Wood hexes can be considered "flooded" terrain. "Flooded" hexes are treated as fordable river hexes (level -1) with no current. Roads therein are considered elevated (level 0, per B5.) through a flooded hex; no other terrain features exist in flooded hexes. Units may not set up in a flooded hex. Each Personnel unit landing in a flooded hex is subject to E9.42 as though it were a shallow stream. SW landing in a flooded hex are eliminated. Grain is treated as Drained Rice Paddy (G8) and the edge of the Grain depiction is the bank. (ASL A76 + ASL BP4).

B23.74 FACTORY. Define a multi-hex building as a Factory (ASL RB).

B23.100 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. To minimize civilian casualties, the player's units must try to confine their use of buildings to entrance ways, foyers and alleys. Each building is considered to have a ground level only, a TEM of 1 less (i.e., Stone Building: TEM = 2), and a per-side stacking capacity of one squad (instead of three; overstacking is still allowed). All building hexsides are treated as "blackbar" rowhouse hexsides (B23.71) except during the RtPh. Infantry may not enter inside any building unless has been previously entered by an enemy unit in LOS of a GO player's unit. No vehicle may set up in or enter a building. There is no Backblast attack (C13.8) or Desperation penalty for firing SCW from a building. All other rules pertaining to buildings remain unchanged. (ASL 52, 57 + BB6).

B24.741 HASTY MINEFIELDS. Minefields (B28.) hastily laid down receive a - 1 DRM to Clearance attempts (General).

B27.57 CONCRETE TRENCH. The TEM of these fortifications is +3 (+5 vs OBA/OVR) and only an Original 3 KIA or better can replace a trench with a shellhole (B2.1). The DYO BPV cost (H1.6) is 11 (ASL 68).

B27.58 URBAN TRENCH. Trenches (including A-T Ditches) are considered to "connect" (as per B30.8) to (but not through) all ADJACENT building/rubble Locations [not to a Location that is rubbled during play of that scenario] (see also O6.21 and O6.6, last sentence). Infantry entering such a building/rubble Location need not pay an extra MF to leave the trench in that location, but must still pay applicable building/rubble COT. Infantry leaving such a building/rubble Location need not pay an extra MF to enter a "connecting" trench. Infantry may not enter such a trench while using Bypass Movement; nor may they use Bypass Movement while in such a trench; nor may they exit such a trench to directly use Bypass Movement. A unit entering/leaving a building/rubble Location via a "connecting" trench is not subject to a Snap Shot as it does so. A vehicle must pay the appropriate MP-cost /penalty to cross such a trench while using VBM; hence those vehicle types not allowed to cross such a trench may not do so while using VBM. Infantry may enter a Fortified Building Location as if that Location were not Fortified provided they enter it from a trench/AT-Ditch that is "connected" to that building Location (RB CG6).

B29.51 CRASH REMOVAL. Besides using the normal methods, a roadblock can be eliminated by using a vehicle (not cycle) to "crash through" it. A vehicle in a hex that has a roadblock hexside may expend a Crash MP (i.e., one MP) in an attempt to cross that roadblock. Having expended the Crash MP (and while still in the hex it is attempting to exit), the vehicle's owner then makes a dr to resolve the attempt:

Final dr	Result
= 2	Roadblock is removed; vehicle enters adjacent hex.*
3	Roadblock is removed; vehicle enters adjacent hex,* then immediately bogs.
4	Roadblock is removed; vehicle enters adjacent hex,* then immediately becomes immobilized.
5	Roadblock is not removed; vehicle immediately bogs in its present hex.
6	Roadblock is not removed; vehicle immediately becomes immobilized in its present hex.
7	Roadblock is not removed; vehicle immediately becomes a non-burning wreck in its present hex. (Normal CS rules apply).

* (expending the required MP to do so)

There is a +1 drm if the vehicle is a non-AFV. A vehicle may not expend a Crash MP if it lacks enough MP to enter the hex across the roadblock hexside. A vehicle may not be fired on due to Crash-MP expenditure until the results of the Crash dr have been implemented (ASL 52).

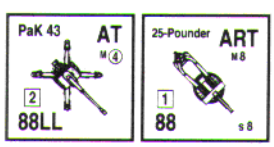
B29.6 HASTY ROADBLOCKS... a new type of Fortification counter that can be created and removed during play (TOT SSR5).

B30.9 BIN. A Pillbox can be designed as 360° CA (at DYO cost *3): it has no NCA and no designated CA (thus allowing its occupants to fire out in any direction, even its own hex). Its TEM vs Indirect Fire is the NCA TEM and vs other types of fire is the CA TEM. Its occupants can be Encircled. All other pillbox rules apply unchanged (ASL 53).

O2. RAILWAY EMBANKMENT: use track counters to trace a continuous railway path connecting two board edges. It is considered Overlay for the purpose of H.1 (ASL-News SO#1 & RB).

O2.4 RAILROADS..."official" Overlay on Tactique magazine. It is considered Overlay for the purpose of H.1 (ASL-News #28, 30).

P5. VILLAGE TERRAIN...set of rules to depict hamlets (ASL-News SO#1 & KGPI).



Chapter C

C.51 12-POINT FACING SYSTEM...vehicles/guns points hex(side&spine) (Fire For Effect #9).

C1.2 MOVING PHONE. A Phone may be moved as Hazardous Movement up to 3 hexes during any MPh its manning unit is eligible to move. Initially, the player must trace the security area through hexes contained within the player's initial set up area. All hexes the Phone passes through are added to this security area. A hex of the security area becomes known to the enemy when a GO unit moves adjacent. The Phone is eliminated if this Gun moves to a new hex (C9.32)(CH#2).

C1.5a FUSED SHELLS. Due to the terrible effects of a new US artillery ammunition (VT-fused), starting from December 1944 all enemy units have their morale lowered by *one* as long they are in the Blast Area of the US OBA using HE (including Harassing Fire). (AS-N *Trojan Horses*).

C1.76 OBA FLOW CHART... playing aid (Critical Hit #3).

C1.76 OBA FLOW CHART... playing aid (ASL Action Pack 1).

C1.823 POINT BOMBARDMENT. Following the friendly set up/entry, but prior to the start of play, the player must select any Pre-Registered hex and place one Shellhole counter therein. Next, he must make a DR (EXC: dr for a half-board scenario) to determine the number of *additional* shellhole counters to be placed using the following method: for each additional shellhole counter, make a DR; the colored dr indicates the direction and the white dr the distance (in hexes) the shellhole is placed from the initial placement hex. Should this result in placement in a hex where shellholes already exist, or in terrain where shellholes are NA, or offboard, re-roll until a valid hex is determined. This method of shellhole placement does not affect fortifications, but eliminates any unit/SW/Gun in the hex that is not *in* a pillbox or trench (ASL A79).

C2.281 GUN B# SUBSEQUENT DR... malfunction severity check (Fire For Effect 2#2).

C7.31-34 SCENARIO TK# DECISION AID...gun playing aid (Fire For Effect #4).

C7.43 SHOCK VARIANT... Shock severity check (ASL-News #21+The Rout Report #23).

C7.61 EXPLODING TURRETS... AFV HD CH effects (NET).

C7.8 HE NEAR MISSES. Previously, a shot that failed to score a hit on the C3 To Hit table was not pursued any further to determine what effect, if any, the missed shot had. Shells do have to land somewhere, however, and in the case of large HE rounds (or any ammo type with HE equivalency) can inflict relevant damage to any units in the vicinity. (COD).

· **C7.81** Only HE shells of 100mm or larger (or with an HE equivalency ≥ 100mm) used in Direct Fire (C.1, C.9) attack may cause damage after having failed to secure a Hit on the To Hit table (C3), or having scored such a hit failing to secure a "Kill" on the AFV Destruction table (C7.7).

· **C7.82** Even though a shell has missed the target, it is considered to land in the

target hex (and every locations with a LOS to the firing unit is subject to Random Location) if the To Hit DR > To Hit # < +2.

· **C7.83** If the To Hit DR > +1 To Hit #, the shell lands in any adjacent hex (and every locations with a LOS to the firing unit is subject to Random Location). The affected adjacent hex is determined by a Random Location dr. If the hex the shell strikes is not in the firing unit's LOS, it strikes the nearest hex adjacent to the target location that lies within a possible LOS. If there is no LOS for any adjacent hex to land in, the shell is treated as a "dud".

· **C7.84** All units in a hex hit by a near miss are attacked following a Random Location if >1 location with a LOS to the firing unit exist in the hex.

· **C7.85** All units in a location hit by a near miss must undergo an Area Fire (A7.23) attack.

· **C7.86** HE shells ≥ 100mm which score a hit but fail to secure a "kill" on the AFV Destruction table (C7.7) attack any other units on that location as Area Fire (A7.23) (AoS archives).

C8.45 GERMAN CANISTER...AFV allowed to (OAF #113).

C9.32 ON BOARD OBA. A Radio/Phone may be used to direct an On-Board (MTR-ART) Gun. Contact must be established in order for the Gun to fire indirect. The Gun then uses the principles of Spotted Fire (C9.3-31) [EXC: only the AREA target type may be used, the +2 TH DRM for spotted fire does not apply]. For TH purposes, the range to all targets is considered to be 13-18 hexes with all applicable modifiers applied. The minimum range for indirect fire is 8 hexes. Intensive Fire is allowed while using indirect fire. Airburst apply to this fire. The Gun may also fire normally when not using Indirect fire (ASL CH2).

C9.33 OFF BOARD ORDNANCE. A Radio (which has a B# 10) may be used to direct the fire of a single offboard ART Gun. Radio Contact must be established and maintained in order for the Gun to fire, but Battery Access is not necessary. The Gun is firing Indirectly with the Radio operator acting as the Spotter; therefore, C9.3-.31 apply [EXC: it is *not necessary* to use the Area Target Type; the +2 DRM for Spotted Fire does not apply]. The Final ROF of the Gun is "+1" (max 3) and it will never malfunction; Intensive Fire is NA. For To Hit purposes, the range to all targets is considered to be 12 hexes. Normal To Hit DRM apply in all cases (including possible acquisition) (ASLUG 11).

C13.278 ATR IMMOBILIZATION & SD RELEASE...ATR can try to Immobilize (C5.73) against the front of an AFV and release enemy sD (OAF #117).

C13.48 BAZOOKA 50 For BAZ 50 use BAZ 45 counters, with range and TH table as printed on the counter, but with HEAT TK# 20, HE equivalence of 12 FP, WP6 and X11 (ASL PB10; CH Obong-Ni)).

C13.7 KLORIHARTSI PIPE GRENADES. Finnish units may utilize ATMM, however, placement of one add only a -2 DRM to CC resolution (ASL A10). Finns may use Klorihartsi pipe grenades as if they were ATMM (C13.7) [EXC: They only add 2 to CCV] (ASL *"the Beast"*)

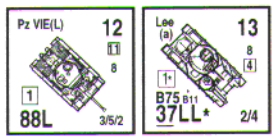
C13.75 GAMMON BOMBS. All British SMC/MMC can (DYO cost = BPV +2) be equipped with Gammon Bomb (that is merely a sack of explosives) as an Inherent SW starting from November 1942 on. Use of a Gammon Bomb requires a Gammon Bomb Check dr = 4 (made immediately prior to any MF expenditure necessary for placement); a HS/crew/CX unit has a +1 drm (+2 drm for a SMC) to its Gammon Bomb Check dr. If the Gammon Bomb Check dr is an Original 6, the unit is Pinned (even if berserk). Aside from the need for a Gammon Bomb Check dr, a Gammon Bomb is treated exactly as if it were a DC for all purposes [EXC: it has a FP factor of 16, and a TK# of 10 vs. armored targets; Non-elite Personnel are not penalized when using a Gammon Bomb; a Gammon Bomb may not be Set]. If used for Breaching (B23.711) purposes, a Gammon Bomb uses a FP factor of 30 (instead of 16). Additionally, a Gammon Bomb may be used in CC vs a vehicle exactly as if it were an ATMM [EXC: the Gammon Bomb Check dr may differ], adding a -3 DRM to the CC attack by the unit. The use of this weapon at close range could, and did, have tragic consequences to the user: the colored die on the CC DR is used as attack against the using units on the IFT "1" column (Only successful usage dr is used as per Backblast C13.81). No DRM apply (ASLUG 7+GSTK; PB; PL2.0).

C13.10 MINE DOG... Soviet extemporaneous LATW (Annual 90).

C13.11 MOLOTOV PROJECTOR ... Soviet LATWordnance-SW (RB CG10.).

C13.12 NORTHOVER PROJECTOR. British MOL-P: can be exchanged in a Seelöwe DYO/CG scenario with the ATR on a 1/1 basis (ASL-N60.).

C14. ROCKETS...on-board direct firing artillery (OAF #97).



Chapter D

D1.65 AFV SUPPLEMENTAL ARMOR...field armor addition (Time On Target #1&#2).

D1.82.a E-CMG...Emergency Coaxial MG (Fire For Effect #5).

D3.441 ARMOR LEADER DRM. An AL provides *none* of its normal benefits while in a OT TD or OT SPA (ASL 37).

D3.46 REGROUPING. Whenever a friendly AFV is destroyed on any non-setup/non-entry board, the player must make a TC for the armor leader received with that group of AFVs (or, if he is eliminated, shocked or pinned, for any vehicular crew remaining), applying a +1 DRM for each AFV presently Immobile or destroyed. If the TC is failed, all remaining Mobile AFV must withdraw to regroup by all ending the same MPh on any whole hex(es) of setup-entry board and may not exit/remain on that board until this requirement has been met. Once committed to regrouping, no further TC is suffered until the previous requirement is met. (ASL A4).

D3.47 INEXPERIENCED GUNNERS. These **NON-VEHICULAR** crews are not fit to short-range combat: when they are, for the first time, in LOS and Normal Range of a Known enemy unit (free LOS check), they must pass a 1MC. If failed, it bear the same consequences of a MC (Pin, Broken, Casualty MC...). After this 1MC, that unit is no more subject to any other enemy unit LOS (ASL TAC22).

D3.72 AMMO OVERLOAD. The vehicles marked with a circled B# (e.g. BŠ) can overload with ammunition during the set-up phase. Each increment of overload add 1 to the B# (DYO cost = 10% FRU vehicle's BPV cost for each increase in

the B#). The vehicles so ammo overloaded have RED CS/cs #s and decrease CS/cs of 1 for each ammo overload increment (ASL JW7).

D3.81-.86 RAMMING...allow AFVs attempting to ram other vehicles (OAF A-L Kursk).

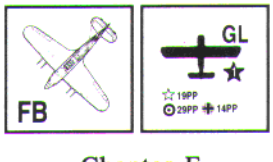
D5.73 AFV GEAR VULNERABILITY. Any original TK DR of 4 that does not Shock, Immobilize or Kill an enemy AFV places a Flame counter on that tank. There can be only one Flame per tank. Flame has no effect on the vehicle's abilities but may became a Blaze in each subsequent APh (treat as a wood building), destroying the AFV. The crew must immediately Abandon the tank, but without a CS roll (ASL ATP1).

D6.73 CLOSED TRUCK. During setup, each truck may be covered with a "?", with that vehicle's actual Passengers (including SW) placed out of the opponent's view in the corresponding Cloaking Box. Such "?" does not bestow concealment status on the truck or Passengers, but does prevent the opponent from inspecting the vehicle's contents and is removed (and replaced by the vehicle's actual Passengers, if any) as per the normal rules for "?" loss [EXC: not for movement of the truck solely] (ASL A62).

D9.54 SOVIET AC. Armored Cupolas: **Mk.I** have an AF = 5, ST, inherent Crew; MA = Russian HMG with six FP, ROF 3, Normal Range = 12 and Repair dr = 3 (ASL 10) - **Mk.II** have an AF = 5, inherent Crew; MA = Russian HMG with 8 FP, ROF 2, Normal Range = 12 (ASL 10) - **Mk.III** have an AF = 11, ST, inherent Crew; MA = Russian 76*, No ROF (ASL JW8) - **emplaced T-18** have AF = 0, ST, inherent Crew; MA = 37, ROF 1 (ASL OAF98.3).

D11.1 SCHUERZEN...specify any German AFV Schuerzen equipped (ASLRB).

D17 ARMOURED TRAINS...rules to use Armored Trains (OAF #116).



Chapter E

E1.111 EVENING. When an "evening" LV Hindrance is in effect, it is treated exactly like Heavy Rain (E3.51) [EXC: this Hindrance is subject to neither increase nor decrease by the Wind Change DR; E3.8 is not in effect] (ASL RB4).

E1.112 PRE-DAWN. When a "pre-dawn" LV Hindrance is in effect, it is treated exactly like Heavy Rain (E3.51) for 2 G.T. It becomes a Rain LV (E3.51) for the following 2 G.T. with no LV thereafter [EXC: this Hindrance is subject to neither increase nor decrease by the Wind Change DR; E3.8 is not in effect] (ASL X2).

E1.24 SOVIET INFILTRATION... Soviet set-up advantages (Fire For Effect #6).

E1.53a STRAYING. Add "runway/wall/hedge" to the list of excepted terrain a unit may be on/ADJACENT to in order to avoid a Movement DR (E1.531) (ASL MJN1e).

E1.8a GUNFLASHES. Gunflashes (E1.82) are not caused by an armed unit engaging an unarmed unit in CC in order to capture (A20.22) that unarmed unit (ASL MJN1e).

E1.78 POINT FIRE. A Personnel unit able to use PBF/TPBF vs an enemy unit/stack may opt to attack using only its Small Arms FP but *not* PBF/TPBF benefits. Such an attack may *not* use Spraying/Assault Fire - but *never receive* the +1 Night LV DRM, is *not* a concealment-loss activity (a Cloaked attacker would be placed onboard concealed), and leaves a Gunflash in the *target's* hex (ASL 61).

E3.712 WINTER CAMOUFLAGE...INFANTRY/vehicles get +1 LV Hindrance DRM and Concealment drm (ASLRB).

E2.5 TRAITOR...one leader could change possession and control (The Rout Report).

E3.75 DRIFTS...increased MF/MP cost, hedge-like and bog terrain (ASLRB).

E3.753 AVALANCHE. The resolution of each attack emanating-from/resolved-in a hill hex that contains a Drift counter must involve a third die. If the result of the third die is "six", an avalanche has been triggered. Move the Drift counter to the nearest lower elevation hex (in the event of equidistant lower elevation hexes, determine the one affected randomly). All units/SW/Guns/Fortifications in the hex to which the Drift is moved are immediately eliminated (ASL G12).

E5.124 PONTOON FERRY. A Large Raft may be substituted by a Pontoon Ferry (use a pontoon bridge to represent this ferry) with which the owner may attempt to move AFV across a water obstacle. This ferry is treated the same as a Large Raft in all respects, except that it may carry one vehicle regardless of weight in addition to its usual 24PP (note that 8PP of Personnel are necessary to utilize the ferry's MP - E5.12). Loading/unloading a vehicle costs two MP (instead of one MP as per E5.21), as well the one MP expended to Start/Stop; a vehicle may not remain in Motion, nor change VCA, nor fire any weapon or smoke dispenser while on the ferry (ASL A65).

E5.341 DIFFICULT CROSSING. With Heavy Current, if a side is Untrained (E5.34) in river assault, on a Boat Movement dr of 5 or 6, a subsequent dr must be made [EXC: this subsequent dr is NA for a Large Raft]. A 6 on this subsequent dr results in the boat counter (and its Passengers) suffering Casualty Reduction (as per E5.121/E5.5) (TOT 24).

E7.404 JU.87G STUKA. Counter. If dr = 5,6 one of them is always armed with a 37L, firing APCR only (carries no bombs); if dr = 3,4 one can be brought on play with a secret dr = 4; if only one aircraft is received, the cannon armed can be received only with a secret dr = 2. Against Unarmored Target /vulnerable PRC, its FP is 2. The 37L MA has X10, ROF 2 (i.e., on Strafing or Point Attack, the 37L cannot continue to attack over its initial attack unless maintaining ROF) with Multiple Hit (C3.8) possibility and with each successful To Hit DR, two To Kill DRs are made on the C7.32 table (APCR). If the MA is disabled, the aircraft is marked with a Gun Disabled. If the 37L lose ROF (or it's Disabled), the aircraft continue the Strafing/Point Attack only to receive AA fire (E.7.401-.402). In Dogfight, the aircraft with the 37L is considered bomb armed and cannot Jettison; more, is subject to an additional adverse -1 DRM. Due to the excellent sights all disregard D3.9. (OAF #115 & 116 + TAC SP16).

E7.405 STURMOVIK. Use an allied FB44 counter [EXC: the FP vs Unarmored Target/vulnerable PRC is 8; it's gunner equipped, allowing a defense in Dogfight: if a FB/DB roll an Original 11 DR attacking a Sturmovik, it is Damaged (Eliminated if the Original colored die is 6]. If dr = 5,6 one of them is always armed with a 37L, firing APCR only; if dr = 3,4 one can be brought on play with a secret dr = 4; if only one aircraft is received, the cannon armed can be received only with a secret dr = 2. Against

Unarmored Target /vulnerable PRC, its FP is 6. The 37L MA has X10, ROF 2 (i.e., on Strafing or Point Attack, the 37L cannot continue to attack over its initial attack unless maintaining ROF) with Multiple Hit possibility. If the MA is disabled, the aircraft is marked with a Gun Disabled but maintain a 4 FP. If the 37L lose ROF (or it's Disabled), the aircraft continue the Strafing/Point Attack with a 4 FP and a base TK = 4. In a Dogfight, the aircraft with the 37L is considered bomb armed and cannot Jettison. (TAC SP16).

E7.406 HURRICANE IID...anti-tank aircraft + Counter (OAF #116).

E8.222 PARKED A/C. Parked aircraft are represented by Gliders with their green side up, and are attacked on the ★ Vehicle Line exactly as they were trucks. Wrecked (i.e., eliminated) aircraft are turned over with their blue side up, and a blaze counter is placed on them if they burn. The P Aerial DRM never applies to parked/wrecked aircraft. Parked/wrecked aircraft are considered vehicle for sighting (A12.121, E1.14) purposes, and the owning player may consider an aircraft to be an enemy unit for Starshell placement purposes (E1.922) if it is not in its initial set up hex. Parked aircraft are a LOS Hindrance. Parked aircraft have a Target Size DRM of 0 and a Manhandling # of 3 [EXC: wrecked/burning aircraft may not be manhandled.]. Parked aircraft may never move by any other method (and thus may never take off / fly). A player may not attack their own parked aircraft while it is in its initial set-up hex [EXC: unless an enemy unit in the hex with the parked aircraft is the target of the attack] (ASL MJN1e).

E8.23 SUPPLEMENTAL GLIDER DRM Table (General "American Eagles").

E8.6 A-40T KRYLIA Russian "flying" tank (Annual 93a).

E9.42 SUPPLEMENTAL PARACHUTE MC DRM Table (General "American Eagles").



Chapter O

011.622b RECONNAISSANCE...CG patrol operation (Rout Report 2#5).

Chapter F

F13.21 WINTER STEPPE. If both Steppe Terrain and Extreme Winter (E3.74) are in effect, so also is F.1B [EXC: Guns can be emplaced] and F8. [EXC: Sangars represent snow built fortifications, water soaked to get ice. E1.16 apply to, and are considered Concealment Terrain for set-up but does not bestow Concealment to the unit IN during play] (ASL TAC15).

F14. TO HIT & TO KILL TABLE 1940-1943...desert playing aid (Rout Report dossier).





Chapter G

G1.43 T-H LEADER. At the option of the Japanese player, once during a scenario, any one Japanese leader may become Heroic without the application of Heat of Battle (i.e., the Japanese player need only declare the leader as Heroic when he is able to make an attack vs an AFV as if he were a T-H Hero (G1.423). The SSR-created Hero must then attack the AFV, either through the use of normal CC vs an AFV (A11.6)/CC Reaction Fire (D7.2) with a CCV of 2 [EXC: the Hero may not make a combined attack with another unit vs that AFV; use of ATMM (G1.4231) is NA], or must, if the AFV is CE, attack the AFV's CE crew by expending one MF [EXC: two MF if the AFV is moving/in Motion] to mount the AFV (i.e., to become a Rider) [EXC: during a Japanese APh, the Hero may mount the AFV if he begins the phase ADJACENT to it] and attack/be attacked by the crew with non-sequential [EXC: Ambush] Hand-to-Hand CC on the following table (all CC DRM not marked with a "*" are applicable [EXC: those with "*½" modifiers are NA]; additionally, there is a +1 DRM if the attacker is Wounded/Stunned/STUNNED):

	Hero attack crew of:		Crew attack
DR	CT	OT	O N
HERO			
≤ 4	KIA[1]	KIA[1]	KIA
5	Recall[2]	Recall[2]	KIA
6	Recall[2]	Stun	Wounded[4]
7	Stun	NE[3]	Wounded
≥ 8	NE[3]	NE[3]	NE[3]

[1] Mark the vehicle with an "Abandoned" counter; the vehicle is immediately captured if the Hero is still present on/in it.

[2] Mark the vehicle with a "STUN" counter (crew may still attack in CC with this "STUN" counter on, but receives the STUN +1 DRM); flip this counter to it's "Recall"; +1" side at the end of the CCPh in which the "Melee/CC" counter is removed.

[3] No effect, Melee continues (unless other side eliminated).

[4] Must make a Wound Severity dr as per A17.11.

Withdrawal is NA for this Melee. The Japanese Hero need not Bail Out if the vehicle he is a Rider on changes its TCA. If the Hero mounts the AFV to make his attack on the CE crew, both the Hero and the CE crew are vulnerable to fire [EXC: the crew still receives the +2 CE DRM] until the beginning of the second CCPh of their Melee (assuming there is a second Melee); thereafter, neither the Hero or the crew are considered CE (i.e., they are inside the vehicle) [EXC: if the Hero attacks a Carrier, the Hero and crew are always vulnerable to fire: the Hero receives the +2 CE DRM after the beginning of their second CCPh in Melee]. Once the "Melee" counter is placed, the vehicle may not move or fire in any way [EXC: any SA may fire normally until the beginning of the second CCPh of the Melee (this is an exception to A7.212)]; if the vehicle is in Motion, it immediately Stops concurrent with the placement of the "Melee" counter. The Hero is not eliminated upon completion of his CC attack (i.e., G1.425 is NA for this Hero). If the Hero eliminates the vehicle/crew in CC, or becomes engaged in CC by any Personnel prior to attacking an AFV through the application of this SSR, he immediately reverts to "normal" Hero status (ASLUG 9).

G1.51 BLIND BANZAI. All Japanese forces must enter play as part of one or two multi-MMC Banzai Charges (G1.5) on the appropriate turn. The Banzai Charge occurs despite having no LOS to an enemy unit; each charge initially moves in the enemy's direction during each impulse. Only if a unit in the Banzai Charge gains LOS to an enemy unit that some portion of the charge could reach during the current Player Turn will that charge specifically move toward that Location; once a Banzai Charge has conducted the first impulse of movement towards a specific target Location, the charge will not change direction due to subsequently revealed enemy units (ASL A57).

G1.665 THAI. Thai units are represented by Chinese counters; but the rules concerning Chinese [G18] are not applied [EXC: G18.2]. 5-3-7 MMC have Assault

Fire (TAC 69).

G9.8 TIGER TRAPS...new PTO fortification (Annual 93b).

G14.511 ELEMENT C. A Roadblock placed in a Shallow Ocean hex adjacent to a Beach hex represent "Element C" type of obstruction. These are considered Beach Obstacles, neither an Hindrance to LOS nor TEM, but not Open Ground and Inherent Terrain impassable to vehicles. Infantry entrance cost is 1.5 MF and Normal Stacking Capability is reduced to two Squad equivalents. Removal is only possible through a DC attack: a Placed DC that does not malfunction automatically eliminates the obstacle, while a Thrown DC necessitates a KIA result on the IFT (ASL-N63).

G14.69 GERMAN NAVAL OBA (NOBA)...Kriegsmarine too had guns (Critical Hit! #1).



TERRAIN

CRETE, GREECE terrain: ARID climatic conditions (F11.) are in effect; all Orchards are Olive Groves (F13.5); all Woods are Brush; all Grain are Vineyards (F13.6), all building are single story and stone.

FINLAND terrain: All Grain and Brush are Woods, all buildings are wood and have ground level only.

NORMANDY terrain: All Hedges are Bocage, all Sunken roads are Sunken Lanes (B4.43).

SICILY terrain: ARID climatic conditions (F11.) are in effect; Cactus Hedge and Olive Grove (F13.5) are in effect; all Woods, Orchard are Olive Groves (F13.5); all Brush are Vineyard (F13.6), Grain hexes are Vineyards (F13).

SPAIN terrain: All Orchards are Vineyards (F13.6); all buildings are stone.

TUNISIA terrain: ARID climatic conditions (F11.) are in effect; Cactus Hedge and Patch (F13.4-5) are in effect; all Orchard are Olive Groves (F13.5); all Brush are Vineyard (F13.6), all Marsh are Brush.

Guest Editor: Darrell Andersen

Welcome to the new issue of Critical Hit. Herein we bring you a quality array of new scenarios, a unique historical perspective, comments on already published ASL material, design aids and results from recent tournaments. The powers that be has also elected to bring us another photo of Ray Verbanic. Yeesh. I'm still in therapy from the same mug in Issue #1!

Take a look at the names on the masthead and on the various articles and scenarios in this issue. With the exception of our new Associate Editor, ASL grognard and renaissance man Brian Martuzas, the names are likely not ones which the ASL community are familiar. Critical Hit provides a platform for fresh ideas and new slants on our great hobby. Those talents found their way to these pages through a simple process....submissions! Do you have a great idea for a scenario? Put it together and send it to us. Perhaps you have a firm grasp on a particular tactic. Armored assault, obstacle placement, desert tactics; check our past issues for great articles on these very subjects by Rob Modarelli. Command and control has been a rarely explored combat issue, until now, with ex-sailor John Gorkowski's tremendous piece. Tanker Adam Geibel explores the esoteric with his article on a rare Italian AFV. All of these talented ASL minds were brought together by submitting their ideas. Those of you lurking out there with a head *full* of ideas are the future of this hobby. Let the rest of us in on what you are thinking! The greatest strength of this magazine is that it is a conduit for new ideas and new voices. Don't line what you see happening in the ASL community? Change it! Do you think that ASL is the greatest thing since beer and Pamela Anderson? Improve it anyway! Submit your scenario and article ideas early and often.

Another fantastic way to get involved with this game is to attend a tournament or two. Spending an entire weekend playing ASL, discussing the game and various related topics is a great way to get away from the problems we all face day to day. Pure escapism.

There are quite a few tournaments played at various time of the year in geographically different points, making the travel and expense relatively easy for most people. Here is the tip for you married guys; if your significant other is balking at you going off on a road trip, show her the pictures "from the front lines" in this issue. She will immediately understand that there will be no other women anywhere near the event! My lovely wife tells her friends she sends me to "some sort of WW II beer thing". Come to think of it, she's not far off! Tournaments are also a tremendous way to improve your play as well. Playing anywhere between eight and twelve scenarios in three days is a great crash course in graduate level ASL.

There are many ways to get involved further in this hobby. The internet ASL mailing list is a handy way to stay on top of what is going on. While this list has grown to over 600 participants, it can be a great way to find opponents in your area (or for e-mail play), or hash out a rules question. The list is a bit of a two-edged sword however. There are a few cranks prowling the list with an axe to grind. This is to be expected with any internet forum, however, and the ASL list isn't as bad as some of those catering to other topics.

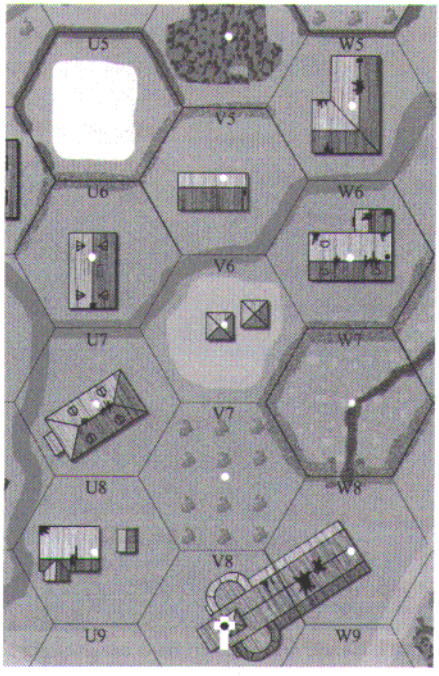
One last thought. Am I the only one that has noticed that one of the characters from the Saturday Night Live sketch, "Scottish Soccer Hooligans" shares a name with ASL designer Ian Daglish? Yikes! If our Ian enjoys ASL like 'their' Ian enjoys soccer, he should be easy to spot at tournaments!

Enjoy the new issue!

Darrell is a long time designer and playtester serving as our first "Guest Editor". We will be having other members of the moveable party a.k.a. the CH staff speak in subsequent issues to give the readership a chance to hear the different voices bringing you Critical Hit, up to this point, from behind the scenes. Darrell is an 82nd Airborne veteran and can lay claim to logging many a lap around the statue of "Iron Mike" at Fort Bragg. He's good with an M-16, too so we didn't edit his piece much at all! RT

tent of presenting a new overlay at this time dovetails with the desire to revive some old scenarios for those that desire a bit of variety. In the interest of getting the new overlay to dovetail with older scenarios, see *Figure 8* for a list of scenarios and set up and VC changes which are suggested. (*We also suggest the individual player feel free to adapt the new board to other, non-listed scenarios, as well as their own designs for submission to CH, the same goes for the other Village 42 overlay. Ed*)

In closing, on the subject of the "village" you will note we address western-European villages in this article. Russian, Italian, North African, and Pacific Island villages have terrain features all their own and will be addressed in later articles and board releases. *Figure 2* depicts a coastal village as seen from Rommel's own viewfinder, and snapped by the Desert Fox himself in his *Storch*. An Italian village is depicted in *Figure 3*, including a quay and numerous, closely situated buildings and narrow streets. These images are presented to contrast these unique terrain features, until now *all* depicted by a handful of geomorphic boards. It is this uniqueness that precludes an attempt to make *one* new village overlay which tries to depict more than one type of village. That would put us right back where we started. Please enjoy the new overlay and write to the author, care of this magazine with your comments.





A Game of Two Halves...



At first sight, the American chances look good: U.S. elite troops out-number the German mix of first and second line infantry to give a qualitative and quantitative advantage. They even have Sherman tank support balancing the Germans' two (Scarce Ammunition) OBA modules. But make no mistake. Scenario AA8, 'Charge the Causeway' from the recently released ALL AMERICAN module is a tough challenge for the Americans, as many a confident playtester found!

The following narrative reflects the American experience, recorded from a real playtest match. Although a one-sided viewpoint, it highlights some of the issues that any player will face in moving their card-stock soldiers across *that* causeway.

Note the comments about Fire Lanes. At this stage of the playtest, it had been ruled that a Fire Lane could be declared even against a moving unit ≥ 6 SMOKE Hindrances. The argument was complicated, but relied in part on the **deletion** of the words "placement of a Fire Lane counter is not allowed if... LOS Hindrance... block LOS totally" in the '92 revision. After a heated on-line debate, the point was addressed specifically on the SSR sheet!

As the American in 'Charge the Causeway', I have to channel my entire force down a single line of nine hexes, and my opponent is expecting me! I face the probability of Fire Lane attack and the near certainty of at least one Module of 81mm OBA on the way. And hex X8 is usually in the sights of the German sniper!

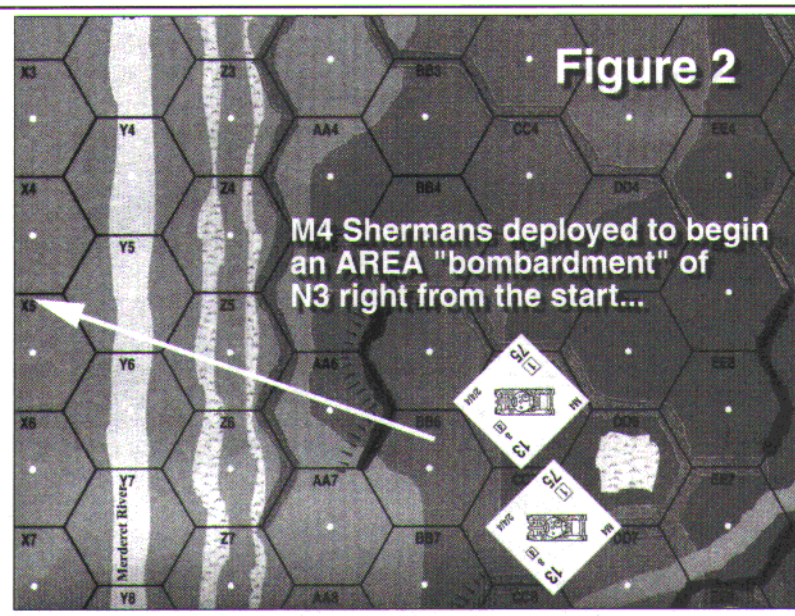
I have to be single-minded. My only priority in these first five turns is to get *something* established beyond R5. If I can get even two squads into cover across the causeway, I shall have matched the historical achievement of George Company. I may try minefield Clearance in X8; the Moist EC will help, but I cannot count on success.

Turn 1 Prep Fire options present a challenge. Direct Fire against concealed (and maybe HIP) Germans in N3 is out of the question. Opportunity Fire is tempting, but the absolute top priority is to put a SMOKE barrier in between N3 and the causeway. It is tempting to try for WP to flush out Hidden units in the buildings, but the priority is to obstruct MPh LOS.

My logic: There is very likely to be a German radio in N3 at level one, and the HMG in N3 level zero. This is as safe an assumption as any I shall ever have to make during an ASL scenario! And I want to get *Sauls* and his men as far down the road as possible on turn one before OBA comes down. I position my M-4s in CC6 and CC7 for Area Target shots against N3; in CC5 for Area Fire into level one of N3; and CC8 for Area Acquisition of O8, where a radio probably lurks at level one (Designer's note: this building moved to O8 with the more accurate 4th edition of the map!) All are CE; if the German wastes IFT shots against them, I shall not mind. My first shot places smoke in N3, but triggers a sniper attack, breaking a U.S. squad. I

U.S. Overview of AA8: 'Charge the Causeway' from ...

All American



sacrifice the rest of the stack to TI for a successful Sniper Check, remembering my last game in which the German Sniper inflicted STUN Recall on three CE tanks in as many turns. Then Smoke in O4 blocks all LOS from N3 down the causeway. It is time for Sauls to make his run!

As always, Sauls ensures that his first MC happens when he is stacked with three squads, and the 7-0 leader as well (once berserk, he is the equal of any SMC!) Note that even though LOS is completely blocked by SMOKE Hindrance, the German can still place a Fire Lane from level zero of N3 (A9.22), and FFNAM still applies (Since the 1992 revision to page A18, no SMOKE Hindrance affects LOS for Fire Lane placement, even though no normal First Fire is possible.) The Fire Lane is deadly. Sauls' berserk stack comes to a halt in U7, whittled down by a succession of *4 minus 1* Fire Lane attacks, to a mere two first line half-squads.

German turn one and my disastrous start is partially relieved as one German radio fails Contact, and one FFE scatters into the marsh. Next an M4 Area target Type Critical Hit (*Unabashedly, one of our fave terms! Ed.*) against O8 acheives a 4MC on a HIP observer, leaving him a wounded 6+1.

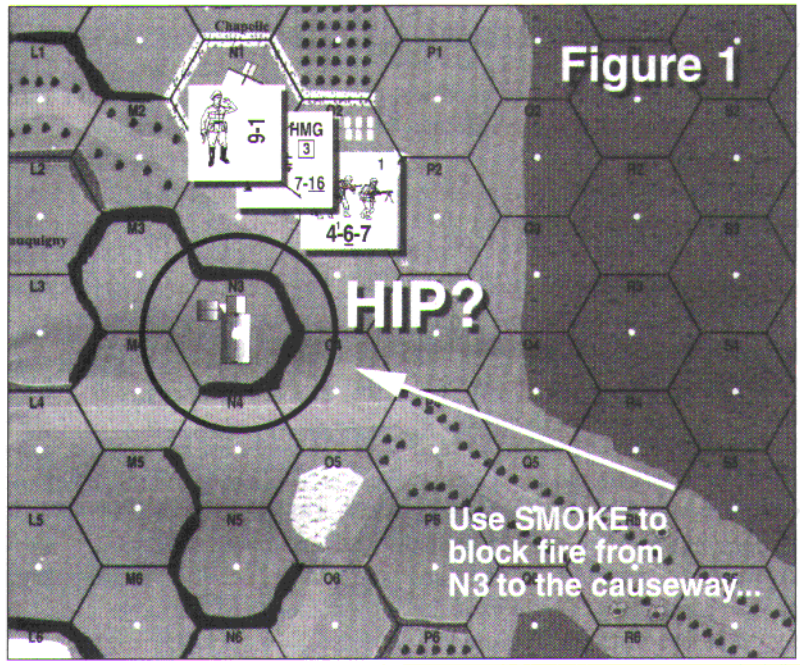
American turn two and I am full of hope! No German FFE in play, two berserk half-squads running interference, and I even have a stack of three squads and an 8-1 in place to attempt mine Clearance in X8! One of the berserk HS survives its run to enter CC in O5 (and later die in Melee). But then, when my X8 stack announces its Clearance attempt, becoming TI and exposed to DFF, the Fire Lane roll is snake eyes for a K/2 result, with the leader and two squads tying for Casualty Reduction and the third rolling boxcars on its MC. From three squads, two half-squads left unbroken. Incredibly, their Clearance roll is a 2, for a Trail Break (*To quote President Ron Reagan: "There you go again!" Ed.*)

German turn two and his Sniper breaks a HS under an M-4 - if they had not been there as sniper bait it would have been a STUN Recall for mister Sherman.

American turn three sees Area Target fire break the Observer in N3, as my Shermans crawl painfully slowly through the Trail Break (Designer's note: see the example in SSR AA3.) But a German radio is reactivated, and OBA again comes down on the causeway.

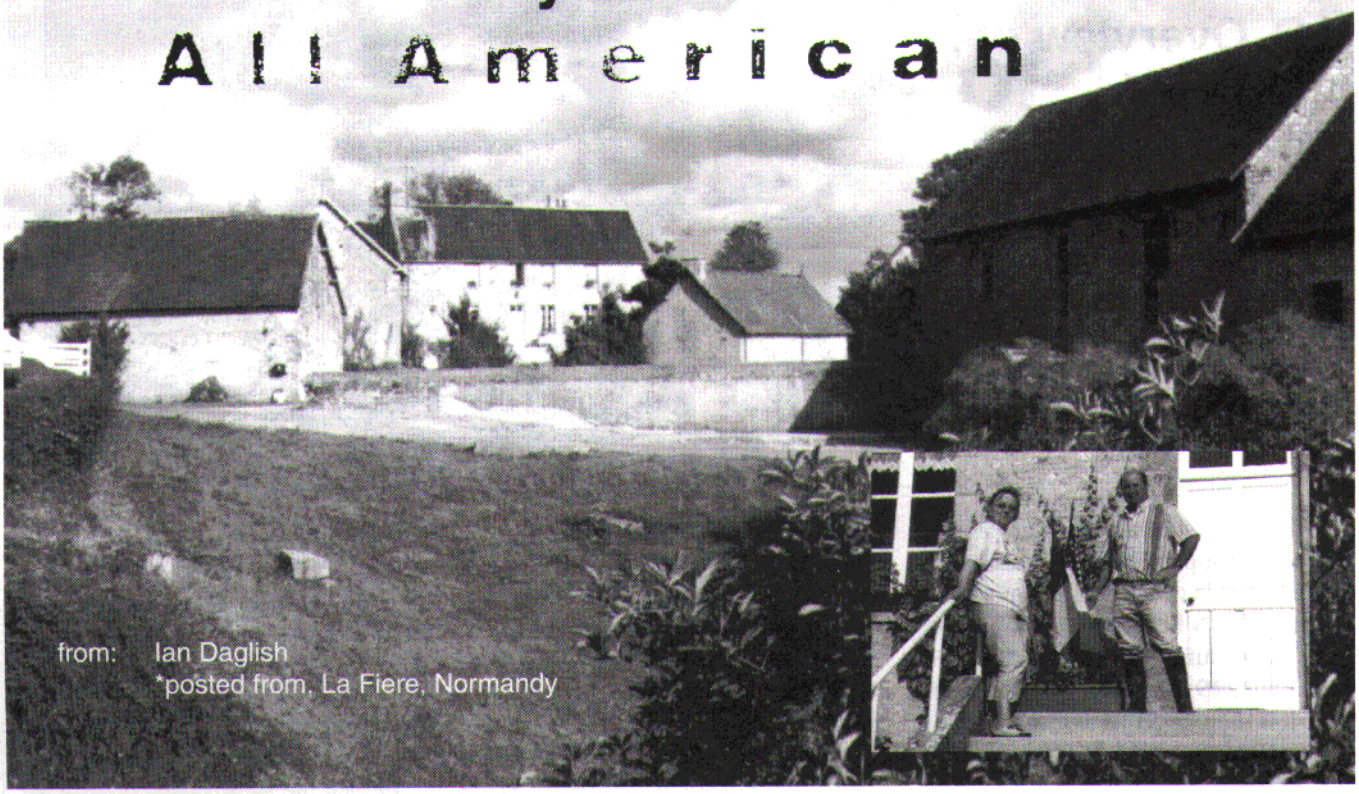
Turn five and a hail of panzerfaust shots flame one Sherman in Q5. A second shelters in the smoke-filled hex, surviving the German Player Turn with a first line squad and a wounded, heroic leader. The game is not over...

In fact, the game ended on turn 8. With the Germans out of panzerfausts, the sole remaining Sherman became over-confident, attempting Intensive Fire, only to lose its MA and suffer Recall. The German drew enough black chits to rain down an iron curtain of OBA on the causeway and the American resigned. The designer gave a sigh of relief and revisited the scenario balance. Again!



More on the story...

All American



from: Ian Daglish
*posted from, La Fiere, Normandy

LA FIERE MANOIR - THE STORY BEHIND HEX AA9:

Players of ALL AMERICAN: The 82nd Airborne at Kellam's Bridge will recognize hex AA9 as a vital position in many of the scenarios depicted.

The Manor house and its outbuildings stand at a site that has been of strategic importance since pre-historic times - with traces of occupation going back over one thousand years. In the age of the Viking raiders, sturdy earthen ramparts sheltered the people of the community (and, no less important, the community's cattle!) The present manor buildings date from around the sixteenth century.

On June 5th, 1944, around 11:00 P.M.., a detachment of engineers from the 1057 Grenadier Regiment arrived at the manoir, demanding accommodation. This was no surprise to Monsieur Louis Leroux and his family. Life under the occupying force was no picnic, but the people of the area had been spared the worst excesses of the *Heerenvolk*, and never before had German troops been billeted at the Manior. Some time later, a small ammunition truck arrived, laden with German casualties, who were accommodated on the stone floor of the huge ground floor kitchen. The truck itself later became part of the barricade thrown across the causeway by elements of the American 307th Parachute Engineers, assigned to the 505 Parachute Infantry Regimental Combat Team.

The following days were to witness the partial destruction of the manoir: the western walls of the house reduced to rubble; the thatch roofs of the outhouses burned and their walls pitted by bullet and shell.

The present owners, Yves and Chantal Poisson, took over the manoir in 1973. While Chantal has overseen the conversion of the former bake-house into two self-contained guest rooms, Yves has maintained the collection of artifacts thrown up by the soil. No less important, Yves is a link with all the 82nd veterans who have visited: many seeking to locate the spot they landed on that fateful night; all keen to tell their particular story. Yves has a French language edition of Marshall's classic 'Night Drop', in which all the names are highlighted, and many countersigned and annotated by the men of the 82nd mentioned.

Every month brings a new story. Exactly where did PFC Peterson stand to fire his bazooka at the advancing German tanks? Now we know, courtesy of Marcus Heim, who was loading for him at the time. Not long ago, Yves Poisson showed an 82nd veteran up the circular stairway inside the turret of the manor house. The aging vet, stopped by a small window (visible in the AA1 scenario illustration) and pointed at the stone pillar opposite the window. Taking a knife, he scratched away plaster from the pillar. He revealed - lodged deep in the stone - the bullet which fifty years ago had whistled past his head as he mounted the stairs. Friendly fire, 1944 style!

Yves and Chantal Poisson extend a welcome to any travelers who wish to visit their Chambres d'Hote: two comfortable accommodations, each with television and bathroom, one with kitchen facilities. Their address is: Ferme La Fiere, 50480 Sainte Mere Eglise, FRANCE (telephone 33 41 31 77).

IRON MIKE AT LA FIERE:

At the time ALL AMERICAN was being researched, plans were afoot for a memorial to mark the site of the actions depicted. Previously, there had been only a token sign by a roadside ditch in hex DD7 boasting that 'General Gavin fought here'. It is reported that the General himself did not recall fighting in the hole, but

that he might have used it for another purpose!

The local Friends of the 82nd Airborne (and there are many!) were determined to create some mark of respect that would be a focal point for visitors. Many options were considered: from a full-blown heritage center to something less dominating. In the end good taste prevailed, and the decision was made to erect a dignified statue. But not just any statue! This was to be an exact replica of the statue of 'Iron Mike' which stands at Fort Bragg.

Permission having been sought and willingly granted by the Commandant and by the sculptor's next of kin, work commenced. Iron Mike's original cast was unusable, so hundreds of photographs recorded every aspect of the striking figure.

Finally, dignified by the presence of a sizeable contingent of ALL AMERICAN soldiers, past and present, the work was unveiled. Today, as the manoir buildings in AA9 maintain the guard of ten centuries over the causeway, across the road in hex BB6 of our game map 'Iron Mike' also watches over the crossing, a lasting reminder of the men who came from thousands of miles away to defend La Fiere.

All American







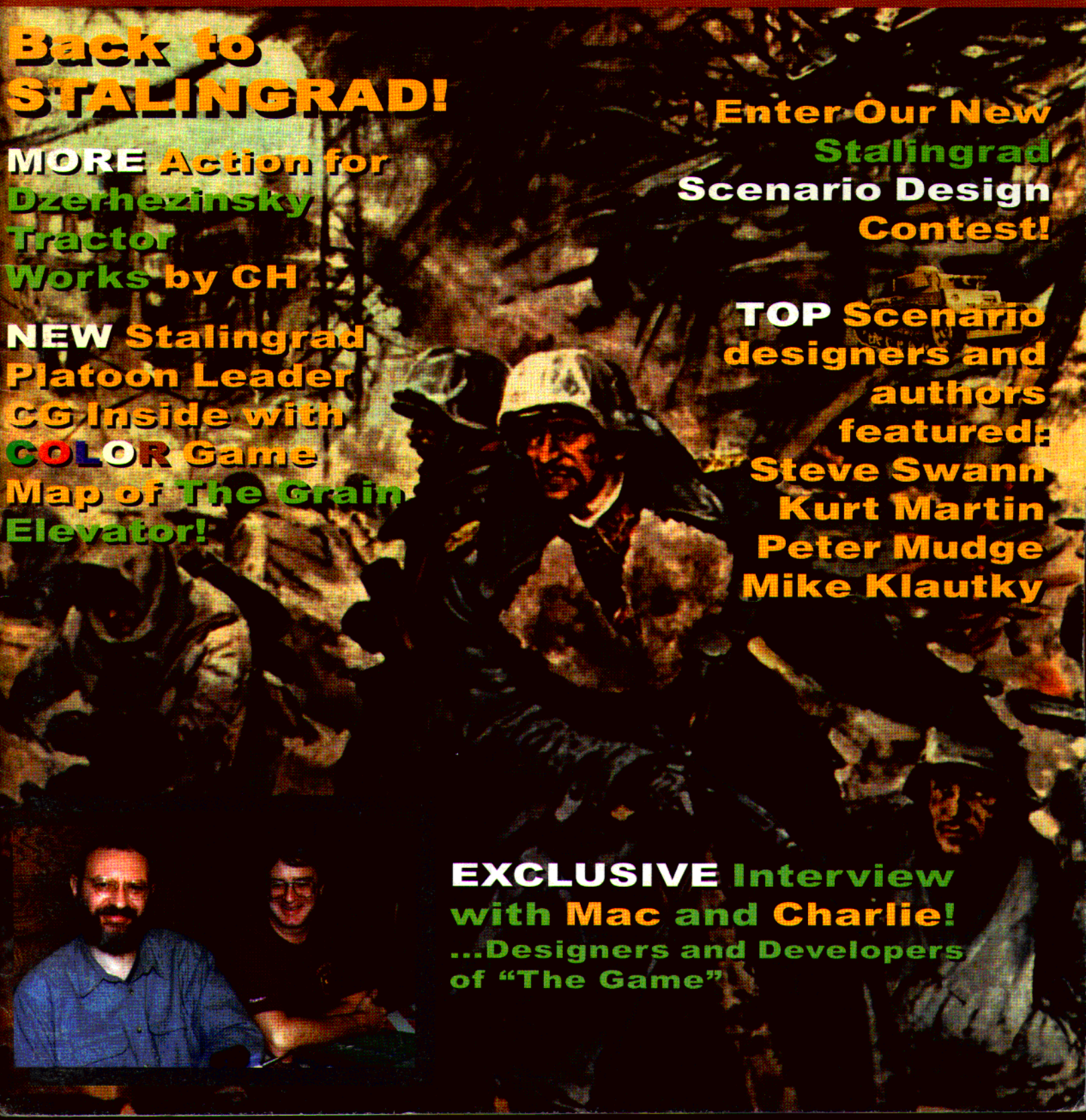
THE PHOTOS: *Above Left*: That's Hex AA9 from our 'All American' game map behind the title of the article, with an *inset* of Yves and Chantal Poisson, in front of the manoir they took over ownership of in 1973.
Lower Left: That's 'Iron Mike', the statue copied from the famous statue of the same name at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.
Above: Another, closer view of 'Iron Mike' recently installed as a memorial to the men of the 82nd Airborne. The statue stands in what is hex BB6 of our game map, overlooking Kellam's Bridge.

Plus:

- MORE DTW ACTION!
- CH Trip to the U.K.
- Urban Combat Tips
- New Scenarios, and CG

CRITICAL HIT

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING 1997 Special $19.95



Back to STALINGRAD!

MORE Action for Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works by CH

NEW Stalingrad Platoon Leader CG Inside with COLOR Game Map of The Grain Elevator!

Enter Our New Stalingrad Scenario Design Contest!

TOP Scenario designers and authors featured:
Steve Swann
Kurt Martin
Peter Mudge
Mike Klautky

EXCLUSIVE Interview with Mac and Charlie!
...Designers and Developers of "The Game"



Battle TW-A:

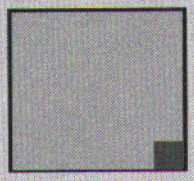
Zholudev's Guards



STALINGRAD, 7 October 1942: The early days of October saw both sides trying to find a weak spot in the other's lines. Following the bloodletting in the Owrashnaya Woods on 27 September, the 389th Infantry Division was thrown back into the fight, this time aimed at the Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works. In the meantime, *Stavka*, in early October ordered a Special Defense Command be set up opposite the city. The primary result of this move was the creation of an artillery division on the east bank of the Volga; some troops were sent to the west bank. Among those replacements for 62nd Army was the 37th Guards Division of General Zholudev. Using the new strength added to the defenders, a heavy toll was exacted on the Germans as the Guards slowly fell back into the factories.

GAME LENGTH: 11 turns; Russians set up first, the Germans move first.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	



EC: Moderate with no wind.

MAP CONFIGURATION:
The entire *Tractor Works* map is used for this firefight.

OBJECTIVES:
The Germans win *immediately* if they control all ground level hexes of six of the nine numbered buildings listed on the game map turn record chart (i.e., 1-9). The Russians win by avoiding the German VCs or *immediately* upon eliminating/immobilizing/Recalling *all* German AFVs.

HANDICAPS:

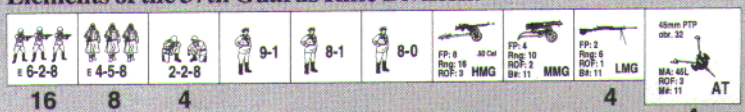
Replace the 9-1 leader in the Russian OB with a 9-2.

Add one additional StuG IIIG to the German OB.

Any mutually agreed upon alteration to either side's OB.

FIREFIGHT SPECIAL RULES (FSR):
FSR1. All German 8-3-8 and 5-4-8 squads (and any resulting HS) are Assault Engineers (H1.22). The Germans are Elite (C8.2).
FSR2. The Russians may not enter a sewer after turn nine. Units still in a sewer Location at the end of turn ten are eliminated. The Russians may fortify six Locations (tunnels are NA) and have Booby Trap Level C (exchanging mine factors to increase this level before the start of play is NA).
FSR2. The Russian T-34 tanks have Inexperienced Crews.
FSR3. All DTW rules apply (i.e., including 15.3 OPT. MG Crews and Support Weapon Teams) [EXC: only one sniper is used for each side, ignore RB 8 but apply RB 17, i.e., allow two self-rally attempts per side].

RUSSIAN ORDER OF BATTLE:
Elements of the 37th Guards Rifle Division:



16 8 4 4 4



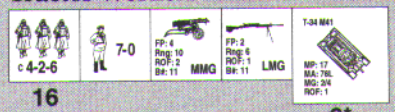


82mm Battalion Mortar (HE & S)

SET UP RESTRICTIONS: Set up on/east of hexrow F.

ELR: 3 — SAN: 6

Tractor Workers Militia and assembly line tanks:



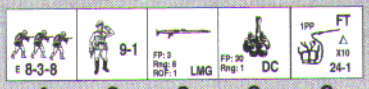
16 6*

SET UP RESTRICTIONS: Set up in any hex of Assembly Hall - One (#2 on the on-map turn record chart) and/or Assembly Hall - Two (3).

GERMAN ORDER OF BATTLE:
Elements of the 389th Infantry Division:



4 24 4 2 2 3



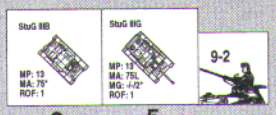
4 2 3 3 2

SET UP RESTRICTIONS: 389th elements set upon/west of hexrow C.

ELR: 4 — SAN: 3

GERMAN REINFORCEMENTS:

Elements of the 16th Panzer Artillery Regiment:



2 5



81mm Battalion Mortar (HE & S)

ENTRY: Enter along the west edge on turn one.

OFF BOARD ARTILLERY: The Germans receive one 81mm Battalion Mortar (HE & S) with Plentiful Ammo directed by an offboard observer at Level 2 along the west edge; secretly choose this hex before all setup. The Russians receive one 82mm Battalion Mortar (HE & S).



THE GRAIN ELEVATOR



The Grain Elevator, Stalingrad, 14 September, 1942: The 48th Panzerkorps pressed its attack into the city of Stalingrad from the south, utilizing superiority in air and tank forces to complete the expected conquest of the city on the Volga. The German timetable would be slowed by terrain features, usually buildings, that dominated the surrounding terrain. One of these fortresses was a huge grain elevator that stood just south of the Tsaritsa Gorge. A group of valiant Russian Marines were holed up in the corrugated metal side-tower, defying the men and guns of three enemy divisions. For nearly a week, since September 14, the men withstood the pounding of artillery and the attentions of panzers and infiltrating German soldiers. At one point, enemy infantry penetrated into the tower itself, only to be driven back as they were creeping up the stairs. The fight inside the grain elevator typified the fighting all over Stalingrad; the effort to drive the enemy out of the tower involved knives, fists and bullets. The defenders of the tower did not evacuate until they were driven out by thirst during the night of September 20. Even in their withdrawal, a Marine platoon leader, Lieutenant Khoyzyanov, and his men stumbled upon, and drove off a German mortar battery located in a nearby gully...

CG SCENARIO RULES:
CGSR I1-I4 apply only to the Initial Scenario and its applicable RePh steps. I5 applies to all GE1 CG Scenarios. All DTW rules apply (i.e., including 15.3 ORT. MG Crews and Support Weapon Teams) [EXC: only one sniper and self-rally is used for each side, ignore RB 8 and RB 17].

I1. Initial EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. Weather is Clear.

I2. Neither side has RGs purchase restrictions for the Initial Scenario.

I3. The OB-given Battalion Mortar received by the German may freely Pre-Register ≤ 2 hexes *before* the Russian setup.

I4. German RGs units purchased for the initial scenario are available at scenario start (i.e., they may enter on/after Turn 1). All Russian RGs units purchased for the initial scenario *only* may set up *on board* without any additional CP cost.

I5. A side may make a dr in RePh step 3.3 to replenish each DC or FT 'used' (not destroyed/captured/otherwise lost) in the preceding scenario (only) if it retains any squad(s) in a Friendly MLR whose RGs came equipped with that type of SW. DC: 1-5 Replenished, 6 Lost; FT: 1-4 Replenished, 5-6 Lost.

I6. Attempts to Clear Rubble and/or Debris are limited to one per RePh for each side.

CG Dates: A.M. 14 September, 1942 - A.M. 15 September, 1942 [four CG scenarios]

GE 1 OBJECTIVES: The Germans win at the end of any CG Scenario if they Control (A26.1) all *stone* Locations on the map. The Russians win at the *end* of any CG Scenario in which the Germans *do not* control at least two stone buildings (i.e., *not* Locations).

INITIAL SCENARIO VICTORY CONDITIONS: Germans must control ≥ 14 Stone Locations at scenario end.

INITIAL SCENARIO: German Attack, Russian Idle.

TERRAIN CONFIGURATION: The *entire* Grain Elevator map is in play.

INITIAL GERMAN OB:
Elements of the 267th Infantry Regiment and support elements from Kampfgruppe Hellerman [ELR:4] enter along the west edge. The west edge is the German **FBE**: {SAN:3}

A1: StuGIIIB Pltn x 1 — **I1:** Rifle Pltn. x 2
O4: Offb'd Observer — **O1:** Battalion MTR OBA
19 CP

INITIAL RUSSIAN OB:
Elements of the 92nd Marine Rifle Brigade, 133rd Tank Brigade and 271 NKVD Regiment [ELR:3] set up anywhere on map. North, south and east is the FBE: {SAN:5}

A2: NKVD Militia Pltn. x 4 — **O1:** Medium Mortars OBA
I1: Marine Rifle Pltn. x 1* — **G2:** ART Bty. x 1
I5: Storm Pltn. x 1 — **15 FP**
Fortified Building Locations x 4 — **12 CP**
*must set up in The Grain Elevator (II6-I7-I8)

Fortifications Available for purchase:	
Foxholes[G]	Trenches[G]
Fortified Building[G]	AP Mines[G, I]
"?"	HIP[G]
Wire[G]	Set DC[G]
Roadblock[G]	AT Mine[G, I]
Booby Traps[G]	Dummy Minefield[G]

[R] Russian only and *only* for Initial CG Scenario.
[G] Germans may *not* purchase for Initial CG Scenario.
[I] Max 20 FP per side for all CG Scenarios.

CG DRM:	GERMAN	RUSSIAN
Leader	-1	0
Battle Hardening	0	-1
Artillery OBA	0	0
CP Replenishment	+2	+3
Intensity Level	LOW	LOW

GE1	Time/Date		Attacker	Weather	EC	Wind	Moon	Hist DRM
Scenario 1	A.M.	14/9/42	German	Clear	Moderate	None	NA	-1
2	P.M.	14/9/42	German	Clear	Moderate	None	NA	0
3	Night	14/9/42	Russian	Clear	Moderate	None	None	0
4	A.M.	15/9/42	German	Clear	Moderate	None	NA	0

Elements of the 29th Motorized Infantry Division & KG Hellerman

German CG Card

ID	Unit Description and Composition	Type	CP Cost	Maximum Scen.	Maximum CG	Notes
S1	Stukas	E7.2 '42 FB with bombs	1	1	1	t
A1	Sturmgeschutz Pltn.	3xStuGIIIB	5	1	1	lr
A2	Panzer Pltn.	3xPzIIIH	6	1	1	glr
A3	Panzer Pltn.	3xPzIVF2	8	1	1	glr
I1	Rifle Pltn.	4x4-6-7 MMC	4	2	6	lrz
I2	Panzergrn. Pltn.	4x4-6-8 MMC	6	1	3	lrz
I3	Sturm Pltn.	3x5-4-8 MMC	5	1	2	lrz
I4	Pionier Pltn.	3x8-3-8 MMC	8	1	1	elrz
I5	HW Pltn.	2x81mm MTR, 2xHMG, 2xMMG	9	1	1	ac
O1	Battalion Mortars	81mm OBA	3	2	4	ap
O2	Offboard Observer		1	2	4	o
G1	AT Gun Sect. I	3x50mm PaK 38	8	1	1	ac
G2	Inf. Gun Sect.	3x7.5cm INF, 1x150mm INF	10	1	1	ac
M1	Fortifications	20FP	2	2	2	a
M2	Sniper	SAN +1	2	1	4	
M3	Attack Option		1	1	4	

a Available for on-map setup on CG day of purchase [EXC: German Initial Scenario].

c Each German AT/INF/81mm MTR Gun comes with a 2-2-8 crew; each German HMG/MMG/Lt Mtr/ATR comes with a 1-2-7 crew.

e German 8-3-8 are Assault Engineers (H1.22).

g For each Pltn. purchased, the German may immediately purchase one Panzergrenadier Pltn. (I2) for 3 CP.

l Determine Leaders (SMC) as per 3.12-121. I3 & I4 units receive a -1 DRM.

o Off-board Observer is secretly recorded before setup and may trace an LOS from Level 2 of any friendly controlled west edge hex (Note the German controls the west edge at the start of the Initial Scenario.

p Increase CP cost by one per Pre-Registered hex (C1.73) purchased with module.

r Must enter as reinforcements if entered on the CG Day of purchase [EXC: 3.9; 3.91]. The RGs is available for on-map setup if purchased on any CG Day prior to that of the scenario.

z German RGs receive the following SW/SMC: Rifle Pltn. - 1xLMG, 1xLtMTR; PzGr Pltn. - 1xLMG; Sturm Pltn. - 1xLMG, 1xDC; Pionier Pltn. - 1xLMG, 2xDC, 1xFT. [**Note l** applies for Leaders]

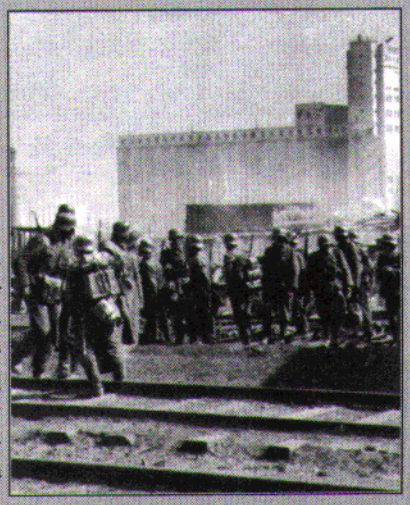


THE GRAIN ELEVATOR





THE GRAIN ELEVATOR



The Grain Elevator, Stalingrad, 14 September, 1942: The 48th Panzerkorps pressed its attack into the city of Stalingrad from the south, utilizing superiority in air and tank forces to complete the expected conquest of the city on the Volga. The German timetable would be slowed by terrain features, usually buildings, that dominated the surrounding terrain. One of these fortresses was a huge grain elevator that stood just south of the Tsaritsa Gorge. A group of valiant Russian Marines were holed up in the corrugated metal side-tower, defying the men and guns of three enemy divisions. For nearly a week, since September 14, the men withstood the pounding of artillery and the attentions of panzers and infiltrating German soldiers. At one point, enemy infantry penetrated into the tower itself, only to be driven back as they were creeping up the stairs. The fight inside the grain elevator typified the fighting all over Stalingrad; the effort to drive the enemy out of the tower involved knives, fists and bullets. The defenders of the tower did not evacuate until they were driven out by thirst during the night of September 20. Even in their withdrawal, a Marine platoon leader, Lieutenant Khoyzyanov, and his men stumbled upon, and drove off a German mortar battery located in a nearby gully...

CG SCENARIO RULES:
CGSR I1-I4 apply only to the Initial Scenario and its applicable RePh steps. I5 applies to all GE1 CG Scenarios. All DTW rules apply (i.e., including 15.3 OPT. MG Crews and Support Weapon Teams) [EXC: only one sniper and self-rally is used for each side, ignore RB 8 and RB 17].

I1. Initial EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. Weather is Clear.

I2. Neither side has RGs purchase restrictions for the Initial Scenario.

I3. The OB-given Battalion Mortar received by the German may freely Pre-Register ≤ 2 hexes *before* the Russian setup.

I4. German RGs units purchased for the initial scenario are available at scenario start (i.e., they may enter on/after Turn 1). All Russian RGs units purchased for the initial scenario *only* may set up *on board* without any additional CP cost.

I5. A side may make a dr in RePh step 3.3 to replenish each DC or FT 'used' (not destroyed/captured/otherwise lost) in the preceding scenario (only) if it retains any squad(s) in a Friendly MLR whose RGs came equipped with that type of SW. DC: 1-5 Replenished, 6 Lost; FT: 1-4 Replenished, 5-6 Lost.

CG Dates: A.M. 14 September, 1942 - A.M. 15 September, 1942 [four CG scenarios]

GE 1 OBJECTIVES: The Germans win at the end of any CG Scenario if they Control (A26.1) all *stone* Locations on the map. The Russians win at the *end* of any CG Scenario in which the Germans *do not* control at least two stone buildings (i.e., *not* Locations).

INITIAL SCENARIO VICTORY CONDITIONS: Germans must control ≥ 14 Stone Locations at scenario end.

INITIAL SCENARIO: German Attack, Russian Idle.

TERRAIN CONFIGURATION: The *entire* Grain Elevator map is in play.

INITIAL GERMAN OB:
Elements of the 267th Infantry Regiment and support elements from Kampfgruppe Hellerman [ELR:4] enter along the west edge. The west edge is the German **FBE**: {SAN:3}

A1: StuGIIIB Pltn x 1 **I1:** Rifle Pltn. x 2
O4: Offb'd Observer **O1:** Battalion MTR OBA
19 CP

INITIAL RUSSIAN OB:
Elements of the 92nd Marine Rifle Brigade, 133rd Tank Brigade and 271 NKVD Regiment [ELR:3] set up anywhere on map. North, south and east and is the FBE: {SAN:5}

A2: NKVD Militia Pltn. x 4 **O1:** Medium Mortars OBA
I1: Marine Rifle Pltn. x 1* **G2:** ART Bty. x 1
I5: Storm Pltn. x 1 **15 FP**
Fortified Building Locations x 4 **12 CP**
*must set up in The Grain Elevator (II6-I7-I8)

Fortifications Available for purchase:	
Foxholes[G]	Trenches[G]
Fortified Building[G]	AP Mines[G,I]
"?"	HIP[G]
Wire[G]	Set DC[G]
Roadblock[G]	AT Mine[G,I]
Booby Traps[G]	Dummy Minefield[G]

[R] Russian only and *only* for Initial CG Scenario.
[G] Germans may *not* purchase for Initial CG Scenario.
[I] Max 20 FP per side for all CG Scenarios.

CG DRM:	GERMAN	RUSSIAN
Leader	-1	0
Battle Hardening	0	-1
Artillery OBA	0	0
CP Replenishment	+2	+3
Intensity Level	LOW	LOW

GE1	Time/Date		Attacker	Weather	EC	Wind	Moon	Hist DRM
Scenario 1	A.M.	14/9/42	German	Clear	Moderate	None	NA	-1
2	P.M.	14/9/42	German	Clear	Moderate	None	NA	0
3	Night	14/9/42	Russian	Clear	Moderate	None	None	0
4	A.M.	15/9/42	German	Clear	Moderate	None	NA	0

Elements of the 92nd Marine Rifle Brigade, 133rd Tank Brigade and 271 NKVD Regt.

Russian CG Card

ID	Unit Description and Composition	Type	CP Cost	Maximum Scen.	Maximum CG	Notes
A1	Light Tank Pltn.	4xT-60	6	1	1	lr
A2	Medium Tank Pltn.	3xKV-1 M40	10	1	1	lr
I1	Marine Rifle Pltn.	4x4-5-8 MMC	6	2	4	lrxz
I2	NKVD SMG Pltn.	3x5-2-7 MMC	4	2	3	lrz
I3	NKVD Militia Pltn.	4x4-2-6 MMC	3	2	4	lrz
I4	MOL Projector Sect.	3xMOL-P	3	1	2	ac
I5	Storm Pltn.	3x6-2-8 MMC	6	2	2	elrz
I6	HW Pltn.	2x82mm MTR, .50 cal., HMG, 2xMMG	6	1	1	ac
O1	Medium Mortars	120mm OBA	4	1	2	ap
O2	Light Artillery	76mm OBA	3	1	2	ap
G1	ART Battery	4x76mm P obr. 39	6	1	2	ac
M1	Fortifications	40FP	1	4	4	a
M2	Sniper	SAN +1	1	1	4	
M3	MOL Capability		2	1	2	a
M4	Attack Option		2	1	2	

a Available for on-map setup on CG day of purchase.

c Each Russian AT-Gun/5/8" MTR is accompanied by a 2-2-8 crew; each Russian HMG/MMG/Lt Mtr/MOL Projector/ATR is manned by a 1-2-7 crew. The HW Pltn. comes with *both* a .50 cal. and a 6-12 HMG.

e Russian *Storm Pltn.* (i.e., make a side record if necessary) 6-2-8 squads are Assault Engineers (H1.22).

l Determine Leaders (SMC) as per 3.12-121. I5 units receive a -1 DRM.

p Increase CP cost by *two* per Pre-Registered hex (C1.73) purchased with module.

r Must enter as reinforcements if entered on the CG Scenario purchased [EXC: 3.9; 3.91]. The RGs is available for on-map set up if purchased on any previous CG Scenario.

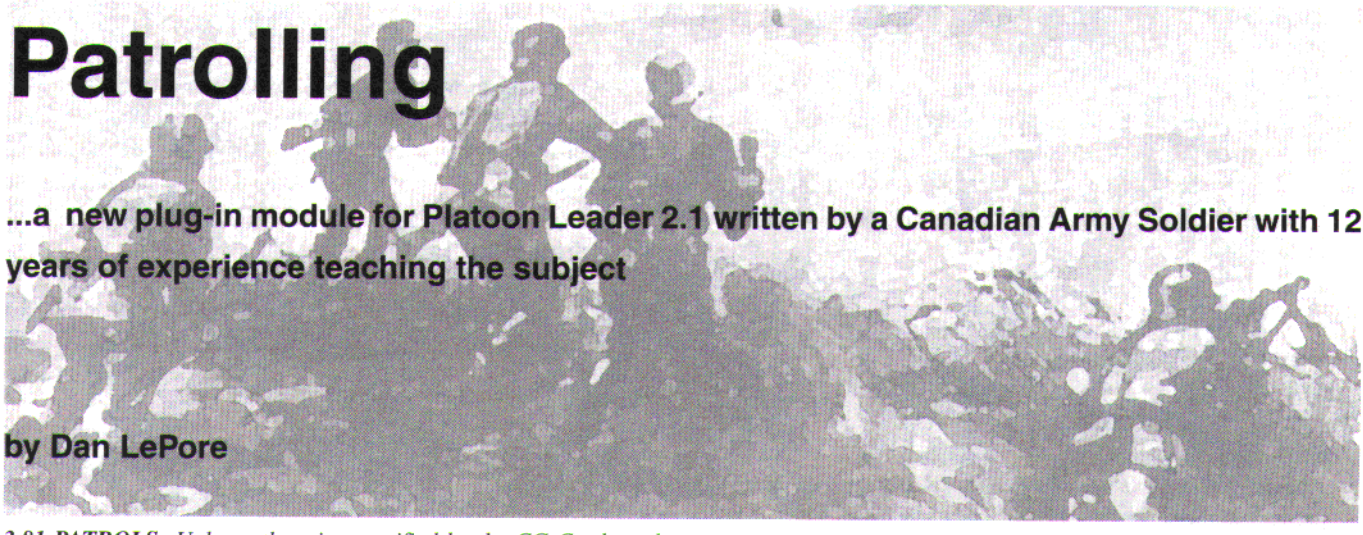
x Marine Rifle Platoon MMC and all Russian SMC receive a special +2 Fanaticism ML Bonus in *any* Location of The Grain Elevator (I6-I7-I8). All other Russian MMC are Fanatic in the normal manner in these Locations.

z Russian RGs receive the following SW: Marine Rifle Pltn. - 1 x MMG; 1xLMG; 1xLtMTR; NKVD SMG Pltn. - 2xLMG; Storm Pltn - 1xLMG; 2xDC; 1xFT. [**Note l** applies for Leaders]



THE GRAIN ELEVATOR

Patrolling



...a new plug-in module for Platoon Leader 2.1 written by a Canadian Army Soldier with 12 years of experience teaching the subject

by Dan LePore

3.81 PATROLS: Unless otherwise specified by the CG Card, each side may purchase Patrols for 1 CP each. Low Intensity CGs allow one Patrol per RePh, while Mid and High Intensity allow 2.

The ASL system partially addresses the concept of infantry patrolling by means of the recon dr. This is a simple way to conduct one type of patrol and in turn does not bog the game down. However, this recon concept does limit the choices that commanders have available to them and leaves something to be desired in the way of realism. Recon is available to both players in most CGs, but is rarely used by the attacker and almost never by the defender. The following optional rules add realism and variety to both the attacker and defender's tactics with little drag on the game.

Patrols are an effective method for a commander to obtain information and inflict damage on the enemy. Patrols are used in both the attack and defense. Infantry units generally detach patrols to perform assigned missions, which can be broken down into two basic types: reconnaissance and fighting.

Reconnaissance patrols are used to collect or confirm information, such as the enemy's size, disposition, equipment and terrain. Accurate information of this type is vital to the commander in making tactical decisions. Reconnaissance patrols are one of the most reliable means of obtaining this information.

Fighting patrols are aggressive actions that are used to harass, destroy or capture enemy personnel and equipment. Instead of gathering information, fighting patrols seek to do harm to the enemy outside of major actions, when perhaps a greater local advantage can be achieved. Specific goals of such patrols include setting ambushes, attacking enemy positions, destroying vehicles and capturing enemy personnel for interrogation.

Most patrols work forward from the friendly MLR (Main Line of Resistance) and are self-sufficient. The size of a patrol can vary from two men to company strength, depending on the mission. They could be lightly armed and seek to avoid enemy contact at all cost, as does a reconnaissance patrol. Or they could be armed-to-the-teeth fighting patrols, looking to engage the enemy.

Patrol commanders have much to plan for: actions when the enemy is contacted, what to do upon reaching the objective, or even what to do if the patrol becomes lost.

To avoid detection, patrols use terrain and camouflage to their advantage. They ditch cumbersome equipment like helmets, and ensure that noise is kept to a minimum. In Stalingrad, for instance, Russian soldiers wore burlap around the their boots to muffle the sound of their footsteps on concrete. To prevent patrols from infiltrating the enemy uses passwords, sentries, illumination, counter-patrols, and other warning systems.

Platoon Leader Patrols

Platoon Leader Patrols can be of any of four types. Unless specified otherwise by the CG, players may purchase a maximum of two Patrols per CG Scenario for Medium and High Intensity CGs, and 1 per CG Scenario for Low. A Patrol costs 1 CP. (These patrolling rules could be modified for use w/ other CG' like RB and KGP. Some suggestions would be for both attacker and defender to be allowed to purchase patrols at 1CPP for one patrol or 2 CPP for two patrols. They could also be used for non-campaign scenarios, although that was not my intent.)

After purchasing a Patrol during RePh step 3.8, all Patrol activity occurs as Step 3.171, that is, between Scenario Setup and Scenario Commencement.

3.171 Choose Patrol Type

1 - Recon - reconnaissance or surveillance
2 - Ambush - attack enemy patrols, convoys and columns
3 - Raid - destroy or capture enemy personnel or equipment
4 - Anti-vehicle - destroy enemy vehicles

3.172 Assign at least one half squad and no more than 3 squads to the patrol. One unwounded leader must accompany the patrol. The leader must be a Corporal, Sergeant or 2nd Lt. One unwounded hero may also be assigned to the patrol. Any SW may be added to the SMC/MMC. Place all units in a cloaking box. All units of a patrol must come from the same newly purchased RG, which must be eligible for on-map setup, or from the same friendly MLR.

3.173 Choose and record a Mission Hex for the patrol. If an Ambush Patrol this must be concealment terrain.

3.174 The Patrolling player now rolls on the Patrol Detection Table and conducts all of the following steps. If both players are Patrolling, the side which was the defender in the most recent scenario may choose the order of resolution.

1 -If the patrol is compromised (i.e. the Final DR is >6) it must roll to Return, Step 3.

2 - If the patrol is conducted, move its cloaking counter to ground level of the Mission Hex and do the following:

Recon - Make a dr to see number of locations that can be Searched in/adjacent to the Mission Hex. All results are applied immediately. Patrols must check ground level locations before inspecting upper levels of a hex. If any enemy unit(s) is present in the location, roll for Ambush with an extra -1 for the Patrol [EXC: If there are Enemy HIP units in the chosen hex both sides roll without this or the -2 concealment DRM.] then complete one round of CC.

Ambush - Make a concealment gain dr <5 for each MMC (only Leadership and Stealthy/Nationality drm apply). If successful, leave cloaking counter in hex. Any unsuccessful units must roll to Return. All SMC gain concealment automatically or may choose to Return. If any enemy unit(s) is present in the location, roll for Ambush [EXC: If there are Enemy HIP units in the chosen hex both sides roll without this or the -2 concealment DRM.] then complete one round of CC.

Raid - If any enemy unit(s) is present in the location, roll for Ambush with an extra -1 for the Patrol [EXC: If there are Enemy HIP units in the chosen hex both sides roll without this or the -2 concealment DRM.] then complete one round of CC. If there are no enemy units, the Patrolling player may move his Patrol to any other location in the same hex and repeat until ambush/CC occurs or there are no more locations.

Anti-Vehicle - Roll for ambush with an extra -1 for the Patrol [EXC: If there are Enemy HIP units in the chosen hex both sides roll without this or the -2 concealment DRM.] then complete one round of CC. If using LATW roll to see target facing and use the appropriate TH modifier.

3 - Patrolling player now rolls on the Patrol Return Table.

4 - Returned Patrol units may now be put in any friendly MLR. Both sides may now regain concealment as per CG11.

5 - Conduct any other Patrols, then Return to RePh step 3.18.

3.1741 If the Mission Hex contains Mines, they attack the Patrol with a +1 DRM. If the result is a PTC or less, there is no effect on a Recon or Raid Patrol, but other types must Abort (immediately roll to Return).

3.1742 If the Mission Hex contains Wire or Panji, apply a +1 drm to the Search, concealment gain, ambush dr or anti-vehicle CC.

3.1743 If the Mission Hex contains Trip Flares and the Mission is at night, check to see if they go off with a +1 drm. If they do, the Patrol must immediately roll to Return with an additional +2 DRM. Otherwise the Patrol can continue normally.

3.1744 Booby traps don't apply to hexes or locations searched during patrols.

3.1745 The player that is patrolling may abort a Raid or Anti-Vehicle Patrol after the enemy units are revealed. If he aborts, neither side gets to attack.

3.1746 CVP are recorded for the following CG date.

3.1747 SW can be dm/reassembled at will for the patrol. Accordingly, a patrol rolls on the Detection and Return Tables with the dm PP, but may still use the weapon during/after the Patrol as if assembled.

3.1748 A Patrol may always make one attempt to acquire any unpossessed Gun/SW in their location if there are no non-prisoner enemy infantry in the location at the end of the single round of CC.

Patrol Detection Table

DR	Result
≤ 2 - 7	Patrol conducts mission
8 - 9	Patrol compromised and returned to friendly MLR
10 - 11	Patrol reduced* - returned to friendly MLR
12 - 13	Patrol KIA* - returned to friendly MLR
14+	Patrol KIA - no units return
	*Use Random Selection to determine which unit(s) are Reduced/KIA'd

Patrol ReturnTable

DR	Result
≤ 2 - 8	Patrol returns safely
9	Patrol loses any prisoners - returns safely
10 - 12	Patrol reduced* - returned to friendly MLR
13	Patrol KIA* - no units return
14+	Patrol Captured*/KIA - no units return
	*Use Random Selection to determine which unit(s) are Reduced/KIA'd/Captured

Patrol Detection and Return DRM

-1	Elite, Stealthy (each)
-1	Recon type patrol
+/-	Leadership
+1	Inexperienced, Lax (each)
+1	Enemy unit(s) in hex adjacent to mission hex (each)
+1	Each 3 hexes >3 (FRU) Mission Hex is from friendly MLR
+2	Day patrol (EXC: PTO)
+2	Night Patrol PTO
+1	No Moon or Full Moon
+1	For every HS >1 Squad
+1	Every PP >2 for heaviest SW
+1	Conducted attack [EXC: HtH CC] - Return Table only
+1	Pinned
+2	Broken

Rule for the THOUGHT

GUN DUELS

by John Gorkowski

In any tank battle, the first shot is decisive. U.S. Army tank training has long emphasized the need to get in the first shot to succeed and *survive* on the battlefield. Often neglected, but quite handy, Gun Duels (C2.2401) deserve some attention from the ASL gamer. Few players take advantage of this clever option. They seem to forget it's available or perhaps don't realize the potency of this game-play option in their tank battles. Perhaps a simplified presentation of this tricky rule will help. Know the Gun Duel rules and spring a nasty surprise, I mean lesson, on your next opponent.

All Gun Duels have two pre-conditions and of course, an accompanying exception:

1. Gun Duels can occur in the Movement Phase only.
2. With one exception, they are always declared by the ATTACKER.
[Exception to #2, the DEFENDER may declare a Gun Duel when the ATTACKER declares Bounding First Fire prior to any movement point expenditure (C5.33). This is the only occasion when the DEFENDER can declare a Gun Duel.

Given the above pre-conditions, there are two ways a Gun Duel can develop.

1. During the Movement Phase, the vehicular target (only) of a declared Defensive First Fire attack may announce a Gun Duel in an effort to Bounding First Fire at that Defensive First Firer before its Defensive First Fire shot occurs.

2. During the Movement Phase, any target of a Bounding First Fire attack declared before the firing unit has spent a Movement Point may announce a Gun Duel in an effort to Defensive First Fire at that Bounding First Firer before its Bounding First Fire shot occurs.

If one of the two Gun Duel situations described does develop players must determine the order of firing. A unit responding to an enemy attack by announcing a Gun Duel will automatically concede the first shot if...

1. Its target is aerial.

2. Its target is concealed.

3. It must change covered arc (VCA or TCA). to fire on its target.

4. It is conducting an overrun.

5. Its target's attack is reaction fire.

"The U.S. Army has long stressed the need to get in the first shot to succeed and survive on the battlefield during the tank vs. tank engagement."

If the unit announcing a Gun Duel is not restricted by one of the above conditions it might fire first. To determine the order of firing, the Defensive First Firer or Bounding First Firer and the player declaring a Gun Duel must sum their respective Firer Based (C5) and Acquisition (C6.5) TH dice roll modifiers. The +1 Gyrostabilizer DRM and the doubling of the lower die roll called for by the case C4 does not apply.

The order of firing is determined as follows:

1. The player with the lowest total Firer based TH DRM fires first.

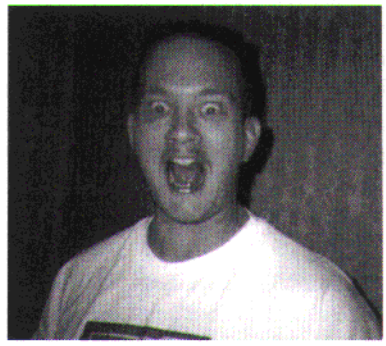
2. If players have equal total Firer-based TH DRM then the one with the lowest Final TH DRM is considered to have fired first, and may thereby void the other player's shot.

3. If players have equal total Firer based TH DRM and equal Final TH DRM then the shots are resolved simultaneously.

A firing unit's CA changes occurs when its shot is resolved, not before. Thus, if a unit declaring a Gun Duel has a lower TH DRM, its shot occurs before the target can change CA. However, remember that the unit declaring a Gun Duel will automatically concede the first shot if it must change CA.

After the initial Gun Duel the Defensive First Firer or Bounding First Firer may immediately declare another attack against the same target if otherwise allowed to do so. The target may in turn declare a second Gun Duel. In this case, each firer may use his Rate of Fire as a negative DRM when determining his total firer based to hit DRM.

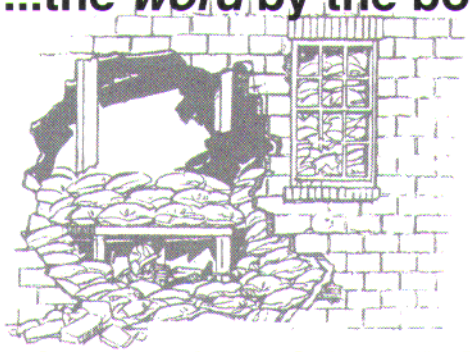
Keep Gun Duels in mind. When all hope seems lost, you just might get that first deadly shot in and survive to fight another day. Just a rule for the thought...

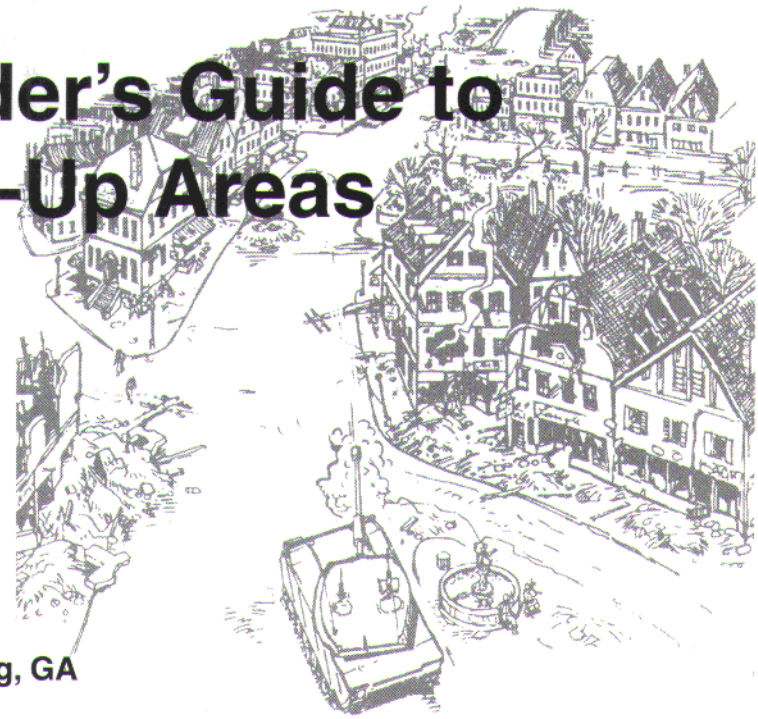


You are totally kidding me! I want to shoot your Sherman first with my Panther and just because I have to spin the turret you get to plug me in the rear? No way!

A Platoon Leader's Guide to Combat in Built-Up Areas

...the *word* by the book





U.S. Army Infantry School, Ft. Benning, GA

With the recent release of Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works, and The Grain Elevator (found in this issue) CH has placed the focus squarely back on urban combat. That focus, combined with the Platoon Leader emphasis on a military theory -over-game approach leads to the presentation of information on the subject from relevant military sources used to train soldiers for the actual task at hand.

Excerpts from Field Manual 90-10-1 *An Infantryman's Guide to Combat in Built-Up Areas* (Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, 12 May 1993) are presented. The gamer is invited to view his tactics and the following materials along the lines of the METT-T approach as it fits within the ASL model: *Mission, enemy, terrain, troops and time available*. With additional more city fighting treatments on the horizon for CH, we invite you to analyze your approach to siezing city-block after city-block by the book. You can immediately put your lessons to good use with the special grain elevator game inserted in this issue.

Defense of a City Block

A company in a built up area may have to defend a city block in a core periphery or residential area. It conducts this operation according to the defensive scheme of the battalion. The operation should be coordinated with the action of security forces charged with delaying to the front of the company's position. The defense should take advantage of the protection of buildings that dominate the roads.

a. A well-organized company defense:

- Stops the attack of the enemy on the roads by using obstacles and enfilade fire.
- Destroys the enemy by ambush and direct fire from prepared positions.
- Ejects the enemy from footholds or remains in place for a counter-attack conducted by battalion.

b. The operation of the company is more effective if it has time to reconnoiter the terrain, and to prepare obstacles and fire lanes. Vehicles not needed for the defense should be grouped in the combat trains at battalion. The operations should be supplemented by patrols, mainly at night, and communications should be wired. The company should be organized to provide a series of operations, a defense, and a reserve that is tasked with counter-attacks.

c. The defensive forces should ambush on the avenues of approach, cover the obstacles by fire, and prepare a strong defense inside the buildings. The reserve can be tasked:

- To reinforce the fires of the defense.
- To react to a danger on the flank.
- To counter-attack and throw the enemy from a foothold.

d. Engineers should be controlled at company level. They construct obstacles, prepare access routes, and assist in preparing defensive positions.

A company or section of tanks attached to the company should provide heavy direct-fire support, engage enemy tanks, and support counter-attacks.

Company Delay

The Patrolling module, presented in this issue (and planned for inclusion in PL 2.1) for Platoon Leader enables the simulation and inclusion of these tasks within the confines of ASL. Both attackers and defenders can move outside of their lines to accomplish a myriad of missions.

A company delay can be part of a battalion's defense. Its operations destroy enemy reconnaissance elements forward of the outskirts of the town, prevent their penetration of the built up areas, and gain and maintain contact with the enemy to determine the strength of the main attack.

a. The company's sector should be prepared with obstacles to increase the effect of delay. Engineers prepare obstacles on main routes but avoid some covered and concealed routes that are known to friendly troops for reinforcement, displacement (retreat) and re-supply. These routes are destroyed (closed) when no longer needed.

b. Anti-armor weapon systems are positioned on the outskirts of the town to destroy the enemy at maximum range. They should be located in defilade positions or in prepared shelters. They fire at visible targets and then fall back to alternate positions. Platoons should be as-

signed to sectors from 500 to 700 meters (one to two blocks) wide. Platoons delay by using patrols and ambushes and by taking advantage of all obstacles.

c. Tanks support the platoon by engaging enemy tanks, providing reinforcing fires, aiding the disengagement of platoons, and covering obstacles by fire.

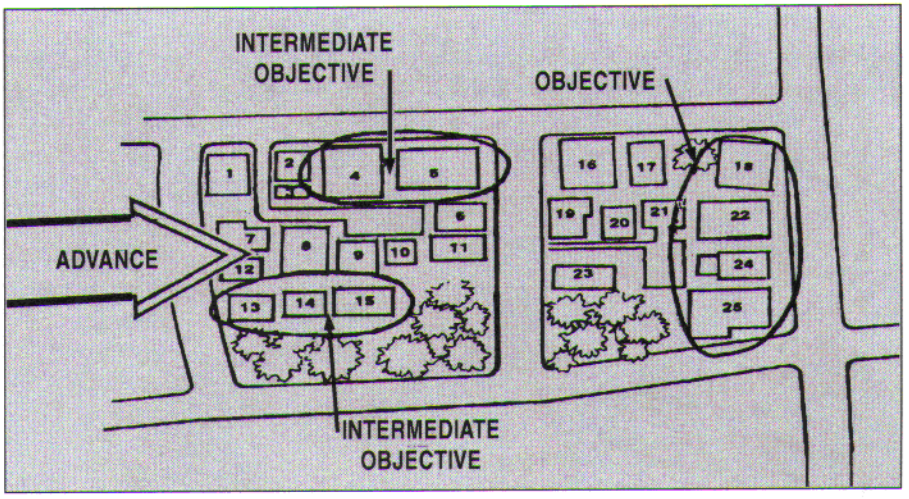
d. Other AFVs support the platoon in the same manner as tanks.

Defensive Plan at Platoon Level

1. Defense of a Strongpoint

One of the most common defensive tasks a platoon will be given is the strongpoint defense of a building, part of a building, or a group of small buildings. The platoon's defense is normally integrated into the company's mission. The platoon must keep the enemy from gaining a foothold in buildings. It makes the best use of its weapons and supporting fires, organizes all-round defense, an counter-attacks or calls for a company counter-attack to eject the enemy that has a foothold. The platoon leader analyzes his defensive sector to recommend to the company commander the best use of obstacles and supporting fires.

a. The platoon should be organized into a series of firing positions located to cover avenues of approach, to cover obstacles, and to provide mutual support. Snipers may be located on the upper floors of buildings. Un-engaged elements should be ready to counter-attack, fight fires, or reinforce elements of the platoon.

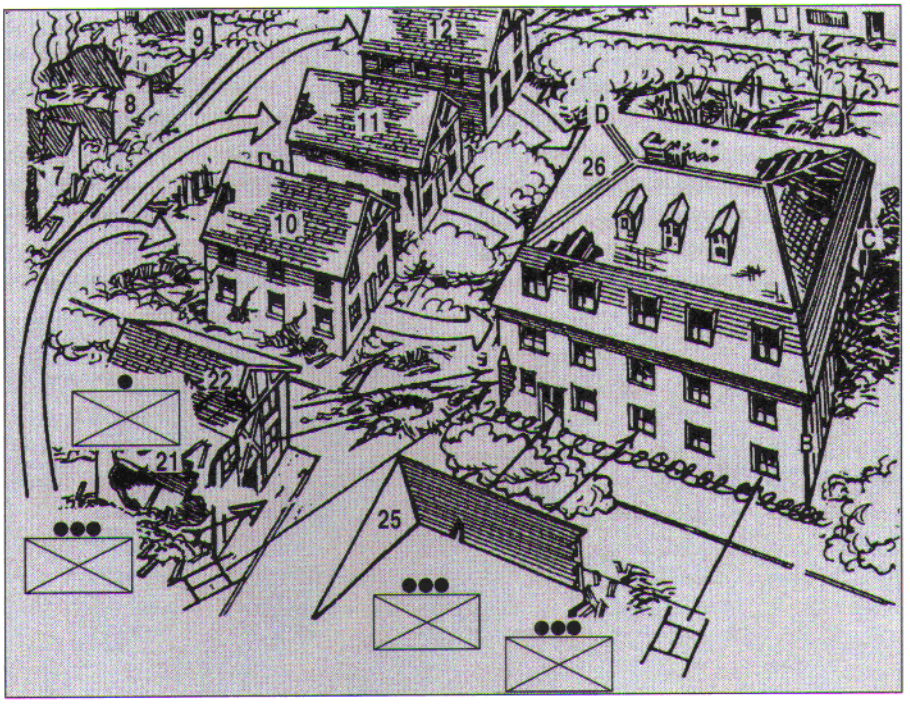


Defense Against Armor

The terrain common to built up areas is well-suited to an infantry's defense against mechanized infantry and armored forces. A well-trained infantry can inflict heavy casualties on such forces.

a. Built-up areas have certain traits that favor anti-armor operations.

- Rubble in the streets can be used to block enemy vehicles, conceal mines, and cover and conceal defending infantry.
- The streets restrict armor maneuver, fields of fire, and communications, thereby reducing the enemy's ability to reinforce.
- Buildings provide cover and concealment for defending infantry.
- Rooftops, alleys, and upper floors provide good firing positions.
- Sewers and storm drains provide underground routes for infantry forces.



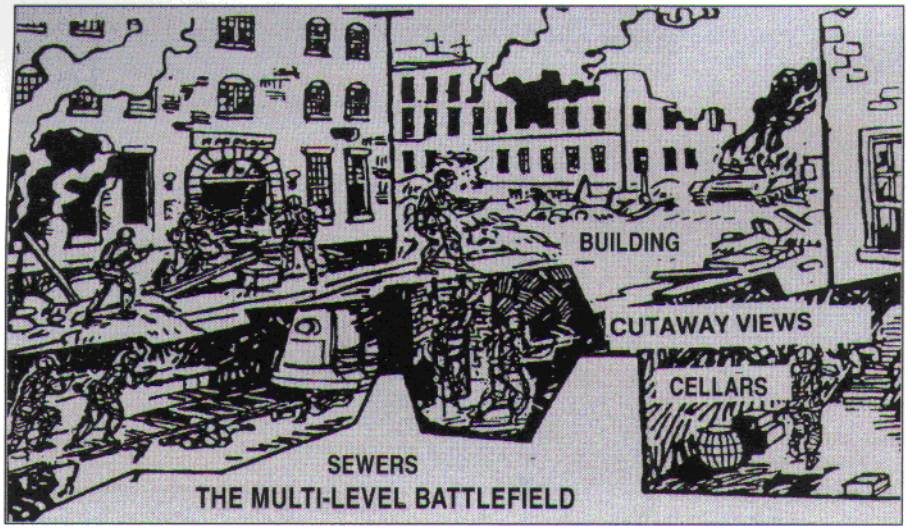
b. Anti-armor operations in built-up areas involve the following planning steps:

STEP 1: Choose a good engagement area. Enemy tanks should be engaged when they are most restricted in their ability to support each other. The best way for infantrymen to engage tanks is one at a time, so they can destroy one tank without being open to the fire of another. Typical locations include narrow streets, turns in the road, "T" intersections, bridges, tunnels, split-level roads, and rubbled areas. Less obvious locations can be used by using demolitions or mines to create obstacles.

STEP 2: Select good weapons positions. The best weapons positions are places where the tank is weakest and the infantry is most protected. A tank's ability to see and fire are limited, mainly to its rear and flanks, if the tanks are buttoned up. *In ASL the weapons and visual dead space of a buttoned-up tank against targets located at ground level are not directly simulated with the exception of turning large caliber gunned turrets on narrow village streets and the inherent difficulty of engaging infantry in cellars successfully with AFV firepower.* Similar dead space exists against targets located overhead. *This aspect is directly simulated in the inability to fire at targets on level two from an adjacent hex, for example.*

STEP 3: Assign target reference points and select methods of engagement. After selecting weapons positions, assign target reference points to ensure coverage of the areas and as a tool in controlling fires.

a. To the infantry force, the best place to engage tanks at ground level is flanks and rear or the top of the tank if the force



is in an elevated position in a building.

STEP 4: Coordinate target engagement. Tanks are most vulnerable while buttoned-up. The first step of the tank-killing force is to force the tanks to button-up, using all available direct and indirect fire. The next task is to coordinate the fires of the anti-tank weapons in the area so that if there is more than one target in the engagement area, all targets are engaged at the same time.

a. AFV are often accompanied by infantry in built-up areas. Anti-armor weapons must be supported by an effective all-round antipersonnel defense.

b. At a planned signal, all targets are engaged at the same time. If targets cannot, they are engaged in the order of the most dangerous first. Although tanks present the greatest threat, half-tracks are also dangerous because their infantry can close in on and destroy anti-armor positions. If the friendly force is *not* secured by sufficient infantry, priority of engagement might be given to enemy APCs. Rubble and mines should be used to reduce target mobility to present more targets to engage for a particular anti-armor position.

Conduct of an Armored Ambush

A rifle company can use an attached tank platoon to conduct an armored ambush in a built up area. To do so, the tank platoon should be reinforced with an APC with one or two squads from the rifle company. *In ASL, the "APC" of choice is the half-track. The mobility advantage of placing troops in unexpected locations is made possible through this extra mobility.* The ambush can be effective against enemy armor if it is conducted in an area cleared and reconnoitered by friendly forces.

a. The operation involves maneuver on a road network that is free of obstacles. Obstacles outside the ambush can be used to canalize and delay the enemy.

b. The ambushing tanks should be located in a hide position situated about 1,000 meters from the expected enemy avenue of approach. A security post, located at a choke point, observes and reports the activity of the enemy. When the enemy is reported at a trigger point, the tank platoon leader knows how much he must move his tanks to execute the ambush.

c. The tanks move quickly from their hide positions to firing positions, taking advantage of all available concealment. They try for flank shots on the approaching enemy-the average range is 300 to 400 meters. Such long ranges do not expose the tanks to enemy infantry.

Characteristics of Built-Up Areas

Built-up areas consist mainly of man-made features such as buildings. Buildings provide cover and concealment, limit fields of observation and fire, and block movement of troops, especially mechanized troops. Thick-walled buildings *(stone in ASL)* provide ready-made fortified positions. Thin-walled *(wood in ASL)* buildings that have fields of observation and fire may also be important. Another important aspect is that built-up areas complicate, confuse and degrade command and control *(not represented in ASL, see a number of past variants).*

a. Streets are usually avenues of approach. However, forces moving along streets are often canalized by the buildings and have little space for off-road maneuver. Thus, obstacles on streets in cities are usually more effective since they are more difficult to bypass.

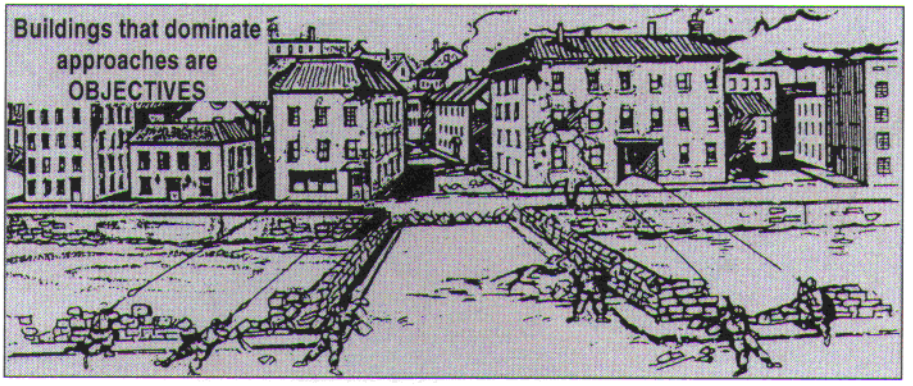
b. Subterranean systems found in some built-up areas are easily overlooked but can be important to the outcome of operations. They include subways, sewers, and cellars. *(represented in ASL with the exception of subways).*

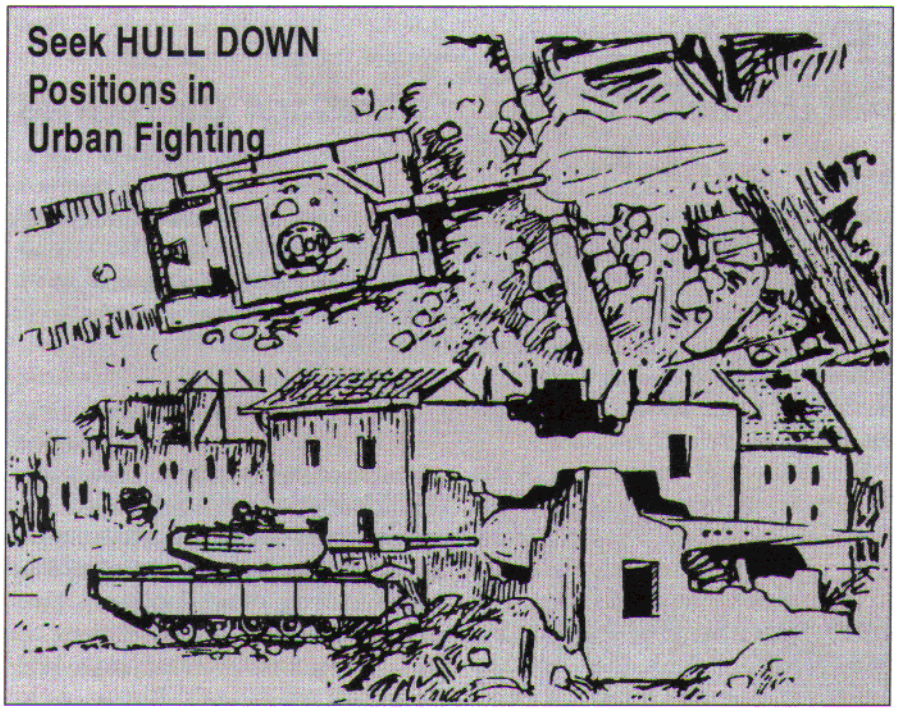
TARGET ENGAGEMENT

In the city, the ranges of observation and fields of fire are reduced by structures as well as by the dust and smoke of battle. *Dust raised by urban and other fighting is not represented by ASL except in some SSR treatments.* Targets are usually briefly exposed at ranges of 100 meters or less. As a result, combat in urban areas consists mostly of close, violent combat. Infantry troops will use mostly light and medium anti-tank weapons, rifles, grenades, sub-machine guns and machine-guns.

SMALL UNIT BATTLES

Units fighting in built-up areas often become isolated, making combat a series of small-unit battles. The defender has tactical advantages over the attacker in this setting. He occupies strong static positions, whereas the attacker must be exposed in order to advance. Greatly reduced line-of-sight ranges, built-in obstacles, and compartmented terrain require the commitment of more troops for a given frontage. The troops density for





both an attack and defense in built-up areas can be as much as three to five times greater than for an attack or defense in open terrain.

Company Team Attack of a Built-Up Area

The following are techniques that might be employed by a company. These may be independent operations but are normally part of a battalion operation and apply to any type of infantry.

Attack of a Block

To attack a block in a built-up area the infantry should be reinforced by tanks and engineers.

a. This operation is characterized by platoon attacks supported by both direct and indirect fires. Success depends on isolating the enemy positions (which often becomes a platoon objective), suppressing enemy weapons, seizing a foothold in the block, and clearing the block's buildings room by room.

(1) Task organization of the company team varies because of the nature of the built-up area. For example, a non-mechanized infantry company fighting in the outskirts of a city might organize as follows:

- Two rifle platoons reinforced with engineers-to assault.
- One rifle platoon-reserve.
- One tank platoon-in support of the assaulting rifle platoons.
- All available direct and indirect fire weapons should be used to isolate objective buildings. Direct fire down streets and indirect fire in open areas between buildings helps in the objective isolation.
- Machine-guns fire down streets, into windows and so forth.
- Tanks engage enemy armor and fire at protected targets.
- Riflemen engage targets of opportunity.

c. Before the assault, smoke should be employed to cover the assaulting platoons. Flanks are secured with direct fire.

Fighting Positions

Considerations:

a. Protection. Buildings should be selected that provide protection from direct and indirect fire. Masonry structures with two or three overhead levels provide suitable protection. Wood buildings need to be reinforced (*fortified in ASL terms*) to provide adequate protection.

b. Dispersion. Positions should not be established in a single building when two or three buildings that provide mutually supporting fires may be occupied. A position in one building is vulnerable to bypass, isolation, and subsequent destruction from any direction.

c. Concealment. Buildings that are obvious defensive positions (easily targeted by the enemy) should not be selected. Requirements for security and fields of fire require that exposed buildings be selected. Therefore, reinforcement should provide suitable protection within the building.

d. Fields of Fire. To prevent isolation, positions should be mutually supporting and have fields of fire in all directions.

e. Covered Routes. Each position should have at least one route that permits reinforcement and withdrawal from the building. The route can be established by one of the following:

- Through walls to adjacent buildings (*via breach in ASL*).
- Through underground systems.
- Through communications trenches.
- Behind protective buildings.

Armored Vehicle Positions

Fighting positions for tanks are essential to a complete and effective defensive plan in a built-up area.

a. Armored vehicle positions. AFV positions are chosen with the best concealment, cover and fields of fire while still retaining the ability to move.

(1) If fields of fire are restricted, hull down positions should be used to gain cover and fire down streets. From those positions AFV are protected and can move rapidly to alternate positions. *Examine your options via Reverse Motion when analyzing the urban terrain for the best place for your AFV.*

(2) The hide position covers and conceals an AFV until it can engage targets or move into position for engagement of targets. *Examine your options in ASL for setting up AFV utilizing HIP, and deploying into attack positions from such hide spots; also be mindful of opportunities to reverse out of hide positions into covered terrain that does not require a Bog check, i.e., not into another building hex, etc.*

THANK YOU!

CH has been a sponsor firm of *The New York City Rescue Mission* since December 1995. This well known New York charity feeds the homeless year round. Thank you for assisting us in this portion of our corporate mission!

CORRECTION

In last issue's (Vol. 4, No. 2) "CH Bookshelf" the book review for Messengers of the Lost Battalion was written by Adam Geibel, not Abe Edelheit as listed.

STALINGRAD Redux

...notes and commentary for Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works and The Fortress

by Roger Best

DTW contains four *firefights* which each cover fighting in different sectors of the map. And what a map it is! In addition to the large factories found cutting a swath through the center of the complex, extensive railroad sidings, complete with rail cars left on the battlefield, make this urban terrain unique in the world of ASL combat.

The Fortress depicts the opening of the battle of October 14 and takes place on the extreme western edge of the map. Designed by Peter Mudge, the playtesters' initial response to this scenario was unanimous: it was more fun than *No Farther*, another popular CH Mudge/Stalingrad opus set on the RB map.

GERMAN: You can keep the Russians guessing about your battle plan right from the start due to the two choices posed by this firefight's objectives. You can go all out for the Administration Building in G22 that gives this firefight its name or invest the remainder of the enemy lines by grabbing the seven buildings and the pillbox.

The problem with achieving the second objective is the fact that the large square at E21 splits this battlefield in two. Worse yet, this square is dominated by *the fortress*. To envelop Russian lines on both sides of this obstacle entails splitting the German force, always a risk. Nevertheless, signs of a strong enemy concentration in building 8b may allow you to use your mortar OBA to keep him either *inside* via the use of shrapnel, or *smothered* via the use of smoke. The use of OBA smoke is critical in any attempt to cross the square regardless of the enemy concentration in building 8b.

Use your self-propelled guns, the StuG IIIB, in an historical manner. These things are crewed by artillerymen, not tank crews. Hint: these are mobile artillery. Enter the map, choose the hex or hexes to bombard, then get on with the rest of your game plan (see Figure 1). Try and choose hull-down positions or sneaky bypass spots the enemy is unlikely to have covered by anti-tank guns. Once you find yourself parked in good fire-base positions and *not* getting attention from guns, become happy. Then load and shoot. Remember you can interdict enemy positions by keeping acquisition in place; don't frenetically move about the battlefield with your StuGs seeking new targets. They'll never hit anything and eventually they *will* find themselves in the sights of a gun. Tanks are mobile assets and should be used as ...tanks.

The hallmark of the playtests of this firefight was the frequency of games that went down to the wire. The German use of his 150mm OBA option often turned the tables at the very end. This Corps level artillery asset is not to be squandered in the early going. 81mm mortar OBA is an excellent interdiction tool and fine for delivering smoke on the battlefield where needed. It is not very good at digging 8 ML Russians out of cellars. In a short firefight of six turns duration, combining the big Corps-level strike with a combined arms advance of men and machines is one winning formula for smashing enemy lines wide open at the opportune moment. You may only get one chance, so it must be managed properly.

RUSSIAN: Your play in The Fortress is dictated quite a bit by the realities of a shallow line. This is an up-front defense and you are not falling back! The enemy does not have any great advantage over your forces in terms of manpower (i.e., 16 squads to your 14) unless you spread yourself out unnecessarily. One experienced Stalingrad *grognard*, Robbie Weissbard, suggests, "a small handful of killer positions forces your opponent to break his strength against them." The message is to build those individual fortresses; don't just plop your defenders down in a building here and a building there.

Your order of battle for this firefight provides enough war-power to construct multiple, supporting mini-fortresses. You can break this battlefield into a number of sectors. The factories around H26 are tough to bring direct fire into without closing to the walls running along the F22-G29 hexrows. Positions in the H24-25 factory are also mutually supportive against any approach along the south-side

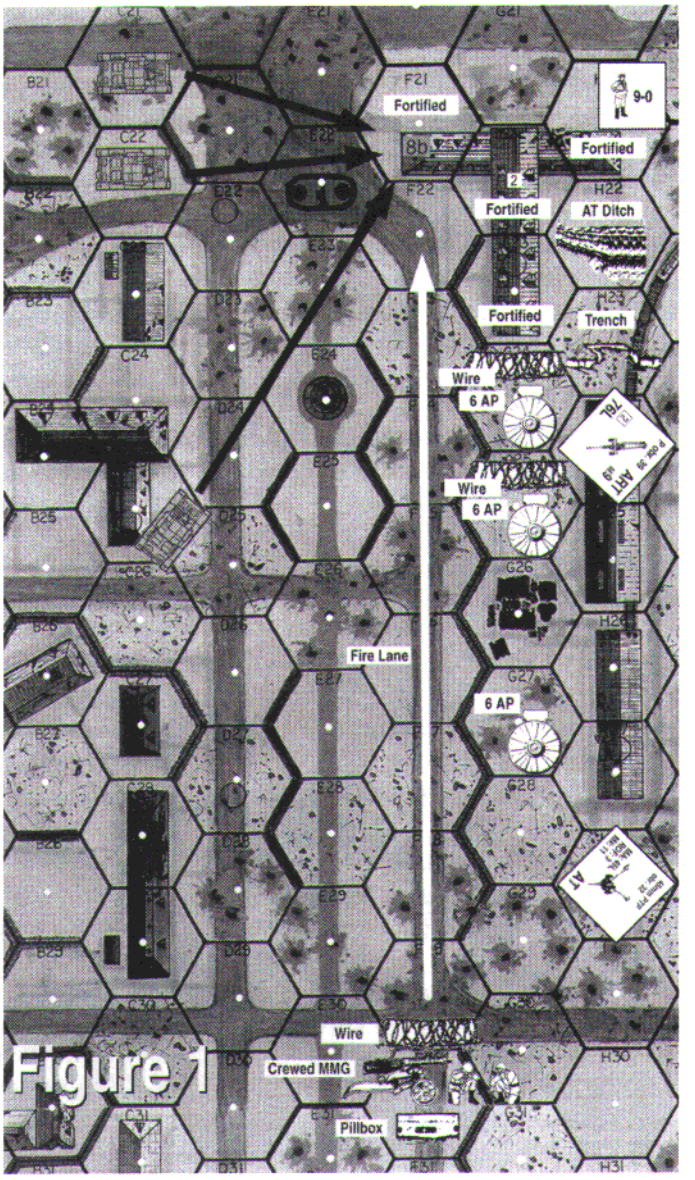


Figure 1

of G22. Along the lines of the mini-fortress concept, consider placing 6 AP mine factors in G24, G25 and G27, covered by wire in G24 and G25. Place the AT-Ditch in H22 to avoid a bold armored infiltration into your rear. A trench in H23 will link with the ditch to allow movement behind your lines for reinforcement. Note the manholes in G23 and H24 and the reinforcement possibilities available. Just remember FSR3, keeping you above ground during end game. Your 76L artillery piece goes in H25 to cover your front and also note this spot covers the northeast corner of G22. You may wish to cover your southern flank with the 45L AT-gun in H28; this also helps cover the pillbox machine-gun post out there on the edge of the battlefield.

The pillbox is placed in F30 with wire in the same hex and a crewed MMG (bet ya' love those crew-served MGs *now*) covering the road. Keep placing a firelane until your tube melts or they come and get you. The pillbox position doesn't tie down many of your combat assets. In a six turn firefight, a couple of turns worth of attention or acceptance of this constant nuisance is the choice which faces your opponent.

Now that we have the underpinnings of a mini-fortress on one flank, attention should be paid to *the fortress* itself. The constant risk of the Germans smoking out this position necessitates using all four of your fortified positions for the ground floor of G22; in this way the enemy will have to reduce your defenses instead of just covering his own advance into CC. Mister commissar lives one floor up, sending everyone who comes his way back downstairs to fight it out.

This all leads to a bristling fortress on your southern flank. The German will not be able to achieve victory simply by overrunning the northern 'half' of the map; there are only four victory buildings up there. Regardless, your job entails using dummies and the right blend of delaying forces to fool the enemy into thinking this sector is more heavily defended. You will need to cover the square with fire from its north side, from positions such as G18-19 and H18-19.

The Fortress can highlight many of the facets of urban combat. This being Stalingrad, however, means it's all going to come down to digging those Russians out of their cellars and rubble.

Cities Contested During Twentieth Century Conflicts....

Cities are the centers of industry, finance, government, communications and culture. In the case of embattled cities such as Stalingrad, they can even become targets of prestige, named after an enemy ruler and therefore imbued with a value which transcends the other, more obvious military and political advantages inherent in these places.

In addition to major conflicts, cities often see combat during insurgencies. In developing nations control of only a few cities is the key to control of the resources of the entire nation.

The list below is not meant to be all inclusive. It is meant to provide an overview of twentieth century urban conflicts and serve as a ready list of the major battles fought in cities or during which the fate of cities hung in the balance (i.e., Moscow).

No city shows up on the list more than Warsaw; the battle during the Nazi invasion of 1939, followed by two uprisings in 1943 and 1944 destroyed significant portions of this embattled city. Until the fall of communism, the inhabitants of Warsaw lived behind the Iron Curtain following World War II. Many others were killed in the gas chambers of Auschwitz and other concentration camps within, and outside the borders of Poland.

But it is Stalingrad that typifies city fighting to the historian. The fighting in the city on the Volga led to much of the *book* on urban combat that we find in field manuals of many nations. German officers were debriefed by the U.S. Army after World War II, resulting in numerous guides outlining the military art as learned by the Germans *during* the Second World War in places like Stalingrad.

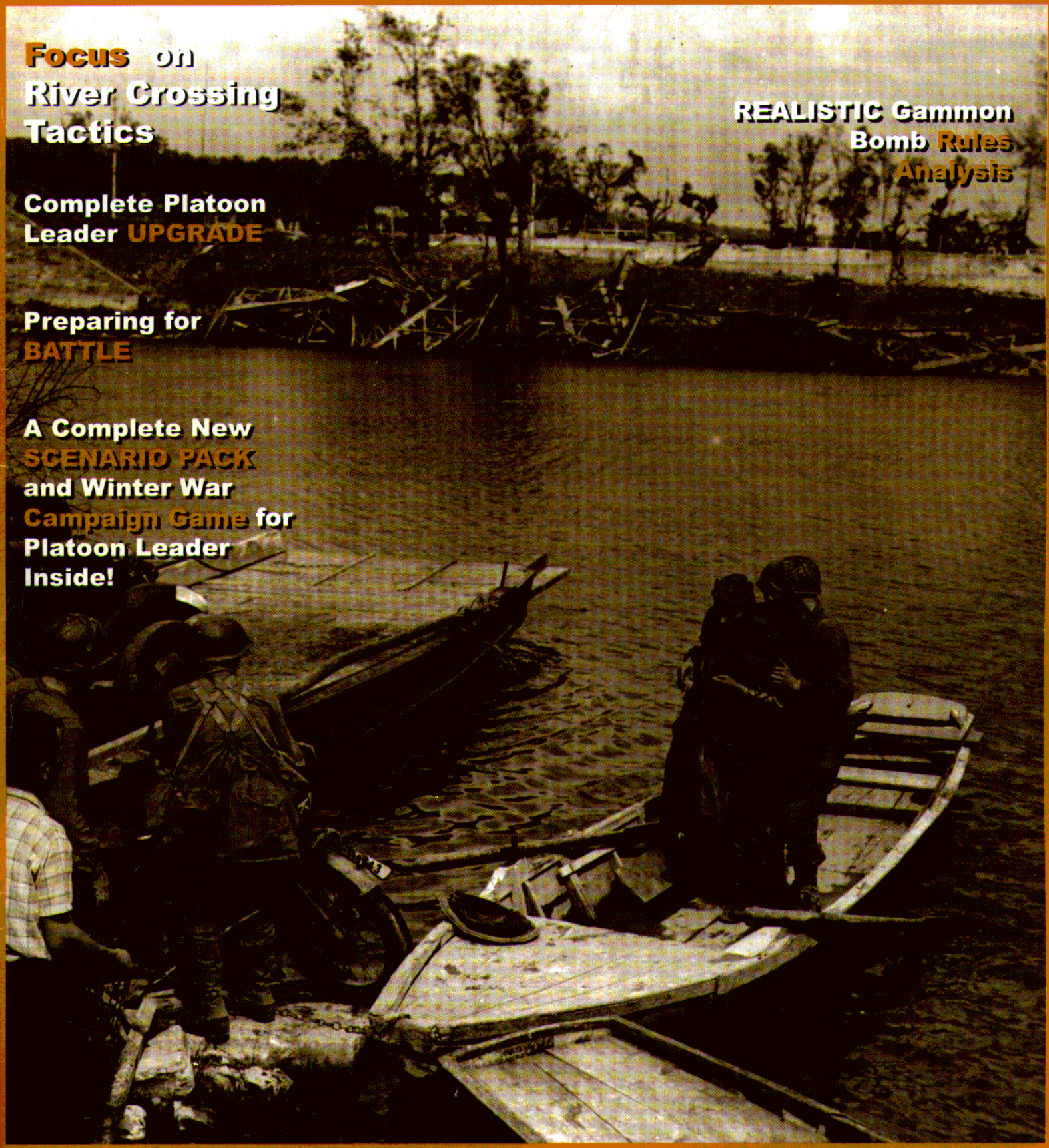
CITY	YEAR	CITY	YEAR
Riga	1917	Budapest	1956
Madrid	1936	Beirut	1958
Warsaw	1939	Santo Domingo	1965
Rottedam	1940	Jerusalem	1967
Moscow	1942	Saigon	1968
Stalingrad	1942	Kontum	1968
Leningrad	1942	Hue	1968
Warsaw	1943	Belfast	1972
Palmero	1944	Montevideo	1972
Brest	1944	Quangtri city	1972
Warsaw	1944	An Loc	1972
Aachen	1944	Xuan Loc	1975
Oretona	1944	Saigon	1975
Cherbourg	1944	Beirut	1975-78
Breslau	1945	Managua	1978
Weissenfels	1945	Zahle	1981
Berlin	1945	Tyre	1982
Manila	1945	Beirit	1983
San Manuel	1945	Panama City	1989-90
Jerusalem	1948	Colon	1989-90
Seoul	1950	Kuwait City	1991

Plus:

- Platoon Leader Ver. 2.12!
- Tournament News
- More New Scenarios

CRITICAL HIT

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING Vol. 5, No. 1 $15.95



Focus on River Crossing Tactics

REALISTIC Gammon Bomb Rules Analysis

Complete Platoon Leader UPGRADE

Preparing for BATTLE

A Complete New SCENARIO PACK and Winter War Campaign Game for Platoon Leader Inside!

Preparing for Battle



by Dan Lepore

Your Platoon has seen a lot of fighting in the last week and the rest will be a welcome one. Just as you sit down to the first hot meal in 3 days, the Battalion runner slides into your trench. Before you can get a second gulp of your bully beef down he says "Lt Murrel, the old man wants to see you at Battalion HQ, now!"

You set your mess tin down and shake your head thinking to yourself "What did I do now?" You get up and grab your helmet and Sten and move towards the HQ. As you move through the trenches mortar rounds whistle overhead and impact amongst the position. You can't help thinking the whole time that I'm going to get my ass shot off before I can get it chewed off. I don't know which one would be worse; the old man can be one tough bastard. As you approach the bullet-riddled farmhouse, you realize you haven't shaven in awhile. I sure hope he's too busy to notice. The sentry standing by the door looks at you. You tell him that Major Markuss wants see you. Without saying a word the Private motions with his head towards the door.

As you enter you see the old man. He is studying a large map of the area. He's in deep concentration and looks like he hasn't slept in days. You see the A and C Company Commanders in the room standing, looking towards the map, keeping their distance. You come to attention at the doorway and address the Major, "Sir!" holding your salute, he looks in your direction and snaps " Lt Murrel, come here".

You present yourself at attention and he pulls out Captain's insignias and pins them to your tunic. "As you know, Captain Irwin was wounded yesterday. Congratulations on your promotion, you are now in command of B Company. Now sit down and prepare to copy. Gentleman orders." he says as a mortar round lands close spraying shrapnel off the building.

Winning in ASL, as in all games, is important, but to beginners it is not as important as playing the game well. If you play a game well and lose, it's better than winning and not understanding how you did it, except maybe at tournaments. There have been many great "how-to articles" written on set-up, tactics, and playing better, but there is a lot for the novice player to remember even before the game has begun. It's easy to tell players how to set-up, make a plan etc., but there are still a lot of details prior to the scenario commencing that need to be addressed to be decisive in battle. The main flaw with these "how-to" articles is some players still continue to make the same mistakes because they may not understand the fundamentals of a good defense or attack. This article will outline these fundamentals so the player can better understand what makes a successful attack and defense and some of the basic steps in preparing for an action. The playing aid should assist players in being prepared for a scenario with a checklist they can look over to ensure they are starting with a good foundation, before the first roll of the dice. This will help the player to have the right frame of mind, so they are not frustrated early on in the game. First we will begin looking at the fundamentals of the attack and the defense.

The aim of the attack is to close with and destroy the enemy through movement, aggressiveness, firepower, and speed. The fundamentals of the attack are:

1. Initiative. The attacker must seize and hold the initiative from the defender. When this is accomplished the attacker will maintain the momentum, keep the enemy off balance, and prevent him from using resources such as reserves to block your penetrations, and mount counter-attacks. Selecting the location of the attack, limiting the enemy freedom of movement seizes the initiative, and chooses the type of fight you want. When the enemy is reacting to your actions it will be a great psychological advantage. You should always be ready to exploit and take advantage of an enemy weakness as they arise.

2. Concentration of Attack. Your attack must have resources available to concentrate your offensive power at the enemy. The key is choosing the right times and places to attack. Look for a weakness in the enemy's set-up and exploit it. Concentration shouldn't just include number of squads, but includes firepower to suppress, destroy, and demoralize the enemy. The concentration the attacker can muster will depend on a number of factors such as terrain, movement, units available, frontage of the defense, weapons, and supporting forces.

3. Surprise. The attacker chooses the place to launch the attack. Be original in choosing your axis of advance; don't always look at the most likely place to launch the attack. If you see it, assume your enemy does too. Look at areas the enemy has left lightly defended or forgotten to cover. Diversions can be used to hide the main thrust of the attack. Concealment terrain can be used stay out of enemy observation to maintain concealment that will be valuable when closing with the enemy. Speed can surprise the defender, as he will be unable to react to the threat fast enough and will be caught off balance trying to restore his defensive framework.

4. Security. The flanks of the attack must be secure to ensure your attacking force is not outmaneuvered. Support from

indirect fire weapons, direct fire weapons, and reserves can be used to secure the flanks. Firebases can be used effectively in this roll, depending on terrain.

5. Flexibility. The attack must have a high degree of flexibility in order for plans to be altered to meet the changing situations and unexpected developments that will happen. Be aware of any opportunity to exploit a weakness. Make sound and timely decisions. This also is achieved by a simple plan and being aware of the battles flow. Reserves can help provide this flexibility.

6. Simplicity. Make a plan according to your mission and keep it simple. A complex and involved plan will have more chance of failure and be harder to execute than a simple plan. It will ensure that you can change to react to situations better with minimal effort and loss of initiative.

7. Movement. Use armor and mechanized units to drive deep into the enemy's defense to encircle or flank. This can draw the defender's resources away from the main defense. Indirect fire can be used to support this action.

8. Depth. Organizing the attack in depth will permit the commander to maintain constant pressure on the enemy and exploit a penetration. Firebases are used to provide pressure and deny enemy movement to counter-attack. Securing objectives in depth will breakdown the framework of the enemy defense. Take objectives that will make the defense hard or impossible to defend.

9. Balance. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. A balanced force will do better reacting; by concentrating power to take advantage of a sudden opportunity or by reacting to enemy action at a decisive moment. The initial set-up can cover the frontage of the area of defense, have suitable forces to deal with opposition firebases, and fire support will provide continuous pressure on the enemy. Reserves are available to support and influence the battle, exploit success or to respond to enemy counter attacks.

The aim of the defense is to stop the enemy or break their attack by fire, maneuver, and hold ground. The fundamentals of the defense are:

1. Concentration of Defense. The defender must be able to concentrate his force at the enemy's main effort. This is achieved by number of units and should include firepower. The defensive position must be able to meet an attack from all directions.

2. Initiative. The commander must ensure the attacker never gains the initiative. The defense shouldn't be thought of as just a static position reacting to the enemy's actions. Use maneuvers, aggressiveness, patrols and counter-attacks to seize and maintain the initiative. The battle should be fought on your terms and the terrain you select.

3. Terrain. The strength of the defense depends greatly on the selection of terrain. The commanders' ability to analyze terrain, determine enemy approaches, select key defensive positions, and deploy his force, will be determining factors in the success of the defense. The selected terrain should cover enemy approaches with fire and offer the defender concealment and protection, while restricting enemy observation to these positions. Identify bottlenecks, natural barriers, and positions for man-made obstacles to restrict enemy movement and deny key locations. Selection of defensive positions will be based on likely enemy approaches, concealment, protection, objectives, and obstacles within the defensive area. This will be based on the overall plan for the battle. Remember terrain needs to be controlled, not necessarily occupied. Determine enemy approaches and then look for terrain that will dominate or block those approaches. Open terrain, i.e., open ground and orchards, can be dominated by long range, direct fire weapons. This will require the enemy to react by using more restrictive terrain. AFV, LATW, and MG defend this best. Close terrain, i.e., buildings and woods, will restrict the attacker's movement and provides the defender with concealment and protection. Infantry are best to cover this type of terrain. High ground will provide good observation, but may be in range of direct fire enemy weapons; the commander must weigh the options.

4. Mutual support. The attacker should not be able to attack one position without being covered by fire from at least one other position. The degree of mutual support will depend on range of weapons, terrain, units, and visibility. The attacker has to split his covering fire to hit these supporting positions. Flanking units, reserves, MG, LATW, and firebases should be sighted, providing mutual support to flanking units. Sight weapons keeping in mind firelanes, range, LOS, and bore sighting.

5. Depth. Depth positions will absorb the attacker's momentum, prevent breakthroughs of the position, limit the attacker's penetration, and help blocking actions. It will allow the defender to identify the attackers main thrust and provide time to counter-attack. Depth is proportional to the defender's strength, frontage covered, firepower, mobility, and terrain. It helps surprise the attacker and make him commit resources to contend with depth positions.

6. Movement. Movement will be limited in most instances. Ensure movement contributes to victory conditions. Look for the opportunity to move units to fall back positions and skulking when feasible. The defender needs to have fallback positions planned. Mechanized units can be used to re-deploy units and keep the enemy off balance.

7. Reserves. Reserves should be an uncommitted force that is free to deal with anticipated and unexpected developments, thereby providing flexibility and balance to the defense. Their main function is to reinforce, block actions, counter-attack, secure flanks, and protect rear areas.

8. Concealment. The use of deception can be a great asset to the defender and will depend on the siting of the defense. Hidden units can be used to surprise or disrupt an attack if placed in unlikely locations. Use "?" to protect units on front-line and key defensive locations. Once revealed, move concealed reserves forward to replace unconcealed units. Skulking can be used to maintain concealment. Dummy "?" and HIP can be used to deceive the attacker of the defenses strong and weak points. Be creative.

All combat leaders have steps or procedures they follow before conducting an action. These steps are called battle procedure. This is used in the attack or the defense by all levels from the squad leader right up to the divisional commander. It is the procedure by which the commander receives orders, makes a plan, deploys troops for battle, and executes the mission. This is used so each leader is prepared for battle and follows a logical sequence. It will ensure that his troops can react to an enemy threat with

minimal waste of time, maintain the initiative, and be victorious in battle. Battle procedure can be broken down rather loosely into 5 steps:

1. Receiving Orders
2. Conduct a Reconnaissance
3. Prepare a Plan
4. Deployment of Troops
5. Execute the Mission

Just as real commanders do, ASL players go through battle procedure somewhat before each game. The best players in the game go through these procedures without much thought, as it becomes instinctive, and their success in playing well shows. It may differ slightly from each player, but the thought process is similar. No great commander or player would fight a battle just "going with the flow" and expect to win. To those that are new to the game, you need to have deliberate steps for thinking about how and why you will set-up and play a scenario. The aim is to provide a checklist the player can use to cross-reference before a scenario begins to minimize errors and create a workable plan. I will break these steps down in ASL terms to help prepare for a scenario. Understandably, real commanders have much more detailed steps in their procedures, which are more time consuming and would cover writing and the issuing of orders to their men, timings, support, and the like, that don't concern us squad leaders.

You walk out of the farmhouse with pages of orders. As you head back to your trench it hits you, you are in charge of the company. As a Platoon Commander you were used to carrying out orders from the Company Commander, now you're in charge! "I should look at what we are doing today. I have 120 men in the Company and the Battalion's mortars attached to us, as well as two tank destroyers. Intelligence says the enemy has been moving tanks in our area of operations, so we'd better bring those PIATs up front. Stiff resistance is expected in and around the village approximately Platoon of SS and our mission is to clear the village by 1645."

Receiving Orders. In game terms this would be covered in choosing a scenario, reading the victory conditions very closely so you understand what your mission is. You will have information on size of forces both friendly and enemy, what your objective will be, any special rules or restrictions imposed on you or your enemy, and what terrain you will be fighting on. This will be the basis of how you will conduct your action.

You remove your map from your pocket and look it over. With a pencil you mark your Company's objective and its axis of advance on the map. As you study the map, you note some high ground on the left, a good position for enemy observation and fire. "We'll be crossing some open ground early in the advance, with a copse of woods and a stream on the left. Looks like the enemy can channel us into a kill zone there." A small village in the centre will provide protection and concealment to the enemy.

Conduct a Reconnaissance. Look at the area your forces will be operating in. A real commander would look at his map and in some cases actually get to see his objective or at the very least some of the ground he will be operating on. We get to look at the map boards in ASL. Look at it from your enemy's perspective. Points to study are lines of advance, key positions for defense, rally points, fall back positions, obstacles, cover, and a myriad of other things. With all this information the commander is ready to make a plan in how he would like the mission carried out.

With all available information you start to formulate your plan. The way you see it is the enemy will be situated in the village because it provides the best protection and concealment. The woods on our left flank will provide the Company with some cover and is within our axis of advance. The hill will likely have an observation post on it to observe the advance. By staying in the woods we can maintain the element of surprise. We will attack the village using 1 Platoon to provide covering fire with the MMG and HMG, while 2 and 3 Platoon move under the cover of smoke and the valley on the right flank to assault the objective. The PIAT's can be placed on the far right to defend against a tank threat. The TD's can provide anti-tank defense and help support the attack on the village

Prepare a Plan. Probably the most crucial part of battle procedure can easily be overlooked or taken lightly. Take into account all available information on your forces, the enemy, time, terrain, and the victory conditions. Then make a workable plan on how you would like to fight the battle. How do you know what plan to use? The victory conditions usually dictate how the battle should go. For example, in a scenario that the attacker needs to exit to win, the defender can plan to allow some of the enemy's force to exit, but block enough units to win. Remember the saying "fail to plan, plan to fail".

" Gentlemen orders. Lt Datetree 1 Platoon will be forward during the advance and act as a firebase when we come under enemy fire. 2nd Lt MacDonald 2 Platoon will be right rear and 2nd Lt Kerchner 3 Platoon will be left rear. 2 and 3 Platoon will act as the assault element of the attack. 1 Platoon will also provide scouts and deploy 100 meters to the front stay in visual contact. B Company have been given the task of clearing the village located at 134 898..."

Deployment of Troops. This is the set up. It should reflect the mission and directly support the plan. Ensure the fundamentals are followed, so you have a well-prepared set-up.

Execute the Mission. This is when it all comes together artillery, firepower, movement, rallying, and casualties. If you have prepared well you will do better then a piecemeal attempt or playing it by ear. Your plans will rarely survive the enemy's first shot (or roll), but at least you have one workable plan based on sound judgements. Read articles on playing the game better.

This article is not a substitute to good play, but rather another tool to help the learning curve seem less steep for those new to the game. It's intention was to help provide the foundation and insight to playing the game better. It is not a stand-alone article, you still need to log a lot of time on the cardboard battlefield and play with as many different opponents as you can. It should help you pay attention to the details before the first dice are thrown. The game is usually won by the player who can pay attention to details better, exploit the enemy's mistakes, and make less mistakes himself.

Battle Procedure Play Aid

(D) applies to the defence and (A) applies to the attack.

Receive Orders

Did you…

- ❑ Read the victory conditions. Re-read and know them.
- ❑ Look at your OB. Weapons, units, SAN, ELR. Know what you have available. If you have vehicles and/or ordnance look at Chapter H notes for any special features.
- ❑ Look at the enemy OB.
- ❑ Familiarize your self with the SSR.
- ❑ Determine advantages and disadvantages friendly/enemy force.
- ❑ Read unfamiliar rules for special units, e.g., wire, FT, DC, mines, etc.

Conduct Reconnaissance

Did you…

- ❑ Look at the map boards from both your view and the enemy's.
- ❑ Identify key defensive positions. (D)
- ❑ Study your objective. Find positions that if taken will make the defence harder to defend. (A)
- ❑ Examine your defensive area. Get familiar with its terrain. (D)
- ❑ Check LOS before play begins to probable enemy locations and kill zones. (D)
- ❑ Plan rally points and rout paths.
- ❑ Plan fall back defensive position. (D)
- ❑ Determine dominating terrain on the battlefield (height advantage, observation, and protection).
- ❑ Identify axis of advance. The fastest to victory, best cover and other likely avenues of approach.
- ❑ Locate locations for firebases to support attack. (A)
- ❑ Identify natural barriers and bottlenecks.
- ❑ Look for positions to cut off enemy rout paths.

Make a Plan

Did you…

- ❑ Make a simple plan based on all available information gathered.

Deployment of Troops

Did you…

- ❑ Ensure to cover the fundamentals of the defence, e.g., mutual support, depth, flanks… (D)
- ❑ Ensure to cover the fundamentals of the attack, e.g., flexibility, surprise, movement… (A)
- ❑ Use dummy "?" and HIP for deception. (D)
- ❑ Conceal all units out of LOS after set-up. If attacker starts offboard, defender conceal all units.
- ❑ Avoid defending isolated positions. (D)
- ❑ Deploy squads to provide scouts. (A)
- ❑ Set-up AFV's in hull-down positions, secure flanks, and dominate open areas.
- ❑ Set up OBA observers with LOS to objective or axis of advance.
- ❑ Set -up AFV's to support infantry attack, e.g., smoke, neutralize enemy firebases… (A)
- ❑ Place firebases with LOS to support the attack. (A)
- ❑ Sight weapons for LOS, firelanes, and boresighting. (D)
- ❑ Cover the fastest approach to victory. Concentrate defence to best meet the attack. (D)
- ❑ Concentrate attack at enemy's weakness. (A)

Execute the Mission

Critical Hit Tactical Level Gaming Magazine: Our best selling magazine presents the opportunity to continue to add value to our line of games! The new releases will each receive their share of in-depth feature articles, designer's notes, new scenarios and replays within the pages of CH. What's more, we'll be continuing to provide updates for our Platoon Leader CG rules, in a high-quality offset printed format as an insert to CH. It's a must read for fans of the CH family of games. Subscriptions remain $35.00 (add $1.00 for Canadian and $3.00 for Int'l) for a two issue plus Special Edition annual subscription.



FROZEN HELL

PLFH

Russian Purchase Record

ID	Unit Description		Total RGs Purchased
A1	Tank Pltn.	3xBT-5 M34	❑❑❑
I1	Rifle Pltn.	3x4-4-7 MMC	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
I2	Conscript Pltn.	4x4-2-6 MMC	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
I3	Engineer Pltn.	3x4-5-8 MMC	❑❑
I4	Lt. Mtr. Pltn.	2x50mm Lt. Mtr.	❑❑❑❑
I5	MG Pltn.	HMG, 2xMMG	❑❑❑
G1	Battalion Mtr. Sect.	2x82mm Mtr.	❑❑
O1	Regimental Arty.	76mm OBA	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
M1	Fortifications	15FP	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
M2	Sniper	SAN +1	❑❑❑❑❑
M3	Attack Option		❑❑❑❑

Finnish Purchase Record

ID	Unit Description		Total RGs Purchased
I1	Sissi Pltn.	3x8-3-8 MMC	❑❑❑
I2	Rifle Pltn.	4x6-4-8 MMC	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
I3	Reserve Pltn.	4x5-3-8 MMC	❑❑❑❑❑
I4	Anti-tank Sect.	2x20L ATR	❑❑
I5	MG Sect.	HMG, 2xMMG	❑❑❑❑
G1	Field Gun Sect.	2x75 mle 1897	❑❑
O1	Medium Arty.	75mm OBA	❑❑❑❑
O2	Heavy Arty.	150mm OBA	❑❑❑
M1	Fortifications	15FP	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
M2	Sniper	SAN +1	❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑
M3	Attack Option		❑❑❑❑



FROZEN HELL

PLFH



Kelja, Finland, 25 December 1939:. On Christmas Day, under the cover of a thick ground fog, the Russians crossed the frozen Suvanto River in the Taipale sector and established beachheads at Patoniemi and Pahkemikko. The Russians soon discovered that they had made their beachhead immediately in front of several Finnish heavy machine-gun bunkers which destroyed them within hours. Farther to the north along the Suvanto River, another Russian battalion had taken advantage of the fog and established itself at Kelja. This unit dug-in and called for reinforcements. If reinforcements could cross the river in force before the fog burned off, the Russians would have the chance to cut off the Finnish 10th Division at Taipale. By the time reinforcements began moving out over the ice-bound river, the fog was lifting. Several Finnish machine-guns and two old quick-firing WW I era field guns took the crossing under fire and checked the immediate Soviet build-up. Every Finnish gun that could be brought to bear was swung around to fire on the Kelja salient. Every available man, including headquarters and other non-combatant personnel, was organized to storm the Russian beachhead after the artillery finished working it over. The battle see-sawed all day and into the night, when the fighting continued under the hard white glow of a Winter's moon. At the same time the Finns tried to wrest Kelja from the dug-in Russians, they also had to repel repeated Russian attempts to reinforce the beachhead. The last Russian troops were ejected from Kelja the following morning at 0915 hours, almost 24 hours from the initial Russian crossing. It had been close and bloody work. Within the Kelja perimeter and scattered across the ice leading to it, were hundreds of Russian corpses.

CG FIREFIGHT RULES:

I1. All PL 2.11 CG SR and Campaign SR are in effect unless specified otherwise. The SR listed as "I" apply only during the Initial Firefight. All SR listed as "C" apply during the entire campaign.

I2. EC are Fog (E3.31) at Level-1 and lower, with a Mild Breeze from the north. Note that E3.742 applies to the Russians.

I3. Finns set up their Initial OB units first. Then the Russians set up their Initial OB, then the Finn sets up any purchased on-board unit.

C1. Weather , EC, Wind, Visibility are determined as per E3., B25.63, and E1. Ground Snow and Extreme Winter (E3.74) are in effect for the entire campaign. Weather Determination (E3.) [EXC: ignore Mud, Deep Snow, and Drifts] is used with a +2 DRM after the Initial Firefight.

C2. Russians enter on any land edge hex west of the River.

C3. Finns have Winter Camouflage (E3.712), Molotov Cocktails (A22.6), and are Ski Capable (E4.). Finns may enter anywhere along the north, east, and/or south edge of board 32 and/or the south edge of board 10.

C4. No Quarter is in effect and H-t-Hand CC is allowed by both sides.

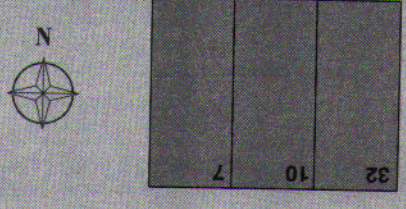
CG Dates: 1000 Hrs. 25-DEC-39 to 0915 Hrs. 26-DEC-39 (five CG Firefights.)

CG OBJECTIVES: The Finns win if, at the end of any CG Scenario, they Control all buildings and pillboxes east of the river.

INITIAL FIREFIGHT OBJECTIVES: Finns win if they Control 21 Buildings at game end or amass at least twice as many CVP as the Russian.

INITIAL FIREFIGHT: Finnish Attack, Russian Idle.

TERRAIN CONFIGURATION: All Water and Marsh hexes are frozen. Islands do not exist. All buildings are Wood [EXC: 10Z6]. All Grain is brush. The "Kelja Village" is defined as the area on/within the alternate hexrow boundaries defined as follows: 10GG10-10P10-7P8-7GG8-10GG10. The River is frozen and can support Russian Tanks. Any original KIA rolled on an OBA Effects DR IN a frozen river hex will break the Ice in that hex making the hex impassable to any unit. Broken Ice hexes are marked with Shellhole counters to signify open water.



	1	2	3	4	5 (1)	6 (3)	7 (5)	8 (6)
★卐 IDLE Side Sets Up First								
★卐 ATTACKING Side Moves First								

INITIAL RUSSIAN OB:

Elements, Russian 4th Division [ELR: 3] Set up anywhere west of the river or within Kelja Village (CGSR I3 & C2) after Finnish HIP set up but prior to the rest of the Finnish set up: {SAN: 2}

I1: Rifle Pltn. x 4
I2: Conscript Pltn.
I5: MG Pltn.
I4: Lt Mtr Sect.
15 CP
40 FP
Fortified Building Locations x 4

INITIAL FINNISH OB:

Elements, Finnish 10th Division [ELR: 4] Set up OB given units anywhere east of River and outside Kelja Village using HIP. Purchased units may set up Concealed if purchased for On-board set up or may enter as per CGSR C3 (SR I3): {SAN: 4}

I2: Rifle Pltn. x 2
I3: Reserve Pltn.
I5: MG Sect.
1-3-5 Pillboxes x 3
1-5-7 Pillboxes x 2
Trenches x 6
17 CP
20 FP

CG Scenario	Time/Date	Attacker	Weather	EC	Wind	Moon	Hist DRM
1	1000 12/25/39	Finns	Fog	Snow	Mild	NA	0
2	1400 12/25/39	Dual	E3.	Snow	B25.63	NA	0
3	2400 12/25/39	Dual	Night	Snow	B25.63	Full	0
4	0400 12/26/39	Dual	Night	Snow	B25.63	Full	0
5	0915 12/26/39	Finns	E3.	Snow	B25.63	NA	0

CG DRM:	FINN	RUSSIAN
Leader	0	+1
Battlefield Promotion	+1	-1
Artillery OBA	-1	-1
CP Replenishment	0	0
Intensity Level	LOW	LOW

Fortifications Available for purchase:	
Foxholes	Trenches[F]
AP Mines[F]	AT Mines[F,C]
Pillboxes[F,P]	HIP
Wire	Set DC
Fortified Building[R]	"?"

[F] Finns only
[R] Russians only
[C] 8 FP per factor
[P] NA after the Initial Firefight

Elements of the 4th Division

Russian CG Card

ID	Unit Description and Composition	Type	CP Cost	Maximum Scen.	CG	Notes
A1	Tank Pltn.	3xBT-5 M34	8	1	3	lr
I1	Rifle Pltn.	3x4-4-7 MMC	2	3	12	lrz
I2	Conscript Pltn.	4x4-2-6 MMC	1	3	12	lrz
I3	Engineer Pltn.	3x4-5-8 MMC	4	1	2	elrz
I4	Lt. Mtr. Pltn.	2x50mm Lt. Mtr.	1	2	4	ac
I5	MG Pltn.	HMG, 2xMMG	4	1	3	ac
G1	Battalion Mtr. Sect.	2x82mm Mtr.	5	1	2	ac
O1	Regimental Arty.	76mm OBA	2	2	8	p
M1	Fortifications	15FP	1	3	15	a
M2	Sniper	SAN +1	2	1	5	
M3	Attack Option		1	1	4	

Elements of the 10th Division

Finnish CG Card

ID	Unit Description and Composition	Type	CP Cost	Maximum Scen.	CG	Notes
I1	Sissi Pltn.	3x8-3-8 MMC	7	2	3	lrsz
I2	Rifle Pltn.	4x6-4-8 MMC	6	3	8	lrz
I3	Reserve Pltn.	4x5-3-8 MMC	5	2	5	lrz
I4	Anti-tank Sect.	2x20L ATR	2	1	2	ac
I5	MG Sect.	HMG, 2xMMG	5	1	4	abc
G1	Field Gun Sect.	2x75 mle 1897	6	1	2	acf
O1	Medium Arty.	75mm OBA (HE only)	4	2	4	p
O2	Heavy Arty.	150mm OBA (HE only)	9	1	3	p
M1	Fortifications	15FP	1	4	15	a
M2	Sniper	SAN +1	1	2	10	
M3	Attack Option		1	1	4	

a Available for on-map set up on CG Date of purchase.

b Use Allied Minor HMG (to represent the Maxim 32 - or use the counter provided in Jatkosota) and MMG for the Finns (EXC: Captured Use Penalties are NA).

c Each Russian 50mm Lt. Mtr./MMG/HMG is comes with a 1-2-7 Crew; each 82mm MTR with a 2-2-8 crew. Each Finnish ART/ATR/MMG/HMG comes with a 2-2-8 Crew.

e Russian 4-5-8 are Assault Engineers (H1.22).

f Use the French counter to represent this piece. Finnish personnel do not pay Captured Use Penalties are NA.

l Determine Leaders (SMC) as per 3.12-121. Sissi Pltns. receive a -1 DRM.

p Increase CP cost by one per Pre-Registered hex (C1.73) purchased with module.

r Must enter as reinforcements if entered on the CG Date of purchase [EXC: 3.9; 3.91]. The RGs is available for on-map set up if purchased on any CG Date prior to that of the CG firefight.

s Finnish Sissi Pltns. are Commandos (H1.24).

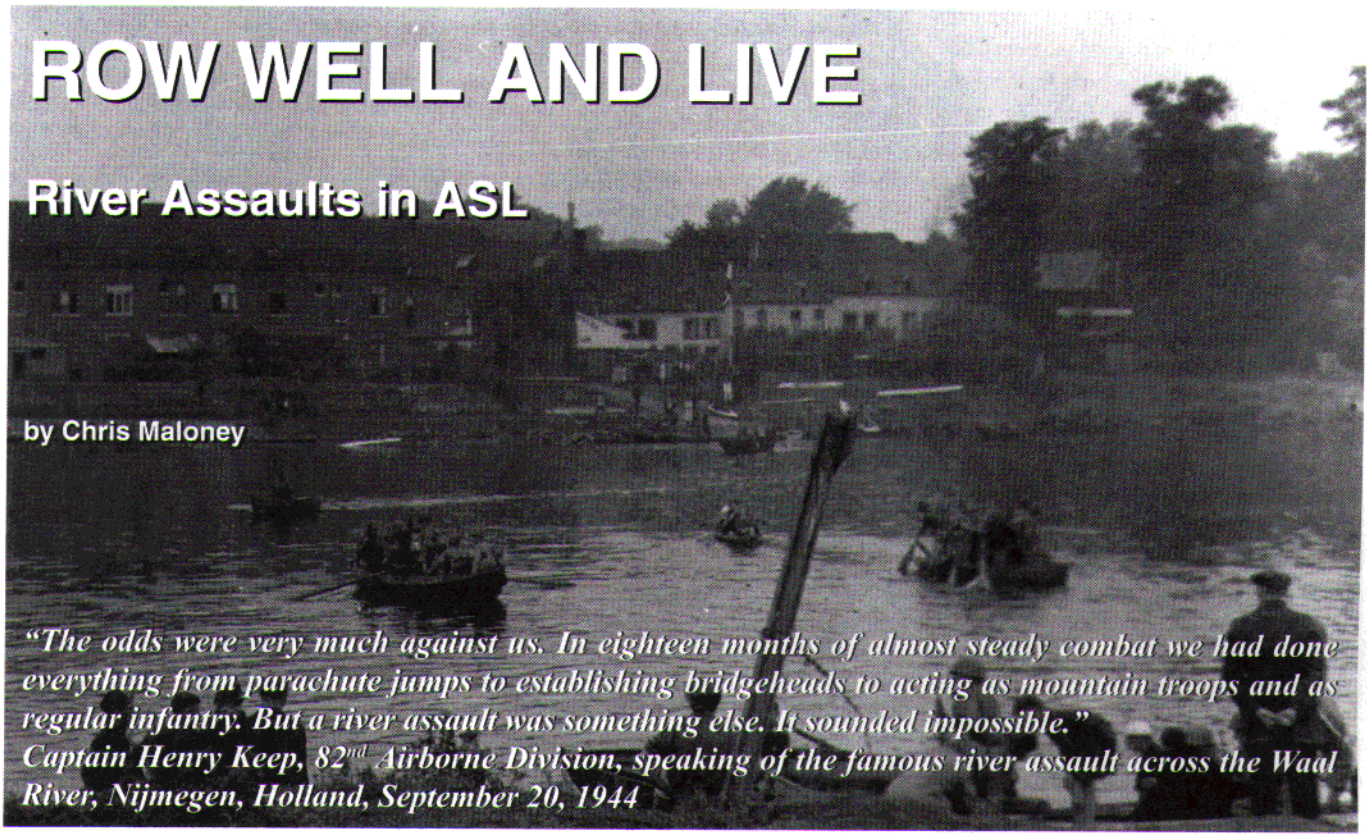
z Russian Infantry Pltns. (I1, I2, and I3) always arrive with a LMG and I3 Engineer Pltns. also receive a DC in addition to the LMG. Finnish Infantry Pltns. (I1, I2, and I3) also arrive with a LMG. Sissi Pltns. also receive a DC in addition to the LMG.

* These notes apply to both CG Cards.

ROW WELL AND LIVE

River Assaults in ASL

by Chris Maloney



"The odds were very much against us. In eighteen months of almost steady combat we had done everything from parachute jumps to establishing bridgeheads to acting as mountain troops and as regular infantry. But a river assault was something else. It sounded impossible."
Captain Henry Keep, 82nd Airborne Division, speaking of the famous river assault across the Waal River, Nijmegen, Holland, September 20, 1944

Of all the horrifying bloody tasks the hard-luck infantry were called upon to perform in World War II, one of the worst was an opposed river crossing. The manner in which river crossings are simulated in ASL bears this out well. Sadly, there aren't many scenarios in ASL that feature this type of operation. This article was written to pass along some of the tips picked up while playing river-crossing scenarios, the author's favorite type, and to encourage others to design some new ones.

In all the river-assault scenarios the author has played, the most terrifying, nail biting moments came while my cardboard men were rowing towards the far shore, almost defenseless against incoming fire. Note my use of the term "rowing" in the previous sentence. Although amphibians were used in river crossings, this article only addresses the use of boats. In game terms, at least, amphibians, such as the LVTA and its brethren, were mostly in evidence during sea-borne assaults.

THE BOATS

ASL provides game pieces for three different types of boats: the assault boat, the large raft and the small raft. While in the water, all three boats can move at a maximum rate of two hexes per turn (not counting drift). The one exception to this is the German assault boat, which is equipped with a motor, an inherent driver and an allotment of four movement points. Once beached or in the water, a boat is considered a vehicle (E5.21).

During a night scenario (such as Z13, "Singapore by Moonlight") the status of a boat as a *vehicle* is important to be aware of. If you are the scenario attacker, your boats can be seen at ≤ 1.5 times the normal NVR. And unless they are beached, these boats are *always* in Motion. Barring LOS obstacles, at night your opponent will see you before you can see him. If he has no vehicles on board, and you have motorized assault boats, your opponent will also have the opportunity to fire off that critical first starshell (E1.91).

MANHANDLING/LOADING

In some scenarios, the attacker will be called upon to manhandle his boats to the river's edge. This necessarily provides the enemy an opportunity to lay fire on your men before they can get their feet wet. The manhandling of boats is treated almost identically to that of guns (C10.3). Your troops will be subject to the –2 Hazardous Movement DRM while dragging their inflated transport around. Unlike manhandling a gun however, troops manhandling a boat *may* carry up to their normal IPC and do *not* become TI. You must have at least 1/3rd the PP capacity of the boat to attempt manhandling; only squads in excess of that amount qualify for the C10.3 DRM. For a large raft, the author recommends using two squads. They can both load into the raft, and it's heavy. If in the PTO, remember that manhandling a boat through irrigated rice paddy does *not* cost twice the MF cost of the hex (G8.12).

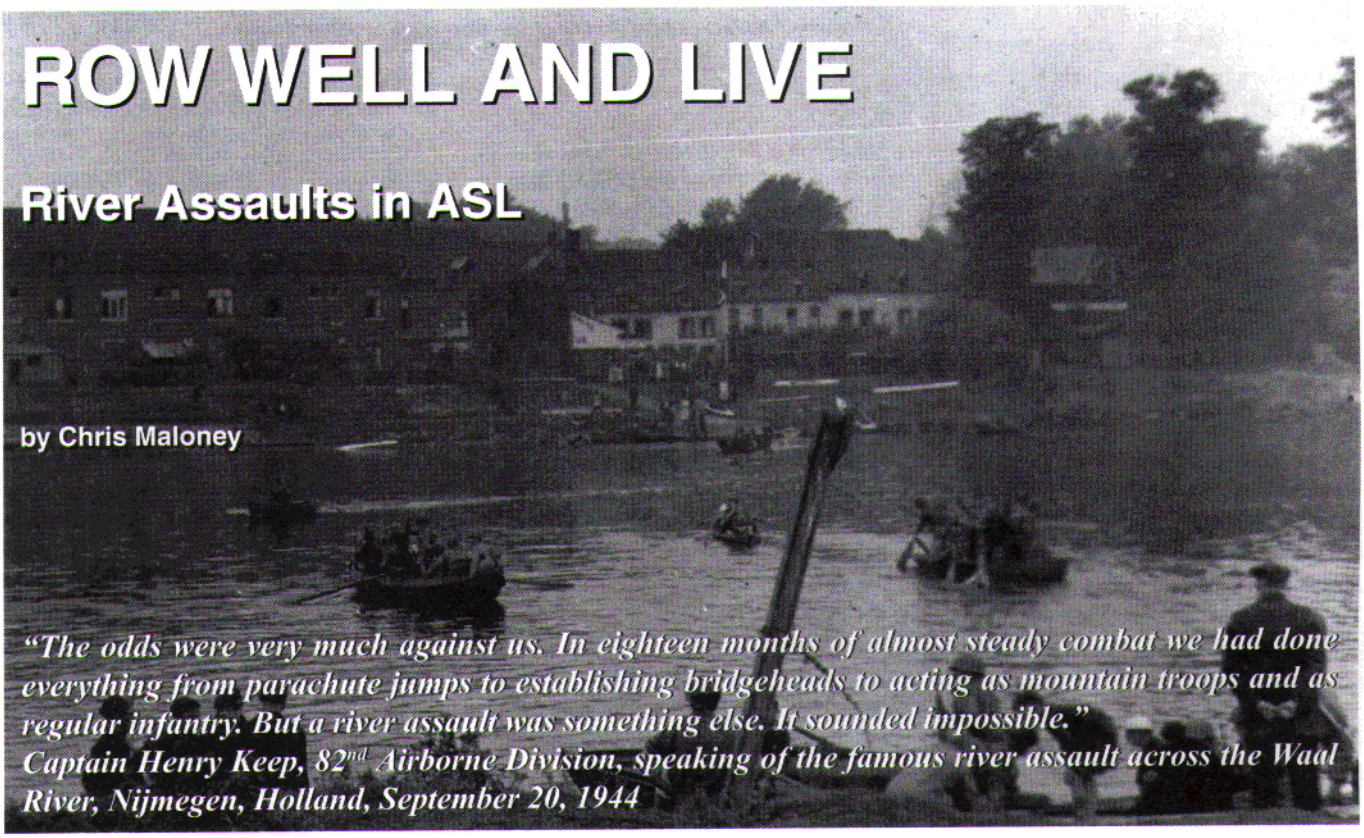
Leaders play a role in dragging boats to the river. If you are out of the LOS of enemy units, use leaders to manhandle your boats. Not only can leadership modifiers provide their usual advantages, by declaring double time your squads will have 8 MF to use. If in the LOS and range of enemy units, the author does not recommend exposing those precious leaders to the vagaries of the dice in the face of that –2 Hazardous Movement penalty. If you have a leader in a hex with more than one boat, roll for each boat's manhandling DR separately to gain increased odds that *someone* from the hex will get into the river. The author's experience usually goes something along the lines of making a roll for all the units as a stack, only to roll an '11' or a '12', resulting in a whine that can be heard three states away!

Once you are underway, declare that your units are beaching their boat (1 MF) as soon as they are adjacent to a river hex. Then, have your infantry enter the water obstacle hex as a passenger (0 MF as per

ROW WELL AND LIVE

River Assaults in ASL

by Chris Maloney



"The odds were very much against us. In eighteen months of almost steady combat we had done everything from parachute jumps to establishing bridgeheads to acting as mountain troops and as regular infantry. But a river assault was something else. It sounded impossible."
Captain Henry Keep, 82nd Airborne Division, speaking of the famous river assault across the Waal River, Nijmegen, Holland, September 20, 1944

Of all the horrifying bloody tasks the hard-luck infantry were called upon to perform in World War II, one of the worst was an opposed river crossing. The manner in which river crossings are simulated in ASL bears this out well. Sadly, there aren't many scenarios in ASL that feature this type of operation. This article was written to pass along some of the tips picked up while playing river-crossing scenarios, the author's favorite type, and to encourage others to design some new ones.

In all the river-assault scenarios the author has played, the most terrifying, nail biting moments came while my cardboard men were rowing towards the far shore, almost defenseless against incoming fire. Note my use of the term "rowing" in the previous sentence. Although amphibians were used in river crossings, this article only addresses the use of boats. In game terms, at least, amphibians, such as the LVTA and its brethren, were mostly in evidence during sea-borne assaults.

THE BOATS

ASL provides game pieces for three different types of boats: the assault boat, the large raft and the small raft. While in the water, all three boats can move at a maximum rate of two hexes per turn (not counting drift). The one exception to this is the German assault boat, which is equipped with a motor, an inherent driver and an allotment of four movement points. Once beached or in the water, a boat is considered a vehicle (E5.21).

During a night scenario (such as Z13, "Singapore by Moonlight") the status of a boat as a *vehicle* is important to be aware of. If you are the scenario attacker, your boats can be seen at ≤ 1.5 times the normal NVR. And unless they are beached, these boats are *always* in Motion. Barring LOS obstacles, at night your opponent will see you before you can see him. If he has no vehicles on board, and you have motorized assault boats, your opponent will also have the opportunity to fire off that critical first starshell (E1.91).

MANHANDLING/LOADING

In some scenarios, the attacker will be called upon to manhandle his boats to the river's edge. This necessarily provides the enemy an opportunity to lay fire on your men before they can get their feet wet. The manhandling of boats is treated almost identically to that of guns (C10.3). Your troops will be subject to the –2 Hazardous Movement DRM while dragging their inflated transport around. Unlike manhandling a gun however, troops manhandling a boat *may* carry up to their normal IPC and do *not* become TI. You must have at least 1/3rd the PP capacity of the boat to attempt manhandling; only squads in excess of that amount qualify for the C10.3 DRM. For a large raft, the author recommends using two squads. They can both load into the raft, and it's heavy. If in the PTO, remember that manhandling a boat through irrigated rice paddy does *not* cost twice the MF cost of the hex (G8.12).

Leaders play a role in dragging boats to the river. If you are out of the LOS of enemy units, use leaders to manhandle your boats. Not only can leadership modifiers provide their usual advantages, by declaring double time your squads will have 8 MF to use. If in the LOS and range of enemy units, the author does not recommend exposing those precious leaders to the vagaries of the dice in the face of that –2 Hazardous Movement penalty. If you have a leader in a hex with more than one boat, roll for each boat's manhandling DR separately to gain increased odds that *someone* from the hex will get into the river. The author's experience usually goes something along the lines of making a roll for all the units as a stack, only to roll an '11' or a '12', resulting in a whine that can be heard three states away!

Once you are underway, declare that your units are beaching their boat (1 MF) as soon as they are adjacent to a river hex. Then, have your infantry enter the water obstacle hex as a passenger (0 MF as per

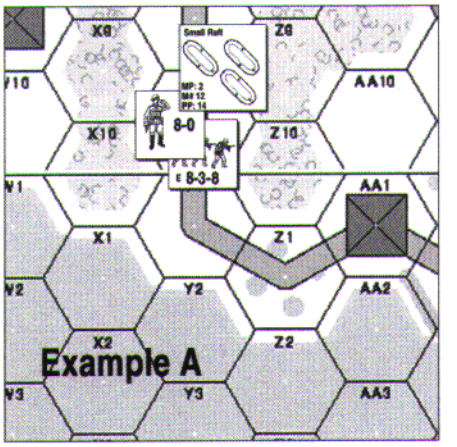
E5.21). You may continue to move the boat ¼ of its MP capacity for every MF left to the manhandling unit(s). Remember, that since a boat in water is considered a vehicle, you have only 4 MF when (un)loading. The boat may not be manhandled in the Advance Phase, but if beached may be (un)loaded onto/from (E5.22). If you used double time to reach the water's edge that player turn, you may not load into the boat (A4.5).

Once your men load into the boat, they may be cloaked, with all SW dm if possible. As the defender, as soon as your opponent enters a hex bordering a river in your LOS, ask to see what's in the stack and try to remember its contents. As the attacker, the fact that your units are cloaked is an invaluable asset. Keep him guessing as to which boat contains your ranking leader and which one contains Colonel Klink.

MOVEMENT

Once your men are safely (well, relatively speaking) in their boats, they must, unless in a motorized assault boat, begin the task of rowing. All non-motorized boats get 2 MP per MPh, possibly less if SSR designates your men as untrained (E5.34). The passengers of a non-motorized boat must total at least 1/3rd the PP capacity of the boat in order to row it. If a boat is abandoned or the PP requirement is not met, it may only move/beach as per the drift rules (B21.121). Boats are immune to drift only on the turns in which they (un)beach. The river's current is an important factor in determining where you want your men to launch on your side in order to get across to the proper landing area. There's nothing worse than watching your men drift off the board (and out of the game) due to the river current.

A couple of final points to remember: boats do not pay for VCA changes and are always considered in motion when unbeached and they do not pay the extra 1 MP for entering a location with another vehicle.



Example A: It is the beginning of the German MPh. In hex 2Y10, a full squad with a leader are attempting to manhandle a small raft to the river. The German player declares the manhandling attempt, which makes him subject to the –2 Hazardous Movement DRM (C10.3). In order to move into 8Y1, the German must roll ≤ 11 [the small raft's Manhandling #12 – the doubled cost for terrain (2MF for Open Ground) +1 for the additional pushing half-squad = 11). If the German player rolls a 12, he must remain in hex 2Y10, and the units may not move for the remainder of the MPh, though they do receive a –1 Labor Status counter as per B24.8] Should he roll an 11, the German may move into 8Y1 and end his MPh. He does not receive a Labor Status counter, and may beach the boat (E5.21). In the Advance Phase, the German player may load into the raft (unless he went CX that MPh, making him unable to load as per A4.5). Lastly, should he roll less than 11, he may move into 8Y1, declare he's beaching the boat, load into the boat for 0 MF, then use his remaining 1 MF to move into 8Y3.

"HAIL MARY, FULL OF GRACE"

Boats are fragile things. About the only form of 'protection' they offer their passengers is the fog of war offered by cloaking. When a boat is fired on, the most important thing is to determine whether or not the boat is beached. All non-ordnance fire (including OBA) and Area Fire attacks against an un-beached boat have their FP halved (or quartered due to the normal halving of Area Target type or Spraying Fire attacks). All attacks are resolved on the "*" vehicle line of the IFT, with a resolution DR < that number sinking a number of boats in that hex up to the highest KIA number listed in that particular column (E5.5). A DR = to the "*" number causes casualty reduction among the passengers of the target boat (use random selection for multiple boats/passengers) [EXC: A small raft counter is reduced, and its passenger casualty reduced]. Lastly, a DR > the "*" number has no effect on the boat or its passengers.

Residual FP attacks are *not* halved. If a boat is beached at the time of the attack, non-ordnance direct fire attacks and Area firepower attacks are not halved [EXC: Area/Spraying Fire attacks are still halved normally].

Ordnance fire attacks against unbeached boats treat them as if they were HD, very small and moving. Any hit automatically sinks the target boat, but may only attack one boat at a time. Overstacking penalties *do* apply to boats (E5.52). Obviously, boats are difficult targets for ordnance to hit, but the effects are dramatic when a hit is achieved.



"Men of the 90th Division, 3rd US Army, taking to the assault boats for another crossing of the Moselle in the early morning fog." US Army Signal Corps Photo

Units never take a MC/TC for any reason when they are passengers in a boat. A sniper attack resulting in a broken MMC passenger instead causes casualty reduction and all pin results against boat passengers are ignored.

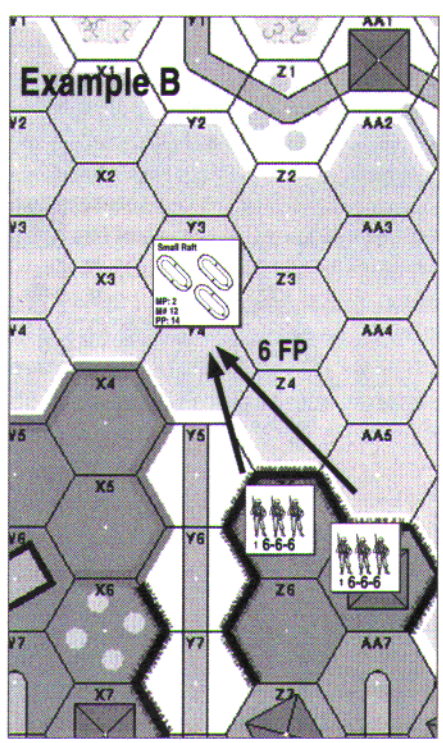
LAND HO!

If your boat enters or drifts to a water obstacle adjacent to land during your MPh or APh you may declare the boat beached at no MP cost. If you do not declare beaching as the boat enters the hex, you must pay an additional MP to beach (E5.23). This is an important point to remember. For every ¼ MP remaining to your water craft, the passengers may expend 1 MF. A boat is considered a vehicle for (un)loading purposes, so remember even passengers with a leader have only 4 MF. Also, a water obstacle is considered –1 level terrain (EXC: Flooded), so MF costs are doubled when going on to *terra firma* (i.e., usually level 0 terrain).

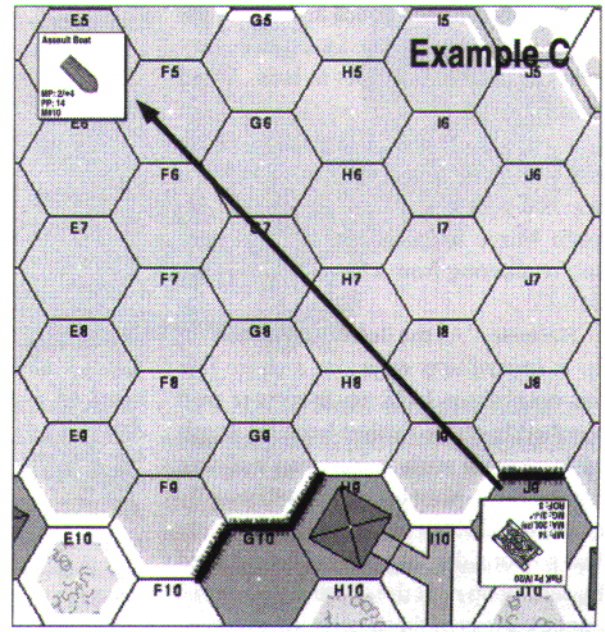
The irony shown in Example D is that the beached boat is at its most vulnerable when it hits the far shore. With FP attacks not halved, and ordnance treating it as an average sized target for TH purposes (E5.52), your men are at their highest risk at this point. Get them out of that boat.

To attack a beached boat, all LOS must be traced to the center dot of the water obstacle hex. The crest-line of the river's edge may offer some protection. Unlike a sunk un-beached boat, which eliminates all its passengers and their portage, the outcome of those men and machines of war in a beached boat are treated differently. The SW are still eliminated when a beached boat is sunk, but the passengers are placed in the water obstacle hex where they must take the effects of the same DR that sunk their ride, applying a –2 DRM. Units broken in a water obstacle must rout, even if disrupted (B21.43).

Example B: The German full squad and leader are now cloaked. The American player fires on the small raft with his 6-6-6 squads during his Prep Fire Phase. His FP attack is halved to "6". A look at the 6 FP column shows he'll need to roll a "6" or less to effect the raft. On a roll of "5" or less the raft sinks, eliminating all passengers and SW. On a DR of 6, the full squad is reduced to a HS (E5.5) and the leader must make a dr of 1-3 to survive (E5.121).



Example C: An assault boat containing an American squad is in 8E5. During the German Prep Fire Phase he fires a FlaK Pz IV 37 in hex 8J9 at the boat using its MA in a direct fire ordnance attack. The assault boat is not beached so it is treated as very small, moving and HD. In order to obtain a hit, the German must make a DR ≤ 5 with the white die > colored die. Any hit automatically hits the boat and eliminates its personnel and SW.



CROSS THE RIVER

What is the best way to get your men across a river safely? Here are a few tips the author has picked up while ferrying (no rule by this name) his cardboard men across a few paper-map rivers.

Spread Out – Even though boats are not subject to FFNAM and FFMO, it's always to your advantage to spread out. Due to the FG restrictions and ¼ FP of your passengers (moving and mounted penalties) there's no real FP to speak of, hence absolutely no reason to stack. Spreading out avoids any artillery concentrations the enemy might bring down and reduces the number of targets in a given weapons covered arc.

Smoke – This is an important weapon in the ASL arsenal. If your enemy cannot see you, he's not going to be shooting at you either. When playing the Germans in "The Dinant Bridgehead" it's tempting to use those 100mm batteries to blow up the French. Forget about it! Don't be distracted from your primary mission: a safe crossing. Use smoke to get your superior force across, then switch to high explosive with any remaining artillery.

Support Fire/Waves – Should you send your HMG over in the first wave or wait until later? That all depends on the nature of the opposition. The author prefers to use SW to keep the other guys' heads down, albeit with the admission that having a nice killer stack on the other side early can increase my chances of victory. Should there even be more than one wave? Again, it depends on the enemy's disposition. If he has good LOS to the river, and more importantly, to the area you plan to beach at, by all means consider keeping units and SW back to provide covering fire.

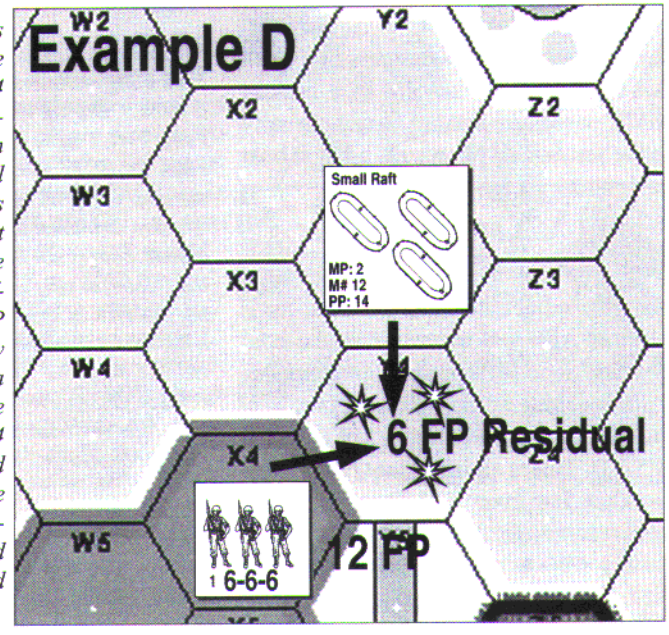
Terrain and Current – The current can send you drifting into an FFE, or

worse, right off the board and out of the battle. Take a look at the far shore and try to determine the best spot to land. Avoid mudflats and marshes as they can pin your men in beached boats for an entire turn (i.e., even when starting a MPh in a beached boat in a marsh hex it's a Minimum Move to enter the hex because you're entering from a lower level, as per B16.4).

Defense – As the defender you can set up in one of two ways: on a shore-line for maximum LOS to the river and beached boats or further back on dominating terrain such as hills and building upper levels. Your opponent will usually be provided for in the form of supporting fire so consider any advantages gained by setting up near the shore based on the expected loss of these units. In any case, pick out the likely landing areas closest to any victory area and make sure you have some sort of LOS to this zone. Being in a beached boat is very un-healthy to its passengers…but only if you have an LOS to them. Also, remember if your units are in a building or woods on the river's edge your opponent will have to us CX to advance out of the boat into CC with you.

I hope this article has been informative and raises some interest in the play and design of river crossing scenarios in ASL. Enjoy the scenarios contained in this issue of CH. See you on the other side!

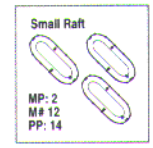
Example D: Now it's the German MPh and he moves the boat into 8Y4 and declares he's beaching. First, the German must take the residual FP attack of 6 (which is not halved against boats). Let's assume the German player is unaffected by the residual FP attack and safely beaches the boat (for a total of 1 MF). The American 6-6-6 in X4 now fires on the beached boat at 12 FP, since the FP of non-ordnance attacks against beached boats are not halved (E5.51).



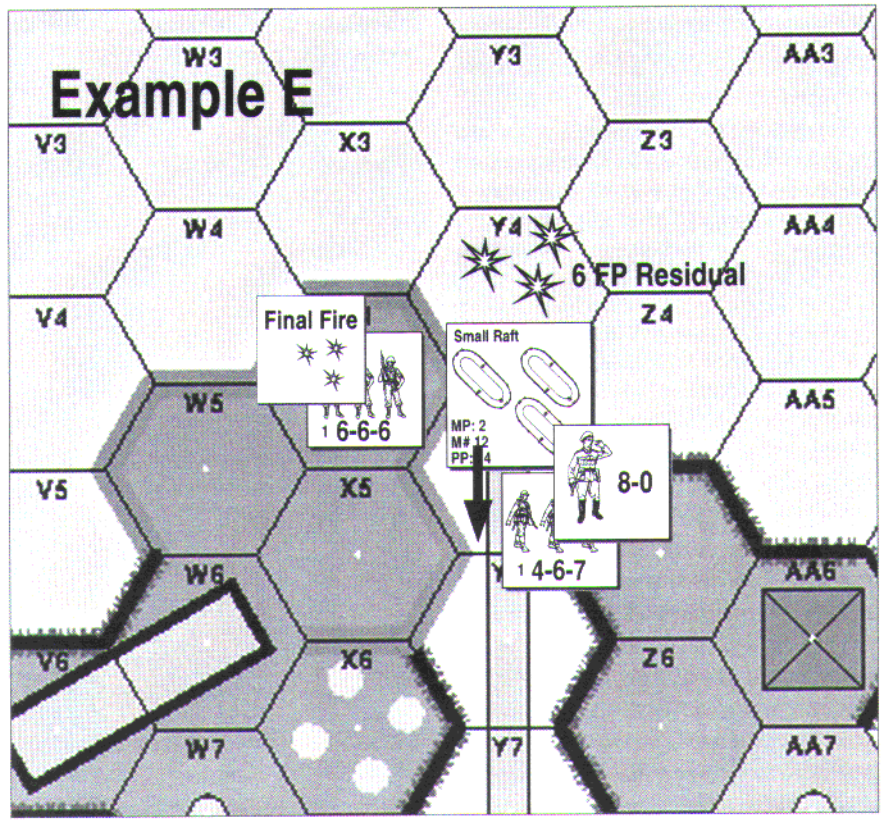
Some Scenarios Featuring River Crossings:

ASL 25	**Gavin's Gamble**
A65	**The Dinant Bridgehead**
Z13	**Singapore by Moonlight**
CH 88	**The Shortest Way**
CH 91	**Long Minutes***
CH 94	**The Ulla Crossing***

*** in this issue**



Example E: After surviving all Defensive Fire, the German player un-loads from the beached boat into 8Y5, using up his remaining 2 MF (only ½ of the boat's MP were left and its costs 2 MF to move from –1 level terrain–the river—to the 0 level Open Ground hex.)



WWII TD SOCIETY ON THE WEB

Here we report on the recently-organized World War II Tank Destroyer Society. We have learned, from Colonel (Ret.) Bob French, that you can visit them on the internet at:

www.lakemartin.net/~cfrench

A FROZEN HELL

Dissection Of A Campaign



by Jim Torkelson

The Platoon Leader CG "Frozen Hell" is a series of five campaign game scenarios set during the Winter War between Russia and tiny Finland. The campaign is spread out over a two day period around Christmas 1939. The Russians have just crossed a frozen river and are trying to reinforce their bridgehead. The Finns are trying just as hard to wipe them out.

If the un-analyzed life is not worth living, then the un-analyzed game is not worth playing. If you are going to spend 20+ hours involved in a campaign game, at least spend more than five minutes looking at the map. In the case of Frozen Hell, the Russians start out entrenched in a small village, with reinforcements attempting to enter the battle by traversing a frozen river. The Finns are coming out of the forest to break into the village, while trying to interdict the movement of enemy forces. The Russians are heading east, while the Finns are attacking north and west.

Two separate battles are taking place in Frozen Hell; the city-fight and the interdiction of cross country reinforcements. Each side needs to win *both* of these battles to prevail in the campaign. The Finns win at the end of any of the five CG scenarios if they control every building *and* the pillboxes east of the river. Each CG scenario can last up to eight turns, but more likely will go six or seven turns long. Thirty to forty turns is a nice long game and reduces the impact of chance on the overall battle.

Terrain: The map depicts a village situated along a river, with a large forest inland. The forest opens up as it approaches the river. The opposite riverbank has some cover, but the map edge averages only two hexes from the river bank. The approach to the village from the south is mostly open fields, with scattered clumps of trees and houses along the way. The eastern approaches have more cover, with the trees coming right up to the built-up area. The village consists mostly of wooden rowhouses, with the exception of one large four hex stone building. There are a number of level one locations, but no level two locations from which one can see the entire map. The level one positions can see over some of the stone walls, but the improvement is limited.

The upper levels in this village *do* provide more places for the Russians to put their many squads. The board 10 village is notorious for the way that the individual blocks can be cut off from each other; any attack from the east and south can isolate the defenders within very quickly. Ideally, the Russians could buy roadblocks to make a mini-citadel; but not here. Instead, broken units are forced to rout repeatedly, until they find a safe haven.

The rowhouses reduce the available fields of fire, heightening the importance of Close Combat. What's more, the forest to the east allows the Finns to get very close to the village before being engaged. This type of close-in warfare increases the importance of concealment, stealth, and high firepower. These are the specialties of the Finnish soldier.

The river dominates the map. That expanse of blue ice draws the eye upon it. With only ground snow, crossing units are not slowed moving along this river-highway except for changing elevation at the river bank. It is a wide expanse of open terrain, between three and ten hexes wide; *and* a potential killing ground. The northern end of the river is out of range or LOS of most of the Finns set-up area. A side note from the victory conditions: not all the buildings on the east side of the river are in the village. There are a couple of wooden buildings on the south edge of the map a long way from the village. The Finns must also defend these buildings to prevent the Russians from sneaking away with a cheap victory.

PL 2.x System: Strategic Locations (SL) are used to determine the MLR at the end of each CG scenario. On this map, the number of buildings, entrenchments, and woods-line hexes (a woods-line SL is defined as a woods hex adjacent to non-woods terrain in any group of >= 3 connected woods hexes) mean that few units are going to be left in uncontrolled terrain, except out on the ice. The most significant change in the PL 2.0 system is that units no longer can move at will over the friendly controlled area between scenarios. The Redeployment range limit is 6 hexes for infantry, and moving further (as per PL 2.1 upgrade also found in this issue and at www.CriticalHit.com) requires a DR for possible Replacement or Casualty Reduction. No longer does the Defender set up, only to find the entire Attacker OB sitting on one flank. What's more, with the release of PL 2.1, commanders must take into account the possibility of the enemy Patrolling—gaining valuable reconnaissance, or conducting aggressive combat patrols—between CG scenarios.

Bore-sighting is not available as this situation without a true scenario defender. I do suggest a balance where the Russian cannot buy Reserve RGs and set them up on the village side of the river. The game is supposed to be about getting across the ice, not sneaking around it.

CGSR: The frozen river surface is masked with fog until the mild breeze blows it away, which will occur in three or less game turns from the start of the initial scenario. The fog density DRM is +1, +2 or +3 per hex, and will decrease one level per game turn that the breeze is blowing. The Russians pray for a nice thick fog so their reinforcements can cross the river unscathed. The Ground Snow has an effect on the battle, making it more difficult to climb or descend the river bank. It also allows the Finns to use their

skis. The skis are useful if the Finns plan on a raid across the river to knock out the Russian mortars. The Finns' Winter Camouflage will allow them to assault move in open ground and retain their concealment, not a minor point when assaulting the village from its extremities.

Extreme Winter represents a severe difficulty for the Russians. Their breakdown numbers decrease by one (those B11 MGs are going to be very unreliable, going to B10 and X11). Further, whenever any Russian personnel attempt to rally when not in a building/pillbox and roll an 11, the unit suffers Casualty Reduction. No foxholes may be dug during play, although they may be purchased during the RePh. In this particularly vicious battle, No Quarter is in effect for both sides, and both sides can declare Hand-to-Hand CC. Combining stealthy concealed troops with a CC ambush and H-t-H leads to high casualties. No Quarter *will* allow disrupted Russian conscripts to be able to rout away from the implacable Finns.

The Russians: The Russian advantage is in their numbers; this really shows up in view of their available reinforcements. The Rifle and Conscript platoons are plentiful and cheap. For 9 CP, the Russian can buy three platoons of each, *and* keep that up for four CG scenarios. On a per squad basis, each first line squad costs two-thirds of a CP, and conscripts cost one-third of a CP. The Russian OBA is limited in ability; the chit draw mix is poor, and the radio contact number is pitiful. But it is also cheap. To improve both negatives, opt for a field phone and use a HIP leader on the west side of the river Then choose a pre-registered hex in the woods across the ice. Even with a pre-registered battery, don't expect more than one fire mission. Consider getting off two missions a luxury.

Russian armor is not much good at infantry support. Lacking a truly effective HE shell (a 45mm HE hit is 5 FP on the IIFT; 4 on the IFT), and equipped with only a minimal MG armament leaves the Russian commander in question regarding their role. Just what are they supposed to do? They *are* an armor plating, albeit a thin one. On the 'debit' side, an RST turret, a B11 (B10 for Extreme Winter) gun, red MP, and a lack of radios sums up the negatives! Are they worth purchasing? The author does not think so. Then again, they do provide cover, and a +1 TEM or hindrance for the open streets inside the village. Think of them as crags with treads and make your own choice. If the Finns buy the French 75s, the tanks are dead. Worse, they could be dead *and* burning wrecks with smoke that would help Finns cross streets.

Russian mortars are a great advantage. The combination of several 50mm and two - four 82mm mortars can make woods hexes very dangerous for the Finns. A mortar fire-base on the west side of the river can hit the woods clumps around 7M10, 10Q3, and 7U10 with multiple air-bursts. The Russian needs to apply multiple breaks against the high ML Finns, and the mortars are the best way to do it. The 82mm mortars also have smoke, with an s8 depletion number. Not bad when there is an HMG watching the path your conscripts need to take across the ice. The threat of those mortars will help persuade the Finns to attack the village from the east through the inland forest. There are limited positions to fire from on the east side of the river, near the village. Mortars have to worry about minimum range, and cannot fire from buildings. Therefore, keep the mortars on the west side of the river.

As an early war scenario, the Russians can trade an 8-1 leader for a 10-0 commissar, and a 8-0 leader for a 9-0 commissar, with a maximum of two on the map at any time. A commissar can turn conscripts into more useful troops! The improvement in morale of all personnel with the commissar gives the conscripts a chance to pass a NMC, and the immunity from DM status gives them a chance to rally after they *do* break. The penalty for a failed rally attempt is small compared to the benefits of these Comrades' inspirational presence. Commissars are an absolute must for the Russians.

The Russians are blessed with an ELR of 3, which is good for this time period and the lack of motivation in the Red Army in this extreme winter cold. The conscripts are a mixed bag. They are MMCs, and they can occupy buildings. As long as they shoot and do not get shot at, life is good. When the Finns get into Close Combat, the conscripts are at a disadvantage. Being Lax, the +1 Ambush modifier sharply reduces the chances of surviving Hand-to-Hand CC. They also penalize any first line troops they are stacked with, possibly getting them ambushed as well. And being slow, getting across the river takes longer. Quantity has a quality all its own. The sheer numbers of Russian squads will disrupt Finnish plans. Fifteen first line and conscript squads can occupy the village at start, and up to 18 more will try to rush across the river. The Russians will be able to occupy all the front line buildings with a squad, providing numerous targets. All those squads can form some powerful firegroups to attack the Finns in their +1 woods TEM during the approach.

The main threat to the village is from the east, through the forest. Fortifications can help the Russians set up a coherent defense. Available fortification purchases include foxholes, wire, trenches, fortified buildings, and HIP/Concealment counters. Trenches can only be obtained by buying them for the Initial Scenario. Buy some foxholes to place on the western river-bank, so the light mortars can have a safe place to start. Inside the village, trenches between the buildings help prevent the inevitable block-by-block isolation. Additionally, fortified building locations can protect front line troops from Finns trying to advance into CC. Wire is a good idea to slow the attack from the forest approaches. The movement penalty will slow the Finns down, and if greater than the allowance for assault movement, strip some concealment.

Finns: How can any discussion of this campaign *not* include a quick session of adulation for the Finns' special abilities? Self Rally, Deployment and Recombining without leader assistance, plus stealth for elite and first line troops. And that ML 8 is pretty great. The peculiar Finnish leadership structure does make negative modifiers very rare. But then, if these troops were led by a -2 leader, nothing could stop them! Multi-hex firegroups are more commonly used lacking the temptation to stack to gain the leader modifier. Their high morale makes them much more likely to survive enemy fire in Good Order. One can take many more risks with eight morale troops than with their less brave brethren.

Molotov Cocktails are a mixed blessing, best saved for the possible appearance of the Russian tanks. Winter Camouflage is an advantage which should not be overlooked; it will greatly assist the attack along the woods-lines. Skis are useful for a cross-river raid, but

are not a good idea for close quarter fighting in the forests or among the buildings in the village. The Finnish disadvantage lies in the expense of those troops. A Sissi squad costs 2 1/3 CP each; a first line squad costs 1 1/2 CP, and a reserve squad costs 1 2/5 CP. Each squad has to perform at least three times better than their Russian counterparts.

Everything is more expensive for the Finns, including their artillery and support weapons. The Finns are given several pillboxes and trenches at CG start. The question lies in what to do with them. If they are going to be used as bases from which to stop Russian infiltration across the river, the basic problem is range. From the woods around 7L9/7M10, a 16 hex range MG leaves a four or five hex wide alley uncovered. Those old French 75 guns can cover a gap, but the TH numbers are not great, and there are better uses for them. OBA could be called in from this position too. An HIP observer does not need a pillbox... There are some positions where a MG in a pillbox can cause lots of problems for the Russians. The clear LOS down the hex-grain from 10O10 to the walled square in 10Y5 puts an element of risk into Russian movement. Another MG in a pillbox at 10O2 can see clearly along the alternate hex grain to 10Y2. These two MGs partially isolate several buildings, and greatly slow down reinforcements. All of the woods and buildings in the southern third of the village area can be cut off with fire from Finnish starting positions. The Finnish artillery, both direct and indirect, is quite useful. The French 75s are an excellent purchase. As the only source of ordnance smoke (s8) for the Finns they can be used to support an assault. The firepower they produce is also good for driving the Russians out of the wooden buildings on the outskirts of the village. Do not start them in a pillbox from which they cannot be removed. That way they can be manhandled into new positions with better LOS. And if the Russian tanks make an appearance the TK# of 14 will create burning wrecks. The OBA does have a poor chit draw pile, so pre-registered hexes are a good idea. At least the radios work. OBA is expensive in terms of CP, especially the 150mm heavy module. The 75mm medium OBA is best for blocking the reinforcements from crossing the river. Buying a Pre-Registered hex and Barrage with the NW-SE orientation on the ice could put a serious cramp into Russian movement. The 150mm can use a concentration to break open the ice (need an original KIA, i.e., a 5 or less). Expensive, but not out of the question. For close-in anti-tank weapons, the Finns have a few DC, Molotov cocktails, the Lahti 20L ATRs, and good old close combat. Molotovs are chancy to get, and have a 6 TK, unmodified due to armor but those RST tanks are unlikely to be CE. The heavy ATRs have a base TK of 6, with positive modifiers at ranges of six hexes or less. This is not bad, considering the weak armor of the BTs. The excellent Finnish morale means that PAATCs are a pretty sure thing. All this amounts to the Russian tank crews living in fear. The iron monsters do not rule this map.

Plans: The Finns are trying to recapture the village and block the Russian reinforcements. The village is best attacked from the east, from inside the forest. The northeast buildings are adjacent to woods hexes, helping to cover the approach. The southeast part of the village is easily isolated by fire. That is a good target for the French 75s and the OBA. Blocking the reinforcements is harder to do. An attack along the river-bank goes through several hexes of open ground, vulnerable to the Russian mortars and OBA plus small arms. The entire river-bank must be defended, or the Russians will attack in the far south and take the building at 7D7. The Russians are trying to hold onto the village, specifically to at least one building on the East Side, and the best way to do that is to pour lots more troops across the river. The Russian advantage is numbers, so do whatever possible to stretch the Finns out. A Human Wave from the southern stretch of the river with 7D7 as the goal would seriously irritate the Finn... As it is much more difficult to re-deploy units in PL 2.0, it would take a major operation by the Finns to recapture that fisherman's hut, and those troops would be out of the village fight for quite some time. To defend the village, the Finns need to be engaged as far forward in the forest as possible. Otherwise the village is broken up into separate and un-supporting blocks, easily assaulted. Remember that the western river-bank is your friend, and the firepower of your mortars is to be feared.

The Plan: The Finns set up their OB-given on-board forces first, utilizing HIP. Then the Russians set up all their units, followed by the remainder of the Finns purchased on-board units. My Finnish plan for the Initial Scenario uses the most accessible reinforcement entry area, on the north edge of board 32. Southern objectives for the initial scenario can be the easily isolated woods-lines and building SL at 7P10, 10P3, 10Q7, and 10S9. The reinforcements will try to break into the board 10 woods around 10BB9.

Of course, a plan for keeping the Russians from crossing the river is necessary. The Finnish OB-given forces are 8 x 648, 4 x 538, 3 x 248 HS, 3 x LMG, 2 x MMG, 1 x HMG, and 3 x leaders. They all start out HIP with five pillboxes, six trenches, and 20 FP.

Russian at start and setup: My Russian plan is to hold the key woods and buildings from 10FF7 to 10Z9 to 10V7 along the eastern perimeter, and only lightly defend the isolated terrain on the south side of the village. The mortars will try to hold the southern flank from a distance. While the other troops are held in place, most of the reinforcements will try to push through the fog across the northern river as fast as their legs can carry them. An indirect threat consists of six conscript squads and a leader attempting a Human Wave across the river on the south flank, with the objective being the hut at 7D7. They can make it there on turn two.

The Russian OB designated forces start off with 12 x 447, 3 x 426, 5 x 237 HS, 5 x leaders, 4x LMG, 2x MMG, 1 x HMG, and 2x 50mm light mortars. They also get four fortified building locations and forty more FP. The light mortars and the medium 82mm mortars will set up in foxholes on the western river bank (see below). The FP will be spent as follows: Spend 4 x FP to utilize HIP for two squads (the scenario maximum), spend another 24 x FP on two Wire counters, and spend at least four one-squad locations on foxholes for the west bank mortar crews.

With their 12 CP, purchase units with legs as the top priority. 3 x I1 Rifle Pltns. and 3 x I2 Conscript Pltns as reinforcements cost only 9 CPs. For more firepower, buy a G1 Battalion Mortar Section with two 82mm mortars with the extra CP spent for on-board setup.

(In an upcoming issue we watch the Russians and Finns fight it out.)

Sarge Sez



Going Under Cover...

by David P. Roth a.k.a. "Sarge"

Alright 'cruits. Fall in and listen up! Ol' Sarge is gonna take ya thru another lesson in ASL 101. I want ya to...hey, you in the back row. Is this stuff boring you? Maybe you already know all there is to know about playin' ASL? Perhaps you would like to share your vast knowledge with the rest of the platoon? I suppose yer play is flawless, and you've NEVER lost a scenario before? No? Well, pay attention cuz what I'm trying to squeeze into yer little brains today just might give ya a fightin' chance in yer next cardboard encounter...and I ain't talking about crawlin' into some boxes...well, actually that is a part of it now that I think about it.

Today's topic is using cover. Quick...who stands a better chance of surviving a machine-gun attack? A squad moving behind a stone wall, or a bunch of idiots wanderin' out in the open? Uh, ya don't have to wait til next week to answer up. Ya can speak up today sometime.

Right!, the guys behind the wall. They're using available cover, TEM in ASL terms, to protect themselves from getting shot up. Sounds simple. But even the best players can forget, get a little too confident, and run out in the open when other terrain is available, and get wasted. Guys like Pleva will get bug-eyed with excitement if ya run across the street with yer squad within range of his 8-3-8 squad lying in wait in that building yer trottin' toward.

Of course, movin' thru protective terrain does tend to slow ya down a bit. If yer down to yer last movement phase, and ya gotta cover 8 hexes to exit the winning victory points, ya ain't gonna make it if ya move thru the woods, over the wall, thru the rowhouse, into the gully, and across the stream. Great cover! Guess what! Ya won't win! "Sarge, didn't ya just say that cover will help us survive fire attacks"? Yes I did. I'm glad at least one of ya laimbrains is payin' attention.

Ya don't always have to move thru protective terrain to take advantage of it's benefits. If ya keep the terrain between you and the bad guys, most times it will give you at least a LOS hinderance, or could block LOS completely. And by movin' behind and around the terrain, it won't slow ya down as much. Remember these words...BYPASS MOVEMENT. More on that in another lesson.

Now, some types of terrain can actually increase the effects of fire attacks against you. Ya want to avoid these whenever possible. Hammada (increased fragmentation), woods (airbursts), runways (ricocheted bullets), elevated roads (profiled against the sky), climbing cliffs (falling can really hurt ya), water obstacles, and sewers (smelly boots, demo charges dropped on top of ya really mess ya up). Just make sure ya know where the bad guys are first if ya have to cross any of these areas. Ok.

> **"I love the smell of burning armor in the morning."**

Let's say an enemy tank is chasin 'ya down out in the North African desert. No real cover fer miles around. What can ya do? Well, yes, you could raise a white flag. But that won't help ya win the scenario will it? See that bunch of sand over there? Double-time right into it. See, sand slows down all vehicles, requires a sand bog check, and will cut the effects of any HE shots in half. Sure you'll get sand in yer boots. But ya might live long enough to drop a grenade down the hatch in CC.

Other places that can keep enemy AFV's at bay...woods, marsh, crags, rubble, graveyards (them headstones are murder on treads), jungle, water obstacles, interior hexes of buildings, bocage, under bridges,...well, you get the idea. If you can slow 'em down, limit their movement advantage and firepower, you can lessen the effect of their attacks. Ya might even get a chance fer "Tin-can Payback". And it sure is fun brewin' up a treadhead. I love the smell of burning armor in the morning.

Now, another term to keep in mind...Assault Movement. Taking away that -1 DRM sure makes a difference. By the way, which of you maggots can tell me what FFMO/FFNAM means? No, it ain't no French cussword, rookie. Drop down and give me fifty fer that dumb answer. They are penalties assessed to anyone with a deathwish and allows them to come into play. First Fire Moving in the Open/ First Fire Non-Assault Movement. Don't you let me hear about any of you 'cruits taking it on the chin cuz ya forgot about FFMO/FFNAM. I'll have ya diggin' trenches from now til next Christmas. Ok, now ya know that covering terrain is good, and being in the open is bad. Sometimes though, ya gotta let it hang out where everyone can see ya. What do ya do then? I just told ya a minute ago...Assault movement! Use smoke grenades if ya got 'em. Deploy and send half-squads across one at a time. Ya might lose a few guys, but the rest of their buddies have a much better chance of survival.

Ok, any questions? Yes, I know. Ya got a hundred of 'em. Just don't know how to ask 'em. Well, fall out for the Wargames, and put into practice what Ol' Sarge has laid upon ya today. See if it doesn't improve yer odds of surviving.

Good luck 'cruits. Dismissed!

Sarge

(Remember, Sarge is talking to the beginners out there and all the rest of you that can't buy a win.)

Annual Bonus Edition

US $22.95

Critical Hit

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING

Operation Compass & Wavell's 30,000



Beda Fomm Campaign with 22" x 30" Historical Map INCLUDED!

22 Brand New Scenarios Inside!

DESIGN NOTES

by Patrick J. Hair & Fred Hair

In designing the scenarios found in this issue, some points came up that needed to be addressed before pressing on. My first concern was troop quality. In scenarios 58 (Hollow Legions' Ci Arrendiamo) and G20 (Camp Nibeiwa), the authors chose to represent the British infantry with first line (4-5-7 game terms) squads. I, however, have chosen to represent them with elite squads (4-5-8s). In doing my research, everything on the subject pointed to these early-campaign British troops being highly trained and accustomed to the desert environment. To me, this justifies the higher morale. Later, as the British army expanded, troop quality was in many cases watered down. Thus, one would expect to find more troops of non-elite status later. Even the 4th Indian Division was, at the time of the Compass battles, considered an exceptional unit. I represented them with the first line 4-5-7 instead of the conventional 4-4-7 2nd line unit, which is recommended in Chapter H for DYO use for colonial troops.

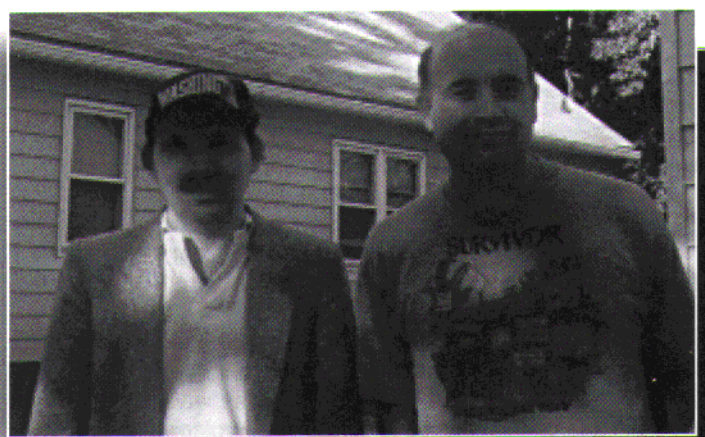
When the Australians entered the picture, the record reflects that they, too, were well-trained and had high morale, though they were inexperienced and sometimes ill-equipped. The conundrum is: should untried troops be represented by elite game pieces based on their historical performance? The ASLRB states that ANZAC units should be represented with the elite 4-5-8. Given this, and the historical hindsight that the Australians did indeed perform very well, I chose the 4-5-8 elite squad, albeit, with a lower ELR to represent their inexperience. It was the baptism of fire in WW II for the Aussies.

If you play the scenarios chronologically, you'll note that Australian ELR 'climbs' in later scenarios to reflect their growing experience.

Historical Simulation.

I am one of those rare birds who enjoys playing the Polish in Game Designer's Workshops' old Europa game system in *Case White*. The challenge is to hang in there as long as possible and cause as much damage to the Germans before you ultimately succumb. I don't mind playing a historically accurate game or scenario representing a battle where one side clearly has an advantage. Many battles were not fought on even terms.

continued on page 10



About the Designers

Pat (left) and Fred Hair developed an interest in WW II history due to their dad's service as a Bofors 40mm gun commander and truck driver for the 438th AAA Battalion in WW II. Part of their youth was spent listening to war stories and watching war movies. Their first wargame experience was the original version of Gettysburg in the mid 1960s. From there they played numerous wargames including: Panzer Leader, Blitzkrieg, Luftwaffe, Squad Leader and Tobruk to name a few. Pat began making Tobruk scenarios for himself and his wargame friends while Fred branched off into Air Force scenarios covering every theater of the war based on detailed accounts of individual actions gleaned from personal accounts and after action reports compiled into research books. This naturally led to the purchase of ASL and Critical Hit material as well as an urge to design their own scenarios based on their extensive and continued study. Both Pat and Fred are musicians and composers. Pat is currently putting together a professional studio for recording and producing music for himself and others and Fred has recently accepted a position as an Assistant School Principal after having taught music for the past 20 years. Pat is responsible for the research and original design of the scenarios for Wavell's 30,000/Operation Compass and Fred has helped in the playtesting and design modifications to turn these 22 scenarios into playable games.

These are a few of the references used to piece together the scenarios.

1. *The First Desert Victory General O'Connor's Desert Triumph Dec. 1940 Feb. 1941* By George Forty First Edition Published in 1990, in The United Kingdom by The Nutshell Publishing Company Limited 12 Dene Way, Speldhurst Turnbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0NX ISBN 1871876206

2. *Rommel's North Africa Campaign September 1940 November 1942* by Jack Greene and Alessandro Massignan Combined Books, Inc. 151 East 10th Ave. Conshohocken, PA 19428 @ 1994 ISBN 0938289349

3. *The Imperial War Museum Book Of The DESERT WAR 1940—1942* Editor: Adrian Gibert Ed. in Chief: Field Marshal Lord Bramall KG GCB OBE MC Printed in Great Britain for Motorbooks International, PO Box 1, Osceola Wisconsin, 54020 @ 1995 ISBN 0760302006

4. *Mussolini's Soldiers* by Rex J. Trye @ 1995 for Airlife Publishing LTD. 101 Longden Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9EB ISBN 1 85310 401 9 Entire book used due to nature of content i.e.organization, equipment, uniforms, training, etc. Many nice photos.

5. Illustrated WW2 Encyclopedia, Vols. 2 & 3. Based on the original text of Lt. Col. Eddy Bauer Ed. in Chief: Brigadier Peter Young, DSO, MC, MA Consultant Ed.: Brig. Gen. James L. Collins Jr. USA Chief of Military Histoy, Dept. of the Army Correlli Barnett Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge @ 1966, 1972, 1978 ISBN 0874755204

continued on page 10

6. *History Of The Second World War* (in 96 weekly magazine volumes) by Marshall Cavendish USA Limited @ 1973 Originally by BPC Publishing Limited @ 1966 Various authors contributed. *Wavell's 30,000* by John Connell (19091965) author of the biography *Wavell: Student, Warrior June, 1941* pages 309 – 329,

7. *Battles For North Africa* Chapt.: "The Hollowness of The Italian Challange" pages: 2021, 2829, 3435, 3841, 5053, 5659, 6263, 6688, with maps of Sidi Barrani area, Bardia, Tobruk; included were quotes and information from John Connell's *Wavell* book, Basil Liddell Hart's Memoirs, Moorehead's *Desert War*, Field Marshall Lord Slim's *Unofficial History, Australian Official History*, Basil Liddell Hart's *The Tanks: Vol. 2, dispatches by Wavell and O'Connor*

8. World War II Magazine; Sept. 1996; Vol. 11, #3. PO Box 420235, Palm Coast, Florida 321420235. 18008293340 "Italian Invaders Routed at Beda Fomm" by J.D. Latimer whose dad served in the Lancashire Hussars. pages 3036.

9. Avalon Hill's ASL Chapter H info on Italian equipment; Avalon Hill's "Tobruk" @1975 Game Designer's Notes and information.

10. Game Designer's Workshop's Europa Modules *Western Desert* and *The Near East* to help with confirmation of unit identifications.

11. *Afrika Korps* by Major K.J. Macksey, M.C. Ballantine's Illustrated History of the Violent Century Campaign Book No. 1 01687 101 5th Ave. NY NY 10003 @ 1968 1972 Editor in Chief: Barrie Pitt Military Consultant: Sir Basil Liddell Hart The Whole book; does not cover the 1940 campaign as it begins with Rommell's arrival, but covers post 1940 Desert War in great detail and holds a wealth of

continued on page 39

For me, the fun is in the learning, the experience you might say, as well as winning. Much valuable gaming experience with a particular system can be gained even during a seemingly lop-sided battle.

Having said that, let's move on. I trust you'll note this designer leans toward historicity in his scenario designs.

I happen to agree with author Adam Geibel's article, found elsewhere in this issue. I put that into action by making Italian gun crew ML = 8. Throughout my research on these battles, the Italian gun crews consistently displayed bravery and high morale (compared to the infantry, at least) and were on many occasions lauded by their British opponents. Most of the time, the Italian gun crews were wounded/killed at their guns or would only surrender when overrun or surrounded. Very few times does one find it mentioned that a gun was abandoned; and even this could be due to gun jamming or running out of ammunition.

Given that the Italian defenses were built upon gun positions with vehicles used for counter-attacks, many of my victory conditions call for the elimination/capture of the enemy guns, or elimination/breakage of their crews. Without support, the Italian infantry—at least during this campaign—would usually surrender, often *en masse*. Sometimes, even with support, and a fort to hide in, they would give up if the British merely showed hostile intent. But, alas, how would one design a scenario around that? Sometimes the Italians would surrender to armored car squadrons (12 vehicles) which consisted of cars equipped with no more than an ATR and a light Bren or Lewis machine-gun.

To help your Italian crews hang in there, try stacking some negative modifier leaders with them to help them during morale checks. Or better yet, set up rally points aimed at bringing gun crews back into action quickly. The better officers always seemed to be with the gun crews anyway (which could partially explain the quick surrender of all the other troops).

Another thing that I have done which goes against convention: I use a few armor leaders for the Italians. I have always thought that ASL should use armor leaders more, across the board. Historical accounts that many a scenario are built around come from the account officers. Each vehicle platoon had a leader—at least a sergeant, and where larger formations are represented, an overall leader with the HQ squadron could be a Major, Colonel, or even a General.

I now turn my attention to the specific scenarios. My notes are a combination of points from playtest, historical notes and play tips.

Scenario 109: FRONTIER RAID

These little raids were usually led by Captains, Majors, or Colonels (British). The British nearly always had Carriers and Mk VI Light tanks available. The Italians had many L3s for recconaisance, for use as main battle tanks, and in 'penny packets' for infantry support.

This one can be won by the British player if he does not try to overwhelm the Italian position. It can be simple for the Italian player to knock out the British armored cars due to their '0' armor. The VC call for one side to earn more DVP than another. Usually this runs the risk of the side getting the first crack in to play 'run-and-hide'. Not so in desert scenarios. There is nowhere to hide.

Scenario 110: STARLIGHT, STARBRIGHT

This one will be tough for the Italians. The original scenario length of five turns was reduced to three to make it a game. It is still a tough one for the Axis. This is an excellent solitaire scenario.

The 10-2 AL in the British OB represents Major Geoffrey Miller. A most interesting addition to the rules in the variant special rule in this scenario depicting the truck headlights of the Italian patrol going out, as well as the NVR bonus they get when on.

Scenario 111: THE BATTLE OF GHIRBA

The 10-2 AL represents Lieutenant John Combe of Combeforce. How did this British force pull off this 'show' in real life? A reading of the historical summary makes it plain: the British knocked out or captured 7 officers, 94 men, 4 guns and a light tank without suffering a single casualty!

In early playtests the British , with their lack of armor protection and 2-pounders were thrashed. After the addition of an A9s and Mk VIs, as well as using dust and special tactics to screen their vulnerable tanks, the British were able to win. Initially the design lacked the two Italian guns and their transports/crews.

The addition of the extra British armor, plus the Italian guns and crews, led to the final step being the tweaking of victory conditions to balance the game.

Scenario 112: FRONTIER RAID II

Early playtest led to question the inclusion of the British artillery or the 3" mortar. Removal was voted down, as these larger raids were usually accompanied by at least battalion mortar, if not a barrage.

continued on page 39

This scenario is similar to the first 'Raid' except for the British guns and armor. The British should still handle this as a raid and not try to overwhelm the Italian defenses. The Italians *will* eventually get their licks in.

Once again the VC call for one side to earn more DVP than the other: in this case the British. The varied OB for each side makes for a wide-open contest that often comes down to the last shot or CC attack.

Scenario 113: GRAZIANI'S ADVANCE

This is the ponderous advance of the Italian army into Egypt. The British used a small, mobile delaying force of mixed elements with mines, artillery, and airplanes to harass the advance. ATRs were plentiful, with machine-guns, 2" Mortars, and portees the backbone of the delaying force. The victory conditions come down to forcing the Italians to succeed with their advance. Did anyone order a white horse for Benito?

The Italians had a little of everything on this march. Most of their *materiel* makes for targets to be blown up by the enemy. At first glance, this scenario looks like the Italians will be massacred. Play experience proved that if the Italian tanks decide to come out and fight the British trucks and armored cars will have a tough time of it. The game may be won or lost by the end of the second turn or it could become a running battle.

Scenario 114: SURPRISE AT NIBEIWA

My first thought was whether ASL players would get cranky that the former ASLUG scenario, later published as an official scenario, would be getting another pass. It belongs in the set and my own research on the OB and setting are reflected in Scenario 114.

It's a pretty straight OB and the British are faced with the challenge of wiping out the Italian force. By not having to eliminate each and every tank, the 'chase-the-last-tank' phenomenon is avoided.

Scenario 115: TUMMAR WEST

This is the first of the 'eliminate/capture the Italian guns and and crews' scenarios. It uses the raised Italian crew morale to effect.

British Matilda II tanks and the artillery were present. The sceanrio length was reduced to eight turns from the original ten (British auto-victory).

If the British use historical tactics, they can easily win. The Italians can however make it more difficult by spreading their forces around, causing the British to split their forces or risk not having enough time to do the job over the wide expanse of the battlefield.

Scenario 116: PRIDE BEFORE FALL

Although the Blackshirts "resisted stiffly" according to the account, and had some equipment and mobile artillery, they did not care to fight and were not generally well led by their socially correct appointed officers. This accounts for the poor Italian leadership, ELR, and the use of conscript squads.

This is a difficult scenario for the Italians to win as they are saddled with conscript units, hamstrung by low morale and a MF of 3. The Italian may be dropping some equipment along the way to be able to exit in 8 turns. Due to the heavy dust the British must contend with the resulting lower percentage shots to get at their enemy.

The Italian player has a chance to move his men across the desert battlefield but he better not squander what little AT weapons he is assigned in his OB. In the final accounting, the interest in this scenario is in a tactical depiction of an 'infantry' unit going against an 'armor' unit in terms of moving such pieces into one another's Zone of Control in a larger-scale game. See what really happens when you roll that "A Back 2" result...

Scenario 117: THE FALL OF SIDI BARRANI

The VC allow the British some flexibility here: wipe out the Italian force or grab terrain. With an OB of 10 squads going against 21 Italian squads, the building grab may be a difficult proposition. That 114mm OBA will be key if you choose to go after the buildings.

With a good Italian set up and execution of tactics, this could be difficult for the British. It could quickly degenerate into a series of close combats where the British are outnumbered by the quantity advantage of inferior ML troops. If facing a skilled Italian opponent, the British tactics must be flawlessly executed. The Italians should cluster around the VP buildings so they can easily feed infantry into the melees that are likely to develop and force the British player to knock out all those tanks and guns.

Scenario 118: SIDI OMAR

Italian air support shows up for the first time in the set. No British Matildas were present at Sidi Omar.

This one will drive the British crazy when Italian guns with a ROF of 3 get five hits in a row in the same fire phase on a tank with a AF of 1. Of course, the tank will survive the first four attacks while the fifth one will find its mark. Or when the Italians get three consecutive kills on tanks about to overrun their positions. Sounds like

continued on page 40

info regarding terrain, troop usage, equipment characteristics and usage which was very insightful. Can certainly be used for post1940 desert scenarios as a reference of substance for later scenarios (2/41-5/43).

12. Game Designer's Workshop's Europa Modules *Western Desert* and *The Near East* to help with confirmation of unit identifications.

13. *Rommel*, by Roger Sibley, Ballentine Illustrated History of the Violent Century, War Leader book No 27 for some background information on the Italians and an overview on the Compass campaign

14. *The Battle for North Africa*, by John Strawson, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York @ 1969 , the first two chapters, culminating in Chapter 2, 'Fox Killed in the Open" provides a great account of Operation Compass

15. *The Desert Rats: The 7th Armoured Division in World War II*, by Major-General G. L. Verney, DSO, MVO is the divi sional history; Chapter 1, to page 48 takes us through Beda Fomm and Sidi Saleh, with some great maps

16. Armor: The History of Mechanized Forces, by Richard M. Ogorkiewicz, Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, New York @1960 details tank development in Italy (pg 237-249)

17. *The March to Tunis,: The North African War 1940-1943* by Alan Moorehead, Harper & Row, New York @1967, first published under the title African Trilogy, tells the story from the perspective of Australian war correspondent Alan Moorehead. This book lends great flavor to the early desert war and also covers the author's travels, and military actions in Palestine

continued on page 40

fun, eh?

The British can win if artillery, ordnance and vehicle smoke is used properly. Never stop moving and screen the lighter armored vehicles with dust. This situation calls for the use of unusual tactics such as putting your best armor leaders in the weakly armored tanks because they have better MG firepower for use in overruns or PBF.

Scenario 119: FORTRESS AT BARDIA I

A somewhat different VC gives this one flavor. The British must clear a gap in the wire/AT-trench/mines line at night.

The Italians will have to set up so they can cover their trenches, mines and wire. This will force them to stay close to the perimeter so they can see the British and use starshells to eliminate their concealment and fire on them. The British have the ability to break through with the help of their leaders, smoke and artillery. If the British don't have any support for the units breaking through the Italians will eventually get in the hits. The Italian will need to hold out along their perimeter or else it will be tough to win.

Scenario 120: SMALL ENCOUNTERS

The British need to capture the Italian supply dump. This was a key mission during the campaign, difficult to represent in ASL but commonly reported in accounts of the period. Originally this scenario specified the capture of "the ASL logo hex". That was replaced by overlay X4 in hex 31FF9.

The capture of war booty is not the only mission of the British: they need to get at the Italian squads and armor in this one. They have the men and machines to do it: our ML 8 Australians are featured and three Matildas with an 8-1 AL give the Commonwealth some much-needed AT punch.

The main foe capable of forestalling Commonwealth plans is that 100mm Italian artillery. It is directed by an Offboard Observer, and comes with Plentiful Ammunition. This is a tough weapons system to deal with, with no radio-toting leader to break or radio to malfunction. This one often comes down to the wire.

Scenario 121: A TEST OF NERVES

Okay, so CH already published a scenario called "Test of Nerves" (and a damn fine tourney one at that, I hear). So they changed the title of mine slightly. I insisted on keeping it, claiming designer's prerogative.

This one seemed to depend on the roll of the dice to some playtesters. As originally designed, the Italians were massacred. Some British leaders were removed from their OB. In some playtest contests, one 40L 2-pounder took itself out of the game by malfunctioning or was knocked out early. Most times one gun went down the Italians won.

If one of the two guns breaks the game may well be curtains for the British.

Scenario 122: FORTRESS AT BARDIA II

This one can be very difficult for the British even if they use their traditional tactics because their Matildas arrive late. The Italians must separate their pillboxes so there will be two clusters of fortifications with various guns and infantry for the British to attack.

The 150mm gun should be set up so that if the British choose to attack the other side first, they will come under its fire. Otherwise, it will not get a shot off as it cannot change its CA. The Italians should also put their best guns in the cluster less likely to be attacked first. This allows them more opportunities to fire. The smaller guns can still kill the Mk VIs and infantry.

The British will have to use their traditional tactics, sans Matildas, so a judicious placement of smoke from their CS tank and mortars will be needed. The Matildas will probably arrive in time to attack the second cluster before the infantry and Mk VI survivors get there. In this case, the Matildas will be more effective if they stop adjacent to an enemy unit and use point blank fire instead of overrunning with their wimpy MGs and the +4 modifiers. Another departure from using OBA smoke is to use FFE on the second position. This should break some of the low-ML Italians.

Scenario 123: THE BARDIA WATERWORKS

The Italian morale was really poor. They didn't blow up the water supply or the docks. It seems that they didn't really want to, even though they had their orders. Thus, although the Italians have two good leaders present, they may not be able to motivate the ambivalent troops in their charge to blow their own water up. The best they can probably do (speculation here) is to force the crews of the 65mm gun and HMG to hold out to the end of the game or until eliminated.

In order for the British to survive the open ground, they must advance behind their lone Matilda and use OBA and vehicle smoke/dust to screen everyone else. The Italians with boresighted MGs and good leaders will massacre the infantry in their trucks and make it difficult for the carriers as well. Once the British close, the Italians will try to hold out and stall for time. There is also a small chance that the Italians may roll low

18. The purchase of the 3 part Italian Orders of Battle from The Scholar's Bookshelf in Cranbury, NJ. is suggested for students of the period.

19. Photos and records from the collection of Adam Geibel

20. Photos from Captured Axis Records, National Archives

Scenario References

1. Scenario 109: Frontier Raid Reference #(s): 1, pages 6680; 5, page(s) 268269; 6, pg. 313; 7, pg. 21; 8, pg. 30.

2. Scenario 110: Starlight, Starbright Reference #(s): 1, pages 6770.

3. Scenario 111: The Battle Of Ghirba Reference #(s): 1, pages 7374.

4. Scenario 112: Frontier Raid II Reference #(s): same as Scenario 101.

5. Scenario 113: Graziani's Advance Reference #(s): 5, pg. 270; 6, pg. 313314; 7, pg. 34.

6. Scenario 114: Surprise At Nibeiwa Reference #(s): 5, pg. 294; 6, pg. 315; 7, pages 5354; 8, pages 3233.

7. Scenario 115: Tummar West Reference #(s): 5, pg. 294; 6, pages 316317; 7, pg. 58.

8. Scenario 116: Pride Before Fall Reference #(s): 6, pages 316317; 7, pg. 59.

9. Scenario 117: The Fall of Sidi Barrani Reference #(s): 6, page 317.

10. Scenario 118: Sidi Omar Reference #(s): 1, pg. 139; 6, pg. 318.

11. Scenario 119: Fortress At Bardia 1 Reference #(s): 1, pages 134150; 3, pages 49; 5, pages 322323; 6, pg. 318 in John Connell's article; 7, pages 7076.

enough to blow up a victory hex (they only need to get one to win) so after the British close, the Italian's best leaders should head back toward the demolition troops to influence the roll. The British should try to come in from one side, avoiding the two hex distance requirement for demolition until necessary.

Scenario 124: THE FALL OF TOBRUK

The Italians were actually quite determined not to give up Tobruk. And the newer M13/40 tanks were getting the better tank commanders for this fight.

This one is a tough go for the British. The 150mm harassing fire will delay or kill infantry as well as tanks. It will also allow some shots by those immovable 150mm guns. The Italians should divide their forces in half and put them on the extreme corners of the board. This will force the British to split their forces or risk running out of time.

The British will only be able to smoke one side of the board at a time, hence the Italian division of forces makes further sense. The British will have to try to overcome one side using traditional tactics and smoke while their 76mm mortar tries to chip away at the other position. In this way they can pull out a win and get their hands on the prize of Tobruk.

Scenario 125: DOWN THE THROAT

The British were simply never able to win this scenario as originally designed. The game system does not reflect the way in which the Italians fought (A return to the surrender rule found in GI: Anvil of Victory might do it. Ed.) Over the course of seven or eight playings some of the examples are: the Italians rolled four critical hits and killed Matildas. The Italians also did not break when the 4 MG Tanks overran or fired at them point blank, and the Italians (with their leader) successfully use deliberate immobilization and also killed Matildas in CC.

In order to make it possible for a British win some Italian leaders were omitted from the original OB and sangars replaced trenches. A small group of Italian infantry and MGs were removed because these were never actually engaged, although nearby.

This is a good little solitaire scenario. Set up the guns and crews and go at them with your Matildas!

Scenario 126: METAL AT MECHILI

Yes, I could have done yet another Italian fortress battle and the British tanks would not be able to take the fort unsupported by infantry and artillery. The battle outside of the fort was more exciting, and more significant. Although the Italians didn't really *lose* this battle, they thought they did, withdrawing their armor and abandoning the fort.

Playtesters reported this scenario turned out to be the most fun one in the bunch. Both sides have many options and can win. The Italians can charge the British or they can hide behind the sand dunes and rush out against the British flanks. The British can charge the Italian guns/tanks or take up positions in the deir or behind the hillocks to get hull down status. It's a wild and wooly affair.

Scenario 122: STAND AT DERNA

The terrain and environment in this sector of the region actually does change here very abruptly. Wind blown, low hills, with no cover (where the British attacked from) looking over flat land with a wadi; then the town nestled between the sea and the high, tree covered-in-spots mountains (where the Italians defended). With the southern part of Derna on the first slopes of the mountains. I've seen photos of it, including where the Australians had to attack from.

Here the Australian 6th Cavalry uses captured Italian tanks, reported in accounts and involved in many actions in the early campaign. The Italian Airborne Regiment used 47mm AT-guns as artillery because they could be air-dropped.

The Italians have ample good firing positions as well as adequate power to stop the British. The British do have two things that work in their favor: OBA and the fact that the Italians have a high ROF and will allow for many chances of breakdown/elimination. Just kidding!

The best bet for the British is to close the gap as quickly as possible. The British MG and good leader can stack in a sand hex and try to pick off crews and other units. The Italians should not just stand back and fire but rush their tanks across the wadi and try to take hull down positions behind hillocks so they can take out British units. The Italian armored cars might want to hang back until the tanks are taken care of, saving them to make overrun attacks against the enemy infantry.

Beda Fomm #1: THE END OF THE LINE

Yes, I know they're big, family-man unfriendly, extended-college-career-after-Dungeons-&-Dragons-type scenarios. The three Beda Fomm scenarios also serve as a mini-campaign game.

I had good, detailed info on the set up and how the events unfolded, so I wanted to translate the text into a game and make it the culmination of this presentation.

Although the OB for each side is rather large, it is not

continued on page 42

12. Scenario 122: Fortress At Bardia 2 Reference #(s): same as #11, Scenario 589, Fortress At Bardia 1, except: 8, page 33.

13. Scenario 120: Small Encounters Reference #(s): 3, page 7.

14. Scenario 121: A Test Of Nerves Reference #(s): 1, pages 145147; 7, page 75.

15. Scenario 123: The Bardia Waterworks Reference #(s): 1, page 147; 7, pages 7576.

16. Scenario 124: The Fall Of Tobruk Reference #(s): 1, page 154161, 157; 5, page 324; 6, page 323; 7, page 82.

17. Scenario 125: Down The Throat Reference #(s): 3, page 10.

18. Scenario 126: Metal At Mechili Reference #(s): 1, pages 163165; 2, pages 8486; 5, pages 334335; 6, page 326; 7, pages 8283; 8, page 34.

19. Scenario 127: Stand At Derna Reference #(s): 1, pages 165168; 2, pg. 85; 7, pages 8283.

20. Beda Fomm #1: The End Of The Line Reference #(s): 1, pages 169173; 2, pg. 31; 3, pg. 12; 6, pages 326327; 7, pages 8588.

21. Beda Fomm #2: The Trap Congeals Reference #(s): same as #20, Scenario 5818; page 56, from Lucio Ceva & Andrea Curami's 'La meccanizzazione dell' esercito italiano fino al 1943, 2 vols. (Rome, Ufficio Storico Stato maggiore esercito, 1989).

22. Beda Fomm #3: Death Of An Army Reference #(s): same as #20, except material found on page 52, from Archivio Ufficio Storico (Italian Army Archives).

that you have 90 infantry units to set up; you have 5 here, 8 there, 5 to the left, and 12 or 16 further back, each with their own officers and equipment, plus guns in different places in various stages of emplacement or in the open, plus re-enforcements—maybe more than one group of them.

If you are scared off by high piece density, try not to get discouraged. After 3 or 4 turns, the player turns get shorter. In Beda Fomm #1, things look BAD for the Italians. And they are. Sorry. They are completely surprised to find the British blocking their withdrawal. The Italians had, after all, cleverly slipped away from Derna and Mechili.

I have found that, especially in desert scenarios, lots of equipment tends to get knocked out quickly—in 3 or 4 turns, thereby leaving LOS Hindrances for the remainder to move around and gain protection from.

There was always a higher concentration of guns and vehicles in WW II desert battles in an effort to make up for a lack of manpower, firepower, large and frequent open areas to traverse, and relatively few strong points where you could dig in and hold (presumably with less equipment).

Not even the British knew for sure that they could pull off a race across the desert and then to cut off the Italians and stop them with the limited forces the British had remaining. Losses to the British were due mainly to supply problems and vehicle breakdowns.

The Italians simply did not have the proper forces and equipment with them in the vanguard of their withdrawing units to effect a breakout or overwhelm the British blocking force. The VC are aimed at providing a chance for the Italians to win in game terms.

Beda Fomm #2: THE TRAP CONGEALS

The British *did* have those 25 pdrs there! The Italians had heavy artillery, with plentiful ammo, yet for some reason didn't have that much of an effect on the British. ASL probably will not grant you the nicety of "for some reason it didn't do anything." For that reason the OBA has been limited. Reluctantly, because it *was* there; and plenty of it too.

I maxed out the printed pieces given. If you want to make a purely historical presentation out of this, add up to 80 more Italian tanks of the available marks and see what happens.

You'll have to use wrecks from some other units to get your Italian units back in the game if you are linking the scenarios.

The lack of dust makes this action feel different than most desert scenarios. It's a large battle for the game system and luck swings can go either way with all the tubes engaged.

Beda Fomm: DEATH OF AN ARMY

Once again, the Italians really did have plenty of heavy artillery which was ineffective. I used all 18 Italian M11/39 and M13/40 tank pieces for the breakout. If you feel the Italians need more, they can have no more than 31. For the British portee, the 10-2 infantry leader may also double as an armor leader. Should the gun dismount, you will use an infantry 10-2 leader. In real life, they did not dismount and were truly heroic—knocking out five Italian Medium tanks with only five shots after having jumped onto the truck and driven round the attacking Italians' eastern flank.

It was hard to trim this scenario and keep it accurate because some guns/vehicles defended head on and some from the flank. This was the real situation. When we give them just one each, when that one gun in the center or on the flank gets knocked out or breaks, that sector gets overrun by the Italians. Thus, I decided to keep the last three Beda Fomm scenarios large in the hopes of providing options for both sides based on maneuver and use of their forces.

WRAP UP:

It is my sincere hope that you 'get' what I'm trying to communicate here and you are 'into' the story. It's such a fascinating period! Enjoy the scenarios and in true CH spirit, feel free to make changes and modifications as you see fit, using your imagination, research and opinions to get the maximum out of these. Or just read the write-ups in the bathroom!

I have already submitted the next set of scenarios in the war in North Africa: Rommel Retakes Cyrenaica to CH. Ray and Kurt are two of the biggest North Africa fans out there and when I found out CH was going to be bringing back a new and expanded edition of the old AH classic, TOBRUK, it was no surprise. CH has scenario sets covering action in Italian East Africa, El Alamein, Halfaya Pass, Tunisia and Somalia in development so it looks like plenty of desert action is coming down the pike a bit for fans of the period.

If you are a fan of the war in North Africa, feel free to write me care of this magazine.

■

Volume 5, Number 2

$15.95

Critical Hit

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING



Dads In WWII

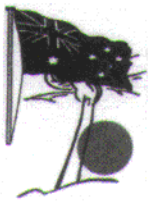
1998 Canadian ASL Open

Combat! First Hand Look

Grab A '98 Pack with the Paddington Bears

Plus 8 New Scenarios

And More!



INTRODUCTION

For those who haven't heard of Gona (and this includes plenty of Australians in 1998), it is a village on the north coast of Papua (the eastern half of the island of New Guinea). It was where the primitive track (in 1942) from Kokoda finally led to the sea, and also linked with the east-west coastal track.

The "Kokoda Trail" was, and still is, a jungle path (or multiple paths in some places) that leads south from Kokoda village across the peaks and valleys of the Owen Stanley mountain range. The Imperial Japanese Army's *Nankai Shitai* (South Seas Force) had set out from Gona in late July to march across the mountains to Port Moresby in just 10 days, and carrying just enough food supplies for that time. That major miscalculation was matched by the directive from Allied HQ in Australia that "the pass" through the Owen Stanley mountains be sealed with explosives, so it could then be defended by a small force. Unrealistic expectations from General MacArthur's HQ and poor Australian planning resulted in an untrained Aussie militia battalion being sent along the track one rifle company at a time (the most that could be supplied by native carriers), into combat against an unknown enemy force. The 39th Battalion had to train themselves on the "two-way rifle range" (against a reinforced Japanese battalion, later the whole regiment). The jungle-clad battlefields of Kokoda, Isurava and Efogi are ripe for future HASL development by Aussie PTO devotees.



The Kokoda Trail will forever remain part of Australian military folklore. The battle of the Kokoda and Gona campaigns ended at the beachheads as the members of Maroubra Force captured Gona after heavy fighting – but after the Japanese defenders extracted a heavy toll in human life.

The original idea for a Gona campaign came from ASL stalwart, Steve Swann, who contacted me in 1994 to hunt for local source materials about the Australian and Japanese units at Gona. Steve had identified Gona as a battle whose terrain and OBs could readily translate into an ASL campaign. Part of my research involved reading *Those Ragged Bloody Heroes*, by Peter Brune, and being deeply moved by the remarkable history of the 39th Battalion. Over a year, we worked together on the Mud and Blood CG, until it had a map, a campaign and scenarios, plus lots of information about the terrain and the units. The M&B draft sat with Critical Hit! for some time, but the (historically accurate) M&B campaign looked too static on the Japanese side.

In late 1997, Ray Tapio asked Mark McGilchrist and I to revisit it, with the mission of developing a PTO Platoon Leader 2 campaign. The result is the ***TRBH*** package. It is intended to be useable as an introduction to PTO concepts, with lots of jungle and kunai, no vehicles, caves or panjis, limited OBA, and almost no landing craft. The scenarios are straightforward infantry, but with the PTO goodies like Banzai, Stealth, Hand-to-Hand CC, and extra HIP. Of course, we have added some extra features (almost impossible to resist as a CG designer).

Two noticeable new components for the ***TRBH*** CG would be Cleared Fire Zones and Command Post counters. The rationale for CFZs comes from the fact that with a little time and effort from the defenders, tropical plant growth could be pruned along prepared firelanes at different heights, while being allowed to grow over bunkers and other fortifications. This gives the concealed defenders multiple "bore-sighted" locations, and usually meant attacking troops are unable to spot the source of deadly enemy fire. In a campaign, another difficulty arises when the entire landscape is jungle, kunai and swamp; Command Post counters are our solution to the problem of "strategic" terrain types in the PTO. A Battalion CP acts as a focal point in the game for scenario set-up and unit re-deployment. As with any headquarters, they are valuable and also vulnerable (so they instantly disappear if enemy controlled).

The ***TRBH*** PL2 campaign offers an incentive to the Japanese side to counterattack, so as to delay or disrupt the otherwise inevitable Australian build-up. A swift/lucky attack may even gain enough TVP for a 'sudden-death' victory. The historical campaign fits on the ***TRBH*** mapsheet at almost the exact ASL scale, with only a slight shift

TO TRBH

By Paul Haseler and Mark McGilchrist

of the Small Creek huts and the upper reaches of Gona Creek being necessary.

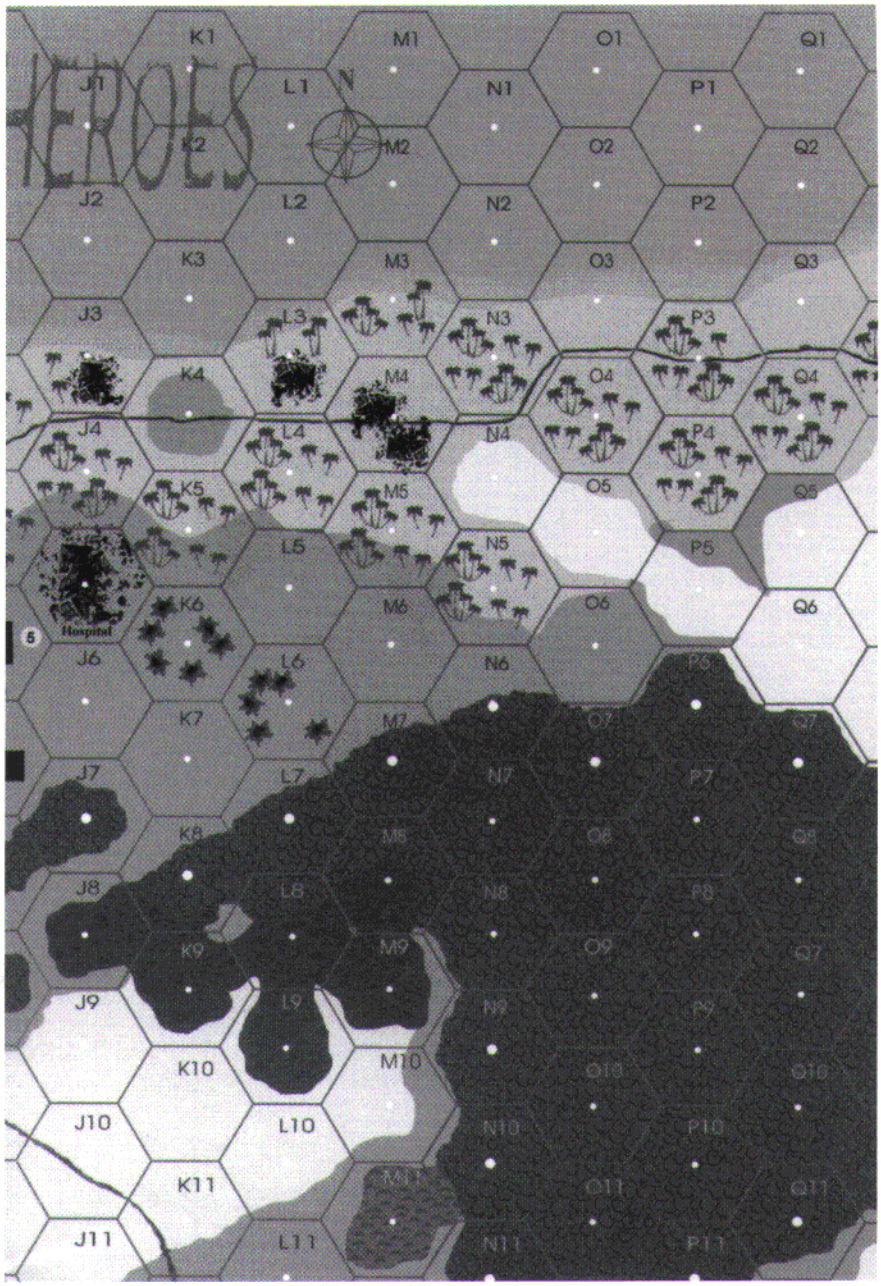
The performance of the Japanese troops at Gona is also worthy of attention. By September 1942, the *XVIII Army Road Building Unit* had begun to improve the Gona-Kokoda track, but then had to turn round and swiftly begin digging for a different purpose. The Gona Mission area became heavily fortified with numerous coconut log bunkers, connected by a trench system. Well-hidden firing pits, with solid overhead cover, extended along the shore east of Gona, and among the huts near Small Creek. Once the siege had begun, the frontline troops, whether line infantry or road builders, endured critical shortages of food, ammunition and medical supplies. This was despite the quantities stacked unused near the beach, which the Japanese HQ never managed to distribute (marked by Debris hexes on the ***TRBH*** map). As the campaign history shows, the amazingly stoic Japanese defenders were also static; once ordered to their positions, they put up with astonishing hardship, then fought to the death. The ***TRBH*** CG requirement to "purchase" food supplies for the Japanese (or let units starve) is based on this situation, and the same applies to ammo supply.

One insignificant night attack was made at Gona by the Japanese; so apart from the rumble of barge engines, the nights were relatively quiet until the final attempts of the garrison to escape. Only limited counterattacks were attempted (the Japanese commander apparently refused his officers freedom of action), and night patrolling was almost non-existent. No such restriction is imposed on the Japanese in ***TRBH***.

While the resourceful Japanese barge units were still able to move troops and supplies along the coast at night, including dropping off reinforcements and removing wounded, this contact with the outside would have sustained Japanese morale. The tightening of the perimeter in early December made regular access to the beach at Gona impracticable for even those hardy types (and the garrison's will to fight must have diminished, as diaries showed they became aware that no reinforcements were coming and that senior officers were being evacuated).

Disease pushed up the casualty rates for both sides, the troops fighting on despite suffering terribly from Malaria and Scrub Typhus, the latter proving fatal in many cases. Penned inside their fortifications, eating rotting food, surrounded by corpses and indescribable filth, the Japanese suffered crippling dysentery also. The Australians had better access to supplies, but physical exertion (especially for malaria sufferers) was exhausting in the tropical humidity and high temperatures, to the point of collapse. To be pulled out of the front-line to recuperate, a Digger had to have a consistent fever of 103° or more (since everyone else managed to endure at 99-102°). The limited number of Firefights in the **TRBH** CG can be seen as a reflection

continued on page 24



of the limited physical resources of both sides.

From 19th November until 9th December 1942 when the Mission finally fell to the Australians, the garrison of 800-1000 Japanese troops had held off two depleted Australian Brigades. 682 Japanese were buried at Gona, as were several hundred Australians nearby. Only a couple of (incapacitated) prisoners were taken. Many more Diggers were evacuated with wounds and serious disease. Though under-strength, the 39th Battalion was returned to combat at Gona in early December, and took over from the depleted AIF battalions of 21st Brigade. In a symbolic closure, the unit that had been driven out of Kokoda in August, became the battalion to finally succeed in capturing the Gona Mission. From being green as grass in July, the ragged bloody heroes* had returned as seasoned veterans in December to finish the task. After this, the 39th Battalion's campaign continued along through the coastal swamps. Sadly, the numerous casualties suffered eventually resulted in the 39th leaving Gona in late January with a strength of just 7 officers and 25 men, all badly affected by malaria and other tropical ills. A few months later, this outstanding unit was inexplicably disbanded (along with several other militia battalions).

The last word on this battle of attrition belongs to Lt.Colonel Ralph Honner, outstanding leader of the 39th Battalion, who after the final brutal sweep across the Mission area with rifles and bayonets, signalled to 7th Division headquarters: *"GONA'S GONE."* ■

**Facing the IJA onslaught alone for three weeks, the young "Chocos" of the 39th had not cracked. They were malnourished, their permanently wet uniforms rotted on their gaunt frames, and their boots also fell apart, but they still managed to prevent the Japanese from breaking through.*

Australian Forces

A brief word on the Australian Army during WW2; there were two types of forces, effectively two armies.

The Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) was a volunteer expeditionary force of four divisions whose troops had enlisted for overseas duty (and had served in North Africa, Greece and Syria with considerable distinction). By 1942, these veteran units were returning to Australia, battle tested and capable in attack and defence, but not yet trained in jungle warfare. Mostly they learned about it "on the job." (The 2/# for the AIF units stands for 2nd AIF/ Battalion # to distinguish them from the battalions with the same number that fought in the First World War).

The Australian Military Force (A.M.F.) was the pre-war reserve army or national militia, composed of a mix of enthusiastic volunteers (including WW1 veterans) and some draftees. The Militia was only for defence of Australian territory, and as an Australian mandate, Papua was included, as was New Guinea. This political restriction led to the AMF being ridiculed by the volunteer AIF as "a protected species – not available for export" or "Chocolate Soldiers," and other much less polite descriptions. During 1939-1940, the best young Militia soldiers had volunteered for the adventure offered by the AIF, leaving the AMF short of expertise. The ranks were then filled with 17-19 year old conscripts. In general, the Militia units of 1942 had limited training and no field experience. In a late effort to improve the standard of these units, AIF officers were removed from their own units and drafted into AMF battalions, often to the dismay of both sides. Such officers would take a while before they could trust and be trusted.

AMF units were frequently keen, but unskilled. In New Guinea, they were used initially as labour units, and when called into battle, received a bloody and traumatic initiation. Some had risen superbly to the challenge, whilst others had not been able to cope with the stress and isolation of jungle warfare once they lost their experienced leaders. One battalion consisted mostly of young conscripts who had been thrown aboard a ship without warning, and then found themselves stuck in Port Moresby. There they lived for months in lousy conditions, spending their days unloading ships or digging ditches, but not training. In the desperate days of August when the Japanese were pushing the 39th Battalion back along the Kokoda track, this other unit was armed and marched into the mountains, led by experienced but unfamiliar officers. Having passed the wounded struggling back through the mud on the track, the new-comers arrived during the ferocious struggle at Isurava and were deployed out on a vulnerable flank. After losing their new commander, they swiftly lost the will to fight, and many of them ran from the chaos of that jungle battle. They could not really be blamed for this; many of those soldiers were later absorbed into other units, including the 39th, where they were trained and did well).

By the time of the Gona campaign, a number of AMF units had been battle-tested at places like Milne Bay, Kokoda and Gorari. The rising level of skill allowed AMF Brigades and Divisions to be successfully employed against the Japanese in 1943-45 in New Guinea and New Britain, and later Borneo.

GOING FOR GONA

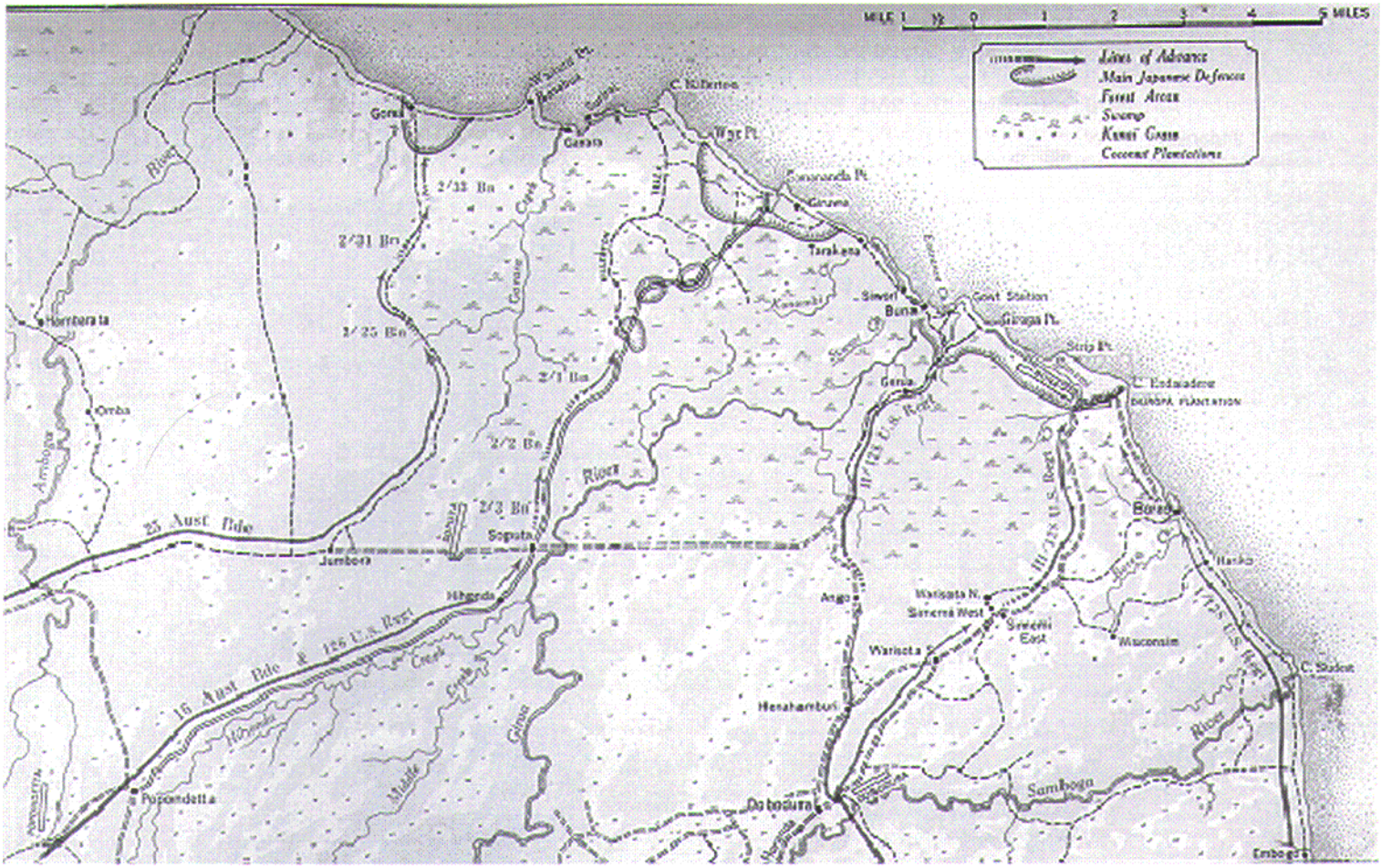
By Paul Haseler and Mark McGilchrist

Campaign Historical Notes

The Gona campaign is regarded to have begun on 15th November 1942, when the troops of the veteran 7th Australian Division, commanded by Major-General "Bloody George" Vasey crossed the Kumusi River and began the trek across 65 miles (100 km) of tropical lowlands towards Gona. In the previous weeks, 25th Brigade had participated in the encircling battle between Oivi and Gorari, that had trapped and destroyed the Japanese rearguard. The battle put to flight the Japanese *Nankai Shitai* (South Seas Force), commanded by Major-General Horii, as they attempted to cross the Kumusi River. Over 600 Japanese soldiers were killed, including their commander, and the *Shitai* was finished as an effective military force. (Survivors would straggle into the Gona-Buna beachhead garrisons, and others gathered at the mouth of the Kumusi River).

It had been a long hard "road" to Gona for the Australian forces. On 21st July 1942, the first regiment of the *Nankai Shitai* landed at the undefended settlement of Gona and rapidly pushed inland and uphill to Kokoda. A single company of Australian militia (from 39th Battalion), supported by some native constabulary defended Kokoda village and the tracks leading from it, thus beginning the Kokoda Trail campaign. From July to September, the Kokoda campaign had taken Horii's troops along a triumphal path, against a gradually increasing Australian force, until they were within 30 miles of Port Moresby, their goal. On the last ridgeline near Ioribaiwa, the Australians finally held the advantage. As well as having suffered heavy casualties, the two Japanese regiments had begun to starve. Horii had gambled upon living off the land or captured supplies, as had been done in Malaya. The ruggedness of the terrain surprised the Japanese every bit as much as the Allied commanders. The initially desperate Australian supply situation improved as they withdrew closer to Port Moresby, whilst growing conversely worse for the Japanese.

continued on page 26



Map 1: Gona-Sanananda-Buna Area of Operations

In September, Horii was forced to order a withdrawal. The pursuit fell to the recently arrived 16th and 25th AIF Brigades, and eventually they would retake Kokoda, and then shatter the *Shitai* at Gorari.

Crossing the Kumusi River did more than mark the end of one campaign and the start of the next; it also marked a clear change in the terrain and climate. In the mountainous interior regions of Papua, the steep peaks covered in rainforest and the kunai covered ridges were frequently cold and wet. The cooler climate kept malaria in remission, whilst the rugged overgrown terrain cut by rapidly flowing creeks constricted the battle to a small front. Beyond Kokoda, the terrain began to flatten, and it was between Kokoda and the Kumusi River that the Australians could finally deploy and outflank the Japanese.

Beyond the Kumusi, the tropical lowlands were a new battlefield. Scattered along the coast were groves of tall coconut palms, and a mixture of scrub, swamp and kunai grass. The swamps were the major terrain obstruction to movement, and also provided a haven to the mosquitoes that carried malaria. Disease became the scourge of this campaign, causing far more casualties than wounds did (four soldiers would be incapacitated by disease for every battle casualty). The 25th Brigade began the campaign at 45% strength, which rapidly shrank to 10%, primarily through tropical disease.

Another changing aspect of the campaign was the introduction of American troops. The untested US 32nd Division was slowly closing on Buna from the south. The Japanese Army rushed some reinforcements into Buna and Gona to maintain their beachheads. The battle at Buna was a bigger, longer and more complex struggle than that of Gona, and gave the US Army as nasty a welcome to jungle warfare as could be imagined.

The battles at Buna and Gona were fought separately, with Gona being the most western Japanese enclave on the coast, Buna the furthest east, and with Sanananda in between. *(see map 1 below)*

Gona had been occupied since July 1942 by logistic and support troops of the *Nankai Shitai*, including the tail of 41st and 144th Regiments, with Lt.Colonel Tomita as base commander. The Gona Mission, which was a key position in the area, occupied a picturesque site on the northern Papuan coast (and prior to July 1942, an Anglican priest and two nuns had provided a touch of civilization for travellers visiting there). The Mission was about 100 meters inland from the coast, and a similar distance from Gona Creek to its west. The Creek was deep enough to be a natural barrier (crossed by a footbridge until that was destroyed by Allied bombing). To the east of the Mission, a coconut palm grove ran parallel to the coast, about 100 meters in

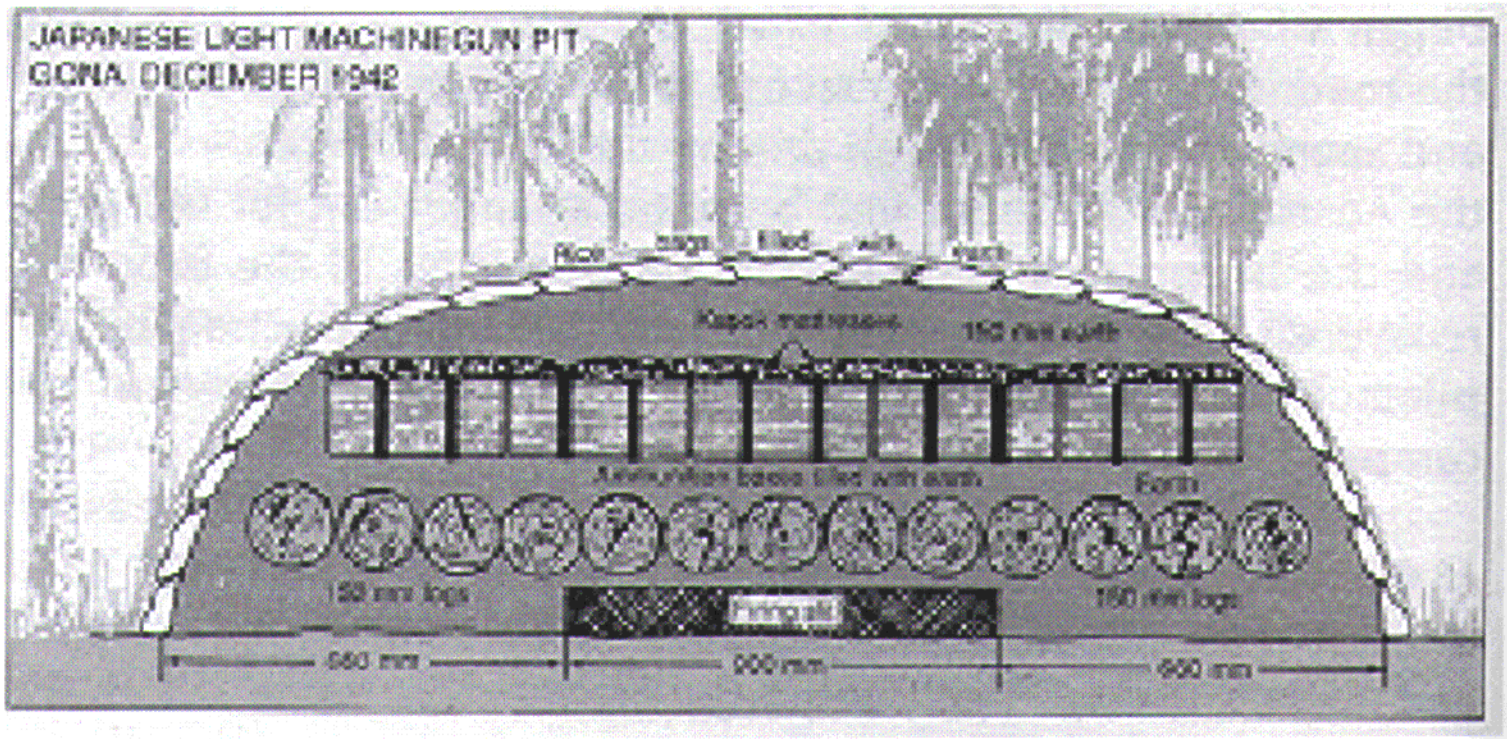


Figure 1 Japanese bunker schematic

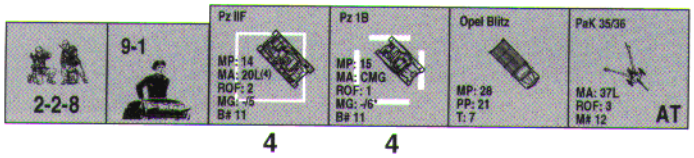
KELLER'S HEROES

PB-CH (D)

SET UP IS SIMULTANEOUS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BRITISH Moves First							

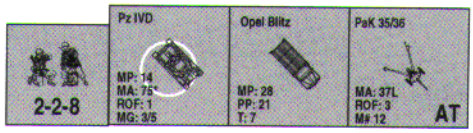
Elements of *Kampfgruppe Kruger*, 10th Panzer Division set up on/adjacent to road hexes 19N7 - 33A9, with at least one vehicle in either 19N7 or 19O8, and with the AT Gun in tow :

[ELR: 4]



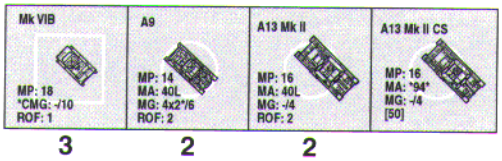
4 4

Reinforcements enter on turn two (with gun in tow and crew as PRC), along the south edge:



Elements of the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment set up on the road on/between 19R6 - 19FF5 with at least one vehicle in 19R6 :

[ELR: 3]

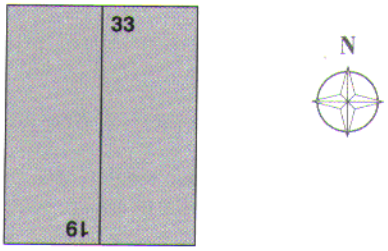


3 2 2

HANDICAPS (ABS):

G3: As for G2 and replace 1 x PzIIF with 1 x PzIIA.
G2: As for G1 and SR 5 applies only to German AFVs.
G1: Two British tanks are CMG Disabled at start.
B1: Two British AFVs are Radioless.
B2: As for B1 and A13IICS has HE Depletion #6.
B3: As for B2 and SR 5 applies only to British AFVs.

BOARD LAYOUT:

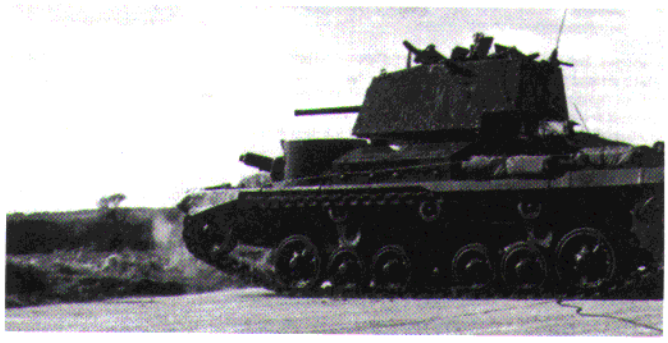


OBJECTIVES: The British must earn ≥ 20 CVP more than the Germans by game end. Both sides gain CVP normally for enemy units eliminated, and British AFVs with functioning MA also gain CVP for exiting the south edge on/between 33GG5-GG6.

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet; weather is Overcast, with no wind at start, with a Thick Mist in effect (which creates a special LV Hindrance of +1 DRM *for every 4 hexes of range*).
2. Set up is simultaneous, place a temporary screen between the two set up areas. There are no Woods hexes, treat as Orchards.
3. British A13II CS tank has HE Depletion #9 and unlimited Smoke. The British side must (secretly) note three of their AFVs as being CMG Disabled at start. If a MkVIB light tank is so noted, it retains its 6FP (12.7) CMG MA.
4. A truck without a Gun in tow or Passengers on board is Recalled.
5. For an AFV (or AFV Platoon) to leave its set up hex(es) during its Turn 1 MPh, it must first pass a NTC. There are no restrictions during later turns.

GUINES, FRANCE, 23 May 1940: When the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment arrived in Calais on the afternoon of the 22nd to reinforce the garrison, the tanks had to be unloaded by their crews using only the ship's crane, because dockside power was cut and the dock workers had fled from the bombing. Due to hasty embarkation, some tank radios had been left behind in England and many of the vehicular machine-guns were clogged with storage grease. Mechanics and crews spent the next 24 hours stripping and cleaning the weapons and ammunition. In the words of Lt. Quentin Carpendale it was 'a most extraordinary way to go to war'. Next morning, the 3rd RTR commander, Lt. Colonel Keller, was ordered to take all functioning tanks southwards and break through to St. Omer, despite having no information on the location or strength of the enemy. Keller obeyed, 'very much against his better judgement'. A little after midday and a few kilometers south, the leading British tank crews saw a column of vehicles parked under trees. So close to Calais, it was assumed they must be friendly, and swirling rain and mist made identification difficult. The troops of *Kampfgruppe Kruger* thought the same, and only when the first 3RTR light tank was 20 meters away did recognition belatedly occur. A surprised German officer hastily opened fire with his pistol at a startled British tank commander, who was standing exposed in the turret hatch. During 45 minutes of confused fighting at close range, 10th Panzer lost 5 tanks and 3 anti-tank guns, but in contrast to this, 3RTR lost 12 light and cruiser tanks, because their immobilized AFVs had to be abandoned. The depleted British unit withdrew to Calais and joined the defence of the town.



Original Design by David Longworth

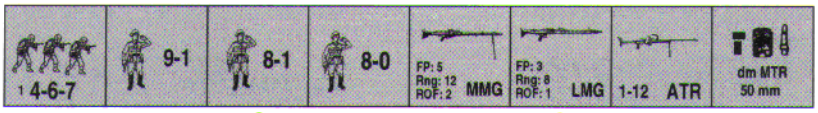
© 1998 Critical Hit!, Inc.

MORNING TRAFFIC

PB-CH (E)

GERMAN Sets up First / FRENCH Moves First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

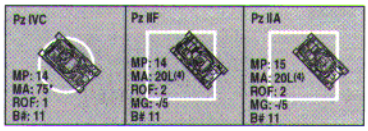
Elements of 1st Panzer Division set up on board 23 north of the river (EXC: as per SR 3):



13 2 3 2

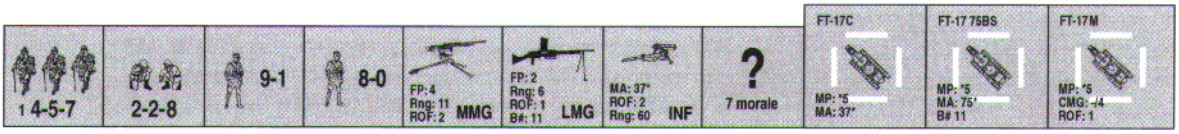
[ELR: 4]
{SAN: 3}

Enter along the north edge on turn two:



2

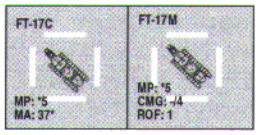
Elements of Amiens garrison and 4éme Division d'Infanterie Coloniale set up on board 33 (see SR 4):



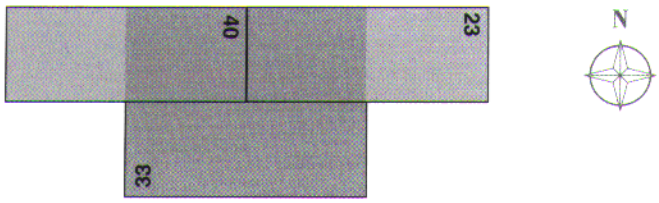
[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 3}

9 2 2 7

Enter along the south or east edge on turn two:



BOARD LAYOUT:



(Only hexrows A-P on board 40, R-GG on board 23 and B-FF on board 33 are playable)

OBJECTIVES: The Germans must Control any three of the following buildings at game end: 33P8, 33R4, 33R8 and 33S8. If *all* German AFVs are eliminated (ignoring Recall), the German must Control all four buildings.

HANDICAPS (ABS):

G3: As for G2 and delete 1x 4-6-7 German MMC.
G2: As for G1 and German AFVs expend 5 MP offboard prior to entry.
G1: Delete 1x German 50* MTR.
F1: Amend SR 3 to allow a SMC and/or SW to set up with the HIP squad.
F2: As for F1 and add an 8-1 armor leader to the German OB.
F3: As for F2 and French 37* INF has Low Ammo.

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, Weather is Clear with no wind at start. Note that Grain is in effect (despite the date).
2. A road exists between 40I1-I4, with a two-lane stone bridge in hexes 40I2-I3, (like both the bridges on Board 23). Prior to set up, each player (German first) places two Rubble counters onboard, in any building location of their choice on Board 23 (and check for Falling Rubble, if applicable).
3. One German squad (accompanied by *either* one SMC *or* one SW) may set up HIP on Board 23, south of the river.
4. French AFVs may set up in Motion. French OB given "?" counters may set up in non-concealment terrain.
5. Massacre/No Quarter cannot be invoked by either side.

AMIENS, FRANCE, 20 May 1940: The southern pincer of the German blitzkrieg attack on France had been racing steadily westward for a week. The sharp end of the pincer consisted of the three panzer divisions of *Panzerkorps* Guderian, being urged by their commanding general to drive for the coast, trusting follow-up infantry to care for the flanks. Wehrmacht HQ saw that the westward course lay parallel with the Somme river and ordered the bridges across it be secured. Early on May 20th, German units approached several crossings in and near the city of Amiens, shocking nearby Allied units into action (or gloom). After a softening up by the Luftwaffe, Amiens was attacked at 0845 hours by the 1st Panzer Division. Observed by General Guderian, the infantry and armor cleared the built up area by 1200 hours, leaving columns of prisoners and some wrecked FT-17s in their wake. Like other Allied units assumed to be behind the front line, neither of the two French divisions guarding the length of the Somme was fully deployed. Isolated French (and also British) units fought a brave but uncoordinated battle for control of this vital river town, but Guderian's troops proved able to brush aside the first French defenders and were able to expand the bridgehead 5 kilometers to the south.



Original Design by Les Kramer

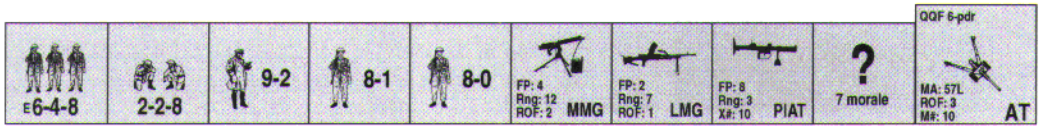
© 1998 Critical Hit!, Inc.

BEDLAM BRIDGE

PB-CH (F)

BRITISH Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5
GERMAN Moves First					

Elements of A Company, 2nd Parachute Battalion set up west of the I10-I9-J8-J6-I6-I1 road:



8 2 3 8

[ELR: 5]
{SAN: 5}

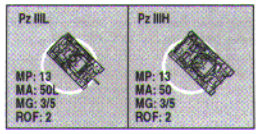
Elements of 9th SS-Panzer Division set up east of the I10-I9-J8-J6-I6-I1 road :



11 4

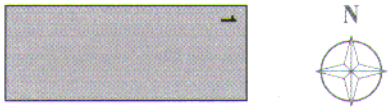
[ELR: 3]
{SAN: 3}

Elements of Panzer Training Battalion enter on hex 1A5 on turn one:



2

BOARD LAYOUT:



HANDICAPS (ABS):

B3: Both B1 and B2.
B2: British have only one Fortified Location.
B1: Delete 1x PIAT.
G1: Delete German MMG.
G2: Delete 1x German 5-4-8 MMC.
G3: Both G1 and G2.

OBJECTIVES: The Germans must earn ≥ 19 VP more than the British. Both sides earn CVP normally, plus for each building in the British set-up area that is German Controlled at game end, the Germans gain VP equal to the number of hexes they occupy.

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet, weather is Clear with no wind at start.
2. The British may Fortify three building Locations during set up. One British squad (and any SMC/SW in the same Location) may set up utilizing HIP.
3. British units suffer from Ammunition Shortage (A19.131).
4. Prior to set up, the British player places a rubble counter at ground level in each of four building hexes. A dr is made for each: if the result is 5-6, then an additional rubble counter of the same type may be placed in any hex adjacent to the original (but only two of these extra rubble counters may be created).

ARNHEM, HOLLAND, 19 September 1944: Lt. Colonel John Frost's small band of British 'paras' had seized the northern end of the road bridge over the Rhine, but were equipped to hold it only for 24 hours. At the start of the third day, their situation was grim. The Red Berets were short of everything except wounded men, and relief was nowhere in sight. Although they had given a bloody nose to the young grenadiers of 9th SS-Panzer near the bridge, there were few options left. During the late morning, a trio of Panzer IIIs drove into the perimeter from the east. The tanks seemed well aware of the position of the anti-tank guns and cleverly avoided them. They opened fire at close range on British-held houses near the bridge ramp, setting some alight, and forcing out the occupiers. Captain Tony Frank of A Company needed a quick solution... and nabbed a nearby Piat operator, then the two crawled into the rubble. After slipping into position behind a wall, they let fly with the LATW. The stricken Panzer III "didn't burn, but it didn't move again" either. The other two tanks cautiously backed away from the unseen threat. At the same time, the newly recruited grenadiers of 9th SS-Panzer were being 'trained on the job', as they infiltrated the buildings that the tanks had cleared. Before the Germans could consolidate their position, Lt. Andy McDermott briskly led 3rd Platoon back into the threatened houses, and threw out the new arrivals after a brief struggle. Hoping the exhausted 'paras' had reached the end of their tether the 9th SS-Panzer's commander, Obersturmfuhrer Heinz Harmel, offered a truce. He hoped to persuade Frost and his men to end the senseless struggle and give in; instead, they asked if the Germans wanted to go 'in the bag'.



Original Design by Paul Seage

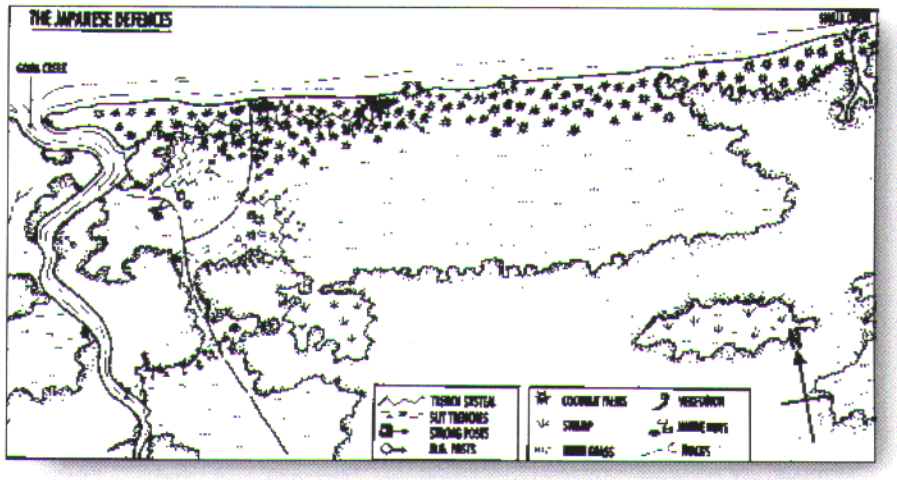
© 1998 Critical Hit!, Inc.

depth and stretching almost down to a small creek, 1200 meters to the east. Two trails met at the Mission, the coastal path and the Gona-Jumbora-Kokoda track (which roughly paralleled Gona Creek running southwards). A large area of jungle and scrub surrounded the Mission, but was split by a swamp area about 250 meters to the south east of the settlement. The eastern jungle mass was extensive, whilst the smaller western area abutted directly onto Gona Creek.

It was over this area, and with two months warning, that Lt.Col. Tomita established a fortified position for his 600-800 base troops. Tomita set out a mutually supporting fireplan of positions. In addition, he had kunai patches cleared to establish substantial killing zones, setting out ambush zones and concealed sniper positions. The defenders built a series of bunkers using coconut logs and sand bags. These bunkers were impervious to small arms fire and airbursts, with only direct hits from artillery or aerial bombing being able to destroy them. Bunkers were camouflaged with dirt and fast-growing vegetation, making the strongpoints hard to spot. Some bunkers also used the natural cover of Banyan tree roots, which grow high and thick around the huge trunk of the tree. *(see Figure 1)*

The defences were sited in three distinct areas. Using the creek as a barrier, the first positions stretched from the Creek mouth 150 meters along the east bank, and then eastwards into the coconut palms for some distance towards Small Creek. Slit trenches and a shallow trench system north of the Mission joined numerous machine-gun posts. The second area was an arc of positions around the southeastern and eastern sides of the Mission. The last set of positions spanned the area between the creek and the track leading into the Mission. All positions made good use of terrain, and were mutually supporting. In addition, the Japanese snipers made widespread use of palmtop sniper positions, which caused higher casualties amongst the junior leaders and Bren-gunners. *(see Map 2)*

The final decisive element in the battle at Gona was the role of Allied commanders and intelligence. The South West Pacific Area (SWPA) was commanded by General Douglas MacArthur, who had assumed command in Australia after his escape from Bataan. MacArthur had hoped for a US Army to be assembling in Australia to recapture the Philippines, and upon his arrival in Darwin had been bitterly disappointed. MacArthur's underlying objective was to gain sufficient forces to return in triumph to the Philippines, which proved difficult in the face of the "Europe first" philosophy in Washington D.C. Furthermore, he had to compete against the Central Pacific Area for scarce resources, which involved an extra level of inter-service competition. MacArthur needed some quick victories to show Washington in order to be given more forces.



Map 2 Japanese defensive positions at Gona

The General was therefore most disparaging about the Australian retreat from Kokoda, ignoring the circumstances of the units unlucky enough to be defending it. He did not enjoy flying, and therefore remained unfamiliar with the terrain in the Papuan mountains. In this he was not alone, the Australian High Command was similarly naive about ground conditions, as shown by their demands for wide flanking movements through the steep and rugged terrain.

Allied intelligence made two substantial errors in the Gona campaign. First was the well-founded belief that the Japanese Army could massively reinforce the Buna and Gona beachheads with up to

continued on page 28



Figure 3
Captain Clowes, centre, and his 2/33rd Battalion AIF patrol which found "AIF Malaya" items in Japanese huts at Gona.

20,000 troops from Rabaul (putting pressure on the frontline commanders to break through quickly). While the reinforcement scenario was possible, the Japanese had chosen to make Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands their top priority. The growing strength of Allied airpower was also making it increasingly difficult for the Japanese to move troops by sea. The difficuly the reinforcements experienced caused some to turn back.

The second error was to miscalculate the Japanese strength and fighting resolve. Allied intelligence woefully under-estimated the strength of the Gona and Buna garrisons. US troops jumping off to attack Buna expected to encounter just a platoon of sick Japanese. The discovery of fresh Japanese troops heightened the shock of the American's combat debut. Despite the experience of Gavutu-Tanambogo, Allied intelligence had little experience of the Japanese Army in defense. In fact, previous experience at Guadacanal and Gorari was that the Japanese had apparently broken and fled. There was an expectation that the Japanese forces at Gona and Buna, once surrounded and assaulted, would surrender. This had been the Australian experience in North Africa against the Italians, Vichy French, and more significantly, the Germans of the Afrika Korps. After each Papuan beach-head attack had been repulsed, the Allied High Command pressed for new assaults regardless of casualties, with the expectation that the surrender would come soon.

The opening phase

When the 25th Brigade crossed the Kumusi River on 15th November 1942, Brigadier Ken Eather commanded it, and it was composed of the 2/25th, 2/31st and 2/33rd Battalions AIF. Just prior to crossing the river, the three depleted AIF battalions of 25th Brigade totalled just over 1000 men of all ranks. About to be included in the 25th Brigade was the 3rd Battalion AMF, which had been blooded during the Kokoda Campaign.

On the 16th November, the Brigade set out down the trail to Gona that had been constructed by the Japanese, and included some drains and engineering work, stables and grain dumps. The 2/33rd Bn. took the van, followed by the 2/25th Bn and the 2/31st Bn bringing up the rear. The 3rd Bn was pursuing some 400 Japanese along the Kumusi, but were recalled to the 7th Division HQ to avoid problems of supply on the 17th November. Also, American bombers dropped 58 100-pound bombs over Gona.

At dawn on the 18th, alert Japanese sentries open fire on dark shapes approaching the shore at Gona. Alarmed by the recent landing south of Buna, Japanese commanders had warned troops about enemy



Figure 2
The panorama astride the track fronting Gona with the lone tree to the right in the middle distance



Figure 6 The 24 November air and artillery strike on Gona in the distance. Major Cotton (2/33rd Battalion 2IC) is seen on the track looking back.

Figure 5 A forward pit of Haddy's Post on the west bank of Gona Creek watching the Japanese at Gona

Supplies were not parachuted, they simply fell, and soft drop zones were preferred. Some loads fell amongst the 2/33rd while in combat, and other loads dropped amongst the Japanese. Only about 5% of the drop was recovered intact.

As the 2/31st Bn worked around the right flank, and commenced its attack along the coast at 1800 hrs, they were immediately hammered by heavy fire from the front and right flank. 14 Australians were killed including two company commanders, and 43 wounded including another company commander, and a further 8 missing, believed dead. The Battalion did reach the Japanese positions, but were unable to break into the fortifications, frustrating the attackers. They spent the night gathering wounded and forming a perimeter. 2/25th Bn was sent to help collect the wounded, and to form up for attack at dawn. The 2/31st Bn was now 187 strong, all ranks.

Haddy's unit, west of Gona, was having some success harassing the Japanese. The ChaForce men shot 10 Japanese on the path to the Creek, all sent to collect water. *(see Figure 5 and Map 3)*

On the 23rd November, Eather launched another assault against Gona. 2/25th Bn attacked from the east in a day-long effort. Intense fire halted the attack, costing 12 dead and 52 wounded. The 40 strong C Company, 2/33rd Battalion, attacked together with the combined A/D Company through the kunai from the south. Approaching close enough to see the Japanese defences, the attackers were too short of men and ammo to overwhelm the Japanese positions. That evening, Lt. Col. Buttrose combined B & C Companies under Lt. Cullen. The entire battalion moved back 600 meters to let air attacks in the next day.

After 5 days of intense combat, 25th Brigade had suffered 60 killed, 3 still missing and 141 wounded. The 17 officer casualties, about 10%, showed both the effectiveness of Japanese snipers, and the penalty for leading from the front. The entire brigade now totalled only 35 officers and 701 other ranks. 3rd Bn had finally arrived, and was moved to reinforce 2/33rd Bn. Eather knew he did not have the strength to attack again on the 24th, so he ordered harassing patrols and sporadic mortar bombardment. Six hours of air attack were also planned. Sixteen strafing runs were made, which harassed the Japanese but did no lasting damage. No other combat occurred this day. *(see figure 6)*



On the 24th, four 25-pounder artillery pieces of the 2/1st Field Regi-

continued on page 32



Figure 7 – A/D composite Company's H.Q. at Gona. The track can be seen in the background. Left from towards the track; Signaller N. Mulally, Lt. R.W. Cox, Ian Morrison (war correspondent), Cpl W. Mackay, Lt. K. Power, and Signaller D. Perrit, right front.

ment were manhandled into Dakotas and flown in to Popondetta. Assembled overnight, the battery was ready to fire in support on the 25th from positions at Soputa. With this addition to his arsenal, Eather sent the 3rd Battalion to attack Gona from the south west, supported by 60 rounds of artillery fire, and Vickers machine-guns firing support from the west bank of the creek. At Gona, like Gavutu and later Tarawa, the effect of preparatory bombardment on fortified Japanese positions was vastly over-rated. The 3rd Battalion got about 50 meters into the defences, but was forced back after 90 minutes. 3rd Bn noted many positions were newly constructed and difficult to destroy, but casualties were mercifully light.

In Port Moresby, General MacArthur met with General Blamey, the Allied Land Forces commander

continued on page 34

Figure 8 – Most of the troops of composite A/D Company 2/33rd Battalion AIF at Gona – Lieutenant Power in undershirt – withdrawn for a rest from the forward posts, while the November 24th air-strike is "called down"



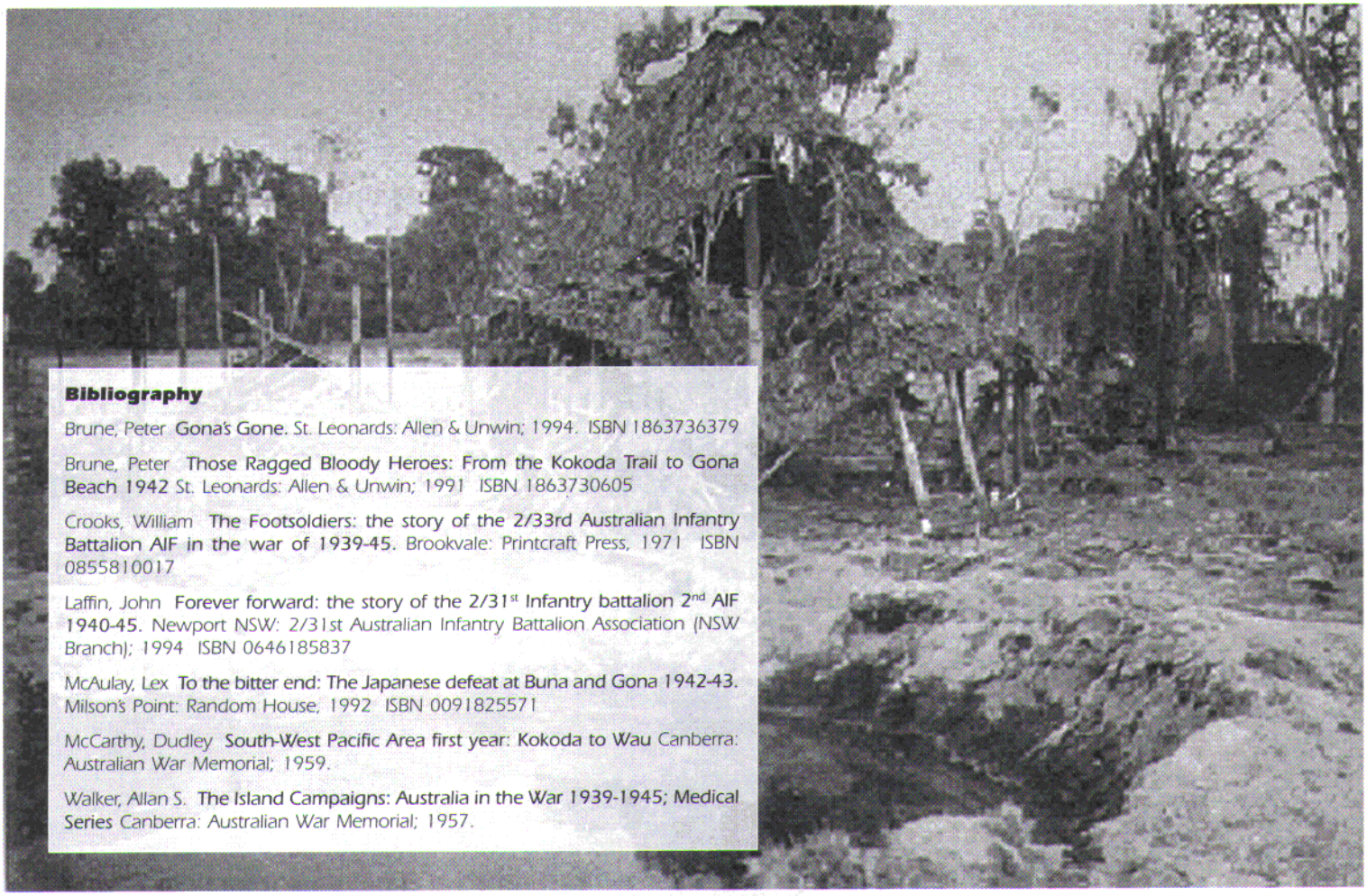
(and CinC of Australian Forces). Previously, MacArthur had humiliated Blamey with remarks about the poor results of the defenders of the Kokoda Trail (there is no doubt that initial Australian expectations had been over-optimistic). Now with the US troops of the 32nd Division having such a harsh baptism of fire at Buna, Australian observers were noting incompetent commanders and a lack of fighting spirit amongst the American troops. Blamey took a certain delight in demanding that Australian troops be sent to Gona and Buna, since he "knew they would fight". Consequently, the 21st Brigade AIF was assigned to take over at Gona, despite having not fully recovered after the losses of their part in the Kokoda campaign.

The 25th November also marks the moment when serious illness took hold of the 25th Brigade. The combination of malaria, long campaigning and the baking heat in the kunai, up to 50° Celsius (130° Fahrenheit), rapidly wasted the weakened 2/25th, 2/31st and 2/33rd Battalions. *(see figure 7)*

One final act remained for the worn-out 25th Brigade. The 26th of November was spent quietly until about 1700 hrs. Suddenly, Japanese small arms and mortar fire started lashing the kunai in front of the 2/33rd Bn., and with much shouting, the Japanese came forward through the tall grass, their bayonets held high enough to appear above the kunai. The combined A/D Company of 2/33rd Battalion had strength of 40 men, so Lt. Kevin Power tried bluffing. Standing on the parapet, he shouted "Come on you Jap bastards, we're waiting for you! Battalion, fix bayonets and prepare to charge!" This gave heart (and a few chuckles no doubt) to the handful of defenders, and the Japanese charge happened to veer to the right, where it was fired upon by units of the 2/25th Bn. The attack was halted there, and the Japanese withdrew in good order. *(see figure 8)*

The first phase of the assault on Gona had ended, and both sides now licked their wounds. While 21st Brigade arrived and moved into position, the 750 men of the IJA I/170 Regiment prepared to board destroyers at Rabaul, bound for Gona. ■

Figure 9
The shambles that was Gona after capture



Bibliography

Brune, Peter **Gona's Gone.** St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin; 1994. ISBN 1863736379

Brune, Peter **Those Ragged Bloody Heroes: From the Kokoda Trail to Gona Beach 1942** St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin; 1991 ISBN 1863730605

Crooks, William **The Footsoldiers: the story of the 2/33rd Australian Infantry Battalion AIF in the war of 1939-45.** Brookvale: Printcraft Press, 1971 ISBN 0855810017

Laffin, John **Forever forward: the story of the 2/31st Infantry battalion 2nd AIF 1940-45.** Newport NSW: 2/31st Australian Infantry Battalion Association (NSW Branch); 1994 ISBN 0646185837

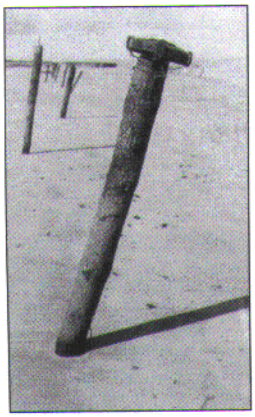
McAulay, Lex **To the bitter end: The Japanese defeat at Buna and Gona 1942-43.** Milson's Point: Random House, 1992 ISBN 0091825571

McCarthy, Dudley **South-West Pacific Area first year: Kokoda to Wau** Canberra: Australian War Memorial; 1959.

Walker, Allan S. **The Island Campaigns: Australia in the War 1939-1945; Medical Series** Canberra: Australian War Memorial; 1957.

DC PARTY

By Pedro Ramis



A Teller mine on a pole on Utah Beach.

Tetrahedron? That's Normandy without a doubt! The one big problem in designing a scenario featuring pre-landing engineer operations on D-Day was choosing a beach landing sector. Books about D-Day are numerous but often lack precision needed for ASL. A review of my past efforts spent searching for suitable actions in Normandy when Gung Ho was released did not bear any fruit either. When the 50th Anniversary of WW II rolled around, lots of new and reprinted books on the subject rolled off the printing presses. Among this new crop was a most interesting book about the sea-borne assault, *Breaching Fortress Europe*. This book is well researched and also analyzes older publications, such as *Omaha Beachhead* and contains reprints of vintage small scale maps of Omaha and Utah beaches. After reviewing the new crop of books, I chose five with the appropriate small-scale focus and began the next leg of the design project.

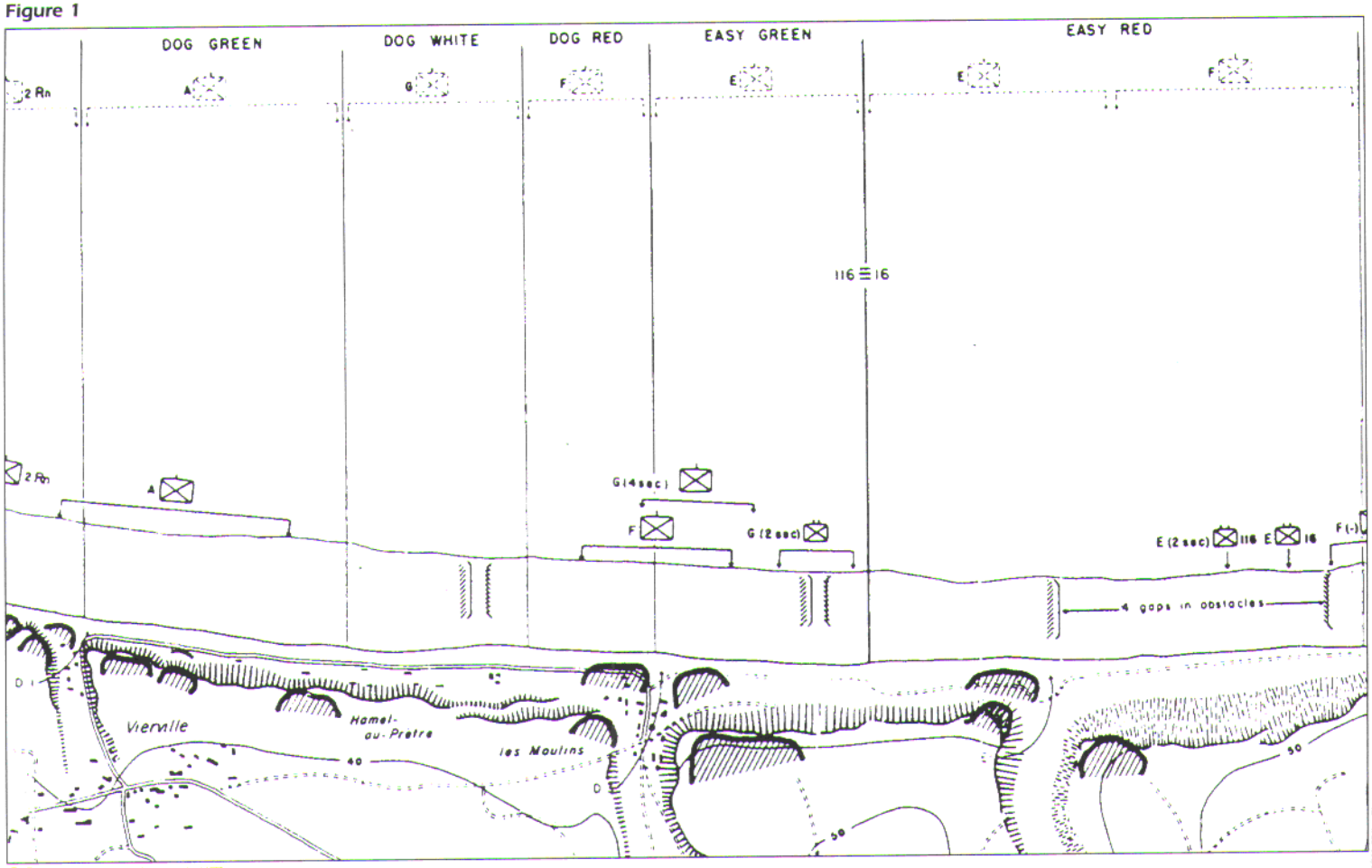
Choosing where to go...

My first choice was Dog Green and the Vierville "Draw" but beach obstacle clearance by specialized troops did not occur there. The map in *Omaha Beachhead* shows the first wave landing (figure 1) and offers three possible sites. Dog White seemed to the point and illustrates the intent of the design project nicely. A clear cut action, plus intermingled, pinned units and the lack of leadership as a challenge for the Americans.

Terrain

Depicting the large beach with a seawall, followed by a stretch of flat ground containing the coastal village of Hamel-au-Prêtre to the west was easy. The ruins of a few houses to the east was also easy. The most difficult was the cliff running parallel with the beach. The cliff averages 30 meters high (hence the double elevation change). Photos and after action reports clearly indicate that smoke was

Figure 1



wafting over from Hamel-au-Prêtre, located on the western end of Omaha. It is also evident that the wind blew from an easterly direction. (since the board layout cannot be placed to show true north, wind direction has been adjusted accordingly – see figure 2)

Beach obstacles were a bit tricky to illustrate and I did not want to add panjis to represent wooden stakes. I added the "roadblocks" with the appropriate SSR (these strange contraptions are called *Element Cointet* and were part of the Belgian defensive line "KW" in 1940. Linked together, these elements were an effective anti-tank barrier, but like minefields needed to be covered by infantry fire) and simplified for games' sake. (figure 3)

Let's take a look at the German defense as it relates to the terrain.

German Defense

A series of "resistance nests" (*Widerstandsneste* – abridged to WN in the German terminology) was established along the Atlantic wall between Dunkirk and Spain. Dog White was bordered by two of them. WN68 to the east (western lip of the Les Moulins draw – Dog Red – which was manned by part of the 10th coy/726 Inf Rgt) and to the west was WN70 at Le Hamel-Au-Prêtre (Dog Green). WN70 was manned by elements of the 11th coy of the 726 Inf. Rgt. (figure 4)

Both Widerstandsneste defended a nearby draw which gave easy vehicular access to the plateau. Both draws were opposite to Dog White. Thus, during the initial wave, the bulk of the defensive fire from these WN was directed towards these opposite draws. Only marginal firepower could be brought to bear on the engineers arriving on Dog White. The first two LCs (one which was promptly destroyed) disembarked only four squads. This meager force provided a poor target compared to the reinforced companies with armor support that poured onto the beach directly in front of the strongpoints.

Let's have a closer look at the armament of the WN

WN68 (figure 5)

- one 50mm AT gun in a concrete emplacement
- two Renault R-35 tank cupolas
- one 50mm AT gun awaiting the completion of its casemate
- two "Tobruks" (concrete foxholes) for MGs near the beach and one on top of the cliff
- one bunker defending the road to Saint-Laurent
- 12 MGs
- three 50mm mortars

WN70 (figure 6)

- one 75mm gun awaiting the construction of its bunker
- two 81mm mortars (probably French models)
- one 20mm Flak gun
- three MG emplacements (in trenches) with an unknown number of MGs.

I have only represented a small portion of these WNs on the map according to their facing and the probability of their usage against Dog White. Some additional troops are added to the WNs as some security platoons filled the gaps between them.

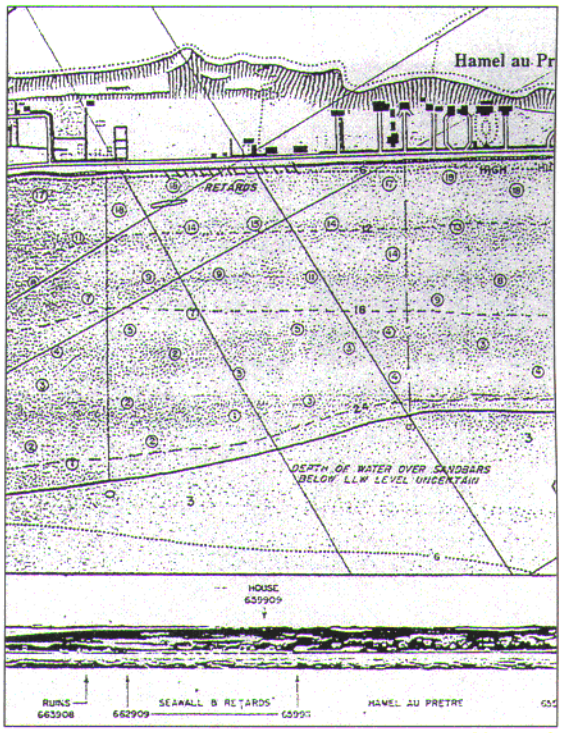


Figure 2

US Order of Battle

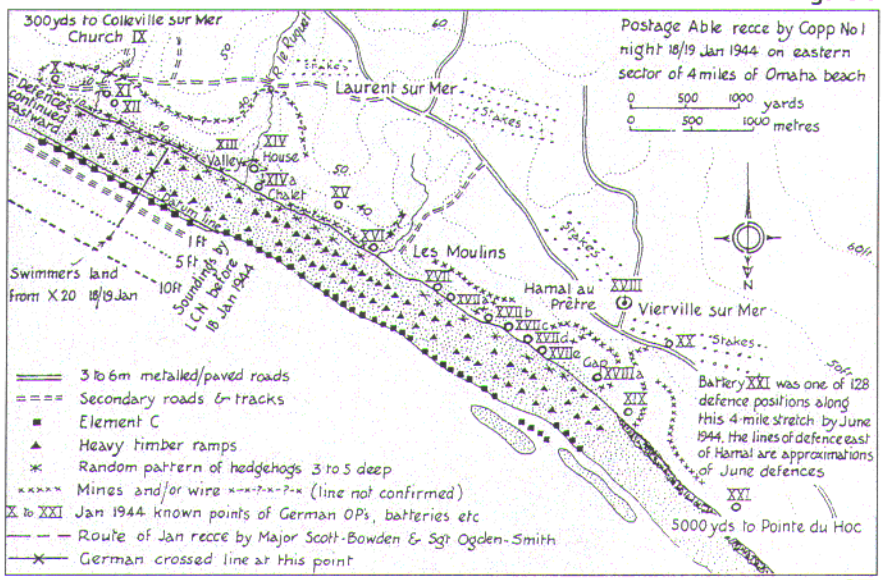
The US assault troops are few in number but diverge from the usual U.S. Army infantry structure in ways worth noting.

Tanks

The Sherman allotment is fairly normal. Apart from being DD, there is not much to say. These Shermans

continued on page 38

Figure 3



are survivors of the initial 16 landed at Dog Green. Later in the day there were a total of four, trying to destroy the 20mm Flak gun when Cota began his charge. Interestingly, a Sherman Dozer which survived the landing at Dog Red/Easy Green, enters play only via the U.S. Balance. As it had not survived long, it should become a priority target if it does enter play.

Engineers

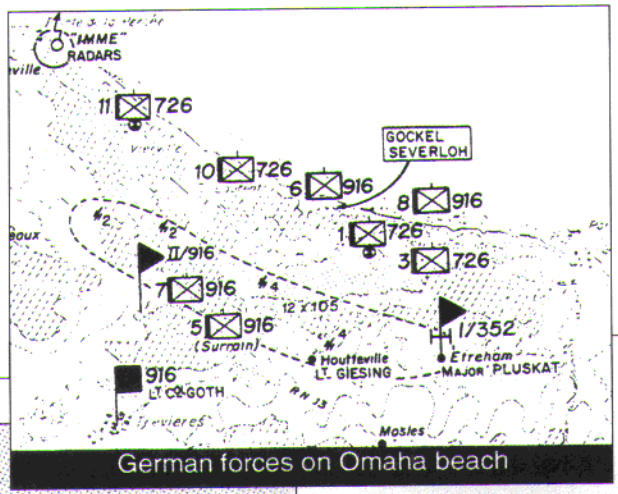
The Special Engineer Task Force was the third vital component of the initial assault along with the infantry teams and their armor support. Many histories concerning the Normandy invasion carry conflicting descriptions of the role and structure of the demolition teams, so a brief review is in order. The assignment called for the creation of clear lanes through the obstacles on the tidal flat. At high tide these obstacles were frequently referred to as "underwater obstacles". The demolition teams were made up of two parts, one Navy with an Army component and the second, a larger part which was an all-Army group. The Navy group was composed of five trained members of Naval Combat Demolition Units, three seamen for nonspecialized duties, and the five Army personnel from a combat engineer battalion, for a total of 13 men. The all-Army group was a 26-man team with a lieutenant in charge. The (LCM) had an adequate capacity to cope with the composite demolition team which came to 40 including a medic. Each of the craft were loaded with 1000 pounds of explosives, demolition accessories, mine detectors, and related engineer equipment.[1]

For game purposes I decided to let these forty men become 4 squads or 8 half-squads with Assault Engineer capabilities. (The smoke 5 will come in handy!) Army-Navy are personnel are mixed.

Infantry

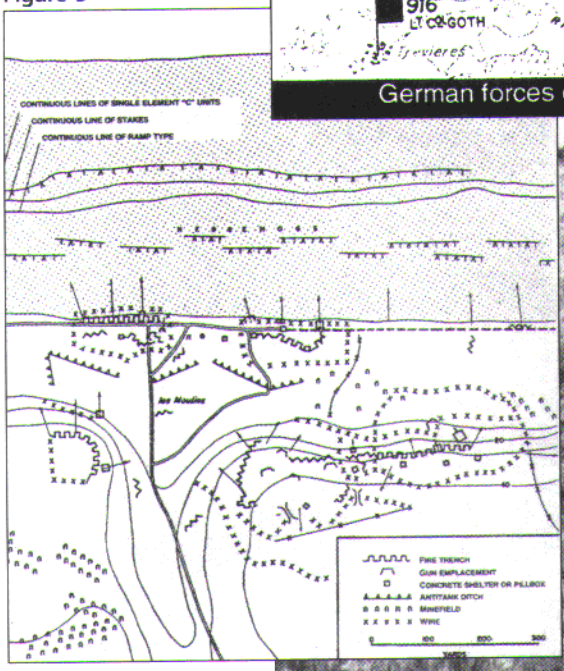
The very specific nature of a seaborne assault

Figure 4



German forces on Omaha beach

Figure 5





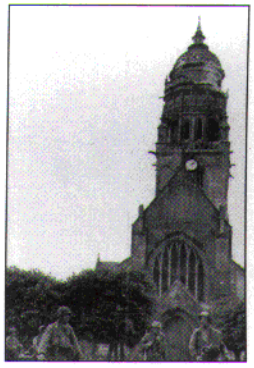
A German gun emplacement on the beaches of Le Grande Vey, France.

and the allotted space in the average landing craft led to a restructuring of the normal infantry company and its platoons into combat teams of 30 men (normal capacity of an LCVP). Difficulty arose when organizing the assault team. *The standard infantry platoon consisted of three 12-man squads plus a platoon leader and possibly several additional members. The new organization for the infantry assault team adjusted the number of troops to match the landing craft. It also redistributed the assets of the standard infantry company and added additional engineer-type capabilities. The revised 30-man structure comprised an 8-man Rifle section, 4-man BAR section, 4-man light mortar section, 4-man Bangalore Torpedo section, 4-man Bazooka section, 4-man Explosive section, and a 2-man Flamethrower section. A possible disadvantage was that the BAR was normally one per every 12-man squad. There are only two per 30-man units in this modified structure. New capabilities were integrated into a small infantry unit by the flamethrower, explosives, and bangalore torpedo sections. The bazooka and light mortar also placed in the team were from the standard infantry company and became immediately available to the small unit commander under the new structure.*[1]

Translated into ASL terms, these units can be represented by six HS and would normally be considered under strength. I chose to let them have elite status and combined them into three squads. Three such units are available in the 116th RCT OB. These troops originally landed in front of WN68. They reacted instinctively and shifted out of harms way the best they could. Thus, they entered Dog White sector.

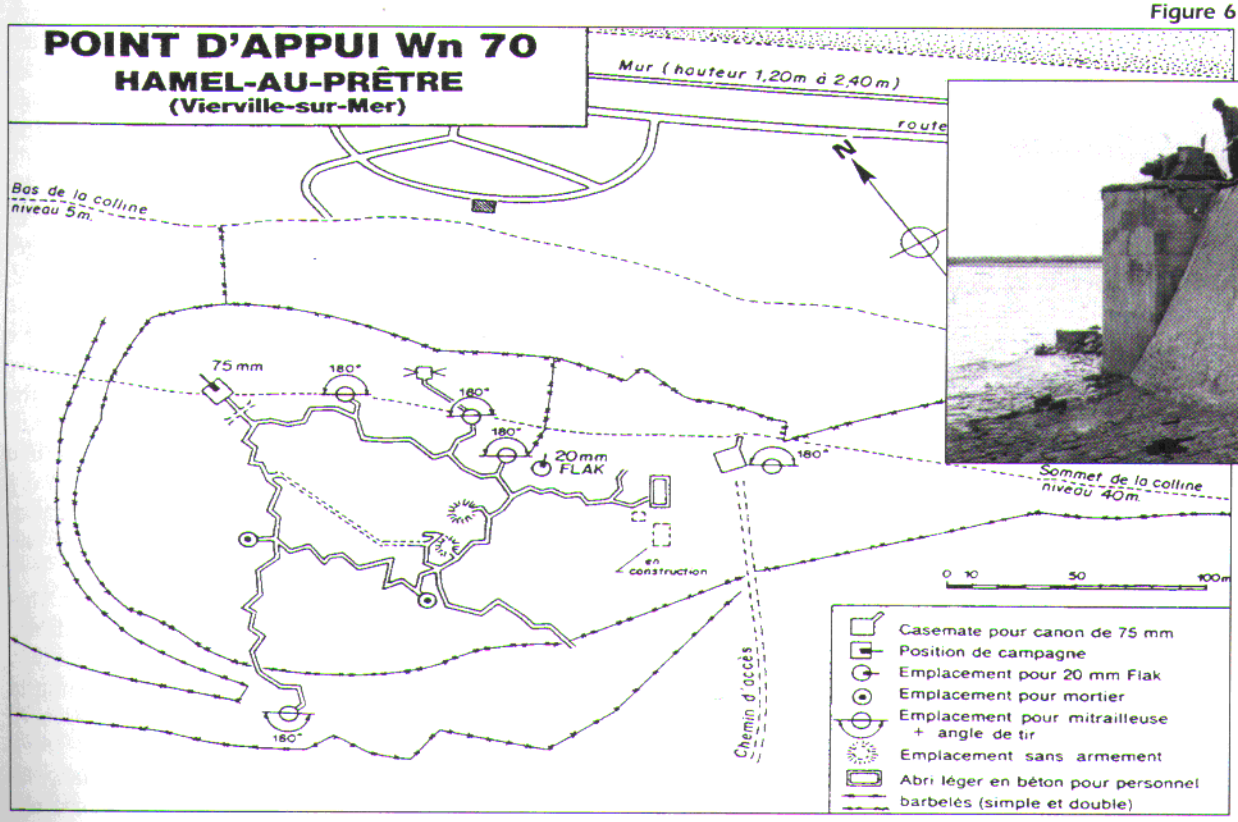
I added four SMCs, two of them Heroes, for leadership capabilities and for help in carrying the FTs. I didn't choose to make an educated guess for the probable loss of SWs and/or of manpower in the initial landing but simply provided a total of three teams. My reasoning was that more than that number of troops were in the area anyway and that 6-6-7 troops are the only reasonable troops to have in a D-Day seaborne assault (these aren't Marines, buster!). In the context of weapons, I imagined some players would probably drop their mortars instead of setting them up. As they used to say at a large hamburger chain in the USA, 'have it your way!' ■

1 Breaching Fortress Europe



Engineer troops of the U.S. Army walk past a ruined French church which was used as an enemy sniper post 24 hours previously, Utah Beach, Les Dunes de Madaleine, France.

Figure 6





A tank turret used for a machine gun position on the beaches of Le Grande Vey, France.

AUSSIE '98 PACK

From the Paddington Bears



PBP 21 Raiders Of The Chaco

By David Bishop

I have to admit that I enjoy quirky scenarios, you know what I mean – "Italians attacking in Russia," "Japanese Paratroopers," and naturally "Bulge battles with heaps of German tanks." So when I discovered a book that dealt with the Gran Chaco War of 1932-35, I just couldn't help myself, and had to make me a scenario. The fact that the war was a complete disaster for the aggressor only helped to stoke the furnace of fascination. It pits two unprepared armies against each other so the possible choice of ASL units to represent the nationalities involved was narrowed down to those in the system that could portray unreadiness to wage war. Other ingredients were the involvement of European advisers, World War I style trenches and automatic weapons.

I chose the Chinese counter-mix for my Bolivian OB since they had the right combination of foreign weaponry and under-trained troops. The Paraguayans needed to be represented as low on equipment but with a better will to fight. Though not 8 Morale material, they were not wimps either. Sifting through my counter trays I settled on Axis Minor as the SW could reflect the quality supplied by dealers in second-hand arms.

Initial play testing was quite skewed, since the *Bolis* tended to get the upper hand if their MMGs found targets in the opening, and when their artillery opened up on the *Paras*, it was "don't cry for me Argentina." So Dave Wilson and I re-jigged the Paraguayans, allowing them to take advantage of the range of their HMGs by giving them a deeper defence set up zone [plus in the first version, they only had half their MF allowance on Turn 1]. We tested afresh and it seemed to be able to swing both ways! Final tuning was on the required CVP target.

Our (Paddington Bears Pack) scenarios are numbered as PBP# to avoid possible confusion with the TAHGC Pegasus Bridge scenarios.

Bibliography

The Chaco War, Bolivia-Paraguay 1932-35
by Bruce Farcau
Small Wars You May Have Missed
by Andrew Graham-Youll

I recommend the (aptly named) *Small Wars...* covering the conflicts in Central and South America during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Suggestions

Paraguayan (Axis Minor): The fortifications and border-post are fixed in place by SSR, with only a tiny choice of the trench placement (personal option, one on the hill and one on ground level). The task for the Paraguayan is less glamorous but easier to grasp than his opponent's, *hold out to the last building, bullet and HS.* Cling to the fortifications as long as possible (and use the reinforcements to counterattack if the enemy is silly enough to abandon them once captured).

Make use of the superior squad range when possible and don't waste your HMGs. These beasts can rule the infantry battle, by hurting the enemy time and time again, so make sure they do! It is also essential to avoid units being taken prisoner, because those extra CVP for the enemy will hurt you badly. The *Paras* have the metal and mettle to hold on (and with steady play they can be in this all the way).

Bolivian (Chinese): The attacker would be my choice for a fun time (true in almost any game). In this, you have wagon drawn guns that must get into action ASAP if they are to play a decisive role, which can mean the "gallop" option or even the "move in the open" option, both of which can give your opponent a thrill if he has LOS. Then we have the *Boli* cavalry, the closest thing to an AFV in the game. These swift suckers should be used to outflank the defence at the first opportunity, and then they can get down to some serious kindling. Wasting these units in a frontal attack would be disastrous, as the *Bolis* will need every MMC they can muster for the end-game.

Now to the role of the Bolivian 3-3-7 grunts. This horde of expendable chaps must clear the defensive positions if their side is to win. The Paraguayan HMGs will soon make you know the meaning of being afraid. *Taking control of the trenches, roadblock and border-post is compulsory* (for the CVP). Don't waste your units in an impetuous rush. Get into position gradually and then pounce decisively.



PBP 22 Morire In Belleza

By Gordon McClelland

Avanti, Popolo! At last, a chance for Italian military honour to be vindicated. Why is it that the Germans seem capable of producing endless elite units, all apparently led by supermen? Could it be that Aryan supremacy is not a myth or is it just Good PR (or at least lack of bad press) that is the essential ingredient? Surely the other Axis peoples on occasion managed to produce an outstanding biological and spiritual specimen. Thus the task at hand was clear – to find such a Man. Easier written than done as it turned out, though once found, he became the inspiration for *Morire In Belleza*.

For this scenario, the "major" Italian advantage is self-explanatory, outstanding leadership, as above. Equally important, the attacker has the heights above the town and a heavy weapon to take advantage of it. The Italian player will find his counters representing the equipment of the assault engineers will be in mint condition. In this scenario, they must be used continually – dice willing!

Having studied the numerous attacking force, the Yugoslav player may feel like surrendering, but better still take a good look at what is available to keep the enemy off the hill. Obviously, that big pesky mortar on the mountain will influence the defensive set-up. Those Yugoslav artillery pieces have a fair chance of replicating history (and reducing the Italian player to tears if they can hammer the *numero uno*).

At the SAGA tournament, players voted with their (FT loving) hearts when bidding for sides, making an 88% pick rate for the Italians. The value of carefully conserving Smoke for the Italian 81* MTR until it was really needed was perhaps the most notable feature of tournament play. Not only had players voted with their hearts but also their heads as the Italians chalked up a 75% win rate. Since then, suitable modifications have subsequently been made to both the OBs and the ABS.

Bibliography

A book entitled *Mussolini As Empire Builder* provided most of the background information. *Hollow Legions* and *Purnell's – History of the Second World War* the rest.

Suggestions

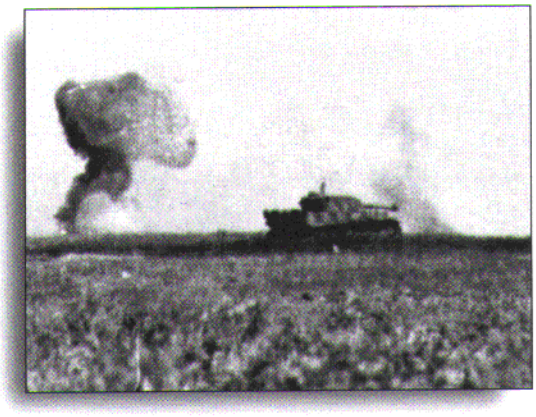
Yugoslavian (Allied Minor): The Yugoslav player has several important decisions to make, namely where are the heavy weapons going to set up in relation to the wire barrier (which is north of the road by SSR) and the all important Hill 497. The Italian 81* MTR will make life hell for units in its LOS, so add that to the equation. The wire can't go in a building hex, so use it in a continuous string to block your central woods or the open left flank. The units in the front line must be concealed when possible. Stretch the life of your dummies and HIP unit/s as long as possible too, because the less you reveal the more the enemy has to guess (and he might guess wrong). A forward screen of units will be needed to slow the attacker, but have their fall-back positions planned.

Think of the lateral road and the face of the hill as a prime killing-zone to be defended by at least one of the guns and the MGs. The HMG and MMG must be kept in action (you need their FP too much to hide them), initially positioned to cover the wire (and/or other possible breakthrough points) which can funnel the attacker into their LOS.

Italian: Your opponent will try to funnel your approach to the hill with the wire barrier, but the terrain means his front-line force cannot be strong everywhere. Pick your spot and give it everything, numbers will prevail. Even the threat of annihilation by AFPh attacks from 10-2 MG stacks and FTs should clear the way. Since you have DCs in reserve, use the flamethrowers like they were intended (but of course the enemy will definitely pick on anybody carrying a flamer).

Conscripts and any unconcealed units are ripe for a serve of HE from the big mortar (which from high on Board 15 will have LOS to many of the hexes aound the hill that the Yugoslavs will want to defend). Because the enemy screening units won't hang on for long, don't bother with MTR Smoke until your units need to either cross the lateral road or climb the hill.

continued on page 42



PBP 23 Panzerkeil

By Gordon McClelland

At the time I designed this Kursk scenario, that was my favourite period/location of World War II action. The Soviet forces were full of hope after their first major victory of the conflict at Stalingrad, while the Germans were still optimistic that their new weapons and ideologically motivated soldiers were equal to the huge task at hand. If Prokhorovka was the climax of the Kursk campaign, what happened in the week leading up to that monumental battle? The situation in the scenario depicts an encounter during the opening of *Zitadelle*. Dug-in Russians with the lie of the land as their ally, the benefit of some special capabilities, concealed set-up possibilities and fortifications are an attractive defensive package. Conversely, the good leadership, concentrated AFV deployment, OBA and mechanised elite infantry, all bode well for the attacker.

Playtesting, when conducted with the able assistance of Matt Brennan, indicated that this was a relatively balanced contest. Actual tournament play was further proof. Played first at a Sydney tournament as the deciding game of a six-round event, the split was 50-50. Similarly when resurrected to fill a gap in my arsenal for the 1997 Sydney tournament, I summoned this chestnut as the climactic round. And it again proved to be a well-balanced game. The championship deciding game between two gnarled veterans (Snake-eyes Seage vs. Boxcars Bishop) was decided on the last turn when a Tiger's start-up DR jammed its gearbox on a double-six roll (from guess who).

Bibliography

Citadel, The Battle Of Kursk
by Robin Cross
Scorched Earth
by Paul Carell
Kursk
by Bruce Clark

Suggestions

Russian: It is a given that the defender in this scenario needs a solid setup (on the other hand, even a bad setup will look about the same, since so much will be HIP or concealed). The OBA and plentiful German MG firepower makes frontal defence a low-odds proposition. Have at least two of your guns in "reverse slope" positions where side shots may eventuate. Remember that the Germans could go over hills as well as around them, but there are natural "choke points". Place the Trenches in a connected string to block halftracks from blitzing through (and even tanks check for Bog). Don't neglect to set some traps with your FT/DC/ATR/MOL equipped grunts.

When the speedy T-34s enter, use the walls, gullies and grain to try all three in a charge at a lone Tiger, keeping out of TCA and using BFF APCR (Panzer IVs are less of a challenge). The Russkis essential objective is to immobilise or eliminate seven German tanks, and a good basis to accomplish that from is to have at least two of the AT guns and two T-34s still in action on/north of the hill mass on Turn 6.

German: In reality, the ruthless Nazis must be willing to sacrifice all their infantry and some AFVs for a clear run at the goal-line for 3 Tigers and an A/L (or 2 Tiggers, an A/L and a Panzer etc). A lone tank is a dead tank as the saying goes, so keep the tanks in cooperative formation and range (as in a panzer wedge).

Use your halftracks and infantry aggressively to overwhelm the Russki squads and gun crews, since the VC give priority to the panzers. Don't expect magic from your OBA, you will need to move the OP tank as often as spot targets, but the timely threat of an FFE will keep the Commie squads and crews honest (enough).

Mechanical Unreliability makes stopping and starting a Tiger a heart-stopping experience, so plan ahead and avoid being totally dependent on those big cats.



PBP 24 Gurkhas and Grants

By Jamie Westlake and Andrew Rogers

This scenario was put together for the 1998 CANCON ASL tournament after the TD Andrew

continued on page 44

Rogers asked me for a competition sized Gurkhas vs. Japs game. After six weeks of scouting through all the Burma-India books I could from four libraries, I dug up a gem *Imphal – A Flower On Lofty Heights* (by one of the British commanders), which basically does for Imphal what *Enemy At The Gates* does for Stalingrad. It gives great detail to the actions described and provides OBs for both sides. This terrific book helped me "narrow down" to the thirty situations worth developing into scenarios.

The action was chosen because of the specific reference in the text to Grants charging across the rice paddies, vehicular dust (now in the balances), the captured 2-pounder gun – all interesting stuff. For playability, the barbed-wire fences on the Stoumont map section are not in play, but historically they were present (hence the map choice). In tournament play, this game came out very well (and very enjoyable).

The Black Cat and White Tiger divisions were to cross each other's paths violently for the next six weeks. Players will recall the excellent ASL Annual scenario *White Tigers* occurred in the same village, which was predominantly built of mud-bricks – hence the stone buildings and rubble validly present in *Ghurkhas And Grants*.

Bibliography

Imphal – A Flower On Lofty Heights
by Lt-Gen. Sir Geoffrey Evans and Antony Brett-James
Burma The Longest War
by Louis Allen

Suggestions

Japanese: The random rubble placement changes the landscape for each playing, but you need to decide what you are going to hold to the death and what can be gradually conceded. Taking the victory conditions into account plot, where your final "safety zone" must be. The AT guns will want to dominate the paddy approaches, in the best TEM they can find (and the MGs must support them). Don't forget the "free" 10% HIP allowance.

Unless the tanks charge over the paddies early on, inviting belly hits, your best bet is to keep the AT guns mysteriously HIP and use the 50* MTR on them (don't laugh – I took out two Grants in one fire phase).

Once the Gurkhas get close, shoot them with everything to avoid or delay the attrition that will occur in HtH CC with them.

Gurkha (British): You have enough troops to spread out on a broad front in this one (and steadily advance through the paddies). Naturally some will be broken so have leaders following up to rally them. Your squads are more than a match for any Japanese MMC, so don't waste time PrepFiring (draw your kukris and go for CC ASAP).
The tanks (in ASL reality) are expendable, but make sure you get some Smoke/HE/MG benefits from them first.



PBP 25 First and Inches

By Andrew Rogers

By March 1945, the Second World War was effectively over for the Nazi regime. Only the elite and the diehards offered real resistance to the final offensive by the Allied armies in the west (with the east a very different story). Along the Western front, British and US forces swept almost unimpeded into Germany, as the Wehrmacht military machine completely disintegrated (many Germans surrendered after offering token resistance).

In a handful of places the Germans held off the Allied advance. In even fewer areas, successful counterattacks were launched. This scenario attempt to recreate the encounter at Uttweiler, a town just inside the German border, where one of those counterattacks occurred. The US Seventh Army, along with the Third Army were attempting to capture the Saar-Palatinate, an area containing much rugged terrain. A key road ran through Uttweiler, giving the town a strategic importance. A battalion from the 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division moved forward to capture the town. Unfortunately, their armoured support became stuck in a dense minefield. The 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, little more than a battalion themselves, took advantage of the situation and counterattacked soon after the Americans entered the town. The US infantry battalion, now surrounded by the feared SS and by flakwagons and assault guns, called for help.

Bibliography

The Last Offensive
by Charles B. McDonald
Hitlers Legions
by Samuel Mitcham

Suggestions

American: Your initial force is there to both impede the SS advance and to hopefully live long enough to join the counterattack. The American player must try to preserve existing forces and then push the Germans back to the edge of the town with the numerical advantage of the reserves. Some of your start up forces will die fighting the good fight. 20Z7 should only fall to a lucky DR or gacked MC.

Therefore, defend it with the 7-morale boys, the MMG and even the 9-1 leader. Place a couple of squads in 20Z2 and arm them with the bazooka. This should deter the Wirblie from approaching the large building alone.

In order to successfully counterattack, US reinforcements must attempt to outflank the Germans. Place three squad equivalents on halftracks and/or the M18 and send them down either board 19 or 42. Use the 90L guns from the M36s to knock out any Germans in 20Z2 and 20Z7. The 9-1 A/L could even consider having a stand-up fight with the flakpanzer, however the StuGs are another matter. Be wary of the long LOS possible from the roads running diagonally north-south on board 20. Two stacks of infantry, with the machine guns and –1 leaders, can manoeuvre concealed up the middle of Board 20. Once correctly positioned, their massive firepower should force the Germans back towards the northern most buildings. Use of your combined arms advantages, with mobile bazooka-armed infantry and high ROF tank-destroyers should eventually counter the German armour. Once this occurs, your infantry can deal with the northern most buildings. Remember, the VP are only accumulated at the end of *your turn.*

German: Essentially, the German clear the buildings Z2, EE4, EE5, CC7, Z7, FF6 on board 20 and hold them for as long as possible. Other stone buildings further south can be reached early on, but will be impossible to hold (but of course every VP counts). VP are accumulated for each Board 20 stone building (adjacent to a road) at the end of each game turn. These victory conditions attempt to recreate the need for the Germans to aggressively dislodge the existing US forces from the town and then hold it for as long as possible in order to delay the US advance through this key area. The restrictions on the at start US force may give you the choice of rolling them up early on or bypassing them to gain VP further down the map.

In order to win the Germans must first capture the four closest VP buildings plus 20Z2 and/or Z7. For security, they must also aggressively clear building 20CC7. 20Z7 can be captured on the second turn if German firepower breaks any American MMC in the front of the building. Have a half-squad ready to leap into this building, preferably supported by smoke lobbed onto the road in hex 20AA7. Alternatively, a coordinated assault on building 20Z2, with the orchards masking your 8-morale troops, could be considered.

Some attackers (and especially the MMG) should move to locations that have LOS to/across the approach routes of the US reinforcements. Prior to each turn pland the desired end position of your AFVs. After Turn 2 it will be difficult to move your armoured support without exposing them to the deadly US tank destroyers. Of critical importance is the position of the Wirbelwind. 20EE6 is useful because it provides covering fire over three of the key locations.

Two other factors need to be considered by the Germans. Firstly, their flanks, the areas around buildings 20EE1 and EE9, are vulnerable to a swift US attack by mounted infantry, and must be covered. Secondly, position German troops after Turn 2 so that many of them can gain concealment, since the US will soon have a distinct FP advantage.



PBP 26 Steamrollers

By Gordon McClelland

This idea was prompted by thinking about how the Russians, having swept through Eastern Europe and put Berlin under threat, must have been a little surprised when in early 1945 they found themselves under attack. The Germans (under a Fuhrer Order of the most futile kind) had placed some of their best troops far to the south-east trying to recapture Budapest. The scenario here is intended to recreate the Russians regaining their balance and launching a devastating riposte.

One of the most interesting things for me is that in 1945 the Red Army is attacking with quality units, which does seem to be a rarity in ASL scenarios. The Russians have plenty of tanks, most of them powerful. The Russian infantry is well led and has an extra sting with the availability of captured German AT weaponry (but of course they will need to get close to have any chance of hitting). On the other hand the Germans have two magnificent mobile pillboxes and some limited infantry support. The infantry have the job of protecting the panzer pillboxes and it is of course 1945 – the happy time for Panzerfausts.

It became immediately apparent during playtesting and tournament play that for the Russian it must be "pedal to the metal" if they are to achieve victory. With mud in effect the roads are crucial to this (an attacker who delays will be lost). Conversely, the German must position his troops so that they do not have to move too often. For the Tiger IIs this should almost read "not at all". A King Tiger attempting to move in the mud is not a pretty sight because it is slow and such an easy target to hit.

continued on page 46

Bibliography

The Road To Berlin
by John Erickson
The Red Army Order Of Battle
by Poirrier & Conner

Soldiers Of Destruction was the major source for the design of this scenario, and is a history of the major SS divisions. *Hitler's Generals And Their Battles* edited by Shelford Bidwell and also *War Maps* by Simon Goodenough were additional sources.

Suggestions

Russian: The Russkis have a tough road to run in 7 turns, but keeping to the rules of combined-arms warfare will get them at least halfway there (and so will thinking clearly about the victory condition).

Use the seven AFVs to move your seven squads quickly forward on one flank or the other (since the centre is too exposed for an infantry assault); then concentrate the attack of the heavy AFVs on one part of the German (AFV) defence until at least one Russian tank (such as a T-34) can break through to the end-zone to harrass/disrupt the enemy infantry (who the 6-2-8s should be there to deal with by then, especially within the critical 2 hex radius of 42G4).

Note: A King Tiger and an IS-2m are equally deadly to each other with a turret hit, equally feeble with a hull hit. The ISU-122s have only their guns for real protection, their armour is weak in 1945. Russian AFVs can never ignore German infantry with PSK/PFs.

German: The fascist swine start with fewer AFVs and fewer MMC (though quality is not a problem), so allowing attrition in equal measure is a way to lose this for the Germans. Set up to dominate those paved roads, the Russian has no choice about using them to arrive in time.

Keep your tanks on or as near to a road as practical since off-road movement risks a muddy fate (and an easier kill for the enemy). After the Russian approach is known, plan to build a small infantry 'hedgehog' in/around 42G4, supported by the Pz IV (if it still exists).

Note: An IS-2m and a King Tiger are equally deadly to each other with a turret hit, equally feeble with a hull hit. The Jagdpanther has only its gun for real protection, its armour is not tough enough in 1945. German AFVs cannot ignore PSK/PF equipped enemy infantry.

PBP 27 — Evening Rush Hour

By Gordon McClelland

After being stopped on the Argenta river line, the British advance resumed decisively in April 1945. The Allied Armies in Italy, after having spent two years fighting in the mountains were undoubtedly happy to get out onto flat terrain again. This scenario was designed to reflect this new



situation and in particular the meeting engagement of reconnaissance elements from both sides, and rear echelon units.

The most interesting characteristics for the British are leadership and mobility. The Stuart V is a great tank in this sort of situation with its combination of MG firepower and speed. Similarly, the Bren Carriers can prove of value in being able to get their HS crews to the scene (probably) uninjured, since they are hard to hit and there is very limited infantry firepower arrayed against them.

The Germans have the heavy HE power of the two StuG 105s, and with their HEAT ammunition they also have the potential to deal with the Stuarts. The AP (and ROF) of the 37L AA gun also should prevent a reckless British rush onto the bridge. Despite having only 4-5 HS, they again have that deadly 1945 Panzerfaust advantage.

I always find small, mobile scenarios to be among the most enjoyable of ASL experiences where players have to use every available weapon and the positioning of even a halfsquad can be crucial. So it proved in this case, with playings generally involving a sharp scrap amongst the buildings south of the bridge followed by a desperate rush across the river. During tournament play it also produced one of those glorious "cardboard war stories" when a 9-2 British leader was KIAed in the open by a hit & run from an unarmed Kubelwagen (the imagined scene of a speeding dust-covered Volkswagen, and then a swinging door bowling over the hapless officer still lingers vividly). Those who are fixated on the use of Panthers may not be so easily amused, but this scenario rewards ingenuity.

Bibliography

The Italian Campaign
by John Strawson
Purnell's History of the Second World War
War Maps
by Simon Goodenough

Suggestions

German: Probably your best weapon is the 37L AA, it can set up in a hill location dominating the bridge and the approaches to it (but remember the restrictions on firing to lower elevation). Knowing the Stuarts can't travel too far on Turn 1 (and fearing their MGs and Canister), the German player must ensure that the screen of HS on Board 22 are

defending where they interfere with British movement the most, south of the river.

On Turn 2, your AFVs will be able to defend the bridge (make certain one or more is across it). If you interdict 8Y1 with the SPW251/10, then at least one Stuart has to stalk it (and takes pressure off the StuGs). Naturally it is essential to get some infantry (such as the Kubelwagen Passengers) over the river, in case the pesky Carrier halfsquads make it that far (and some probably will). Don't forget the gun crew in the end-game (if it still is upright).

British: Probably the first thing you thought was... if I have two SMC, where are the MMC? From the perspective of "normal scenarios", having five HS each is not much to work with (but since a single tank may be all you need, having infantry is gravy). Love those Stuarts, best light tank in the Game. Note that the speed of the Carriers allows them to travel quite a few stream (or bypass) hexes in a turn, avoiding the beady LOS of the enemy AA gun. There are some good HD positions from which a Stuart could duel with the 37L. Clear all enemy AFVs from south of the river before you cross in force, (even leaving unbroken MMC behind could prove a nuisance). Remember also, a BU Stuart can drive into a building, a Carrier cannot.

Since PIATs can be fired by a solo SMC, regard your 9 ML leaders as tank-hunters if needed (and a PIAT can attack infantry in buildings too, and guns, and has no backblast).



PBP 28 Peningkibaru Push

Notes by Paul Haseler *By Derek Ward*

As part of the process of strangling the Japanese war economy (and also as part of being restricted to a PTO side-show), Australian units began an amphibious campaign in 1945 to seize the oilfields of the Dutch East Indies. Offshore from Borneo was the island of Tarakan, oil-rich but also thickly jungled and by May 1945, heavily fortified. The Australian 9th Division (veterans of Tobruk, El Alamein and New Guinea) were to make the assault and then clear the island. Given the limited naval gunnery support available, the landings went well, but the difficult terrain and the dogged defenders slowed the advance from the beach. The Japanese flooded ditches with oil, igniting them with gunfire; they mined wherever they could to restrict the Aussie armour; they did not surrender. On the left of the advance was the village of Peningkibaru, which linked two tactically useful fortified ridges near the airfield, and had a defensive belt of mines in front of bunkers and trenches. The 2/24th Battalion had to try, try again to crack that P. nut. After the main defensive positions were cleared by the Diggers, the Japanese retired into the dense Tarakan jungle and held out there for many weeks.

This scenario has a couple of interesting features: the uncertainty of a dr to see who moves first, both sides enter and must go on the attack, and it has Matildas in action against the wily Nihon-jin. *Peningkibaru Push* is a part of Derek Ward's work on a Borneo Pack: which consists of 1945 Aussie vs. Japanese scenarios (which are being playtested in Australia now, and hopefully should be published in 1999).

Bibliography

The Final Campaigns
by Gavin Long (Official History)
Tarakan – An Australian Tragedy
by Peter Brune

Suggestions

Japanese: The Japanese 'defender' sets up the fortifications and gun first, then rolls to see who gets to move first. The pillbox is not only worth 3 VP but also is good terrain to defend, as it will mostly withstand the 75mm HE of the Matilda CS. The mines are not a surprise for the Aussies so you need to use them to act as a barrier to the Aussie infantry (and if you get real lucky, a tank might get immobilised). Some possible choices for the Pillbox would be E4 or F5 or F6 or F7, because in each case there is either a terrain barrier in front or protective terrain behind/beside. Use the mines in a continuous string to channel the approach of the enemy, unless they get overconfident and charge through. At the very least, mine the crossroad hex (and G4-5-6 makes sense, linked to the convenient Bamboo hex). The tunnel has to lead to/from the pillbox, but think carefully about how it might be used – do you want to have an easy way into it or an easy way out of it to get behind the enemy?

The limited amount of MF that the Japanese have on Turn 1 means at least one stack with a leader needs to enter A8 heading for D6 (using bypass and CX). If the Aussies are on board first, use the covered approach of the hedge (E6-F5). The spread-out objective hexes force the Australian to spread out also. Pick a weak spot and exploit your advantages, send in a DC Hero to soak up DFF (especially from the Matildas), follow-up with a THH to hurt the AFV, then maybe close in for Ambush and CC. Remember there are 15 VP available, so you will probably need 8 VP to win (unless the enemy is forgetful).

continued on page 48

Australian: You will know where the pillbox and mines are, so plan how best to get to one and avoid the other. The Aussies must make use of the road (and don't ignore the path, it is ideal for a leader and a couple of squads who can open up the left flank). Since tanks can move a bit further than the infantry, and the Japanese won't have effective fire down the road on Turn 1, Armoured Assault along the road is probably unnecessary. Pushing riders off by turning your turret is risky, but at least one squad or two HS should try.

Beware of Japanese units using the tunnel to outflank or ambush your forward units. Above all, expect to have to defend your tanks against Tank Hunter Heroes and DC Heroes. You can regard the minefields as a screen for your units too, but remember this enemy doesn't break and may charge right through...

A lot depends on who gets to move first You will need to move assertively to take and *hold* the 8 VP that you need, so moving last can be a definite advantage. If the Japanese are moving last, try to take control of at least 10 VP worth of terrain (and especially the pillbox), so that you can lose some,



PBP 29 Block At Anui

By Dave Wilson

Only days after the invasion of South Korea by the North, units of US Occupation Forces (Japan) were alerted to prepare for being shipped over to help the struggling ROK (South Korean) divisions. General MacArthur imagined a show of US strength would deal with the problem... and US firepower could always deal with the 'poor quality' communist divisions that had so badly mauled the ROK units. The US troops had been living comfortably in Japan and elsewhere since WW2, and in reality were ill-prepared to fight the battle-hardened NKPA. Many North Koreans had fought in China as volunteers against both the Japanese and the Nationalists (and had been recently equipped by the Soviets before they withdrew into their own territory).

US forces initially came to Korea piecemeal and with very little heavy equipment. A forlorn series of "blocking actions" and "fighting withdrawals" followed during July-August, as the perimeter round the port of Pusan solidified. The shaky morale of US troops slumped further when they realised their WW2 BAZ and RCLs were utterly ineffective against T-34/85s (unlike in "the real world" of ASL).

In the case of the 29th Infantry, instead of three weeks to acclimatise and train as planned, they found themselves in combat after only three days, burdened with a large number of new recruits. They had never fired their newly issued weapons, and were without radios or mortars. It was a one-sided action on 28 July 1950, when elements of B & D company of the 1st Battalion set up a roadblock at the village of Anui. Unknown to the green GIs and their leaders, the NKPA 4th Division was in the countryside all around this road junction. The *"Seoul Division"* troops were past masters at flanking manoeuvres and soon cut off the small US force in Anui. Some Americans escaped over the hills, but most had to fight their way out during the night and only about half the troops involved made it back to friendly lines.

Bibliography

Korea – The First War We Lost
by Bevin Alexander
The Pusan Perimeter
by Edwin P. Hoyt
The Forgotten War
by Clay Blair

Suggestions

American: These untrained boys must choose between a screen defence using most of the squads available, a selective defence with the vital areas well covered, or a packing of the vital victory (buildings) area with all but the bazookas. You are going to need a leader and MMG on 1st Level in V2, scanning (or even Boresighting) the X7-BB8 edge of the forest. Some real/dummy units must occupy the DD row or else you will find the T-34 entering from the west to encircle your feeble fighters. Dummies will concern the tank (worrying about a 'hidden' BAZ), but if there are NKPA squads there some infantry FP will be needed. The cover provided by the woods will inevitably mean the bulk of the enemy grunts will walk that way, so your job is to slow them down, then pull back across the road to secure the V1-V2 building (and X2 if you can).

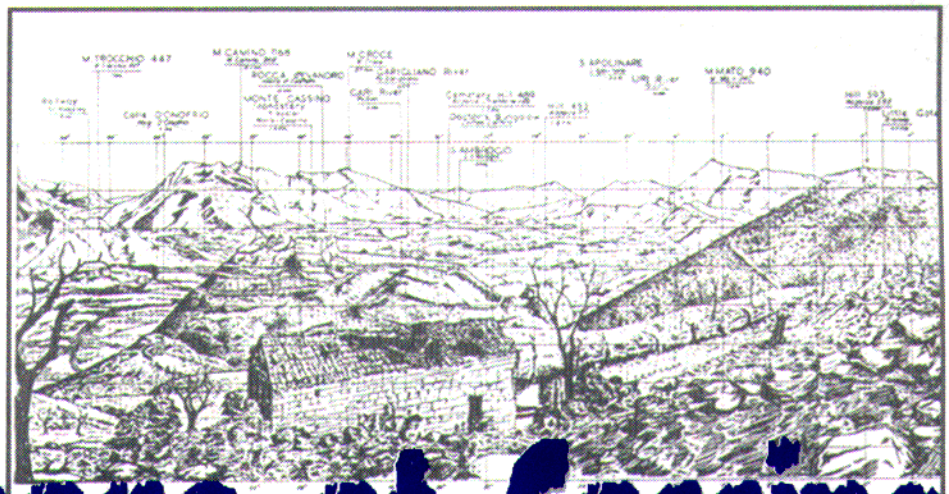
The jeep mostly will enter from the east, getting adjacent to V1-V2 (out of LOS as far as it can), then next Turn, unloading the crew and dm .50cal (and advancing into the building). This, a little later, becomes the core of the defence. By Turn 3, the V1-V2 building should be defended by at least 2 leaders, 2 MGs, 2 squads and a crew; with a screen of squads/HS on the hedge-line U3-X2. If you still have a covering force in the woods north of the road, they may have to stand and rout and then die (remember even a broken unit blocks movement through its hex for at least once). No matter what the NKPA DC Heroes will be able to get your attention when the big push to close in and cross the hedge happens.

Volume 6, Number 1

$15.95

Critical Hit

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING



Carnage at Cassino

Operation Diadem and the Battle of Cassino





1 4-6-7

9-2

Arnhem: The Third Bridge

The Battle of Arnhem: September 1944

by Kurt Martin

Third Bridge tells the story of the battle for the Arnhem road bridge during Operation Market Garden. Although certainly one of the most famous episodes of the Second World War, the fight for this bridge remains a subject of fascination for people around the world, and this game merely adds itself to the millions of words already spent on the topic.

Third Bridge is, however, the most detailed study of its kind to date. While the general facts of the battle are well-known and even understood by many, the representation of the fight at this level offers a chance to look at the combatants and the terrain in greater detail than ever before. As is often the case, this fight followed lines that neither side had intended at the outset, although the final outcome was almost pre-ordained. Surrounded at the bridge, the British were certain to run out of ammunition after a few days at most, and if not relieved by then, there was no chance of victory.

The Historical Officers listing at the end of the firefight write-up indicates which leaders represented in the provided counters took part in the firefight. While this is patently unfair in the way it leaves certain key and noble figures out of the picture, it does give players a feel for who was "at the scene."



TB#1 Breaking In

This scenario depicts a very simple action that is nonetheless representative of the huge mess that was Market Garden in Arnhem. Two of the three parachute battalions of the 1st Parachute Brigade (the unit responsible for capturing and holding the road bridge) were stopped cold well outside of the city. On a hunch or out of desperation, the Brigade commander detached this company of the 3rd Battalion, and it simply marched into downtown Arnhem with hardly a hitch.

As with many British units this day, they paused

at a crucial moment. They were then caught up in this firefight, where more than half of their strength was lost, mostly to capture. This is precisely the fate that much of 1st Airborne would meet in the coming days — overwhelmed not in fighting but by unfortunate circumstance, usually brought about by mistakes in command.

This incident also illustrates how immensely frustrating the battle was for the Dutch — with their aid (which was frequently offered but almost always refused), breaking into the perimeter (or going almost anywhere in the Arnhem area) without encounters with the Germans may have been possible. This is a point made frequently by the Dutch to this day.

(Historical leader counters: Sgt. Peterson, 8-0; Lt. Wright, 8-1.)



TB#2 Guts, No Glory

No portrayal of this battle could be complete without Graebner's Charge, but as the special rules show, it is no easy cup of tea to get a squad-based system to reflect this fairly common wartime occurrence. In this case, we don't even know precisely the goal of the German attack, but the effects of the effort to cross back into Arnhem and assault the British perimeter are among the most famous of the war. Certainly many folks interested in World War II have seen the photos of Graebner's smoldering wrecks piled up on the highway.

In any case, players may be surprised by the game value of this scenario. While it certainly appears at first glance to be the classic "hose", the limited demands of the German Objectives make winning it as the British less than obvious. "Guts" also makes a great solitaire game, and in any case, it is usually over quickly!

(Historical leader counter: Grabner 9-2 AL.)

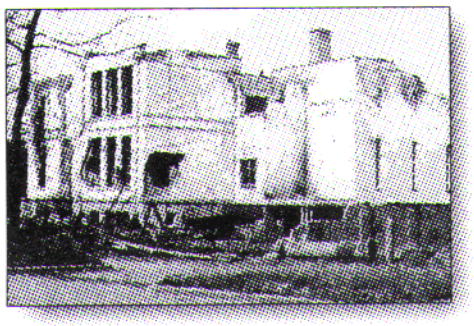


TB#3 With Breakfast You Get Germans

While similar to *The Stand*, this scenario shows the German attack gathering steam. Now there are many AFVs available, but mostly the light units of the 10th SS Recon under Brinkmann. They are not ideal for this sort of fight, but players will have to find a way to pry some use from them without exposing them to too much danger. British fanaticism, Gammon Bombs, PIATs and 6-pounders will make mincemeat of an incautious German player; as the Germans of 1944 can attest.

The Objective options give players some choice on their avenue of attack, an important factor, since the many AFVs should allow the Germans to deny the British most opportunities to reinforce trouble spots. On a side note, the restrictions on the AT gun placement are due to the fact that most of the 6 pounders were not set up during the night, and ended up fighting much of this part of the battle in the open (even in the street) near T16!

(Historical leader counters: Brinkmann 9-2; Mackay 9-2; Briggs 9-1; Barnett 8-1; Cell 8-0.)



TB#4 The Stand

This action is finally becoming clearer, after years of confusion over exactly who held the eastern side of the British perimeter. Looking at the British OB, it's clear that there were three separate commands in the area — Royal Engineers under Captain

continued on page 10

Mackay, 3rd Battalion men under Major Lewis and Brigade Defense Platoon members under Lt. Barnett.

Also quite clear is the need for the Germans to find a suitable approach for attacking the British positions, which defy standard Prep Fire and Run options. The High Walls, open streets and rowhouses make most approaches problematic, and the German vehicles are not sufficiently armoured to withstand much close range action. Of no small account are the Cellars, Gammon Bombs and PIATs British defenders in Arnhem can count on in close quarters.

(Historical leader counters: Ringsdorf 8-0; Mackay 9-2; Barnett 8-1.)



TB#5 Whoa Mohammed!

This firefight puts players at the very center of the battle for the Third Bridge at Arnhem. Represented in this action are Col. Frost and a number of other key players in the battle. In general, this firefight shows the very height of the battle, with the Germans fully committed to the attack and the British just beginning to weaken (a la Ammo Shortage).

Playtesting showed that the Germans player who could coordinate his two attacks sufficiently usually won, although last minute British counterattacks (with great leaders and 9 morale MMC) make every playing a challenge.

Players wondering about the presence of the US 8-0, Lt. Todd, may be interested to hear that this officer was the only American present at the road bridge battle. Assigned to a team working in cooperation with the local Resistance, he wound up with the 2nd Battalion by chance, but survived the battle to become a prisoner.

(Historical leader counters: Frost 10-3, Grayburn 9-2; Briggs 9-1; Gough 9-1; Hindley 8-1; Cell 8-0; Todd 8-0; Harmel 10-2; Brinkmann 9-2; Knaust 9-1; Ringsdorf 8-0; Peterson 8-0.)



TB#6 Grinding Forward

The west side of the British perimeter was quiet for the first part of the downtown battle, as German units on that side were busy repelling the efforts of other British units to join Frost. Gradually the attack worked its way down the west flank to the river, however, and this firefight shows the type of attack that then bore down on the "B" Company defenders.

This firefight tends to be on the bloody side and often concludes with a frightening British counterattack across Kade Straat that determines the winner.

(Historical leader counter: Crawley 9-1.)



TB#7 Damn And Blast

Although not hypothetical, no record survives to tell us exactly what the German's intentions were on this day. While 2 Para was clearly sinking, the German's situation at Nijmegan was also clearly deteriorating by the hour. Thus the assumption that the Germans were laying their explosives under the bridge (which is certain) with a goal of preventing an Allied rush seems a safe bet.

This scenario features two well-led forces per side, with the Germans a bit heavier. The British frequently take advantage of the prevailing rubble to move along interior lines to avoid the German vehicles, and must threaten those same AFV at every turn.

(Historical leader counters: Hindley 8-1; Tatham-Warter 10-2.)



TB#8 The End

Other than the details of SR 2-4, this is really a simple firefight at heart. Broken into many half-squads and two different setup areas, the British also labor under Severe Ammo Shortage and positions that the German can easily surround. Many players will find large sections of their OB cut out from under them in the opening turns.

A British victory lies in preservation of force, something the continued British stealth and leadership will allow. Due to the implied threat of the "British Exit" provision of the Objectives, the Germans must be careful not to let many of the paras escape their grasp, and this leads to weak lines, somewhere.

In the real event, not a single British soldier is known to have escaped the downtown battle to rejoin the rest of the 1st Airborne. And the 1st Parachute Brigade was never re-formed; Arnhem was its glory and its death.

(Historical leader counters: Knaust 9-1; Tatham-Warter 10-2; Gough 9-1; Briggs 9-1; Barnett 8-1; Todd 8-0; Gell 8-0.)

Designer's Notes

The Second Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, was probably the best and most experienced among the nine infantry battalions to fight at Arnhem. This was due in no small part to their commander, Col. John Frost, who had a reputation as a "goer" and was certainly among the cream of the British officers on the Arnhem mission.

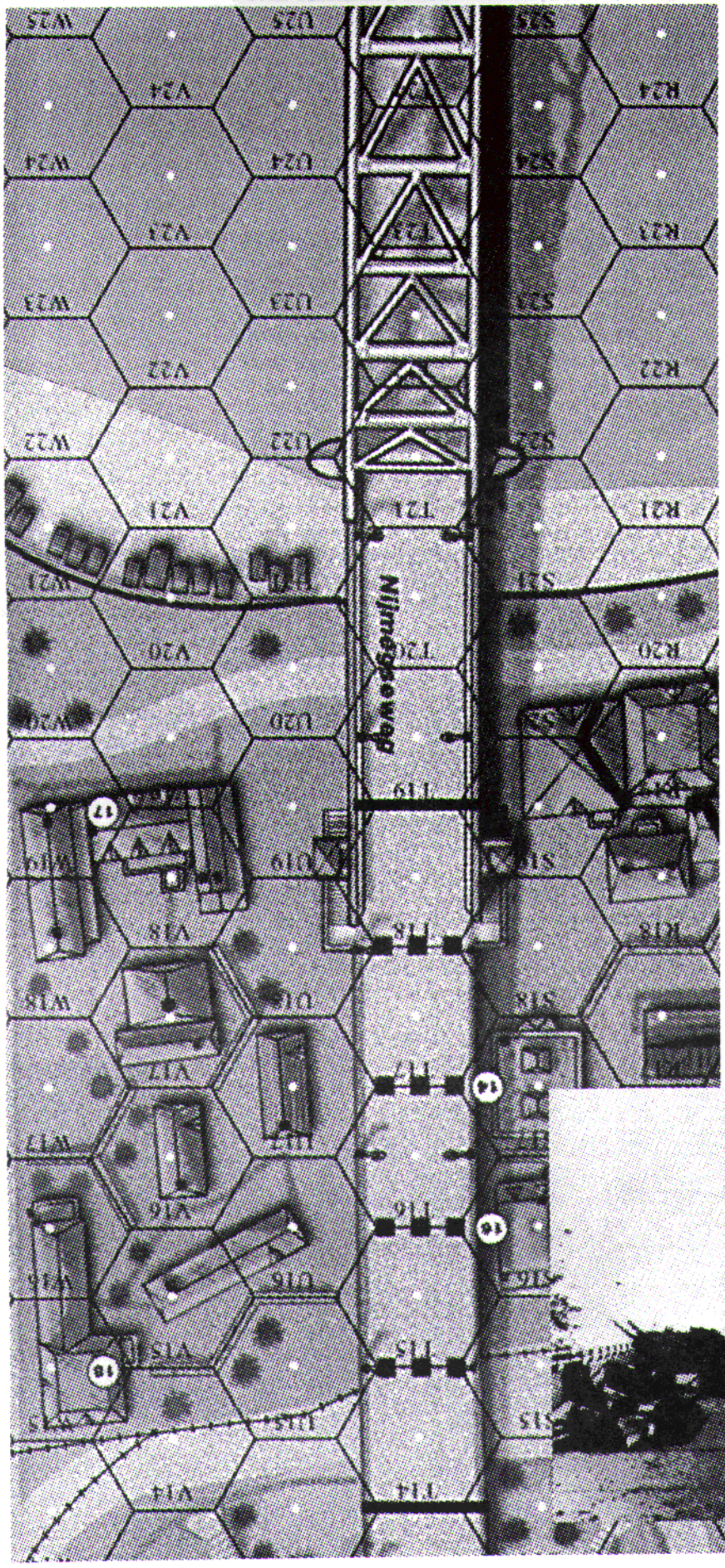
Frost had been with the unit since barely qualifying as a paratrooper in time to take command in 1942. It was "C" company of the 2nd, formed entirely from Scottish regiments (known as "Jock" Company for being willing to fight anyone!), that carried out the Bruneval raid in February of 1942, trained and led by Frost. He then led them on a long, brutal series of adventures in North Africa; a total of five months of drops and fighting which saw 80% casualties in the battalion (612 men in the establishment, with 230 replacements added, but only 360 men returning). Along the way, they were dropped behind enemy lines, forced once to retreat by swimming, and sent into many attacks as regular infantry. They and the other paras of the 1st Parachute Brigade (the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Parachute Battalions) earned a reputation for being rugged and aggressive defenders in particular, the "Red Devils" of legend.

Miserable planning and air drops in Sicily led to further misadventures and caused many more casualties, but further solidified the reputation of both Frost and the 2nd. Then there was a long wait before the Market Garden operation and Arnhem, where the 2nd would gain its greatest glory — but be totally destroyed. Far from playing a pivotal role in Market-Garden, John Frost was reduced to watching as his battalion was "carved up" in front of him, while other, less dynamic leaders, failed to do their part to relieve him.

The essential characteristics of the British in *The Third Bridge* are obvious: Fanaticism on the defense is a by-product of their training, determination once on the objective and the sheer guts of units that had taken a severe beating before. Mixed in with 2nd Para (which actually tallied less than half of the bridge defense) were a wide assortment of units, as shown in the British OB, the majority of whom were at least back-stopped by powerful veterans. The only type of unit missing from this collection at the bridge were members of the 16 Parachute Field Ambulance, who were fully engaged at the St. Elizabeth Hospital, a mile away but behind German lines.

continued on page 10





Number of firefights

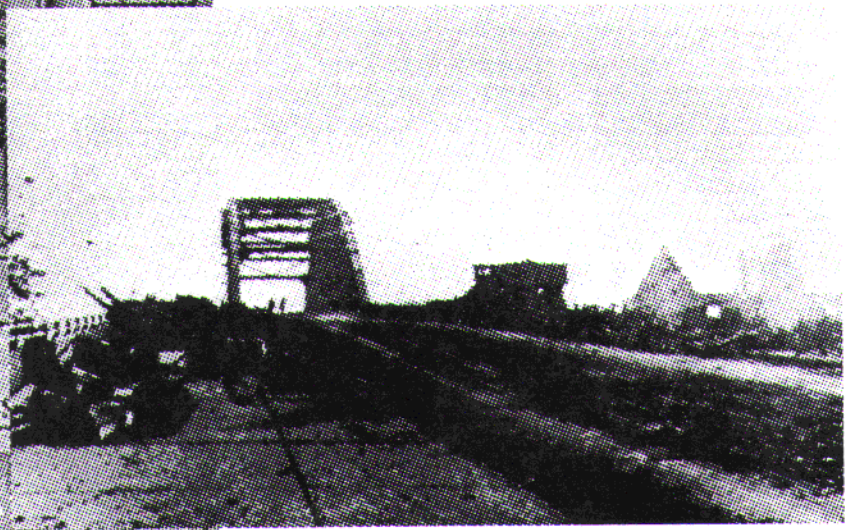
Although there are 11 possible firefights in the ATB CG, most campaigns will see the British declare no Attack Options, thus limiting the CG to 7 or 8 firefights. This is intentional, as actual attacks by the Germans were not constant, but rather interspersed with long periods of bombardment or even lulls in the action.

Purchases vs. table

Some players will wonder why there is no opportunity to purchase units for the CG. Although this was discussed and even laid out in earlier versions of the game, it became clear that it was patently ahistorical to allow players to choose their units at the bridge. During the battle, the Germans merely accepted whatever units could be steered their way, while the British fought the entire battle with almost exactly the order of battle with which they began it.

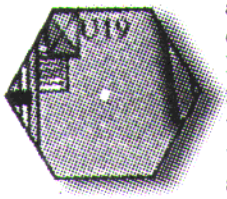
Map

While not terribly complicated in terms of the number of types of terrain, the Third Bridge map breaks a lot of new ground. Most important is the use of the key provisions of B.1, which specifies that terrain artwork is not strictly limited to the inside of each hex. For ATB, we've spent hundreds of hours basing a "game map" on extremely detailed records of the city itself. In effect, we've taken the actual layout of Arnhem circa 1944 and adjusted it as little as possible to fit the requirements of a PL campaign. (The map is actually of some historical interest, as it captures a city that ceased to exist in the bombing



campaign that followed the failure at Arnhem.)

The return on this investment is a "congested" map, where LOS is constricted and not predictable, and units have fewer movement options due to the loss of many Bypass possibilities. Add to this features such as High Wall, and the map begins to show how units denied the use of the streets were forced into very slow off-street movement.



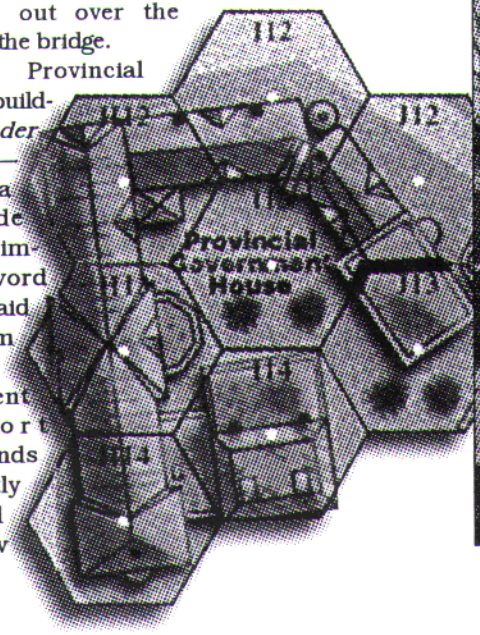
Arnhem Today

Downtown Arnhem today is little changed from the 1940's, but the area around the bridge is the most different. Now a bustling university town, the majority of the buildings shown on the game map have been replaced by modern ones. The road bridge was destroyed shortly after Market Garden and rebuilt along its former lines after the war. It has been renamed the John-Frost-Brug. The bridge, the ramp up to it, the pillars and open area beneath the bridge are all as they were in 1944 — an impressive sight. A memorial inside the concrete shelter (in hex U19) credits the 2nd Battalion without mentioning the other units present. A roundabout at the end of the ramp contains a single stone column, taken from the destroyed Palace of Justice (I10). The inscription reads "17th September, 1944." This is the site of annual ceremonies commemorating the battle.

Right near the water's edge, (about hex O19) is a plaque which shows the layout of the city around the bridge during the battle and as it stands now. The plaque looks out over the water toward the bridge.

The Provincial Government building (the *Huis der Provincie* — H13) has a display inside featuring an impressive 'Sword of Honour' paid for by Arnhem veterans.

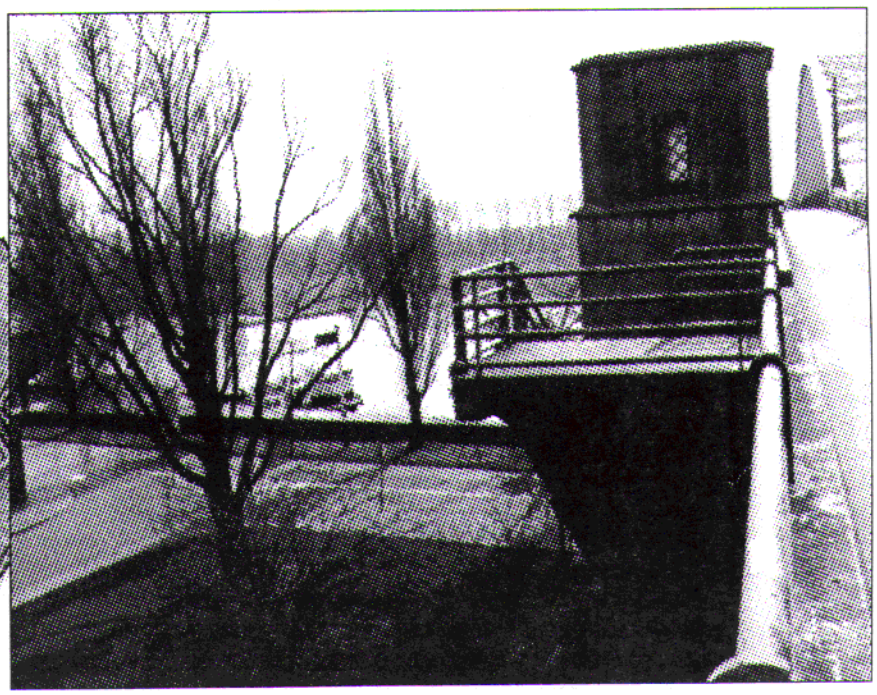
The ancient Sabelspoort (F17) still stands today, neatly integrated into the new





buildings around it, and facing a large parking lot which takes up much of the old Grote Markt (E13).

The factory area to the east of the bridge has changed less in layout, but most of the 1944 structures and businesses are long gone. ■



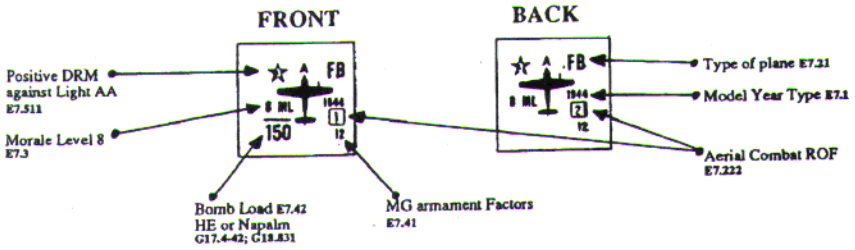
TUMULT FROM

This article was first published in ASL News issue #22 and #25 in two parts. Its intent is to give the player a step by step approach for the on-map resolution of Air Support, thus this compilation of the rules is intended more as a play-aid rather than an analysis of tactics.

The following article will review the rules concerning Air Support, Observation Planes, and Airborne Assault (Paradrops & Gliders). As the boys in the outfit are sometimes a bit scared of the Chapter E rules, and no one ever put on an air show to help them get over this fear, I've decided to be the one who presents these rules from a bird's eye perspective on the battlefields of my favorite game (my first assignment was the "Air Force" game from the "Hill"!).

Of course, you can buy Air Support in a DYO scenario, and as the German, Dive Bombers in all Campaign Games of Red Barricades (in my opinion, you would be a Dumbkopf to ignore this option in RB, but more on this later...).

Now it's time to have a look at the counters. Here's a typical 1944 FB (Fighter-Bomber), and how to read it.



I suggest you review the entire assortment of FB and DB (Dive Bombers) available. Note that the specs are the same for all nationalities!

From Airfields to Battlefields:
How to Acquire Planes

- You receive Air Support by SSR or DYO or RG Purchase (a dr on Table E7.1 is required). Tho only missing Nationality on the Table is the Chinese, who use the US numbers.
- Air Support is never used at Night, if EC are Overcast, or against Locations in or below Fog.
- Arrival is determined in every RPh of the owning players Turn by making a dr less than the current Turn number. Of course, if you don't roll low enough by game end, you don't get the Planes (Sob!).
- Once the Arrival dr is successfully made, make another dr (halved, FRU), and another dr to determine Armament (Bombs if the dr is less than or equal to the E7.1 Air Support Availability Table exponent); of course, the German may receive DB!
- If Bombs are received, the Allied player then checks for Napalm (G17.4-.42; G18.831) [NA if SSR specifies HE (only) Bombs]. US, British (A25.4) and G.M.D. (only) Chinese can use Napalm (see chart on the opposite page).

Of course, Air Support is often predetermined in order to limit the randomness and impact on

You won't see planes too often in ASL

(read Footnote 18, page E24 for an explanation); namely, the existing scenarios containing Air Support are:

ASL 26	TANKS IN THE STREET	(Yanks)	3 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the US
ASL 39	TURNING THE TABLES	(WOA)	2 DB w/ Bombs (M39) for the German
ASL 46	BIRDS OF PREY	(TLH)	2 DB w/ Bombs (M39) for the German*
ASL 65	RED STAR, RED SUN	(COB)	3 FB w/ Bombs (M39) for the Japanese*
ASL 71	JUNGLE CITADEL	(GH)	3 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the Chinese
ASL 73	HELL OR HIGH WATER	(GH)	2 x 3 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the US
ASL 82	FOR HONOR ALONE	(CDG)	1 FB w/o Bombs (M39) for the German
G13	A VIEW FROM THE TOP	(General vol. 27 #1)	1 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the US
T7	HILL 235.5	(General vol. 27 #3)	1 FB w/o Bombs (M42) for the Russian and 1 DB w/ Bombs (M42) for the German
DASL 14	BUYING THE FARM	(HH)	1 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the US
DASL 15	BARKMANN'S CORNER	(HH)	2 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the US
DASL 17	THEY'RE COMING	(HH)	1 FB w/ Bombs (M44) for the US
ASL News	RESCUE BEHLE	(ASL NEWS #8)	2 DB w/ Bombs (M39) for the German
ASL News	TUMULT FROM THE CLOUDS	(Rencontres 90#1)	2 FB w/o Bombs for the German
ASL News	A BUSH ACROSS THE STREET	(Rencontres 93#1)	2 FB w/o Bombs (M39) for the German

THE SKIES

by Pedro Ramis

Balance as much as possible. For example, a Seaborne Assaulting side always receives three FB with Bombs on Turn one (G14.262).

• Last but not least, there is the possibility in DYO Scenarios to design special armament (Hans-Ulrich Rudel's cannon equipped JU87 comes to mind!) for your planes. All this requires a good bit of research, but promises great fun for the willing!

• Your FB/DB are now ready to be placed on map during the upcoming Movement Phase, and are immediately vulnerable to enemy AA Fire (E7.52).

UTILIZATION OUTLINE

During own Player Turn

RPh: Arrival Determination
MPh: placement onboard is mandatory; may Jettison Bombs even if in Melee
DFPh: enemy Heavy AA may fire (E7.52)
CCPh: possible placement in Aerial Combat (E7.22)

During opponent's Player Turn

PFPh: enemy Heavy AA may fire
MPh/DFPh: you may execute Ground Support Attacks while enemy Light AA (E7.52) may fire
DFPh: enemy Heavy AA may fire
CCPh: Dogfight Resolution of Aerial Melee (E7.22) or enemy Planes may advance in CC.

Achtung Jabos!: Own Player Turn Actions/Reactions

Jettisoning Bombs (E7.225):

This can be a lifesaver if you are caught in Aerial Combat while still carrying those heavy bombs; to Jettison bombs, you need only invert your Aircraft counter to its reverse side.

Heavy AA Fire:

• Only AA Guns *without* printed IFE equivalent are considered Heavy AA.

• Normal Gun malfunctions/ROF rules apply, but not facing, nor LOS, nor range, except that the Gun must be set up in a firing position with an LOS that is unobstructed by obstacles at least one full Level higher than the Gun, not in a Building or Pillbox, and under an "AA" counter to shoot at an Aerial Target (see AA Fire below).

• If there is more than one Aircraft in the target hex, use Random Selection with a possible –1 drm for Friendly (to Gunner) aircraft unless they are in Aerial Melee.

Resolution equals Original To Hit DR

DR=2: Eliminates Aircraft

DR=3: Damages Aircraft (Target is Recalled at the end of the current phase)

DR=4: Target Aircraft may not Attack during that Player Turn (place TI counter on Aircraft)

The White dr of the DR indicates the number of hexspines the Gun must change clockwise.

Napalm Availability Chart

(secret final dr less than or equal to 1; drm: -2 vs Japanese)

Vs. Japanese

US:	in/after 7/44
British:	in 1945
G.M.D:	in 7/44-45 in Burma In 4-8/45 in China

Vs Germans

US:	in/after 8/44
British:	in 4-5/45 (Italy only)

Light AA Fire:

• An AA (reverse of Gunflash counter) counter is placed on a AA-capable weapon firing against an Aerial Target while not in AA Mode, and is removed when the weapon is used against a Ground Target (EXC: AAMG do not use AA counters and can fire at Ground/Aerial Targets without consideration of AA Mode), but placement/ removal of the counter reduces ROF by one as indicated on the counter (cumulative with any other ROF reduction).

• You may set up an AA-capable weapon under an AA counter.

• AA Mode can also be changed at the end of any Fire Phase (not MPh) in which the weapon can/does change its CA as per the first sentence of C3.2 (A Gun may change its CA without firing only at the end of a Friendly fire Phase, and only if at that time it is still able to fire without using Intensive/Sustained Fire [EXC: (un)/limbering (C10.2) and Turreted Guns with other Turreted armament (D3.51)]) even if it's not a Gun.

• If in AA Mode, a weapon cannot opt for Opportunity Fire, but an AA-capable weapon can drop its Opportunity Fire option to engage an Aerial Target by placing an AA counter.

• Leadership is NA to AA Fire direction.

• While in AA Mode, a weapon can be (un)limbered/pushed/Hooked Up, or, Dismantled/Portaged/Loaded/Removed/Scrounged from a vehicle, but immediately loses its AA counter.

• No Fire Lane vs Aerial Targets.

• Subsequent First Fire/Intensive Fire/Sustained Fire cannot be used during the same Player Turn (neither vs Aerial nor Ground Target).

• An AA Attack never leaves Residual Firepower and affects only one Aerial Target.

continued on page 14

• A unit that exhausts its ROF in AA Fire is marked with a Prep Fire or a Bounding Fire (if a moving vehicle) marker.

Aerial Combat:

This is one of the rarest of all ASL situations. To date, only Scenario T7 "Hill 235.5" allows for the possibility of Aerial Combat. Let's see what may happen when ASL aircraft go head to head during the CCPh.

E7.22 Dogfight DR Summary

Final ≤ 4	Eliminates target
Final 5	Damages target
Final ≥ 10	Target has Recall option
Original 11*	vs Stuka; Rear Gunner
*cdr 6	FB Eliminated
*cdr 5	FB Damaged

• Only Undamaged FB (Not DB) may voluntarily enter Aerial Combat).

• As the Attacker, you choose how many of your FB are Attacking; all initial attacks must be Predesignated before any attacks are resolved. Aircraft counters are stacked separately under CC counter. Each stack is referred to as a Dogfight. Each Dogfight is resolved separately, in Sequential attacks, the ATTACKER first, using the Tables E7.22 and E7.221.

This is when the Aerial ROF is used; if ROF is kept, the attacking aircraft may continue to attack any other Aircraft in its Dogfight. All attacks by the ATTACKER are resolved before the DEFENDER can return fire.

• Malfunction occurs on an Original 12 DR. The Aircraft may not attack further in Aerial Combat, nor be used in Ground Support except to Bomb. The owning player may Recall the Aircraft at the end of the CCPh, but must not be held in Aerial Melee to do so. Put a Gun Disabled counter on the Aircraft.

E7.22 Dogfight DRM

DRM	Cause
+1	Firer is Stuka
+1	Firer has bombs
+1	Firer is Damaged
-1	Target is Damaged
-1	Target is not a FB
-1	Target has bombs

Damage and destruction:

• A Damaged Aircraft is put under a Wound Marker for the rest of the Dogfight, is later Recalled, and does not count for CVP purposes.

• An Aircraft that is damaged twice is Eliminated and counts as 2 VP.

Sweeping Across the Plains: Opponent Player Turns Actions/Reactions

Some tactical considerations:

One of the most interesting points in the usage of Aircraft is their Defensive Fire capability during the opposing players MPh. Contrary to all other such Fire, an Aircraft may attack both moving/ non-moving targets in the same attack, moving ones being subject to additional FFMO/ FFNAM or Case J TH DRM (C.8) when applicable. Furthermore, the Aircraft's MG attacks leave Residual FP. The combination of these two alone can be sufficient to lead your opponent to play in a more cautious way: he may have to move his troops singly, instead of stacking them together for faster movement. For example, the French player in "For Honor Alone" could well have trouble bringing his reinforcements in due to the threat of aerial attack. A Russian player in Red Barricades could have the same problem Double Timing his reinforcements down those roads all the way to the front under the watchful eyes of hovering Stukas.

Use the threat of your Aircraft to the utmost when something big is in the way, and try to judge the value of an attack against the risk of losing your Aircraft due to Recall. Patience is a virtue! This, of course, doesn't apply to Seaborne Assault Aircraft, as all such Aircraft are Recalled as soon as the first friendly Watercraft enters (or Beaches ADJACENT to) any non-island Land Hex.

Sighting TC Procedure:

Before making any attack, you must place your plane in an attack position, which is usually four hexes away from its intended first target (DB conducting a Point Attack start one hex away).

• Note that an attack, and thus the Sighting TC, is made along an Hex Grain, not an Alternate Hex Grain; the portion of terrain along which the plane attacks is referred to as a Strafing Run!

Aerial LOS Check:

• The target must be in LOS of the plane.

• Blind Hexes can exist [beware of In-Season Orchards!]. Any full level or higher LOS Obstacle creates only one Blind Hex.

• The Blind Hex created by Bocage is the hex formed by the Bocage hexside.

• You're able to see into any Depression barring other LOS obstacle.

• The distance to/from an Aerial target is always doubled and is referred to as Aerial Range (E.5).

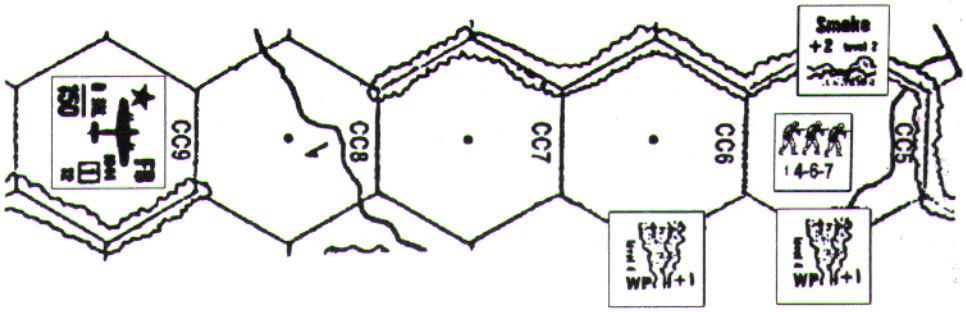
• LV Hindrances (Mist E3.32) are applying to Aerial LOS, as per the Aerial Range, but DLV doesn't apply when determining if LOS is blocked according to B.10 [i.e., SMOKE< vision, and/or terrain LOS Hindrance DRM ≥ 6 blocks LOS completely.!



Level 2 SMOKE:



Level 4 SMOKE:



• The diagram above shows the only SMOKE LOS Hindrances that are taken into account for blocked LOS determination, Sighting TC and Aerial Attacks as defined in E.6; SMOKE in other hexes than these have no incidence on Aerial Attacks or vision.

Sighting TC:

When LOS exists, you roll on the E7.3 Table. All Aircraft have Morale Level of 8.

You must remember a few thing here:

• the Sighting TC doesn't have to be based on a moving unit;

• only one Sighting TC per Turn per Plane is allowed;

• the Sighting TC is based on the easiest Target to spot in the initial target hex!

• DLV Hindrances such as Intense Heat Haze (F11.621) or Dust (F11.71 — .72; F11.74) add a total +1 DRM each.

• A non-hidden Cave is treated as a Building;

As per E7.25, an aircraft cannot cause loss of Concealment, but a Concealed unit moving in Open Ground is not considered Concealed to the Aircraft (i.e., you receive –2 DRM for Target not entirely concealed/HIP), but don't forget that you cannot inspect the stack unless you pass the Sighting TC.

There are six possible results to a Sighting TC:

Original DR	Final DR	Result
≤ 11	≤ 8	Attack
12	≤ 8	Attack then Recall
≤ 11	> 8 and ≤ 11	No Attack
12	> 8 and ≤ 11	No Attack, Recall
≤ 11	≥ 12	Mistaken Attack
12	≥ 12	Mistaken Attack the Recall

• When a "No Attack" result occurs, the plane is unable to attack for that turn, but is immune to Light AA; the ATTACKER is allowed to expend at least one MF/MP with a unit but if he declines to do so, the DEFENDER may then elect to attempt another Sighting TC with another Aircraft.

• When a Recall result occurs, it occurs at the end of the current Phase.

• No additional Sighting TC are needed to attack other units along the same Strafing Run. Each attacking Aircraft resolves all of its attacks for the Player Turn before the ATTACKER is allowed to expend another MF/MP with any unit.

• If a Dummy unit is revealed by the TC, the DEFENDER has the option of whether or not to count that Sighting TC as its only allowed one for that turn; regardless of his choice, the Aircraft is

continued on page 16

E7.3 Sighting TC DRM

DRM	Condition
+X	SMOKE Hindrance DRM as per E.6
+3	Target is in building/woods/rubble/orchard (in season)
+1	Target is in brush/grain/marsh/crag/graveyard
+1	Target within four hexes of non-HIP vehicle/MMC friendly to and in LOS of the aircraft
+1	Mist/Dust/Heat Haze (regardless of Aerial Range)
-1	Target is vehicular or a boat in water
-1	Target has entered a new hex/used VBM/been in Motion during this Player Turn*
-1	Target is part of a Convoy or Column
-1	Target has been attacked by a friendly plane during this Player Turn
-1	Target is not entirely concealed/HIP

*Dashing or movement totally inside a building/trench/pillbox not applicable

subject to Light AA. Remember that the Dummy stack is not eliminated by this (it requires at least a PTC on the IFT and a Good Order ground enemy unit within LOS to achieve this).

Mistaken Attack:

• The ATTACKER takes hold of the Aircraft and immediately attacks your non-hidden, onboard, ground unit that is the closest (in hexes) to the Aircraft's initial target and not in a completely Blind hex (ATTACKER's choice of equidistant targets).

• The ATTACKER can use a different Hex Grain and type of attack than that planned by the DEFENDER.

• Restrictions on Seaborne Assault/Evacuation: the DEFENDER's units in Beach/OCEAN Locations are treated as hidden for Mistaken Attack purposes. If all units of the DEFENDER are in Beach/OCEAN Locations, then no Mistaken Attack occurs (G14.34).

Ground Support Attacks:

To help you differentiate between the different types of attacks, the following diagrams outline the movement of an attacking FB/DB, and the actions taken by/against it in a step by step and hex by hex manner. See the diagrams below and at right:

FB Point Attack Mode

Start Hex	AB1E				C(1)
2nd Hex		B2E			C(2)
3rd Hex			BE		
4th Hex				BE	
5th Hex					BF

FB or DB Strafing Run Mode

Start Hex	AB1E				C(1)			
2nd Hex		B2E				C(2)		
3rd Hex			B3E				C(3)	
4th Hex				B4E				C(4)
5th Hex					BE			
6th Hex						BE		
7th Hex							BE	
8th Hex								BF

FB: the diagram "FB Bombing in Strafing Run Mode" is not entirely correct; you may choose any of the four Strafed hexes shown in the "FB or DB Strafing Run Mode" as its Drop Point. This can shorten the Strafing Run from four to seven hexes instead of the normal eight. A DB may not opt to bomb this way instead of the normal Point Attack Mode.

FB Bombing in Point Attack Mode

Start Hex	AB1E				C(1)
2nd Hex		B20E			*
3rd Hex			BE		
4th Hex				BE	
5th Hex					BF

DB Bombing in Point Attack Mode

Start Hex	A1-BE	C(1)-D			
2nd Hex		20BE-C(2)*			
3rd Hex			BE		
4th Hex				BE	
5th Hex					BF

FB Bombing in Strafing Run Mode

Start Hex	AB1E				C(1)*
2nd Hex		BE			
3rd Hex			BE		
4th Hex				BE	
5th Hex					BF

LEGEND:

A	Sighting TC
B	AA Fire possible
C(#)	Residual FP from (#) of MG Attack
D	Pinned Target
E	Advance FB/DB one Hex
F	End of Attack
1/2/3/4	# of MG Attack
0	Bomb Drop Point
*	Bomb Target Hex

Initial Target Hexes are Bold/Boxed

Step 1: Light AA

• AA Guns with IFE equivalent, HMG, Vehicular AAMG, and AA-capable MA/CMG are classified as Light AA [the most common AA defense in the game].

• Light AA is a form of Defensive (First) Fire by the ATTACKER and can take place after a successful Sighting TC by an attacking Aircraft of the DEFENDER (Aircraft attack during the ATTACKER's MPH and thus the ATTACKER defends itself by using AA Fire in a kind of Defensive/Bounding (First) Fire).

• Light AA is subjected to the rules stated in the preceding AA Fire paragraph and those below. Note that Leader Direction is NA to Light AA Fire [Clarification of E7.5, page E26].

• AA guns with IFE are using that IFE with a ROF reduced by one. [The last example of E7.512 is a bit confusing as it states that the "... Flak Pz IV/20... ROF remains 2 (IFE ROF is always reduced by one)." But the normal ROF is 2 so mustn't it be lowered to one?

• A Light AA weapon cannot fire from a Location that is Blind to that Target, nor from inside a Building or Pillbox. LOS must exist. Remember that to an Aerial viewer, the number of Blind hexes created by any full level or higher LOS Obstacle is always reduced to just one hex, that the Blind hex created by Bocage is the hex formed by the Bocage hexside, and that LOS exists from/into any Depression barring other LOS Obstacle.

• A non SW MG loses its multiple ROF capability unless using IFE.

• Only one attack per Aerial Target per hex per AA weapon.

• A Vehicle conducting Light AA Fire is subject to Bounding First Fire penalties (FP quartered) only if it is in Motion or has expended a MP during that MPh (FP is halved if the Vehicle is Stopped). So, as the ATTACKER, remember to move your AA-capable Vehicle(s) last whenever possible and try to locate it (them) in a position close to your infantry. Due to the limits of Aerial range, most IFE AA-capable weapons have a normal range of only 8 hexes and an AAMG just 4!

• A Vehicle does not have to expend a MP (C2.24) between each shot when using Light AA Fire.

Resolution of Light AA Fire

• The Unarmored Vehicle Line of the IFT is used.

• The only TEM/Hindrance modifiers are LV/Smoke (SMOKE). Any type and Level of Dust adds cumulative DRM attacks by/vs Aerial Units in the normal manner using the Aerial Range (F11.793).

• FFE Dust (F11.75) is applicable but the effects of Heavy Wind (F11.761) are not.

• The only other modifier is a + DRM equal to the number found inside of the * symbol on the FB/DB counter.

Resolution of Light AA Fire

Final IFT < Vehicle line Kill #	*Aircraft Eliminated*
Final IFT = Vehicle line Kill #	*Aircraft Damaged (E7.226)*
Final IFT 1> Vehicle line Kill#	*Aircraft breaks off its attack and Evades*
Other results	*No effect*

An Original IFT Result of 2 always yields an Unlikely Kill Result:
roll a subsequent dr:

If 1	*= Aircraft Eliminated*
If 2	*= Aircraft Damaged*
If 3-6	*No result except if the Original 2 DR would have Damaged the plane or forced it to evade.*

That Original result applies unless it is superseded by a more severe result.

• A Damaged/Evading Aircraft receives all Light AA Fire in its current hex before making any attack and is still subject to Light AA Fire until it exits the hex it last attacked or sighted (whichever comes last) [EXC: A Stuka must fly three hexes away from its initial target even if Damaged.]. This can effectively shorten the number of hexes that an FB/DB in Strafing Run Mode (not Bombing!) must pass through whenever bad luck strikes when such an Attack is declared (but you must state the type of Attack only after the Light AA resolution in the second hex).

continued on page 18

Aerial Attack DRM of Table C6 (Leadership NA)

J.	Moving/Motion Vehicle or Dashing Infantry (C6.1)	+2
J3.	FFNAM (Case J is NA) (C6.13)	-1
J4.	FFMO (Case J is NA) (C6.14)	-1
K.	vs Concealed target (or Area Fire; C.4) (C6.2)	+2
O.	Target using Hazardous Movement (all Case J are NA) (C6.6)	-2
P.	Target Size Modifier (-2 to +2) (C6.7)	Per Vehicle/Gun Counter
Q.	TEM (C6.8)	per TEM
R.	LOS Hindrance (C6.9)	per LOS Hindrance

Walls/Hedges/Roadblocks do not provide any TEM to a Ground Support Attack (E7.4).
HD status is NA.

Step 2: MG Attack

• If in the second hex of the attack, you must now state what type of attack (Point Attack/ Strafing) you're making before resolving the MG attack.

• If you intend to Bomb the hex in which you are about to do an MG attack, you must predesignate your attack before resolving the MG attack.

• Each level in LOS of a Building hex (including Rooftops if applicable) is attacked using the same IFT Effects DR.

• Damaged/Evading Aircraft must add a +1 drm to the IFT roll (or To Hit for Bombs) it makes from its current hex and makes no further Ground Support that Turn.

• A Landing Craft is always treated as Unarmored for Aerial/MG attacks regardless of its Target Facing/AF.

Resolution of MG Attack

• Unlike all other MG TK attempts, an Aircraft's MG may attack both armored and unarmored targets in the same hex using the Original To Hit DR vs the AFV as the IFT Effects DR (modified appropriately) vs unarmored targets (or treated as such).

• A MG attack Original Effects/To Hit DR of 12 results in permanent breakdown of that weapon. Mark with a MG Disabled counter.

• The only TEM/Hindrance modifiers are LV/ SMOKE. Any type and Level of Dust adds cumulative DRM to attacks by/vs Aerial units in the normal manner using the Aerial Range (F11.793).

Vs armored targets

• To Hit DR using the Vehicle Target type and Black To Hit number; the To Hit DR is based on the 7-12 column if the target is 4 hexes away (Aerial Range=8) or on the 0-6 column instead if the target is ≤ 3 hexes away (Aerial Range ≤ 6).

The extract from Table C6 is giving you the only DRM applicable to Aerial Attack [i.e., if a modifier is not listed here, it is not relevant to Aerial Attack (e.g., Case J1)].

• A To Kill DR is made using the MG Basic to Kill Number listed under either 39F, 42F or 44F (except for Stukas that always use the 39F TK#) on the AP To Kill Table (depending on the year of utilization), modified by:

• The Aerial AF of that AFV ranges from 0-4, based on the AF of the AFV (see C7.11) and goes as follows: AF/Aerial AF: 0*/0 - 1/0 - 2/1 - 3/2 - 4/3 - 6/3 - 8/4 - 11/4 (*denotes not AFV vs mines if any hull AF = 0).

The Aerial AF is always based on the worst AF of an AFV (either hull or turret — regardless of the location of the Hit) — even if attacked through the AFVs Front Target Facing.

• Case A: Rear Target Facing (C7.21): +1 to BASIC TK#
All aircraft hits vs an armored Target qualify for the Rear Target Facing modification.

• Case B: Aerial Advantage (C7.22): +1 to Basic TK#; +2 if Open Top Vehicle.

• To Kill Case C (CH) and Case D (Range Effects) are NA.

• Use the MG—not the Direct Fire column of the C7.7 AFV Destruction Table to resolve the attack.

• The attack cannot be further halved if the target is in a Sand/Sand Dune hex when using the Vehicle Target Type (F7.4).

Vs Infantry targets

• No To Hit Dr is necessary.

• Attacks are resolved on the IFT with all applicable DRM.

• If EC are not Wet or Mud and the target is in a Sand hex the FP is halved (FRU) on the IFT after all other modifications [EXC: a Direct Hit against a Gun](F7.4); the Soft Sand of Beaches (G13.3) are subject to the same, while Hard Sand is not as it is always treated as if EC were Wet or Mud.

Vs unarmored targets

• No To Hit Dr is necessary.

• Attacks are resolved using the * Vehicle Line on the IFT.

• If EC are not Wet or Mud and the target is in a Sand hex the FP is halved (FRU) after all other modifications (F7.4); the Soft Sand of Beaches (G13.3) are Subject to the same, while Hard Sand is not as it is always treated as if EC were Wet or Mud.

Vs a Cave (G11.86)

• Against an Upper-Cliff Cave/its content, an MG attack receives an extra IFT DRM equal to the difference in levels between it and the Base Level (or Crest Level—whichever is higher) of its Entrance Hex.

• Each attack is resolved vs all Sighted Units/targets in its Entrance Hex, using the same Original TH/IFT DR used vs the cave but modified individually for each target. All occupants (including friendly) of a Sighted cave's Entrance Hex which are in the Aircraft's LOS are assumed to have been sighted as well.

Vs a Landing Craft

• No To Hit DR as an Aerial Attack always treats a LC as unarmored—regardless of Target Facing/AF.

• Use the * Vehicle Line on the IFT and use the G12 Table (page G27).

Step 3: Residual Firepower

You can now place a Residual FP counter of the appropriate value in the attacked hex.

Step 4: Bombing

TO HIT

• A Hit must be secured on the C3 To Hit Table, using the Infantry, Vehicle or Area Target Type.

• The 7-12 column is used for all attacks made from 4 hexes away (Aerial Range = 8) or the 0-6 column if from ≤ 3 hexes (Aerial Range ≤ 6) and the Black To Hit #.

• The Aerial Attack DRM from Table C6 are the same as those used for the MG Attack resolution (see above) [EXC: TEM is NA when using the Area Target Type].

• If both type of targets are in the same hex, the same TH DR is applicable against both types of targets and is resolved against whatever Target Types are hit.

• Damaged/Evading Aircraft must add a +1 DRM to the TH DR it makes from its current hex and makes no further Ground Support that Turn.

• The Aircraft is flipped to its reverse side showing that it no longer has any bombs.

• Once a TH DR is made that Aircraft may not continue to strafe during that phase. The bombed hex becomes its final target hex.

TO KILL

Vs AFV

Vehicle Target Type

if Final TH DR is:
≤ half of the Basic TH# = Direct Hit; resolved vs Aerial AF with HE Basic TK# of the bomb load

a hit but not ≤ of the Basic TH# = Near Miss; resolved vs Aerial AF with half of HE Basic TK# of the bomb load.

DRM

TK Case A (Rear Target Facing: C7.21) a +1 to Basic TK#—always applies

TK Case B (Aerial Advantage: C7.22) a +1 to Basic TK#; +2 if OT—always applies

• The HE Basic TK# of the Bomb load is not halved for Sand hex when using the Vehicle Target type.

• A Bomb TH attempt that results in a miss is not resolved vs any target.

• Any additional AFV in the same Location is unaffected except by the provisions of Overstacking (A5.132).

• Regardless of the type of hit achieved, all unarmored targets in the same Location are also attacked if hit [EXC: Dud] with the same IFT/TK DR.

Area Target Type

• Any hit is resolved with only half of the FP of the Bomb load.

• AFV are subject to the C1.55 Indirect Fire vs AFV DRM.

• If EC are not Wet or Mud and the target is in a Sand/Sand Dune hex the FP is halved (FRU) on the IFT after all other modifications (F7.4); the Soft Sand of Beaches (G13.3) are subject ot the same, while Hard Sand is not as it is always treated as if EC were Wet or Mud.

Vs unarmored/Infantry

Area Target Type

• All in-LOS ground units in the target are affected if hit, and the effect of the hit vs each unit is resolved on the IFT with a single DR although the applicable TEM of each unit may vary accordingly.

• If EC are not Wet or Mud and the target is in a Sand/Sand Dune hex the FP is halved (FRU) on the

continued on page 20

IFT after all other modifications [EXC: a Direct Hit vs a Gun](F7.4); the Soft Sand of Beaches (G13.3) are subject to the same, while Hard Sand is not as it is always treated as if EC were Wet or Mud.

Vs Landing Craft

• Any LC is treated as fully armored and Bombs are resolved according to the Target type used for the attack just like if it was vs AFV (see above); the Aerial AF is "0" (regardless of Facing) and a Near Miss is treated as a Hull hit (regardless of the TH DR) vs it, using half of the bomb's Final TK#.

• The attack is resolved against the LC and its PRC using the same DR according to the G12 table found on page G27.

• Napalm vs a LC/its PRC is NA.

Vs a Cave

• Against an Upper-Cliff Cave/its contents a bomb attack receives an extra TH DRM equal to the difference in levels between it and the Base Level (or Crest level-whichever is higher) of its Entrance Hex. All occupants of that Cave's Entrance hex (including friendly) are attacked (as for an MG attack).

• If Napalm (G17.4) is used, the resulting Blaze and Smoke counters (G17.41) are placed in the Entrance hex unless otherwise prohibited (see below).

Step 5: Leave Hex

All Good Order Aircraft are moved to an out of the way corner of the mapboard where they are immune to further Light AA Fire until a subsequent Player Turn.

All FB are Recalled at the instant the first friendly Watercraft enters (or Beaches adjacent to) any non-Island land hex (G14.262). It might appear a trifle silly to say it, but I note that DB are not mentioned here. Of course, when you buy yourself Air Support through DYO it always is in the form of FB, but what if one is ever given some DB in a Seaborne Assault/Evacuation scenario?

DB Bombing in Point Attack:
The Stuka Difference

• The most important thing to remember is that after the Sighting TC is passed, the steps are resolved in the following order (in parenthesis, the preceding chapters step numbering) but with the same rules as the preceding except as noted thereafter:

Step (2): MG Attack

Although the attack is taking place adjacent (first MG attack)/inside (second MG attack) the target hex, and Aerial Range of zero is unchanged by doubling it. PBF/TPBF (including TH Cases E and L) is NA [Clarifications of page E26].

Step (6): Pinned Target

Regardless of the outcome of the first MG Point Attack, all unbroken Infantry [EXC: those normally immune to Pin effects] fired on in the target hex are Pinned.

Step (3): Light AA
Step (4): Bomb
Step (5): Leave Hex

Goggles on, and rev your engines

I guess you have been given enough notes to have a try at dominating the battlefields in your roving silver birds and only need some experience at this to develop an eagle eye to leave your opponent in smithereens. Now gentlemen, man your planes. ■

FINNISH ASL: SISSUKONI '99

This just in from Finnish ASL'er Eero Vihersaari following the CH sponsorship of the first Finnish ASL tourney, "Sissukoni '99'. Mika's work can be found in this issue in the form of his new scenario, "In the Ruins of a Church", featuring Jatkosota (Continuation War) action. We've got a lot of interest in Finnish military action in the 20th Century (see the credits for the East Front Campaign CD from Talonsoft for R. Tapio and CH as well as our publication of JATKOSOTA back in the 'early years' of CH. We're interested in the submission of any scenario featuring action from the Talvisota, Jatkosota and Lapinsota, as well as Finland's War of Independence in 1918 for that matter. Simply drop us a line at the CH offices or E-mail us at Finland@CriticalHit.com soon.

Eero writes:

1st prize, $50 certificate went to Kimmo Kyllönen from Oulu.
2nd prize, $30 went to our local player Mika Mäenpää!!! Three hurrahs to Mika. HURRAH! HURRAH! HURRAH!
3rd prize, $15 went to Andreas Hinz from Sweden. We were happy to have him with us.

They will contact you very soon. I'll write the AAR asap but the pictures are going to take some time as I will order them in digital format. Once again, many thanks to you.



Eero Vihersaari

INTRODUCTION TO

by James Leroux

The CARNAGE AT CASSINO (CAC) module offers individual firefights and four campaign games dealing with the Polish, French, American and British assaults against the German 90th Panzer Grenadier Division on the Monte Cassino Massif (just north of the famous Monte Cassino monastery) near Rome, Italy in February of 1944. In addition, players may recreate the two Polish Corps attacks against elements of the German 1st Parachute Division in the same area from May 12 through May 17th of 1944 with firefights and two more campaign games.

All four campaign games are played using the Platoon Leader 2.5 rules system with some modifications embodied in the rules provided with CAC. The map is quite a departure from anything published for the system before and depicts the key elements of the Monte Cassino Massif just north of the monastery. The map for the planned Cassino II module from CH will link with this map. It will show Cassino - the town, Hangman's Hill and the monastery itself.

On the CAC map you'll find famous boulder-strewn high points 569 and 593 - fought over by the troops of a half dozen nations, the narrow plain of the Albaneta Farm, the dominating heights of Colle St. Angelo - all are faithfully represented.

You'll need to own Beyond ValorTM, West of AlameinTM, YanksTM and Croix de GuerreTM to play the full-blown package in CAC as these provide the Germans (BV), British, including Gurkhas (WOA), Americans (Yanks), and French (CDG). You'll also need to bone up on your rules for Caves and Slopes.

The following rules are provided here for your examination to get a 'feel for the module.

THE RULES

2. TERRACES

Terraces-Several hexsides (from II10 to QQ10 for instance) are terraced and are depicted as walls. These hexsides are be treated as walls where the terrain on each side of the terrace is the same elevation, and as Terraces where the elevations are different. A terrace is treated as a normal wall (B9.) except as stated below.

LOCATION: Terraces run along crest hexsides much as hillside hedges.

MOVEMENT: Infantry crossing a terrace from the 'high' side to the 'low' side (from higher to lower elevation) do not expend the one MF normally required for crossing a wall. Vehicles may not cross a terrace [EXC: fully-tracked AFV may cross a terrace with a Bog Dr. Failure of the Bog check leaves the vehicle Bogged in the lower location.]

LOS: A unit entrenched on the low side of a Terrace has no LOS across/along a terrace hexside/hexspine to any 'high' side Location that lies beyond the terrace hex common to that hexside/hexspine. Otherwise, a terrace hexside does not block LOS; however, a LOS traced across any (but along no) terrace hexside to or from (i.e., not "to/from") a 'high' side terrace Location is subject to a +1 LOS Hindrance if that hexside is common to neither the hex that LOS originates in nor the hex it ends in. The maximum possible terrace Hindrance is +1, regardless of the number of such hexsides the LOS touches.

TEM: A non-entrenched unit in a 'high' hex that contains a terrace hexside may claim Wall Advantage over that hexside as usual, but cannot claim its TEM/HD benefits. However, it may claim the +1 wall TEM vs. Indirect Fire as per B9.34 as if the terrace were a normal wall. A terrace is not considered a wall for the purpose of firing HEAT (re C8.31).

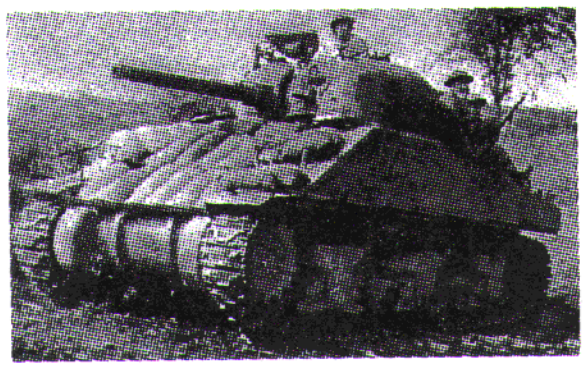
3. HILLSIDE SCRUB

3.1 Hillside scrub represents rough terrain containing boulders, rocky debris, thick undergrowth, and scattered trees. Any hex containing two gray, irregular boulder symbols and scattered irregular shaped olive clumps--such as U17--is a hillside scrub hex.

3.2 HINDRANCE: Hillside scrub is a ½ level line of sight hindrance. Fire traced through hillside scrub hexes is subject to a +1 hindrance for each such same-level hex.

3.3 TEM: A hillside scrub hex has a TEM of +1.

3.4 MOVEMENT: It costs Infantry 1-1/2MF and Cavalry/animals 3 MF to enter a hillside scrub hex. Vehicles must spend ½ their total MP allotment to



CARNAGE AT CASSINO

enter a hillside scrub hex. Such entry requires an immediate bog check DR with a +2 DRM to the Bog Check DR. There is an additional +2 DRM if the vehicle is gaining elevation and entering a hillside scrub hex. A Gun may set up in, enter or exit a hillside scrub hex only if it is dismantled or carried as a Passenger (i.e., not Towed).

3.5 FORTIFICATIONS: The only fortifications that may be placed in a hillside scrub hex are turrets, mines, wire, pillboxes, caves, trenches, foxholes and sangars.

3.6 Hillside scrub is concealment terrain and is inherent.

3.7 Hillside scrub may not be kindled and will not burn.

3.8 Entrance of a hex containing both hillside scrub and road symbols though a road hexside using the road movement rate is identical to movement along any road. Hindrance rules do not apply to such hexes if that portion of the line of sight from firer to target within those hexes never leaves the road depiction regardless of the relative elevations of the firer/target. Otherwise, hillside scrub road hexes are identical to hillside scrub hexes in every respect.

4. BROKEN GROUND

4.1 A broken ground hex represents rough terrain strewn with large rocks and scattered bushes and undergrowth. Any hex containing irregular shaped olive clumps, small gray boulders and scattered brown patches, such as QQ15, is a broken ground hex.

4.3 TEM: A broken ground hex has a TEM of +1, however any non-Assault Move infantry MF expenditures in a Broken Ground location receive a TEM of 0. Non-infantry and all non-Assault-Moving units in Broken Ground are considered to be in open ground.

4.4 MOVEMENT: It costs Infantry 1-1/2MF and Cavalry/animals 3 MF to enter a broken ground hex. Vehicles must spend 1/4 their total MP allotment to enter a broken ground hex. Such entry requires an immediate bog check DR. There is a +1 DRM if the vehicle is gaining elevation and entering a broken ground hex. A Gun may set up in, enter or exit a hillside scrub hex only if it is dismantled or carried as a Passenger (i.e., not Towed).

4.5 FORTIFICATIONS: The only fortifications that may be placed in a broken ground hex are turrets, wire, trenches, pillboxes, caves, foxholes, mines and sangars. 4.6 ENTRENCHING: A successful entrenching attempt in a Broken Ground Hex results in a Sangar. Up to three Sangars may exist in any allowable location.

4.7 Broken ground is concealment terrain and is inherent.

4.8 Broken ground may not be kindled and will not burn.

5. EMPLACED TURRETS

Emplaced turrets are similar to Pillboxes and Armored Cupolas.

5.1 Armor Factors: Front AF6, Side/Rear AF4. Always BU.

5.2 Covered arc: As Gun. Fixed covered arc.

5.3 Armament: Has no fixed armament, rather uses any German MG with -1 to base FP (HMG is 6FP, MMG is 4, LMG is 2.) May be manned by half-squad or crew.

5.4 Entry/exit: As Cupola.



THE SCENARIOS

To really get the flavor of a new module, going right to the historical write-ups is suggested. Here we present the history of each scenario in CARNAGE AT CASSINO and some comments on the Orders of Battle and victory conditions in each:

ICI BELVEDERE

MONT BELVEDERE, NEAR CASSINO ITALY, 26 JANUARY 1944: Although Juin's French Expeditionary Corps was really the class of the Allied army in Italy during early 1944, few were willing or able to admit it. Still, even when given a stupid task, the French took it seriously, if only for honor. This was the situation when Juin found the FEC ordered to attack the frightening Mont Belvedere. The attack really had little purpose except to provide a diversion for the Americans attacking the Cassino massif farther to the south. Yet the French took this as a great opportunity to prove their worth. Perhaps the individual soldier's focus was less grand, but their performance spoke of something deeper than mere duty. The plan was simple enough: assault one of the roughest, tallest groups of rocky peaks in the region, where the Germans also had some of their strongest defenses. As a diversionary attack, each company would be assaulting a position more appropriate for a full battalion. Taking the lead for most of the attack's key assaults was Commander Gandoet's 4th Tunisian Tirailleurs. This battalion featured a few Frenchmen, mostly officers, but the rest were stout

continued on page 36



north Africans. At first the Germans were clearly surprised that the French would attack such obviously strongly-held heights, then they reacted with the usual efficiency. They threw large artillery fires down on the open slopes the French were advancing across. Numerous local counterattacks put the Germans back in position of a few peaks. Feats of mountaineering were undertaken by small groups of Frenchmen, immediately followed by close assaults and intense combat. Having already taken one well-defended peak, the remnants of 10 and 11 Companies now faced an even more daunting challenge; to scrape themselves up the sheer hillsides to the highest peak of the entire Belvedere massif; Point 862. As continual artillery and small arms fire whittled away at his forces, Comm. Gandoet ordered his men to fix bayonets and rush for the peak. Lt. Bouakkaz made good his promise to lead his platoon of 11 Company to the top first, with his corpse carried upright the last yards by his loyal platoon. Gandoet took the peak with the last 80 men, then settled down to try to hold what he had won. The inevitable German counterattacks were weak enough, but soon the endless shellfire forced Gandoet into an rending decision to withdraw. Although the French would return to 862 to stay in the coming days, a seriously wounded Gandoet was carried down the mountain at the end of the battle, mumbling to men seeking his identity "Ici Belvedere... le battalion du Belvedere.." (Belvedere here...the Belvedere battalion...)

The Free French make for the heights and need to control all twelve level 12 hexes within the playable area. The attacking unit is the 3rd Battalion, 4th Regiment de Tirailleeurs Tunisian in this small to medium sized action. It's straight infantry-on-infantry with the defending Germans dug into sangars and trenches. A good weeknight play and a chance to get into action on the map right out of the box (I mean 'folder'.

ONE LAST TRY

ALBANETA FARM, NEAR CASSINO ITALY, 11 FEBRUARY 1944: Earlier in the morning 141st and 142nd Infantry Bn.s of the US 36th Div. made one last assault on the Cassino Massif where they had come so close to breaking through the German defenses of the Gustav Line. Weather conditions had been gradually getting worse and the Allies wanted to try to break through before these conditions force a halt in the offensive which would give the Germans time to improve there defensive positions. The 142nd's effort was directed against Albaneta Farm. Despite receiving galling fire from Colle Saint Angelo and Point 575 as the 142nd descended Phantom Ridge the 142nd was able to drive home its attack on Albaneta Farm. The German sector commander Colonel Schulz (1st Parachute Regt.) was forced to through in his last reserve, a platoon of engineers, in a last ditch attempt to recapture the farm. As fighting still raged around the farm elements of the 200th Panzer Grenadier Regt. began to arrive and were immediately thrown into the fray. This latter commitment tipped the balance in the Germans favor and the Americans were pushed back from the farm. The last U.S. offensive on the Massif had failed. It was now the 4th Indian Div.s turn to take a crack at the German line.

The Americans make the scene in this slugfest for Albaneta Farm. The Yanks of the US 36th 'Texas' Division try and force German Panzer Grenadier and engineers off this dominating terrain feature. The game provides artillery for both sides, providing a real 'Italian Front' feel.

INDIANS WITH GRENADES

SNAKESHEAD RIDGE, NEAR CASSINO ITALY, 18 FEBRUARY 1944: Two previous attempts by the 4th Indian Div. to take Point 593 had failed. Capture of the point was critical to support the flank on an attack directly against the Monastery. During the dark hours of the morning of the 18th the 4/6th Rajputana Rifles, 1st Royal Sussex, and a Co. of the 1/9th Gurkha jumped off in yet another attempt to capture Point 593 and Point 569. Despite heroic efforts by the platoon leaders of the various companies, the Germans held out resolutely on Point 569 and could not be pushed back off the reverse slopes of Point 593. As dawn approached, the German counter attacks began and gradually built in intensity. Due to the nature of the terrain, the issue would be decided with hand grenades. The

Germans hurled counterattack after counterattack at the Indian lodgment on the forward slopes of Point 593. As the day wore on the 4th Indian Div. casualties mounted. The assault companies that nearly had carried the position in the morning were only tattered remnants of their former selves. It was finally too much; orders were issued to fall back to friendly lines. The Germans reoccupied Point 593.

This is a serious fight for Points 569 and 593 and VP are tallied for control of the actual terrain features and adjacent hexes. The Allies win any tie and feature a Commonwealth order of battle combining the 1st Royal Sussex Battalion of the 4th Indian Division and the Gurkhas of the 4/6th Rajputana Rifles (Ghurkhas in game terms). Fanatic Brits, artillery and a slugfest for terrain VP with caution hurled into the wind when it comes to losses.

CAVENDISH FILIBUSTER

ALBANETA FARM, NEAR CASSINO ITALY, 19 MARCH 1944: As part of the New Zealand Corps offensive in the Cassino sector in March an armored probe was planned on the Cassino Massif. After the fighting down in the town and on the slopes below the Monastery was in full swing a composite force of a C Co. of the 20th New Zealand Armored Regt., D Co. of the 760th US tank Bn., and a Co. of the Central India Horse drove up onto the Massif via the newly made Cavendish Road. The armored force managed to pass through "The Gorge" and regroup in the area of Albaneta farm. From here the force attempted to force a way single file down a narrow road towards the Monastery. An anti-tank mine soon destroyed the lead tank. Efforts to break a trail past the mine field were hindered by the terrain and ever increasing German LATW fire as the noose pulled tighter around the penetration. First one and then another of the Shermans and "Honeys" brewed up. Before long 6 tanks were out of action and a further 16 were severely damaged. Without infantry support the tanks were simply unable to advance any further and the force was recalled.

The 20th New Zealand Armored Regiment combines with the US 760th Tank Battalion in this tank-heavy engagement. A total of 13 Allied AFV face down a German infantry force armed with PsK and 75mm RCL, plus a couple of 81mm mortars.

BY DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT

PHANTOM RIDGE, NEAR CASSINO, ITALY, 12 MAY 1944: As the assault on Phantom Ridge progressed the 15th Wilno Bn. of the 5th Kresowa Div. gained the crest, and began to clear the Germans out of their fortified positions. Dense thorn-scrub as well as rocks and boulders greatly added to the difficulties of the night fighting. Two companies never the less managed to thrust past the enemy positions and reached Pt 517. There they were engaged by concentrated enemy fire and their commander was forced to order a retirement to the forward slopes of Phantom Ridge. Upon reaching their new positions the Poles were immediately attacked by German troops from the environs of Point 517 which they had so recently abandoned. The situation was desperate as the Poles had to deal with enemy bunkers which still remained uncaptured in their midst. Hand-to-Hand fighting ensued in which Germans and Poles alike were killed and wounded. When the smoke finally began to clear the Poles still held the forward slope of Phantom Ridge. The remainder of the day the Poles were subjected to continuous artillery and small arms fire, but the counterattack was stopped. That evening orders were received to fall back to the starting positions. The Polish II Corp assault on the opening day of operation Diadem had failed.

The Poles enter the scene with an infantry assault in the LV hindered light of dawn (+1 LV Hindrance). It's another terrain-based objective for the Poles, with five different hexes outlined, of which the Poles need to control four at game end. The game begins with the Germans setting up four of his 2-4-8 HS at start to begin the game under a Melee marker. The players are really thrust into the midst of the action!

INTO THE VALLEY OF DEATH

THE GORGE, NEAR CASSINO ITALY, 12 MAY 1944: The Polish 1st Carpathian Rifle Bn. advanced on the right flank of the 2nd Carpathian Rifle Bn. assaulting Points 593 and 569. The lead Co. fought its way towards The Gorge with its initial objective being to take Albaneta farm to the rear of Snakeshead Ridge. The lead Co. met stiff resistance from the German Paratroopers but managed to reach the entrance to The Gorge which was discovered to be mined. Artillery fire pinned the Polish infantry down for a time until a counter battery shoot could be organized. Having suppressed the German guns somewhat, sappers moved forward in the early light of dawn to clear the mines that were discovered in The Gorge. First one troop and then a sec-

continued on page 38



ond troop of tanks moved forward to support the mine clearing effort. A second Polish Bn. was stopped cold by the German defenders. German fire in the area of The Gorge was extremely heavy. All but 2 of the sappers assigned to mine clearing duty were killed or wounded. All of the first troop of tanks assigned as support were destroyed, as was the lead tank of the second troop. Some of the supporting infantry was able to work its way forward toward Albaneta farm, but deprived of the support of the tanks they were forced to withdraw.

The Poles again make the scene, this time in the form of the 4th Polish Armored Regiment and the 1st Carpathian Rifle Brigade. It's a combined-arms slugfest for CVP and Exit VP. The Polish force is strong (read large: this is a big scenario with 24 squads in the Polish OB) but the German OB features plenty of AT power (three 75L AT-guns and 20 AT mines).

COLLE ST. ANGELO

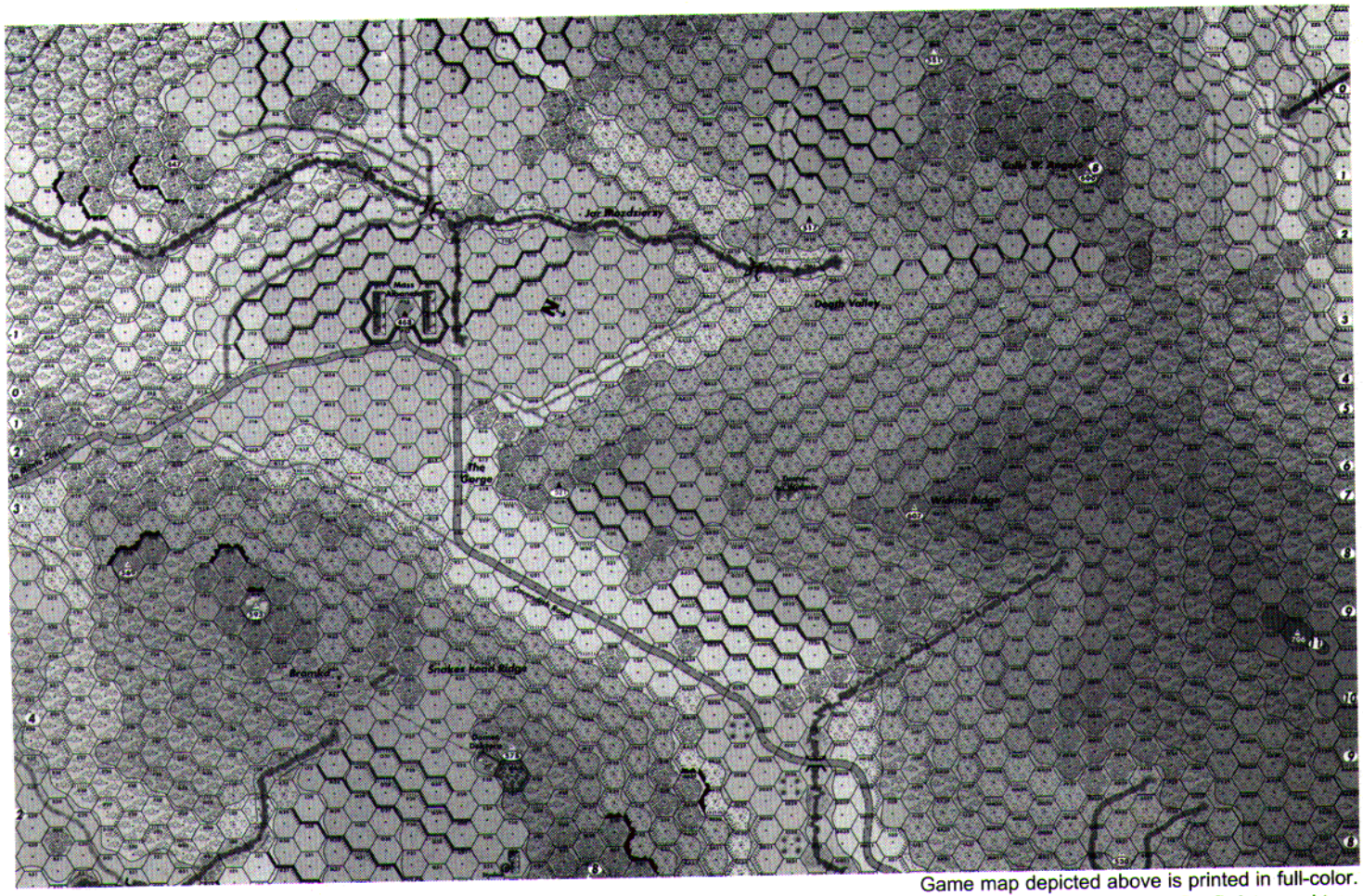
Colle St. Angelo, Near Cassino Italy, 17 May 1944: During the night of the 16th, the 16 Lwowska Rifle Bn. managed to seize Phantom Ridge from the German 2nd Bn. of the 100th Mountain Regiment. Much confused fighting occurred throughout the night and a counterattack by the Germans just before dawn failed to dislodge the Poles. By dawns light a squadron of the fourth Polish Armored Regt. began to ascend Phantom Ridge encountering serious terrain obstacles. At the same time 17th Lwowska Rifle Bn. passed through the 16th to attack Colle St. Angelo. The Bn. stormed forward quickly and overwhelmed the defenders of Colle St. Angelo but their ammunition porters were severely mauled by German Artillery fire as they attempted to reach the forward positions. A series of sharp German Counter attacks supported by large amounts of artillery fire managed to recapture a portion of Colle St. Angelo. Just as the Poles were about to be pushed off the remainder of the feature the Poles tanks crested Phantom ridge and the tanks lent their fire to support the remaining troops and artillery support came into action as well to stem the German advance. The attack was renewed by elements of the 16th and 18th Lwowska Rifle Bn.s and as night fell the Poles were firmly in control of Colle St. Angelo.

More Poles with more tanks! This is a very different game than "Into the Valley of Death" as the Poles need to gain Points 600 and 517 no matter the casualties. Another monster, this scenario pits no less than 36 Polish squads against nineteen for the Germans. Elite forces equip both sides and for a little change of pace the Germans get an OBA module of 150mm rockets. Let me make things clear: the module moves into monster-scenario territory with this one. The Poles also get artillery in the form of 25 pdrs. (88mm) and the Germans get a battery each of 105's and 81mm mortars to make sure the steel fragments are flying around the heads of the attackers every step of the way.

POINT 593

SNAKESHEAD RIDGE, NEAR CASSINO ITALY, 17 MAY 1944: For 5 months the Allies pounded away at the German positions on the Gustav Line in and around Cassino, Italy. U.S., British, and Indian troops have all assaulted Points 569 and 593, but none have managed to take and hold the positions (each has had the positions nearly in hand only to lose them to German counterattacks). The front has settled into a WWI like state, constant artillery shelling, constant patrols, but static positions. Now it is the Polish II Corps turn. On the Night of May 12 the Poles nearly carried the positions but were driven back during the day. On the 17th the Polish II Corps was asked to make another attempt. This time the 2nd Carpathian Rifle Brigade was assigned the job. After repulsing a German counterattack the 4th Carpathian Rifle Bn. left its staging area to attempt what three other nations' troops had been unable to do. An intensive preparatory bombardment of the German positions was conducted prior to the assault. Point 593 fell quickly and the Poles reached the base of Point 569. Unfortunately, this is where the assault bogged down once again. The Germans had hidden in their underground bunkers and caves on the reverse slopes of Snakes Head Ridge and weathered the bombardment with little damage. Then, as the bombardment let up they emerged from their shelters to reoccupy their positions on the boulder strewn ridge. There they awaited the Poles. Once the impetus of the Polish assault was stopped the Germans launched repeated counterattacks driving the Poles back to Point 593. The 5th Carpathian Bn. had to be committed to prevent the loss of Point 593. As night fell the German counterattacks abated. In the morning the Poles swept forward along the entire front meeting only token resistance. The Germans had finally had enough.

We don't want to tell you how it all ends! The Germans are counter-attacking the Poles in this one for control of Points 593 and 569 and the entire battle hinges on the outcome...



Game map depicted above is printed in full-color.

SNAKESHEAD RIDGE, Near CASSINO, ITALY, 18 FEBRUARY 1944: Two previous attempts by the 4th Indian Division to take Point 593 had failed. Capture of the point was critical to support the flank during any attack directly against the Monastery. During the dark hours of the morning of the 18th, the 4/6th Rajputana Rifles, 1st Royal Sussex, and a Company of 1/9th Gurkhas jumped off in yet another attempt to capture Point 593 and Point 569. Despite heroic efforts by the platoon leaders of the various companies, the Germans held out resolutely on Point 569 and could not be pushed back off the reverse slopes of Point 593. As dawn approached, the German counter-attacks began and gradually built in intensity. Due to the nature of the terrain, the issue would be decided with hand grenades. The Germans hurled counter-attack after counterattack at the Indian lodgment on the forward slopes of Point 593. As the day wore on the 4th Indian Division casualties mounted. The assault companies that nearly had carried the position in the morning were only tattered remnants of their former selves. It was finally too much; orders were issued to fall back to friendly lines. The Germans reoccupied Point 593...

Visit us on the web today for free downloads of the latest version of our PL campaign system and read Critical Hit Tactical Level Gaming magazine for additional scenarios and variants for this and other CH games!

www.CriticalHit.com

CARNAGE AT CASSINO™ offers individual firefights and two campaign games dealing with the French, American and British assaults against the German 90th Panzer Grenadier Division on the Monte Cassino Massif (just north of the famous Monte Cassino monastery) near Rome, Italy in February of 1944. In addition, players may recreate the two attacks by Polish 2nd Corps against elements of the German 1st Parachute Division in the same area from May 12 through May 17th of 1944 with firefights and two more campaign games. All four campaign games are played using the Platoon Leader 2.5™ rules system with new special rules included. You'll also receive eight well-tested scenarios. The map depicts the key elements of the Monte Cassino Massif just north of the monastery. Famous boulder-strewn high points 569 and 593 – fought over by the troops of a half dozen nations, the narrow plain of the Albaneta Farm, the dominating heights of Colle St. Angelo – all are faithfully represented. Everything is included to play using your existing rulebook* and game pieces.

CRITICAL HIT

*Ownership of Beyond Valor™, Yanks™ and West of Alamein™ are necessary to play this game.

Carnage at Cassino

The Battle of Cassino: January - March, 1944

Volume 6, Number 2

US $15.95

Critical Hit

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING

Early War Action!

12 NEW Scenarios Inside!





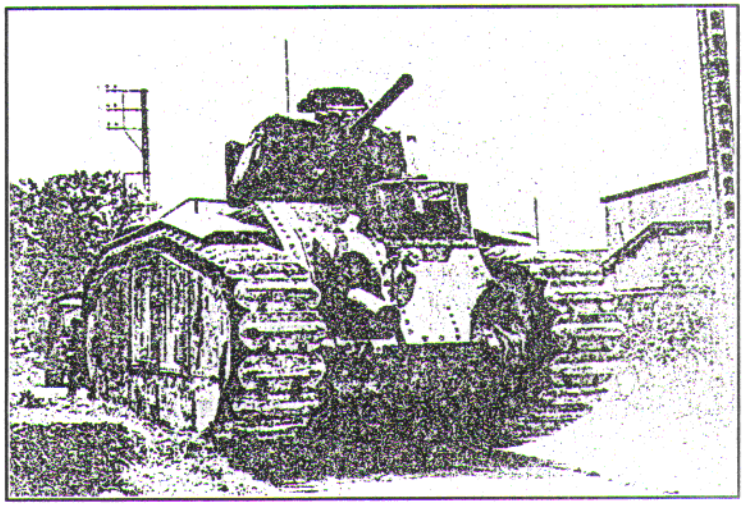


Pedro Returns to Stonne + TWO NEW Campaigns for Stonne 1940

INTRO TO STONNE

Would it be pretentious of me to say that "Stonne 1940" has some of the coolest scenarios ever published? In this writer's opinion it's a fine module with 6 very well crafted scenarios and a CG within. This pack has some of the most interesting actions since "Croix de Guerre", ranging from simple infantry engagements to massive armor free for all's. So not surprisingly, there is something here for both the new player and old alike. The map is really one hell of a nice piece of work done in various shades of greens with the elevations numbered, very convenient indeed. Players might want to note is the use of slopes and barb wire fences, so "KGP II" is a must to play these terrain types. And the icing on the cake has to be the folder format in which *Stonne 1940* is packaged, very attractive with a historical notes on the back, reminiscent of the old SL days.

For those who only have an inkling of this pivotal battle for France here is a small historical note to get your blood going on this unique campaign game. The crisis facing the French 2nd Army was obvious. The front was threatening to collapse along the Beaumont-Stonne line. The French threw every available reserve into the cauldron in an attempt to master the critical situation in and around the village of Stonne. While on the German side, the objective at hand was to hold open the Meuse crossings and take the high ground on both sides of Stonne. The French were trying to prevent this at all costs, close the gap in the front and, where possible, throw the enemy back across the Meuse. If they succeeded, the German attack plan would suffer a serious, possible fatal reversal. It was expected, therefore, that the outcome would be decided in the area of Stonne. It was there that the Infantry Regiment *Grossdeutschland* (IRGD), with its artillery attached *Sturm Pionier* Battalion 43 were situated for what would be one of the most ferocious battles of the Battle of France 1940.



In each of the three scenarios considered in this article you will find certain elements. I'll cover set-ups for the defender and the attack options for the attacker for each scenario, but in no way is this article your ticket to the perfect plan. In the first place, if the playtesters did their job, there shouldn't be any such plan. Secondly, if such plans do exist, I doubt I'd be the one to discover them. This article has two goals: one, to help the owners of *Stonne 1940* gain some insights into some aspects of the scenarios. The second is to show the person whom has yet to buy ASL or *Stonne 1940* something of the diversity of the tactical situations that exist during the wargaming of the campaign for France. There is a different flavor to these times that becomes particularly apparent when one compares Red Barricades™ or CH's *Pointe du Hoc* scenarios with those found in *Stonne 1940*. Gamers who are serious about the campaign for France, will find *Stonne 1940* a fitting addition to their ASL collection.

Before Nightfall — Stonne #1

Rating: 55% French

Attraction: May 15th 1940 and the initial battle for Stonne has begun...

This scenario is more of a meeting engagement then a set-piece battle, where there is an attacker and defender. Though I will have to say it's the French defending more then attacking as compared to the Germans. The scenario centers on the French attempt to re-occupy the village of Stonne after an artillery barrage *and* Germans efforts to re-occupy Stonne and throw the French out. Amongst the rubble, wrecks and blazes, a ghastly firefight soon erupts in the waning light.

French advantages:

9-2 leader, two MMGs, the morale of the French 4-5-8s and very defensible terrain.

French Disadvantages:

Low ELR, not enough good leaders, MMGs start out dismantled, and a CVP cap.

French Deployment:

1940

As can be imagined, the 9-2 should be stacked with three 4-5-8s, with both MMG's and the LMG. Seven dummies are allotted to the French, use them as what I like to call *sniper bait*. Don't waste your time placing them on the French units, they will gain concealment anyway due to the German set-up being out of French LOS. No real fancy maneuvers needed here, deploy to where the Germans are thrusting toward and form up a blocking position. Use your dummies to surround the 9-2 to avoid a lucky SAN activation. This really is a small scenario, and the loss of the 9-2 can spell the end for the French defenders. The scenario's VC is simple: The French need to Control at least eight building / rubble locations or earn at least 14 CVP without losing at least 12.

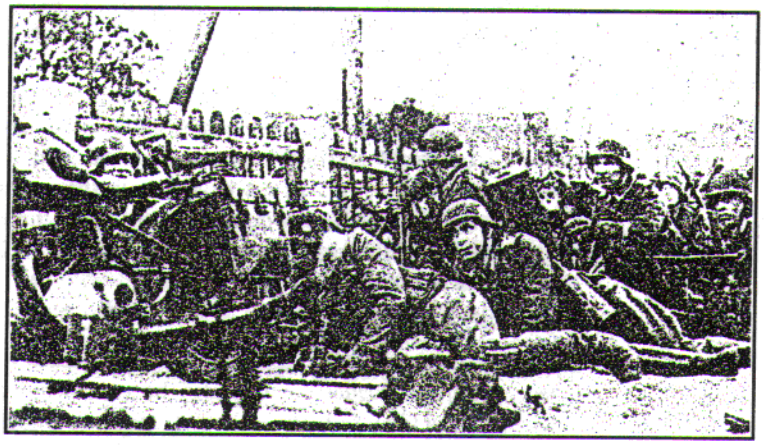
Here is a run down on some of the more important terrain alterations by Scenario Special Rules. There are seven blazes within the village proper, and by SSR, they are confined to those locations only, thankfully minimizing the dice rolling in regards to spreading fires. The blaze hexes I will note are important to the tactics I would like to utilize in my French set-up.

There are three rubble counters placed by SSR, and as noted in the CG SSR, they are considered 'light rubble'. This is a new terrain feature in *Stonne 1940*. The only effect on game play is that light rubble does not block LOS to same level locations as ASLRB rubble would. All other rules pertaining to rubble remain in effect, making the rule easy to assimilate and use. There are also several burnt-out wrecks strewn along the streets of Stonne, victims of Stuka dive-bombers and artillery barrages.

French set-up:

The French must set-up within two hexes of M12 and the Germans set-up on/ between hexrow A and I on level four or less. There are seven level elevations on the gorgeous map. Thus, the Germans are confined to the level-four forest (B13.7) Locations. Also aiding the French are barbed wire fences which are adjacent to the level 6 and 5 forest line, meaning the Germans won't be entering Stonne until turn two at the earliest. This reality gives the French plenty of time to fan out in search of good defensive positions and at the same time try to use the terrain to their advantage.

I like placing my 9-2 and three 4-5-8 squads with both MMGs and the LMG in K11 because I can then assemble my MMGs in the Prep Fire Phase, then advance into the K10 rubble location. Now my 9-2 and his squads can cover building L9, and the church in K9, with Point Blank fire. Secondly I can also throw a Fire Lane down the J9, I9, H8, G8, etc., hex grain and hopefully force the Germans to fight for the village proper. I will also set-up an 8-0 with three 4-5-7s in M10. I like this position and I hate this position. I like it because I can see building locations K8 and L7, even though two wrecks in M9 and L8 hinder my LOS. In fact, from L8 to R11 stretches a long string of burnt-out wrecks. Still, with concealment and the protection gained from the stone building I occupy, coupled with the intervening wrecks, it should be a hellish time for the Germans to get across to building L9. And just for the record, yes I am conceding building location N8

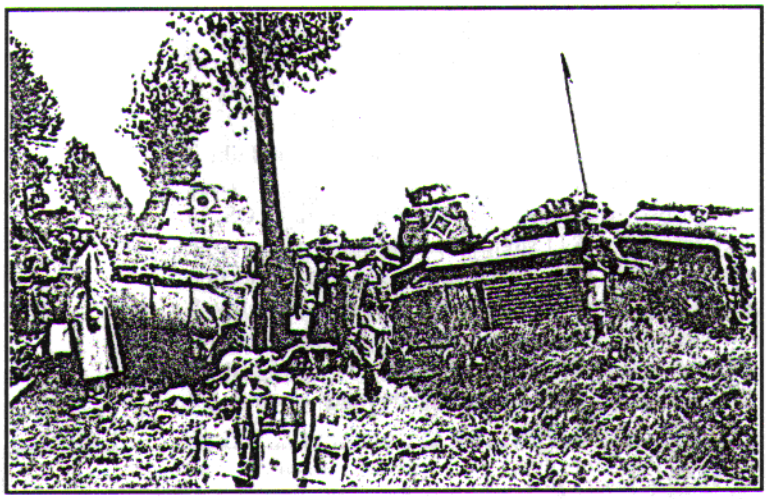


and P9 due to their out of the way nature which would only put more strain on my defense then is really necessary *(Ed. The sign of good play.)*. My units are down-slope; i.e., the slope 'eyelashes' are within M10, so I can't see over the wrecks (KGP 2.2). Now if the 'eyelash' was outside of my hex, there would be no problem seeing over the two wrecks into building K8 and L7.

Now to why I hate this position. There exists the real possibility of it becoming a stand fast or die location. To the back of location M10 are three blazes raging in the following hexes: L11, M11, and N10. Should my 8-0 and his units break, there really is no where for them to flee. They will die in this place.

I next place my last two Elite squads and one 1st line squad in L10. These squads will more then likely be serving in another die-in-place position, but this location is key in helping to lend support to both my 8-0's units and 9-2's units with mutual fire support.

My last real units are placed in K12; that will contain my 6+1 and three 1st Line squads. I will use them to



work their way towards building H10; in more or less an attempt to keep the Germans from gaining any location on level 7 and once more forcing them to fight within the 9-2's set-up area. I've also split the seven dummies into the following: two in N11, three dummies stacked below the 6+1 and his units in K12 and two in K11.

German advantages:

Time (6 turns), MG's, reinforcements. The Lack of decent German leadership can also be considered a detriment but thankfully the added 7-0 can shore things up. Before set-up, I will deploy one 1st Line squad to two HS and give them the MMGs. Next, I'll deploy a 2nd squad, one to handle the light mortar (I can dismantle prior to play [A2.52]), and use the other 2nd Line HS as recon.

German disadvantages:

ELR of 2, leadership, terrain (barbed wire fences [KGP 3.1]) double crests (B10.52), and forests (B13.7) and SSR 4 (any MMC not stacked with a leader, must pass an NTC to CX)

Historically, the IRGD was exhausted by the time they reached Stonne, which is why we see three 4-6-7s ten 4-4-7s and the abysmal leadership on the scenario card. The terrain also conspires to make things rough on the IRGD, but this is deceiving. Initially it will be difficult traversing the terrain in the early part of the scenario, but once the IRGD overcomes these terrain obstacles, they then can bring devastating firepower to bear on the French.

German deployment:

First I'll place my 8-1 with the two MMG-toting LMG. I love to maximize my firepower with this ersatz *buzzsaw* group. I5 will be their initial placement.

Next I'll place the 8-0, both 2nd Line HS (one of the HS is carrying the mortar) along with two more 4-4-7s in H4. I'll place three 4-4-7s in G4 and lastly, I'll place the last 8-0 with three 4-4-7s in F4. The German OB contains four dummies, so I'll deploy two each in I5 and H4. They are to follow close behind the 8-1 and hopefully soak up a sniper attack.

German attack:

A real no brainier here! Go for the L7 and K8 building and use this as a jumping-off point into the center of the village. Remember to try and remain concealed as you get closer to the French defenses. Also, use the 8-0 and three 4-4-7s in F4 to work their way towards the G10 area. Next, send the 8-0 with the two HS and both 4-4-7s to follow the 8-1 towards buildings L7 and K8 to lend fire support. Personally, I would dump the mortar and on the German turn two, try and use both HS to strip concealment away from any French units in K10. Keep in mind concealment loss is done randomly in a given hex.

Conclusion:

I rated this scenario 55% French; the reason being the destructive effect the French 9-2 will have on play. But a wily German player can overcome this handicap by staying concealed and gaining the upper hand by getting across to G8 in the opening stages and thus be one step closer to controlling the level 7 locations in the G12 area. This will force the French player to divert more troops to put a stop to this small German thrust. Like a game of cat and mouse. What really makes this scenario so cool though, is the fact that it makes digesting most of the Stonne Special CG Rules along with those from KGP II much more convenient. Plus it's perfect for *grognards* to teach new players with. A winner.

A Will to Fight — Stonne #2

Rating 60% German

Attraction: 17 May 1940, village of Stonne lies in ruins, yet the valiant Poiliou once more rise from their foxholes to meet the IRGD head on...

A really interesting victory condition. The French

must on one hand hold on to at least three Rubble locations and on the other, he has the option to exit at least 15 VP off the west edge *or* have 15 VP still on map at game end. Believe me, this can be done as I will explain further in the section on French Defense options. Both sides also possess OBA with the French having 105mm OBA and the Germans possessing 75mm OBA and air support in the form of Fighter Bombers on call for turn one. "A Will to Fight," being mostly an infantry affair, makes learning the Slope (P2.1), Narrow Streets (P5.1), Barbed Wire Fences (P3.1), Air Support (E 7) and OBA (C1.1), with a very slight read of the mortar rules, not to difficult to digest. Hell, by the time the players start getting into some of the more complicated scenarios in this pack, they will be experts at the above rules and more!

French Advantages:

Good leadership, HIP, OBA, proximity to the exit victory condition area, the option of using the fall back defense, and concealment.

Once more the French are blessed with excellent leadership with a total -3 in leadership DRM for ten French squads. Not bad at all with the 9-2 being the most pivotal unit in the French OB.

The French also have the option to HIP their OB in concealment terrain. Here the French can use a combination of HIP real units and placing some real units beneath the OB-given concealment counters (a personal preference of mine), thus faking the other guy out with the added bonus of slowing the enemy advance to a crawl.

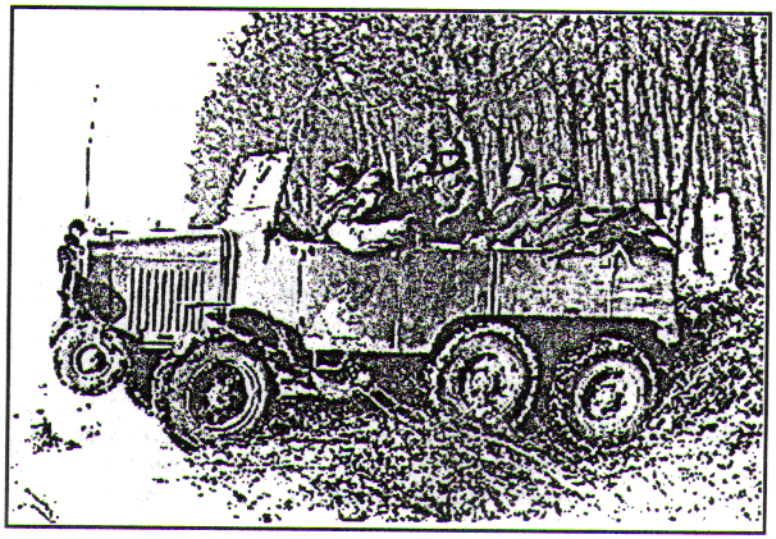
As noted in the victory conditions, the French must not only hold at least three rubble locations, they also may exit at least 15 VP along the west edge. Their close proximity to the west edge is another advantage over the Germans, who, if they throw caution to the wind, can get close enough within two turns to stop the French from exiting those VP which are mainly POWs. Sure, the French can exit on their turn one *but* the Germans automatically receive air support on turn one, forcing the French player to keep his guarding units and POWs HIP until the French half of turn two. The air support can only stay on board during turn one only. Fortunate for the French, eh?

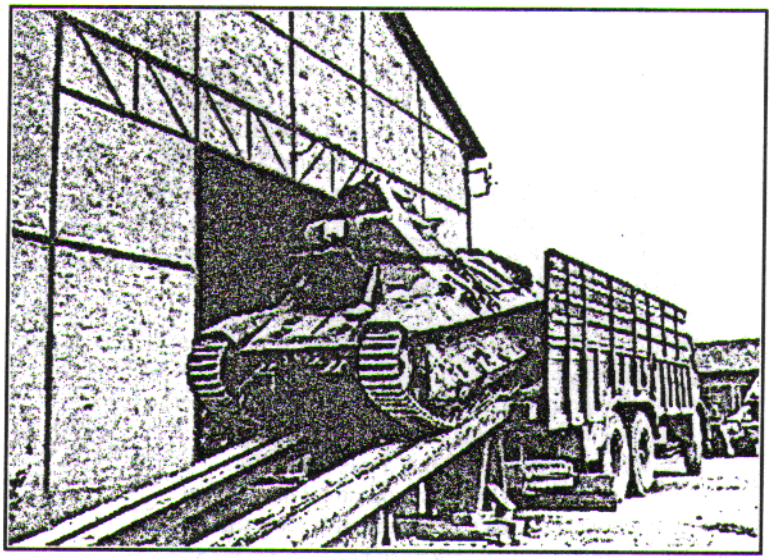
The fall-back defense is another nice option in this scenario. The French can set-up pickets HIP and forward to where the Germans will most likely try to force their way through to put a stop to the French attempts at exiting their needed VP. This tactic has the added affect of eating up precious German time in securing Stonne village. Of course the fall-back defense also serves another purpose: your broken troops are now moving back towards the Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway around F13. In fact, the Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway should serve as your last line of defense in the fall-back maneuver due to the number of buildings (three and the water tower) found there. Each building is in close proximity to the other and can make a last stand defense a very hard nut to crack. There is also the other option of clustering around the Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway, but that would just give the Germans too much of a free hand to maneuver around Stonne proper with impunity.

Lastly, the French possess 105mm OBA directed by an off-board observer at level 6. To me, OBA is a very fickle mistress. You might get it, you might not. Which brings me to the luck-factor 'syndrome'. Don't build your defense or limit your options in hopes of receiving OBA. Granted, with an off-board observer (C1.63) no radio contact is necessary but your accuracy dr must be less then or equal to one to land the SR on target. Not an easy task to achieve let alone count on. The French card-draw pile isn't exactly the most reliable either, being 6 black and 2 red. The French OBA is a nice addition to an already strained defense but it's most effective use might be found as more of a threat to keep the Germans dispersed, thus keeping their firepower from overwhelming the French in mid-game.

French disadvantages:

A preponderance of time, the lack of enough bodies to stand toe-to-toe with the Grossdeutschland, a semi-





dual victory condition and the water tower being rubbled.

With the Grossdeutschland at the very edge of Stonne and with six turns to wipe out the French OB, the French need to utilize their resources to the best of their ability with delaying tactics. Do not stack three squads in one spot to go toe to toe with the Germans, it's just not a feasible tactic. Another strike against the French is the need to not only hold at least three rubble locations, but also to exit 15 VP. The loss of even one squad is quite painful.. The French can also decide to keep the guard and his four POW squads HIP until game end, but then must rely on having more French squads alive at game end so as to come up with the 15 VP needed to fulfill his VC. I would much rather prefer to march my squad and POWs off the west edge rather then risk getting hit by a stray OBA attack, or have Germans troops stumbling into my HIP position. Plus, as stated by the VC, if the POWs are exited off the west edge, they count double, thus the French player's 8 VP of POWs become 16. Now the French squads can be ruthlessly employed without needing to worry about the 15 VP. With the water tower being rubbled by SSR, the French are now unable to use the roof top as an observation post for their light mortar. It was probably the best spot in the French set-up area.

French Deployment and defense:

The French must be aware of German set-up limitations as compared to their own. The farthest German unit is only five hexes away from the French set-up area, thus, within a turn the Germans can be within striking distance of the Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway on level seven. In essence, the French must assume the German player is solely going for building locations and choosing to allow the guards and POWs escape off-board. With this approach there's one less squad to deal with in the French OB. The French player also needs be prudent in regards to the German 81mm mortar and the German radio set-up area. The level 7 hex of V11 is the best spot for the mortar and radio-man to throw mortar rounds and call in the OBA on any possible French positions in the level 7 set-up area.

Now the question beckons: how are the French, with only nine squads and a few leaders and SW going to hold off twenty German squads for six turns? I would venture to guess that deception is the key here and pray for the OBA gods to come to your rescue. Deception can only go so far. The German player will make every effort to canvas the French set-up area in search of any out-of-the-way HIP squads that might try to do an end game charge towards any rubble locations free of German units. Thus, without the OBA coming through for the French, it might be a very short game indeed.

Let's look at what effect the French defenders can have, with the assumption that their OBA will never make an appearance. As I mentioned earlier, the fall-back defense might provide the key to slowing the German advance down. The set-up area for the French is within three hexes of H12. Which means the designer intended for the French to defend the level 7 Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway area. My set-up is as follows: one 4-5-7 is HIP in G12 to overwatch buildings F13, F11 and his own G12. I HIP-ed my HS (I deployed one squad to handle the mortar and the other for my end game charge to take back buildings) with the 60mm mortar in H12. This is a very obvious position to the German player; it is the only decent place where my mortar will have LOS to V11. It will also serve to protect my HIP HS squad in K13 and with a little luck, knock out the German 81mm crew along with the radio-man in V11. I then HIP-ed one 4-5-7 along with the four POW counters in E12, thus within a turn I'm off board with my VP. My 8-0 is HIP-ed in rubble hex H11 with the primary mission to rally any squads falling back from K11 and its adjacent locations. In H10, I have my 9-2 with three 4-5-7s, two LMGs and a MMG. Yes, I realize this is an exception to the rule of stacking a huge portion of my firepower in one hex. The benefit derived from this placement is

to have excellent firepower to await the Germans and good fields of fire, especially down the I11-L12 hexrow with the added insurance of protecting my HIP HS in Hex K13. Also, I do have the option of throwing a fire lane down H9-H6, thus putting a stop to any possible Germans trying a flank attack. Of course, I could be really canny about it and reveal perhaps my LMG squad if he attempts a flanking maneuver and let him think that's all I have in J10.

I have placed my 8-1 and a 4-5-7 in J10 as this is at the furthest point of the French set-up and is meant to slow a rapid German advance. The 8-1 also provides the needed modifiers to knock down the TEMs that surround his location. While I don't expect to surprise the Germans, I'm clinging to the hope that my units in J10 can hold the Germans back for at least one turn. In K11, I placed a HIP 4-5-7 in the rubble that has the mission of slowing down the German advance. Next I placed a HIP 4-5-7 in orchard K12, his task is not to sit still, but during the French movement phase, un-HIP and assault move over to rubble location L11, remaining concealed. I have even taken the liberty of assigning two dummies to his initial HIP location, to add a little deception as to how many units occupy the location. Is it one, two or three? Once more this is a tactical move with desperate measures in mind; to force the Germans to stay cautious, perhaps even get a shot off then fall back into K12. Next, I HIP-ed a HS in K13. This, of course, is another desperate attempt at deception. The hope is that my HIP HS gets bypassed and if the Germans are not garrisoning any of their newly won rubble locations, then I can make one last desperate assault towards some of the VC rubble locations on turn 5 or 6. The icing on the cake would be if my 60mm in H12 managed to knock out the German 81mm mortar in V11.

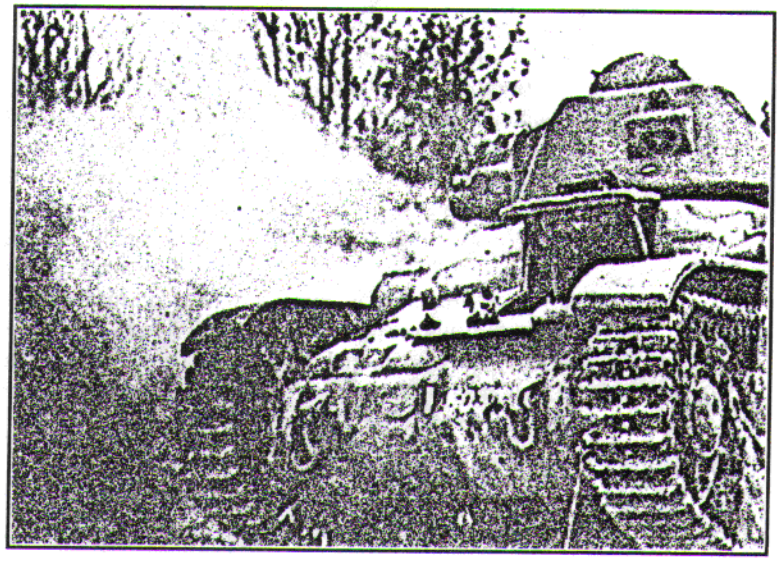
My last 4-5-7 is HIP-ed in rubble location I10 as a back up for the 9-2 leaders MMG squad, should they break and have to rout. I can then shift the squad in I10 over to my 9-2's location and take over as the MMG squad. As for the placement of my dummy concealment counters, I placed two in K11 with the HIP squad in hex G10 and two in H11 to act as sniper bait around my 9-2 leader's location. Two more in J10 with my HIP 8-1 and squad, and the last two concealment counters in K12 with another HIP squad. Also I should emphasize that as the French, you need to shuffle your fake concealment counters around so as to get the most out of deceiving the German player.

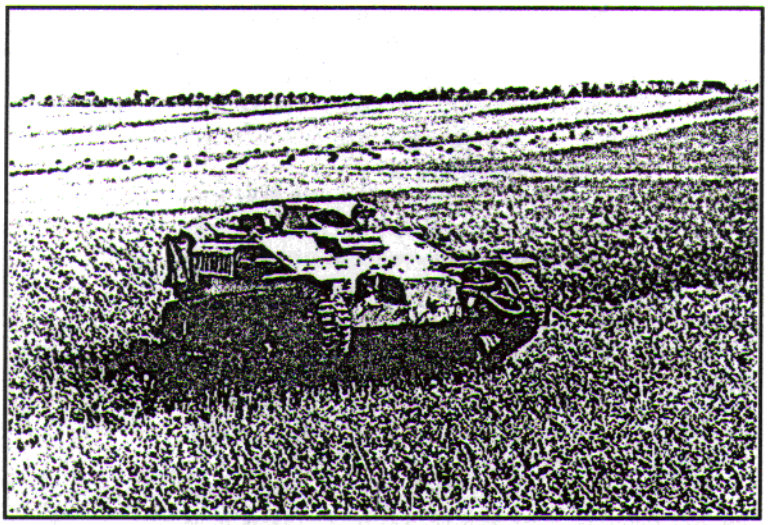
Try to place the Offboard Observer in a spot where the hedges and or orchards don't effect his LOS, since there are quite a few hedges on most of the level 6 locations. To convert your SR, you need to see the base level of the hex, but your primary goal here is to get LOS to the village and most of the level 7 locations, especially V11. If the Germans occupy this hex with their observer and mortar crew and you do get battery access, pound this position with your OBA then switch over to the M11 area to disrupt any concentrated German attack in that area. Placing the Observer in Q22 allows the above LOS possibilities.

German Advantages:

Time (6 turns), numbers, smoke, OBA, decent leadership, firepower, and terrain.

With six turns to traverse up to ten hexes, where the furthest building is located (F11), the Germans have plenty of time to work their way forward and along the way grab a few building near their own set-up area. Here is the most telling difference between the French and Germans in this scenario: the number of squads the Germans have as compared to the French with the Germans having six 5-4-8 and fourteen 4-4-7 squads to attack nine French squads. Originally the French have ten squads, but they lose one to escort the POWs off board. The fact of the matter is the Germans can lose most of their order of battle and still continue to dominate the game. The German mortar is also another key piece in the game, the 81mm can throw smoke rounds at suspected French HIP positions, blinding the





French and giving the Germans a chance to move right on top of the French positions. The Germans have five leaders, their 9-2 being the best of the lot. Here again we find that with such plentiful leadership, the Germans have excellent mobility in overcoming some of the rubble locations they must capture in their quest to win the scenario.

The OBA is another question altogether. Do I assign a leader to the radio and lose the mobility for some of my squads? No, I'll dump the radio and stick that leader with another group of squads to get them forward. Now if the mission also included smoke (which it does not) and was perhaps 100mm or better (it only 75mm OBA and not very effective against stone rubble locations) then perhaps I might set-up a leader with the radio and call in OBA. However, with the firepower of 20 squads, I see no reason to use the radio and waste an 8-0 sitting in back messing around with small caliber OBA when he can be up front pushing his lads forward to victory. As I mentioned above, 20 squads, six of them being 5-4-8s, toting three LMGs, two MMGs, a FT and two DCs, and the 81mm Mortar with its ROF of 3 (it's like having a .50 cal!) is a lot of firepower to bring with the German attack. Terrain also conspires against the French. There are several wrecks littered around the streets of Stonne which affords the Germans plenty of cover in working their way forward.

German disadvantages:

Basically, there are none. With a plethora of squads, firepower, and leadership to throw against the French, I can't really see any disadvantages here. Perhaps if the scenario was a turn less, say five turns, then the Germans might be pressed for time. As it stands now, the Germans are right there in the thick of it with only nine French squads to put up resistance.

German set-up and Attack:

Before I set my units up, I deploy two squads—my 2nd Liners of course. On the attack, the Germans get one 81mm mortar, OBA (if used), fourteen 4-4-7s and six 5-4-8s along with a 9-2, 8-1, three 8-0s, two MMGs, three LMGs, a FT, two DCs, a radio (which I will promptly dump) and ten concealment counters. Before I put cardboard to the map, I like to take a look at the VC. This will determine probable the French deployment, the tempo of my attack, and where I choose to strike. As per the Victory Conditions, the French must have at least three rubble locations at game end. I'm not worried at all about the him exiting the VPs as I'm going for the ruins of Stonne in force. The air support won't do me much good since most of the French OB is HIP or under concealment the first turn. Unless I get lucky in revealing a squad or more, I won't even call in the air support then. Why risk a mistaken attack for so little gain? That's all I would need is to have my own FB attack me. No thanks!

One thing I have learned in playing ASL is to reduce the luck factor as much as possible. Here is how I will initially deploy my units at start. Two 2-3-7s in P12. These guys are my flankers with the objective of searching out the level 6 orchards in K13 and K12. They might get eliminated trying this move but I do have the manpower to throw at the French defenses. One 4-4-7 in the P11 orchard. His mission is to accompany my two HS in P12 and to try and reach L11. The 4-4-7 won't be able to be in L11 at the end of his movement phase due to the high cost to enter such a hex (rubble + higher elevation = 5MF). He can advance into L11 in his APh but will gain a CX counter for traversing difficult terrain (A4.72). Nonetheless, hex L11 is an excellent jumping-off spot into the thick of the French set-up area. Along with my two HS trying to strip away HIP/ concealment in K13 and K12, my 4-4-7 will try to do the same in the K11 and surrounding areas. Two 2-3-7s are placed in P10 at level 6 with one CX-ing towards the church in K9 and the other CX-ing towards L10, then one HS advancing from K9 to K10 and the other HS advancing from L10 to K11. With location K11 more then likely being occupied by the French and K10, still out of the French

set-up area, being an excellent jumping off point into J10 and I10 where the German HS can reap havoc within the French defenses by once more stripping away concealment and HIP. I have a couple of more 4-4-7s on my right flank in building P9 with the sole mission of taking rubble locations in the L7-M8 area.

Following my reconnaissance units comes the *meat* of my infantry, toting the machine-guns, FT, and DCs needed to deal with any Frenchmen that pop their head up out of cover and to root out any stubborn pockets of resistance. My 81mm mortar is obviously placed on the level 7 location of V11 with its primary target being H12, the most logical spot for a French mortar or perhaps a French MG team HIP-ed in that orchard location. The only quandary I find myself in at the start of the scenario is whether to throw a few smoke rounds at suspected French positions or just hammer those positions in hopes of revealing a HIP unit. With the mortar's ROF of 3, it's like firing a .50 cal. in a weird sort of way. As for my ten concealment counters, for me, it's a real no brainer. I will just surround my 81mm mortar with them to reduce the effectiveness of the French sniper trying to knock out my mortar crew with a lucky attack.

Conclusion:

If it were not for the French 105mm OBA having a possible chance of disrupting the German attack, I would then rate this 90% pro German. But the chance for the French to get the OBA is not bad at all with a draw pile of six black and two red. The French should also remember to use harassing fire with their artillery.

One More Try — Stonne #3

Rating: 55% Pro-German

Attraction: Once more the French try to dislodge the IRGD from Stonne, but this time they are throwing the weight of their armor into the fray. Can the IRGD hold the line against this massive French attack? Or will this elite German formation crumble under the massed attack of French infantry and armor...

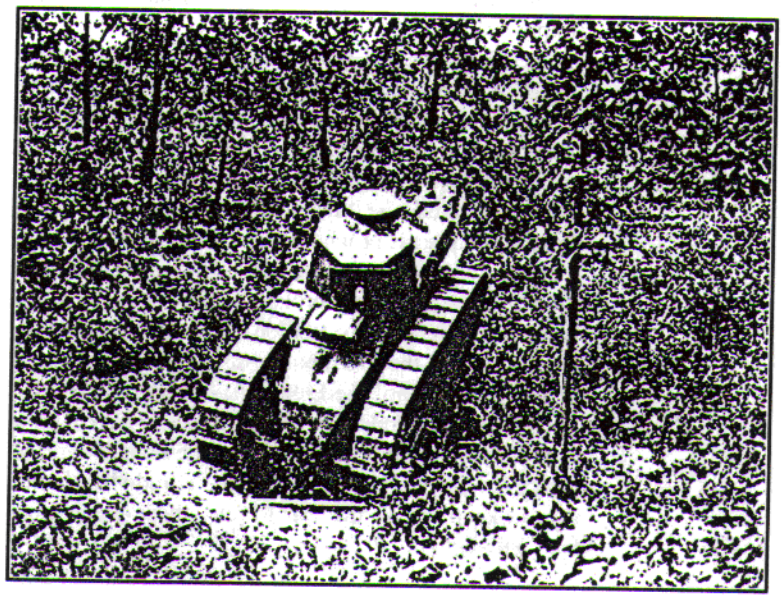
French heavy B1-bis and H39 light tanks along with elite to green troops provide their own version of Blitzkrieg and try to overrun the Germans so as to gain back the majority of Stonne. But first the French must overcome a few obstacles in their way, namely, a German AT-gun screen, a couple of medium 81mm mortars, barbed-wire fences, pesky air support and OBA directed by an observation plane. These will surely play havoc with the French attack, which must control at least 15 rubble locations at games end.

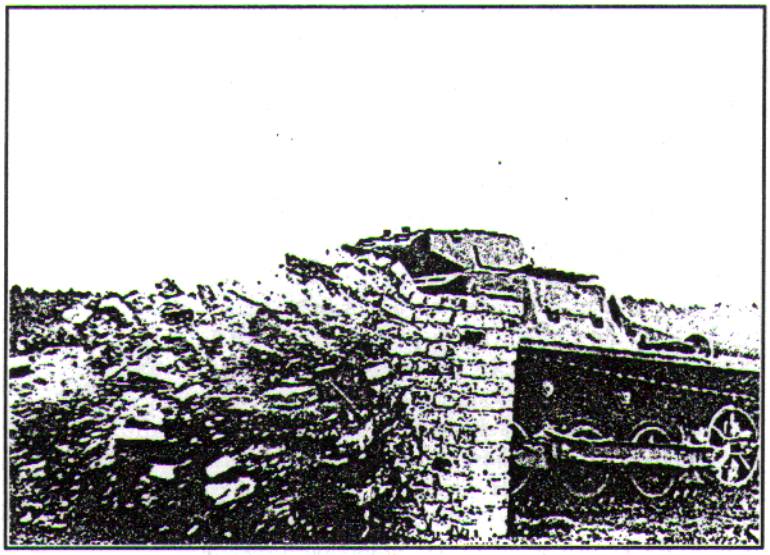
French Advantages:

Armor in the form of heavy B1-bis *chars* and light *chars* of the H39(L) variety, possible use of vehicle 'bypass freeze', large number of squads, Tank Fright (CG13) and the French 9-2 leader.

In this scenario, the French armor is extremely pivotal in giving the French their needed victory yet the French cannot just rely on their tanks to bring them victory. They also must be aware of the potential tank-busting capability possessed by the Grossdeutschland, namely the 37L AT-guns. As for vehicle 'bypass freeze', this is a viable tactic but can also be a drawback if the Axis player's dice are really hot. So it's best for the French armor to stay in motion if they do use the VBM freeze tactic, with the only draw back to this being that the Germans can break and run away since a motion vehicle does not hold infantry in melee.

In Stonne 1940, there is a really nifty little CG SSR called Tank Fright, which reminded me of ASL Scenario A52 "Swan Song" from the 93A Annual which also utilized a tank fright SSR. In this scenario the French can do the same thing: if a tank rolls adjacent to an infantry MMC, the MMC must make PTC or be pinned. Leaders and infantry crews are immune to this rule. This is a very useful tactic when





the French must overcome a really nasty knot of resistance. Tank fright can be used to try and suppress such resistance by moving adjacent to the offending squads and have them take PTCs. If this does not work, there is always the good old VBM freeze tactic. Another advantage the French have are the numbers of squads at their disposal. Three elite, eight 1st Line and thirteen Green squads to try and take back the village of Stonne. In fact, the French have excellent firepower, squad-wise, to throw at the Germans. 80 factors to be exact in infantry firepower alone, added with the MGs we get 102 factors total in combined infantry and MG firepower!

The Germans will have to carefully plan out their set-up so as to chew up the French squads and thereby reduce the French potential to bring to bear massive fire groups on the defenders. The 9-2 French leader is a nice touch to the French OB. Do you stick him with the two HMGs and one MMG or use him to rally back those green squads or whomever else breaks during the French advance? I'd choose the second option because I'll be able to rally my broken squads, especially the green ones, in a timely fashion. It sure is tempting to place him with the MGs, but those MGs will not really be in the fight until the French have taken the level 7 Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway area and have a LOS to J10. Then it will be profitable for the French to place their 9-2 with the HMGs. Until then, it might be a better idea to keep him in the rear to rally those green guys back into action.

French disadvantages:

H39's are radioless, red MP (Note CG SSR 14), not enough leaders, and barbed-wire fences.

Though the French do not suffer the numerous disadvantages they did in prior Stonne 1940 scenarios e.g., Stonne #1 and #2, nonetheless, the three above disadvantages are huge in their impact on French play. First off, even though the French vehicle notes list the H39s as having black MPs, Pedro must have done further research into the matter and found that a good portion of the H39s were of low production standards, hence the red MPs. Now we have eleven French AFVs cruising around with red MP numbers, six H39(L) types and five B1-bis types which means plenty of Mechanical Reliability (D2.51) dice rolling to get these tanks going. The chances for breakdown rise dramatically due to so much rolling. Another big problem for the French is the presence of barbed-wire fences (P3) all along the French approach to the level 7 Rue Du Bout D'En Haut road way area. The French are not restricted to entering along just the west edge; they can also enter on a portion of the south edge map also. That, though, really puts pressure on the French attack due to being so far from the village and what is, in my opinion, a normal amount of time to attack from the west now becomes barely enough time to take the rubble locations. This is primarily due to the many hedges and fences on the southern approach to attack Stonne. Yes, there is a road, the Rue du Bas, which goes directly into the village. The French player must be aware, though, that the Germans will more than likely have this entry area covered by at least one AT-gun (they get three) and at least one 81mm mortar (they get two) along with a few troops to harass both the French armor and infantry. Though it might not be much initially, it will be enough to slow the French advance down and thus give time for the IRGD to shift its defense to Stonne proper.

French and German Attack/Defense options:

As noted above, a march on the southern approach to Stonne will consume too much time. On the bright side, if the German player did place an AT-gun in the N17 area (there are three rubble locations) it could be considered a loss to him due to being out of place and not enough time to manhandle the gun into a better location. The French can attack along both the west edge of the Stonne map and along part of the southern edge of the playing area. I like attacking along the west

edge just because it puts me within striking distance of Stonne. My only concern here is the lack of cover along the approach and the fact that the Germans can set-up at least three hexes away from any French entry area. Another reason for the west approach is to get close enough to the Germans so that calling in the German OBA might be risky due to the proximity of his own troops and possible HIP AT-gun. I will also use Armored Assault (D9.31) along my route of attack. I won't CX my Armored Assaulting units because CX units may not cross over barbed-wire fences and I want these guys ready to pound any Germans along the crest line of E10 to E14 with as few DRMs as possible.

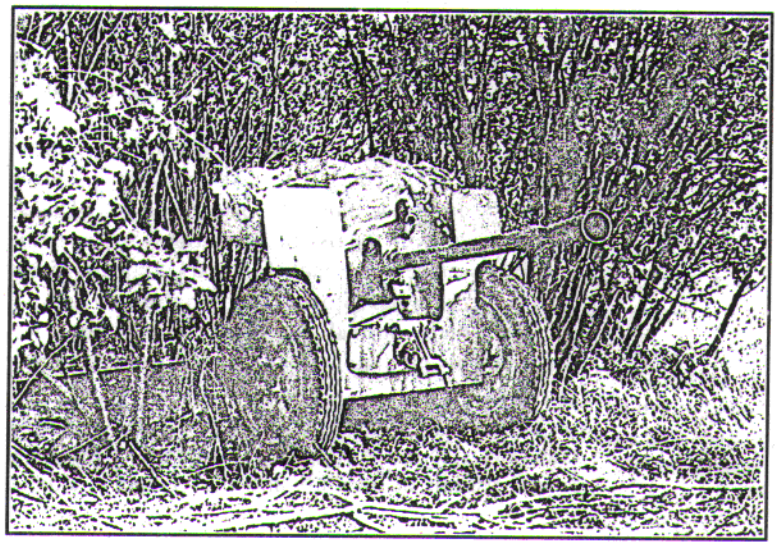
For recon purposes I will deploy two of my green squads. These four HS will be the first to enter play and they will CX adjacent to the E10 to E14 crest line. Of course only two of the four HS will actually make it to the crest line due to the barbed-wire fences in the path of the attack. I will then deploy 1 first line squad and have each carry a 60mm mortar.

Basically, this is how I am going to enter my French units. I'll dismantle my HMGs, MMGs and 60mm mortars. My four green recon HS will set-up from A17-A14, along with them will be my H39s setting up from A14 to A19. A word I think is in order on how CH handles the entry areas. If scenario says to use entry area E, there is a 9 hex entry area, i.e., 1 2 3 4 E 6 7 8 9. My French units' entry area is E and F, E being along the west edge portion of the map and F being along the south edge portion of the map.

Behind my H39s and recon squads, I have three each 4-3-7s at A14, A15, and A16 and two 4-3-7s at A17. Behind them starting again from A14 to A18 I now have my B1-bis tanks and my Elite and 1st Line infantry entering using Armored Assault. B1-bis with an 8-0, three 4-5-7s and LMGs at A14, B1-bis, with an 8-1, three 4-5-8s, dismantled HMG x 2 and one dismantled MMG at A15. A B1-bis with the two 1st Line HS each toting a dismantled mortar at A16, a B1-bis with three 4-5-7s at A17, and a B1-bis with two 4-5-7s at A18. Lastly we have the French 9-2 and 7-0 bringing up the rear; the 9-2 at A16 and the 7-0 at A15 with the task of getting any broken units back in action as soon as possible.

I have three options here with my H39s and all is dependent on how the Germans set-up and to what my recon HS discover. If there are numerous Germans set-up along the E10 to E14 level 7 ridge line, I'll use my H39s to activate CG SSR 13 (tank fright) and if that does not work, I'll just enter the German locations (this is not an overrun, just an attempt to occupy the Germans location). If the Germans set-up AT-guns along the ridge, I'll try to occupy any gun hexes in sight with my H39s. I'm confident my tough armor will carry me through! As for my French plan of attack, I plan on using my green squads to overload the German defenses along the level 7 Rue Du Bout D'En Haut roadway area along with liberal use of H39s to cause PTCs to any German infantry MMC. Once I've secured the Rue Du Bout D'En Haut hill mass, I'll then relive my 9-2 of rear area rally duties and start using him to direct fire into the village of Stonne proper.

I'll once more use my AFVs to instill fear into the hearts of the Nazi invaders. Stay dispersed when attacking as the French, the Germans have air support (E7) and OBA directed by an observation plane (E7.6), so the French infantry and armor will have no real way to avoid an attack from one of these weapons. It is wise to expect a few loses from both. While it's nice having those B1-bis tanks around, with the ability to roll over the German defenders as they please or whatever else the inventive French player might have planned, the German 37L AT-guns have a pretty good chance of inflicting Deliberate Immobilization ([D.I] C5.7) on the B1-bis tanks. Try to keep them out of harms way at the beginning of the scenario and use them for Armored Assault. Once the level ridge is cleared of any German AT-gun threat then move the B1-bis tanks up on the level ridge along hexes E10, F10, G11, H11 (this hex contains a rubbled location, so a bog check (D8.2) is



necessary) and H12. Once the B1-bis tanks reach these locations, it would be in their best interest to do a HD Maneuver (D4.2) so as to avoid Deliberate Immobilization from any possible HIP AT-gun in the rubbled village proper.

Now the French will have an ersatz 75mm artillery from the B1-bis tanks firing into the rubbled village of Stonne. This is what the French player has to keep in mind, that all building locations, as per SSR, are rubbled, so there really is no place for the Germans to hide from the fury of the B1-bis tanks. Shell away! Next, try to get the French 9-2 with the HMGs into hex H11, concealed if at all possible. He to can join in the task of raining down lead on the German defenders. Next, start regrouping whatever other units are still available to the French and have the 1st Line units work their way over the level 7 hill into the village of Stonne following close behind the H39s, while the latter should either be using Tank Fright or VBM freeze on the Germans

That concludes my take on the first three scenarios for Stonne 1940. One thing I do hope for is when I do go ASLOK; I'll have a chance to at least play one of these neat scenarios.

Stonne Commentary by Pedro Ramis

Now that you have finished Mr. Holst's 'take' on the first few scenarios from my Stonne 1940, I comment on some questions received from Stonne enthusiasts:

Q: The rules indicate that the only fortifications available for purchase are foxholes, mines, "?", and HIP. As mentioned, FP (Fortification Points) are not listed as a German RG. Was this an oversight? Was it due to the fact that the Germans historically were in the process of a "Blitzkrieg" with an emphasis on maneuver and very little interest in establishing fortifications?

A: German orders were for the Infantry Regiment *Grossdeutschland* (IRGD) to take the village and to secure the front-line along the quite large Bois-De-la-Grande-Cote (with the risk of infiltration). So, the main line of resistance was established two kilometers to the Northwest between Stonne and Artaise-le-Vivier. I decided that normal scenario procedures for concealment and digging foxholes was enough for the Germans.

Q: Let's say the French player takes one of his fanatic chits and sets up in the stone buildings. Making a frontal assault up the hill into the village is almost impossible—you're attacking fanatics in stone vs. having normal morale and being in woods.

A: I have played the initial scenario about twelve times, about half of it as the Germans. Experience has revealed that a deployed assault—with infantry in a long line and a maximum of one squad per hex—can crack the French defense in a few turns, allowing for an encirclement from the west and east. Of course, this is not an easy task and your French counterpart will try and forestall your plans. Suffice it to say it *can* be done and *has* been done in game terms on numerous occasions. Keep your morale up and do it!

Q: On the far right side of the map the Germans can get up the hill but then must cross a large open ground area.

A: You speak of the approach from hexrows A-K, i.e., the west (note the directional arrow next to the game turn boxes on the map). I usually advance a line of concealed squads on the southern limits of the A4-E5 woods and some more (often unconcealed) from G5 to I6. This is the larger part of my OOB. Note that a smaller force will be in J5-L6, and that, according to the NEW DAY DAWNING historical example, six motorcycle squad are accompanying the tanks. The next step is an Assault Move of one squad each of the entire line in the open with a second line still in the Woods—you have the option open here to Prep Fire then Advance—more often than not some French AFVs will be meeting you. Without too much luck, you'll soon have the possibility to apply large FP attacks (24 to 36) on the French defending the western limits. In the end, if the French defense doesn't collapse, you can still hope to reach the first buildings near the Level 7 hill. One very important thing: use infantry smoke to the max!

Q: The far left (where the TVP are) can be covered by a simple OBA module. With an Offboard Observer (since that is all the French can have), he's pretty much guaranteed radio contact. Barring two red chits, he's raining OBA down on 7 morale troops in a woods area.

A: Yes, but the accuracy is not at its best. LOS is crucial! The Germans must place Smoke (sD) in any way they can to obscure LOS.

Q: The scenario victory conditions ('Objectives') say the Germans win the initial VC if he takes 18 buildings. What were you thinking? Did four year olds test this thing or is this what I can expect from future Pedro Ramis designs? The way it is currently set, the German should win if they take one building! I keep looking for some way that it would be possible. Perhaps

someone with more than my five brain cells can enlighten me?

A: While yours truly 'qualifies' on the brain cell scale you specify, if you check the list of playtesters, you'll see that some of them are not bad players! A lucky German (not me) took *all* the buildings and crushed the French force entirely (that was me, the unlucky Frenchman—oh yes, it hurts). A very unlucky German (me) only took one building after a very hard struggle. A German (not me) took 15 buildings but had suffered too many casualties to gain more (28 squads eliminated). In the last play that I did as the Germans, I reached the 15 buildings requirement of New Day Dawning but only had six Good Order squads in the village during the last player turn. A lot of the DM squads needed one more turn to recover. I suggest you play this out and trust you'll find it is an achievable objective. PR

NEW! VALOR OF THE (37th) GUARDS

You didn't think we were going to do all this new Combat! Stalingrad stuff and forget about our loyal Squads & Leaders following, now did you?



This is a VARIANT. Owner-

Of course not! The Battle of Stalingrad comes alive again in **THE VALOR OF THE GUARDS: THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD**, our new set for the Squad-leading enthusiast that owns Red Barricades™.

Valor of the Guards consists of nine new scenarios, all set on a gorgeous large-hex map rendition of the Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works. No, this is not Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works in a second edition; the scenarios are all new! We've kept the price cheap for this add-on. Valor of the Guards includes 9 new scenarios, one campaign game, all printed on card-stock, plus special rules and a 22 x 34 map with 1" hexes (they love those big hexes!)

This is the product the Stalingrad nuts have been asking for since the release of DTW! (Ownership of Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works not needed to use this product.)

News and Notes continued from page 3

Our recent 'Hexagon Times' mailer provided this writer the opportunity to speak with dozens of our readers by phone, which was really great. One of the most common refrains heard was the need for quick-playing actions due to constraints on time resulting from work and family obligations. A brief perusal of this issue's offerings should show that we are leaning toward shorter, more playable actions in response to your wishes. The feedback about our recent 'Hells Bridgehead' (designed by Dave Lamb) module includes comments about its refreshing 'throwback to Beyond Valor™' feel, due surely to the straight-forward Eastern Front actions the game contains. Dave is working on his second Kursk module, depicting the action at Ponyri, at the time of this writing. Our regular CG customers will also note we are leaning toward shorter campaign games in recent module releases. This is no accident and is in keeping with your wishes.

Not surprisingly, we've received a few queries about our publishing schedule. For the record CH magazine is back on track with this issue in your hands and another off to the printers for year-end 2000. We continue to offer the four-issue subscription at $39.00 US, a great deal when compared to the price of each issue ($15.95 for a 'regular' and $19.95 for each Special Edition) and competing magazines (upwards of $30.00 for one issue).

Stonne 1940 gets a lot of attention in this issue. We'll be bringing you this kind of coverage of other CH modules in future issues. Of course, each issue will include new scenarios based on geomorphic boards (in keeping with our 'Scenario Pack in every issue' pledge) but keen attention will be paid to the history and game play of our extensive and growing line of modules. As in this issue, when we see the chance to increase the enjoyment of a module with new counters or play aids (or both as in this issue) we won't hesitate to do so. Upcoming issues will treat GENESIS '48 and Scotland the Brave I-II extensively.

What of the future? With the rulebook coming back into print we can hope for some new blood in a hobby that has been at risk of seeing its overall following diminish in the absence of any entry path. There has been no shortage of enthusiastic and creative submissions around these parts. With the 'issue' of CH magazine in hand, we'll be focusing 100% of our attention on getting the long-awaited GENESIS '48 out the door (it should be off to the printers by the time you read this). New variants depicting action from WW I to Vietnam (and all wars in between) are in hand and will be focused on for release as we move forward. Darrell Andersen's Uncommon Valor II is in hand at the time of this writing, as is Dave 'Ogre' Dally's 'Item Pocket', our second Okinawa module. Two modules from designer Dan Dolan are in hand awaiting completion, Deir el Shein (Follow-up to Ruweisat Ridge) and a Wake Island game.

A note is in order about our 'Ordeal Before Shuri' module. Unknowing customers have assumed this is the 'same' battle depicted in a recent Annual. Not the case. 'Ordeal Before Shuri' covers a much wider portion of the Kakazu Ridge battlefield, including the village of Kakazu, Nishi-Baru Ridge and a much wider stretch of this hotly contested

continued on page 25

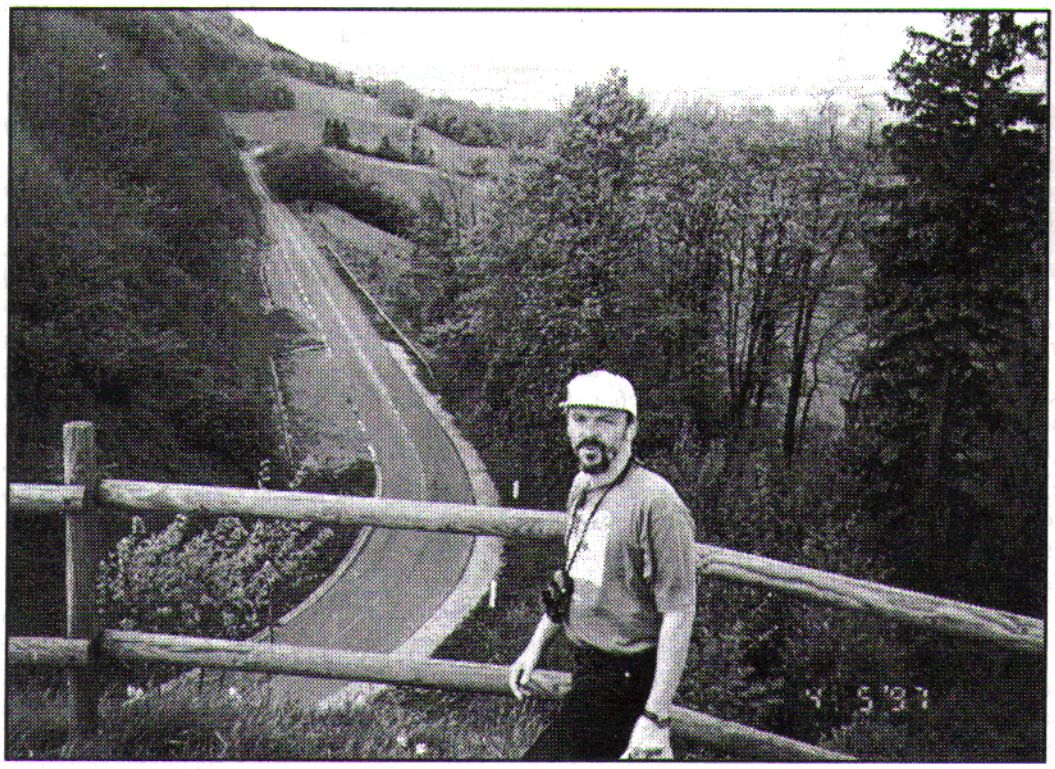
THE MAKING OF

Do you remember the Gung-Ho™ release? A time of tenderness. Napalm on some dark cave and drowning landing crafts. For we that were considered module designers came an order issued by one Bob MacNamara to send scenarios in for the upcoming French module, Croix-de-Guerre™.

Time was very short to send submittals and I just concentrated on creating one scenario using a very large overlay for Board 2. The overlay represented a 'Hill Village' (lacking in the system at the time) and the scenario was entitled 'Trial of Strength'. Having read a bit on the Battle of Sedan in a few books like *To Lose a Battle* and *Grossdeutschland, Volume I*, the old scenario "Counterstroke At Stonne" (a *chestnut* from the days of Crescendo of Doom™) appeared to be one of those *terribly* researched SL thingies. This only lead to an AH rebuttal: "...our CAS scenario already covers this action". At that moment yours truly kept open the possibility of having the overlay printed in the Belgian magazine ASL News, but with more stuff cooking up I buried this idea under a lot of my 9-5 (day job!) work. Then came two things: first, a letter from the Old ASL Spirit himself—Mr. Rex Martin—asking all designers to send CGs (on a three regular boards format) to the 'Hill'. The concept of mini-HASL CGs had been laid out and this sent me re-reading a lot of books in my spare time. The second thing was the publication of *Les Combats du Mont-Dieu*, a French book centered on the area of Stonne and the fighting of May 15 to June 11, 1940. I then hit on the idea of a very beautiful Campaign Game based on this battle. Just think: both sides with tanks, infantry, difficult terrain, lots of action, funny AFVs (AMR ZT3 and Pionier Pz I), aerial combat. Ah, the thought of it!

The French TO&E benefited from the author's five years of research done for Croix-de-Guerre™. When researching the German motorized units, the best material on hand was Dr. Leo Niehorster's existing books and other works such as Tom Jentz's "Panzertruppen". The German infantry unit, in this case the 16th Infantry Division (Infanterie Division or 'ID'), had the standard 1940 order of battle as found in *The Handbook on German Infantry*, a commonly used source.

I drew the first draft map using a 1943 British map at 1:50,000 scale. After buying a few books and uncovering a few units' diaries to complete basic research, the first thing that was discovered was that the German 29th Motorized Division was *not* the unit that replaced *Grossdeutschland* in the front line, but the 16th Infantry Division instead! Written history corrected!



Work progressed through the first four scenarios and a skeleton CG. Big questions began popping up, including the question of the presence of *Sturm-Pionier Bn. 43* and *Pionier Bn. 64* for instance: did they use flame-throwers? If yes, to what extent? Where there mines?

The gamers enjoyment level at playing my Stonne CG project had to be ascertained. A try at "A New Day Dawning" was sufficient to prove the validity of Stonne as a module. My old pal, Jan Himschoot, (of

STONNE 1940

by Pedro Ramis

"Lehr Sanction" fame) took the Germans and we enjoyed playing Stonne a great deal. Then we drove to the village of Stonne and checked the terrain. We took the game map with us, and a book or two, and headed to Sedan. Skies were a little cloudy but largely blue and the sun was shining brightly. Ah, the June 1940 'feel' was right for our first visit. We rambled through places full of significance for two historians playing wargame designers. Bois de la Marfée, Chéhéry, Connage, Chémery, Artaise-Le-Vivier, then a windy country road lead us to a small crossroads at the very edge of that steep hill that had barred the horizon for the last 10 kilometers. One hundred meters above us were sited the houses of that village that saw so much blood—Stonne. I couldn't help but shiver, just like the first time I walked the Stoumont battlefield (featured in Kampfgruppe Peiper I™) with Philippe Leonard.

There was not much to be seen in the actual village—since all the buildings but two very small ones were utterly destroyed during the 1940 battle—nothing tells any tales. Except for that water-tower on the higher ground at the end of the village, the shapes of the streets are basically the same, with a relic, a 47mm SA antitank gun meeting you in front of the church. Climbing the Pain-de-Sucre, one comprehends at once why it was so important to control that spot: it's the perfect artillery observation post! The view is clear for at least 15 kilometers towards the Meuse, the river itself being visible in a few places; just what the French needed! The same visibility also exists when you look at the other side: the beautiful valleys of the Champagne offered their splendor to German artillery observers—and whetted their thirst to conquer them!

We talked to a *mademoiselle*, asking politely if she knew a few of the householders' name...from 1940. She looked at our 'map' with the look reserved for encounters of the third kind but gave us a few answers. All the buildings were destroyed. A lot of the villagers never came back after the war (population fell from 160 inhabitants to 14), an indemnity was received for each destroyed house but most villagers preferred to build their new homes in the proximity of nearby larger towns. Evacuation of all civilians was complete on the 14 May 1940 (Civilian Interrogation NA—another one bites the dust).

Equipped with the address of the mayor, stated to be "an historian of the battle", but lacking time to meet him, we returned home. The game map was amended and a letter was send to Mister Lefebvre, Mayor of Stonne. He very kindly replied with a treasure attached to his letter: two maps at the 1:2,000 scale which were copies of the 1939 military maps. These came along with a report made by the architect sent by the Ministry for Reconstruction in 1942 to evaluate the destruction and the indemnity that each owner would be entitled to receive. This document had all the landowners fully named and ownership of every parcel of terrain neatly delineated. Mr. Lefebvre gave me his telephone number and we arranged a rendezvous while I was on vacation in the Ardennes in the summer of 1994.

By the time I returned to Stonne, a new game map had been created, this time using large hexes and a reduced playing area to avoid counter congestion. From the start I had been confronted with two main problems: the heights of levels and the cemetery. The first one was nothing new for me since I had been confronted with exactly the same issue when creating the map of Cheneux (used in KGP I). It was necessary to use 15 meter elevation changes to limit the number of levels (and associated colors). But this is not too much of a problem—what I took care was to limit the number of higher levels to an acceptable limit. No upper level in the buildings for instance—with the exception of the water tower rooftop and the church steeple, both quite valid in view of the existing LOS limitations. I then erased a lot of slopes when I realized they provided some unrealistic results, only keeping those that seemed 'right' in light of my walk of the land.. The second problem was the cemetery. This provided a real quandary.. To place it where it belonged, in the triangle of open ground at the west of the church, led to lot of rules problems or a real distortion of the village. All this simply because it's an inherent terrain that could not co-exist with hexside terrain such as narrow streets. Not wanting to distort the village by keeping the roads in complete hexes, I finally got rid of both the cemetery and its small walls.

Sixteen drafts later, relocating the houses and streets (a mere forty hours of work), scenarios played at least once, and the CG progressing, the main elements were in place when I paid my visit to the mayor with my wife and 9-month old daughter in tow. This visit paid rich dividends. Mr. Lefebvre let me read some books that I didn't have and lent me a lot of his German archives, including the Grossdeutschland, 10th Panzer, 16th Infantry Division, as well as a peek at his collection of pictures from the battle and from the pre-war village. I had another mayor to visit, this time Mr. Baudier of

nearby Vouziers. He was in touch with veterans of the battle and we exchanged a lot of documents.

In the following weeks, the playtest kit took shape. Labeled "Stonne Heights", it was ready in time to attract the eyes of a few players that had come to the special gathering that ASL News organized at the village of La Gleize for the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in 1994. I was co-editor of ASL News and acted as Secretary in addition to writing in each issue—that slowed work on Stonne, mind you! And a wife and a baby too didn't help 'speed' things along.

One last note. One special appeal of the Stonne CG: there are no night scenarios! This will hopefully convert a good number of regular players into CG fighters.

The Battle As Viewed By A Wargamer

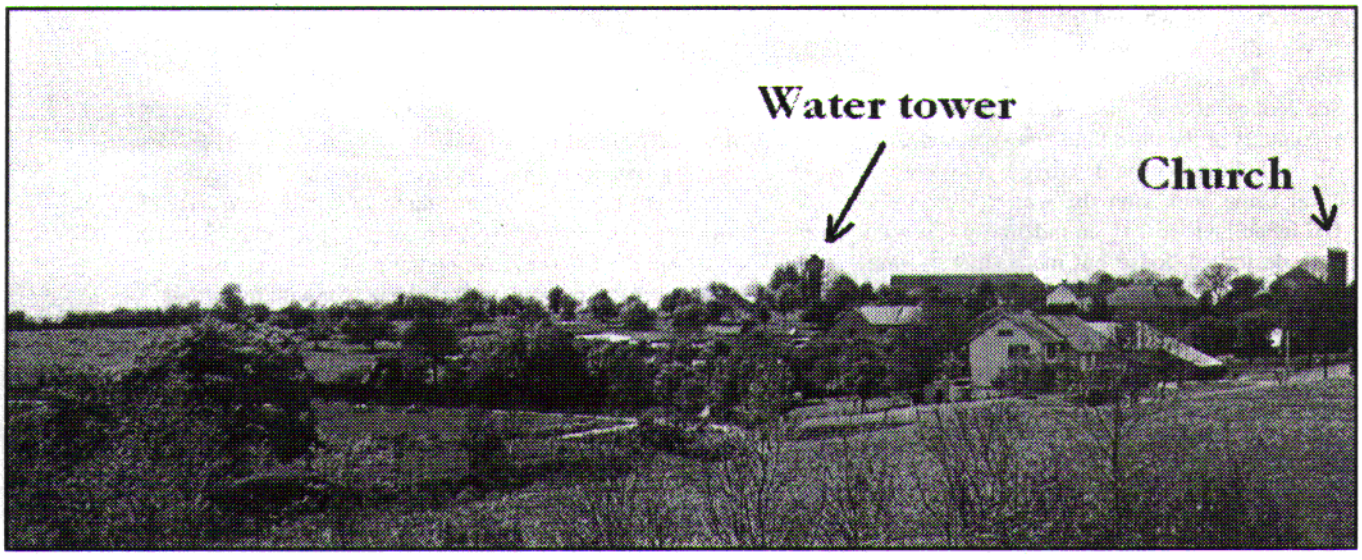
The time has come to give details of the battle itself. My intention is to proceed with a partial daily account of the battle starting with the events of the 13th and 14th of May to give the gamer a 'feel' for the overall action.

Preamble: Sedan, 13 May 1940

One of the most common falsehoods about the Battle of France 1940 is that the French GHQ thought the Ardennes to be totally impassable. In fact, the Germans were expected to cross the Ardennes, *but* that crossing was expected to take two to three more days than it actually did. Furthermore, French GHQ expected the German attempt to cross the Meuse, but only after an intense artillery duel. The thinking was that another three days would be necessary to establish artillery positions and ammunition dumps to support such an operation. The French based their defensive plan on the principle that the main line in front of the Meuse would be reinforced with strong units after the first week of the war. This was without knowing of the might and relative speed of the Panzer Divisions and the decisive role of the Stukas. Blitzkrieg speed and power still came as a surprise to the French command, even after its debut in Poland.

The Germans held a small bridgehead over the Meuse by late afternoon on May 13 and started to expand it by sending unit towards the Bois De La Marfée. Panic spread like wild-fire among French artillery-men at the scream of "Chars!". No German tank was to cross the Meuse for a few more hours but the effect of panic was irreversible: French gunners fled from the battle, abandoning their equipment. A good number of infantry reservists followed them to the rear. Not only did they run, but also they blocked all the roads into the area, rendering reinforcement almost impossible for a time. A few units stayed in place despite the panic—hard fighting and heavy losses in places like Thélonne, Bulson, Chémery and Raucourt were the result of these stalwarts holding their positions—they should not be forgotten.

The French Corps commander then made a real blunder, ordering his troops to retreat to the second line of resistance. The Germans soon found themselves freed of the enemy on their left flank for about 15 kilometers,





allowing them to concentrate their troops with impunity.

Dark hours, Sedan 14 May 1940

On the May 14 the German bridgehead was consolidated, the first Panzers arriving on the front line in time to stop the French counterattacks near Connage and Bulson.

French FCM 36 formations were decimated and their supporting infantry withdrew. At the end of the day, Guderian decided to pursue the *sickle* plan by changing the axis of attack of the 1st and 2nd Panzer Divisions to the west. The *Infantry Regiment Grossdeutschland* and the 10th Panzer Division (which was much delayed in its crossing of the Meuse) were given orders to secure the southern flank of the bridgehead while the 1st and 2nd Panzer Divisions completed the rupture of the western part of the front. Meanwhile, two elite French Divisions, General Brocard's 3ème DCR (Division Cuirassée de Réserve) and General Bertin-Boussu's 3ème DIM (Division d' Infanterie Motorisée) were driven to the front as fast as possible through a constant flow of demoralized soldiers. They were sent forward on a two-fold mission: to seal the gap and to prepare a counter-stroke against the German bridgehead. How such diverging orders could be performed at a single stroke is not known; a counterattack requires a concentration of force, while a defensive line leads to a dilution of force. Alas, the counter-stroke had to be postponed: due to the heavy road traffic. And all the French tanks had to stop to refuel, an operation that took about five hours due to the lack of *camion-citerne* and the fact that each gas tank had to be filled manually. Then the ambiguity of the given orders took effect. A great proportion of the *Chars* were dispersed in small platoons of one Char B1-bis and two H35s to form corks (roadblocks) along all possible lines of enemy penetration to comply with the defense order.

A new deadline for the counterattack was then given on the afternoon of May 15. In the meantime, the first units of the 3ème DIM took up their positions on the second defensive line at Stonne, namely, the 1st Battalion of the 67ème RI and the GRDI/6. Strangely enough, the 67ème started digging a defensive line (mainly fox-holes) in open ground about 300 meters south of the village between the Bois du Mont-Dieu and the Mont-Damion.

The mission for both combatants was the same: hold the Stonne heights—a prominent massif that allowed observation of the landscape up to 14 kilometers away at 280 degrees. Heaven for artillery-spotting..

The scene was thus set for the bitter struggle at this place. What resulted was one is the bloodiest battles of the 1940 Blitzkrieg Era; one that has been rarely written about in any length due to national pride on the part of both combatants. German historians seem loathe to tarnish their Blitzkrieg *legend* by telling tales of fleeing troops, certainly not if this includes the Grossdeutschland and the 10 Panzer Division. The French seemingly neglect the deeds of the 3rd DCR and the accompanying 3rd DIM, since the battle was a failure on the strategic level.

A NEW DAY DAWNING - Stonne 15 May

At 0430 hours a tank column coming from Stonne on the road to La Berlière was stopped by Lt. Chambert, CO of the 2nd platoon/1st Coy/45e BCC. The Chars are FCM 36 of the 2 Coy/ 4e BCC. Separated from the rest of their battalion, they stay in the sector of Stonne for three days. They were then sent to the rear and refueled to be ready to assist the 67th Infantry Regiment (RI). Mist covered the land and visibility was very bad.

At dawn, the German attack began. Panzers entered the Rue Principale in a single column. Sgt. Durand of the 67e RI (in hex P11) quickly took his place at the sights of a well-concealed 25mm SA-L mle 34 antitank gun and shot the first German AFV from less than 30 meters (Q11). The tank burst into flames. The following Panzer passed at two or three meters from the gun seconds before Durand's next shots destroyed the third tank. During that time a Panhard armored car was destroyed in front of the first house on the right side of the street (in Q10). French troops withdrew towards the second line of resistance. A second 25mm antitank gun was sited at the front of the Boizet's house (K8); another was in the vicinity of K13. Five German AFVs were destroyed, but two or three got through.

Panic started to spread among the French infantry when they found themselves in the open pursued by two Panzer IVs firing at point blank. The massacre continued for a few minutes until a French antitank gun under command of Lt. Sallabery arrived at the southern outskirts of the village (possibly near E11). Placed in an enfilade position, Sallabery first saw a 6-wheeled Laffly car manned by Germans exit the village on the road to Les Grandes Armoises. It was dispatched quickly when a Panzer IV suddenly appeared. A quick kill was achieved on that one too (both were killed near E13). A third vehicle (another Pz IV?) turned about and re-entered the village. At that moment a great number of German riflemen were assaulting the village from the west in an encircling movement, having reached the plateau through the Bois De La Grande Côte (from A4 to D5). Meanwhile, a second French armored car had been destroyed, this time an old Citroen-Kegresse (P16). Stonne had fallen into German hands for the first time. Time was 0500. Note that the presence of a wrecked Panzer is listed near hex B7 in some French documents.

The type of close-in action among the 'gardens' of Stonne continued for much of the battle and the accounts above are fairly typical examples. The end result of the Stonne CG design-experience was to provide this same 'feel' to gamers. In this I humbly declare myself successful. Write to the author care of Critical Hit with your comments, especially if you disagree with my conclusion.

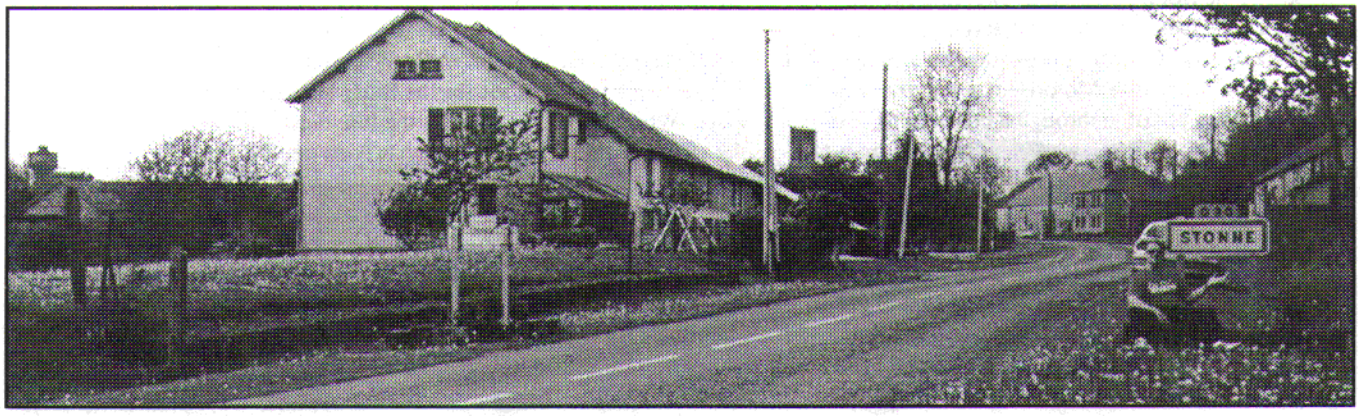
PHOTO NOTES:

Photo on page 18: Viewed from the edge of the Pain-de-Sucre looking WNW (west-northwest). This pictures shows clearly the steepness of the hills and near cliff condition. Remember that the elevation change between the portion of road visible at the upper right corner of the picture and the top of the hill to the left is 100 meters.

Photo on page 20: The water tower and church are clearly shown to be the highest terrain in Stonne.

Photo on page 21: The village's southern exits viewed from the Pain-de-sucre. In the foreground is hex T11. The sunken road at the foot of the Pain-de-sucre is out of view. The Rue d'en bas and the road leading to it are plainly visible. In the mean center of the picture, it is clear that yesterday's edge (bordering the west of the road from M12 to N13 overgrew almost to Bocage proportion. Also visible are today's farm building extensions into L12.

Photo on page 22: Pedro research-pal Brian Martuzas seen at the entrance to the village of Stonne.



Stonne 1940 Errata, Clarifications and Q&A

Errata:

- CG SSR 43 should read 15 AMb instead of 15AMa.
- The "4-4-7" squads in scenario Stonne #3 should be 4-3-7 squads.
- Each RG SW is received on a dr <=4 (if depleted, dr <=3)
- IFSR should state that the LV lasts five turns. CGSR 34 is correct.

By Scott Holst

French CG Card

- The French CP for FP is M2: 1 CP - 2 max/FF - 2 max/CG (4 max is for a future CG III).
- Contrary to PL2.x, French mines cost 8FP/AP Factor and 20FP/AT Factor.
- CG Note I should read 'AFV only' instead of 'Fully Tracked AFV only'. Consolidated Note 't' should read "See CGSR #15".

Campaign Game Q&A and Clarifications

Initial Firefight

Q: Do the Initial Firefight CP suffer from the reduction DR?

A: Yes.

Q: How does the Initial Firefight attacker get decided?

A: There is no ATTACKER/DEFENDER in the INITIAL Firefight since (as stated in CGSR 41) VCs are not based on the Dual Attack or Side Assault terms but on the Initial Firefight Objectives found on the CG Card.

Q: Is the French AMR ZT3 in the Initial Firefight OB part of the triangle parent unit (and thus is withdrawn at the end of 15 PMb)?

A: Yes.

Q: Does IFSR #3 indicate that these French receive free HIP?

A: Yes.

Setup/Entry

Q&A: The initial OB granted by the scenario is restricted to areas A, B, C, and/or the road running from D0 to P7. Although additionally purchased RGs may utilize area D for a price, any RG listed in the initial OB as well as any RG purchased with the 34 CPs is restricted to the same Entry Areas A, B, C or road D0-P7 for the Initial FF.

Q: My MLR is basically all along the plateau hill line with a portion of the plateau around C9. For deployment in the next fire fight can I put vehicles in this area of plateau even though they have no legal route there [woods, mined sunken road and entry D]/

A: Set up is in ACCESSIBLE locations - the locations are not accessible to vehicles since the path of hexes leading to the Friendly Entry Areas is through terrain impassable to vehicles (Woods-CG SR).

Purchases

Q: According to the CG card, the Germans are limited to 4 attack options; French 3. The purchase of an attack chit is not listed on the RG card. Is the attack option simply selected?

A: Yes.

Q: Is the Tank Type dr per unit or per Pltn (Platoon)?

A: Per Pltn (with CGSR 30.1 on countermix limitation).

Q: Are the Germans allowed to buy FPP?

A: The Germans may not purchase fortifications.

Q: Are French leaders received at 1:4 squads or 1:3 ?

A: 1:3.

Q: I9 (Assault Eng Coy) and I10 (Arm Aslt Eng Coy); are they really 338's?

A: Yes. (The tactical structure of the engineer unit in the 1940 Panzer Division crammed them into the relatively small SPW 251 along with their engineer stuff lead to a very small (5-6 men) squad that can only be represented by HS in Platoon Leader terms.)

Q: Is the table in CG SSR 44 use for officer replacement? With a its a good chance that the French get 8 officer upgrades in the RePH!

A: Yes. True!

Map

Q: K7 is different level on play aid from map. What level are the woods in C6, M7, E4, E5, F4, E5?

A: The crest line is too close to the hex center - the hex IS level 6.

Here is a listing of the Levels along the Bois-De-La-Grande-Cote:

Level 6: A4-B4-C5-D5-E5-F5-G6-H6-I7-J6-K7-L7-M8-N8-O9-P8...

Level 5: A3-B3-C4-D4-E5-F5-G5-H5-I6-J6-K7-L6-M7-N7-O8.

Level 4: A2-B2-C3-D3-E4-F4-G5-H4-I5-J5-K6-L6-M7-O7...

We urge players to take a sharp black pencil and to draw the Crest lines along these hexes. You'll see that there are a few double-crests. For better viewing of the above, print the free Stonne Player's aid available elsewhere in this issue.

Other

Q: When both sides have to remove units in about the 3rd fire fight do we use side records to indicate how to deal with vehicles?

A: Yes.

STONNE 1940 BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Les Combats du Mont-Dieu; Giuliano
2. 1940: la guerre des occasions Perdues; Goutard
3. La Guerre de cent heures; Richecourt
4. Comments pedre une bataille-France 1940; Horne
5. Blitzkreig in the West – Then & Now; Pallud
6. Les panzers passent la Meuse; Berben et Iselin
7. Sedan 1940; S.H.A.T.
8. Sedan Mai 40; Gounelle
9. Mai-Juin 40. Les combatants de l'honneur; Delmas/Devautour/Lefebvre
10. Guerre éclair á l'Ouest; Buffetaut
11. Contre-attaques manquées, Sedan 13-15 Mai 1940; Revue Historique de l'Armee
12. 16. Infanterie-und-panzer Division im bild
13. Geschichte der 24. Infanterie-Division 1935-1945; v. Tettau/Versock
14. 29. Division; Lemelsen/Fries/Schaeffer
15. Panzergrenadier Division GrossDeutschland' Schreibert
16. Die Geschichte der PanzerKorps Grossdeutschland. Band' Spaeter
17. Les combats sur la deuxiéme position d'Armee. Piece n° 4; 3° DIM – 3° DCR
18. Les combats sur la deuxiéme position d'Armee. Piece n° 5; la 3° Division Cuirassée
19. Ordre Général n°1 du 21° Corps-3e bureau n°2/3 Mai, 4h
20. Ordre Général n°7 de 3 DCR pour PC 21° Corps (Senuc) 14 Mai, 4h
21. Ordre particulier pour Cdts des Groupements de Combat – 3e DCR (Les Alleux) – 14 Mai, 16h50
22. Ordre Général n°3 du XXI° Corps – 3e bureau n°6/3-15 Mai, 12h30
23. Ordre pour le Groupement Maitre – 3e DCR (non envoyé) – 15 Mai, 12h30
24. Ordre d'Operation n°2208/3 PC 3°DIM-15 Mai 40
25. Note de Service 21° CA n°12/3 á 3°DCR-15 Mai, 21/22h
26. Compte-rendu de 3°DCR á 21° CA-16 Mai 1940
27. KGTB 10. PanzerDivision 12/12/39 – 25/6/40
28. L'héroique campagne de France du 45°BCC de la Gendarmerie
29. Extrait du IMO du 45° Batallion de Chars de la Gendarmerie, Stonne 15 et 16 Mai
30. Les Francais attaquent; Lt Brevier (2e sect/10e Cie/51 eRI
31. Les Allemands attaquent; extrait de "Die Woche"
32. Sedan-Bulson-Stonne. Souvenirs de Guerre du Graf v. Schwerin; Baudier
33. Die Kämpfe der 16. Infanterie Division. Am 17. U. 23.5.1940; Karrenberg
34. TB des Leutnants Hoffman, Bataillonsadjutant des I. Bat im Inf-Rgt 79
35. KGTB der 6. Kp des Inf Rgt 79 (II Btl)
36. KGTB des I./Inf Rgt 79. 18.5.-5.7.1940; Lt Ducoffre
37. KGTB 12. (MG) Kp-Inf-Rgt 79 (Rheine) vom 10. Mai bis 22. Juli 1940
38. Bericht über die Kampftätigkeit der III./AR16 vom 9.5. bis 26.6.1940
39. Le Régiment "Grossdeutschland" attaque: Rolf Durian; "Die Woche" n°7 et 8 des 12 et 19 Fev 41
40. Stürme gegen den Mont-Damion!; Lt Kevekordes (Inf-Rgt)
41. Erstürmung des Mont Damion (Prise du Mont Damion); Fw Krekeler
42. Signal n° 17 – Décembre 40.
43. La charniére de Sedan; Cmdt v. Kielmansegg; "Die Wehrmacht" mai 1941
44. Ubersetzung eines Berichtes der Kämpfe vom 16.-24.5.1940 bei Stonne; Hpt Gysin
45. Il y a un an: la percée de Sedan; "Pariser Zeitung" du 20 mai 41
46. Lettres du FahnenJunker Gunther Scmitz (16. Inf Div)
47. Souvenirs de G. Scmitz: Die Feuertaufe.
48. 4eme Bataillon de chars de combat; Chars et Blindes n°76
49. 7eme Bataillon de chars de combat; Chars et Blindes n°78
50. 41eme Bataillon de chars de combat; Chars et Blindes n°78
51. 42eme Bataillon de chars de combat; Chars et Blindes n°79
52. 49eme Bataillon de chars de combat; Chars et Blindes n°80
53. En marge de "la 3eme Division d'Infanterie Motorisée 1939-1940"; Col R. Dugravot
54. historique du 79. RI 16-26 mai 1940; Gral Wagner
55. La Bataile de Stonne; traduction de "Unsere 16"
56. Westfeldzug des II/ Btl GD
57. Exposé sur les combats de la 3éme DIM: région de Sy-Tannay, 15-24 mai 1940; Col Faure (1/42 RA)
58. Journal de Marche de la 16éme batterie du 242éme RA
59. Historique de 42éme RATT
60. Journal de Marche du V/242 RADT
61. Vie d'une batterie de 105 CS (13éme bat du 242 éme RA)
62. Operational thinking in Clauswitz, Moltke, Schlieffen and Manstein; Frieser
63. Souvenirs du S-Lt Dusautoy; 2éme sect/3éme Cie/67éme RI; 10-23 mai 1940
64. 1/Sturm-Pionier-Bataillon 43 vom 10.5. bis 24.6.1940
65. KGTB 14. Kp/IV Btl/Grossdeutschland
66. Gefecht bei Stonne. 14. (Pz-jg) Kompanie
67. Kriegschronk der 15. IR "Grossdeutschland"
68. Das PanzerRegiment 7 und 21 und seine tochterformationen im zweiten WK
69. 24. Division, extrait de "Eine sächsichte Division im Westen"
70. Fermes des Cendriéres; Sgt Clouet, 2éme sect/7 éme Cie/ 67 éme RI
71. Les chards B1 bis de la 3e DCR, La 5e demi-Brigade lourde au combat, 1940; Buffetaut/Vauvillier

News and Notes continued from page 3

Nishi-Baru Ridge and a much wider stretch of this hotly contested battlefield. 'Item Pocket' is the second module in our three-module set based on Okinawa.

Check back with us in our next issue for more on the expected dates of publication of our upcoming items and note there is a new 'box' in this issue listing all the VARIANTS published by CH for our Squads & Leaders line that should help those wishing to flesh out their collections.

With our recent 'Hexagon Times' mailer back-issue magazine stocks are dropping. The following issues are still in print: Volumes 4/1, 4/2, 5/2, 6/1 and the Stalingrad Special Edition. You will note from the ad in this issue that we've brought back a limited quantity of the 'TANKS SPECIAL EDITION" with overlay. Get 'em while they last.

The year 2000 was a very busy one over at our Moments in History line. Since acquiring MiH in early 1999, the following titles have shipped:

1. LODZ 1914 (WW I monster-game)
2. In Flanders Fields (WW I)
3. Drive to the Baltic (Army Group North 1944)
4. Velikye Luki (Eastern Front 1942-43)
5. Tunisia '43 (Kasserine Pass)
6. Ted Raicer's Royal Tank Corps (Battle of Cambrai 1917)

Upcoming MiH titles are:

1. Tobruk Silver Anniversary Edition (North Africa - Tactical Series)
2. Gotterdamerung: Twilight of the Gods (Battle of Berlin)
3. Manstein's Backhand Blow (Kharkov '43)
4. Streets of Stalingrad 2nd Edition (yes, a Phoenix re-make)
5. Grand Illusion (WW I 1914)

The Combat Game System has been kicked off successfully with two modules under its belt so far. Lots of changes were made to the system between Combat! Normandy and Combat! Stalingrad. Upcoming Combat Game System titles are: Combat! Arnhem, Combat Stalingrad Barbarossa Expansion Pack I, and Combat Stalingrad Barbarossa Expansion Pack 2

We've experienced steadily growing web traffic at **www.Criticalhit.com** and invite everyone to bookmark our site for frequent visits. Our site is the best place to download the latest errata and keep up with new releases.

Ray Tapio

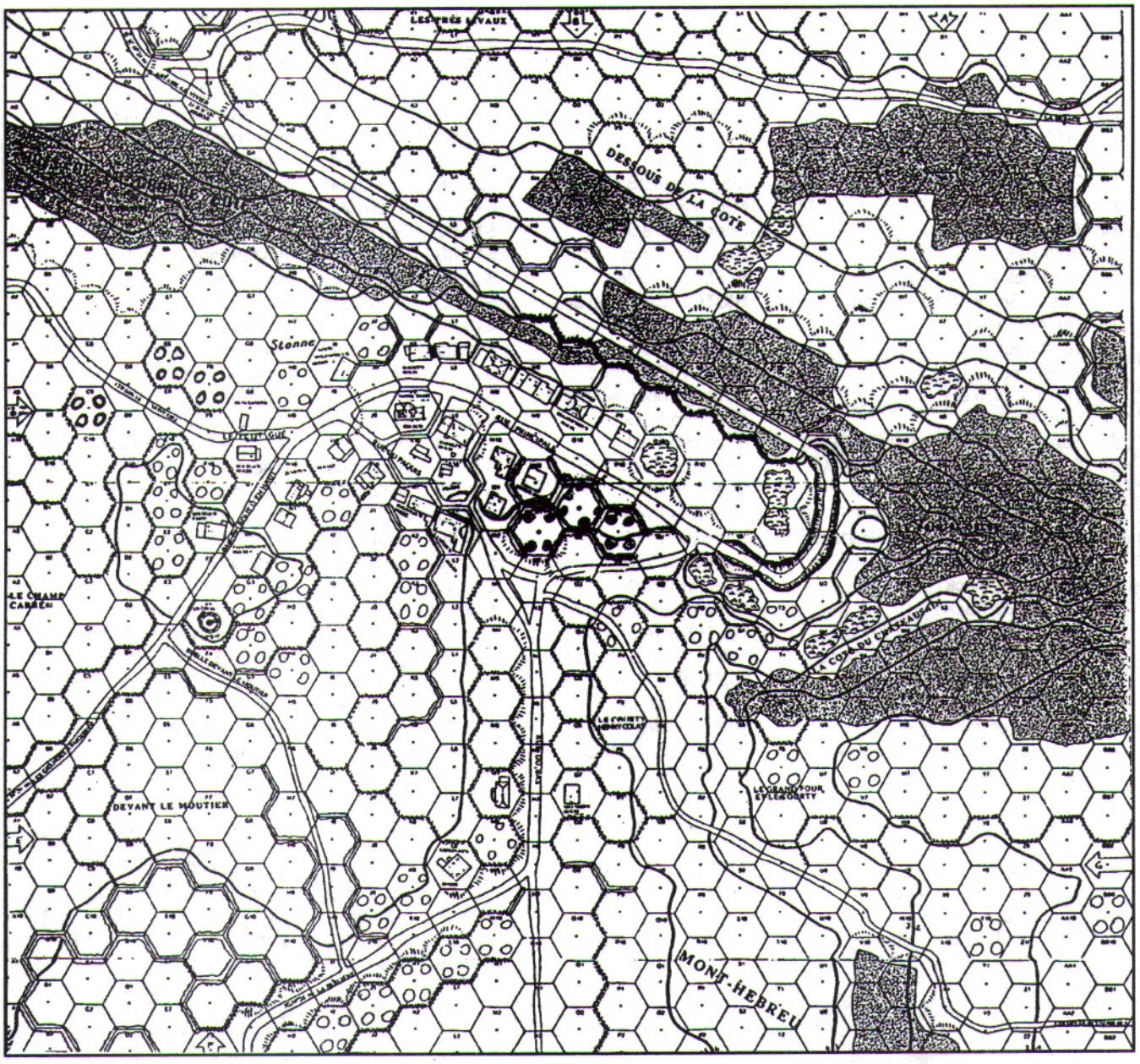
In this issue...

Number	Title	Date	Location	Notes/Author
Stonne #7	Down On The Streets	16 May 40	Stonne, France	Add'l scenario for Stonne 1940
Stonne #8	Shattered Lines	17 May 40	Stonne, France	Add'l scenario for Stonne 1940
CH #128	A Few Rare Men	23 May 40	Thulin, France	Phil Nobo
CH #129	ST Homme Skirmish	23 May 40	St Homme, France	Phil Nobo
CH #130	No Quarter At Queniau	23 May 40	Le Queniau, France	Phil Nobo
CH #131	Blood Brothers	31 May 40	Burnes, France	Dave Lamb
CH #132	Defense Of Orphange Farm	23 May 40	Calais, France	Michael Cole
CH #133	Group Iron	10 May 40	Kannes, Belgium	Paul Kenny
CH #134	Sturmtruppen	11 November 44	Goldap, E. Prussia	Oliver Giancola
CH #135	The River Dance	1 September 39	Brahe River, Poland	Paul Kenny
CH #136	Desperate Stand	25 December 41	Stanley Village, Hong Kong	Dave Lamb
CH #137	Assault On Fornebu	9 April 40	Fornebu, Norway	Paul Kenny
CG II	The Crusher	17 May 40	Stonne, France	New CG for Stonne 1940
CG III	Inferno of Steel	15 May 40	Stonne, France	New CG for Stonne 1940

CG Date **CG#** **Sheet #** FrenchPlayer.....German Player.....

MLR/Set Up Map Symbology

❑ German Sheet ❑ French Sheet W = Wreck BW = Burnt-Out Wreck R = Rubble
F = Foxhole M = Mine O = Objective/TVP Hex I = Immobile AFV A = AFV (Mobile) G = Gun
P = Pre-Registered H = HIP Other (List):



Set Up First.....Move First.....
FRENCH SAN: GERMAN SAN:
FRENCH ELR: GERMAN ELR:

CG TURN RECORD CHART

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PMb AMa LV+1	PMb AMa LV+1	PMb AMa LV+1	PMb AMa LV+1	PMb AMa LV+1	PMb LV+1	PMb LV+1	PMb LV+1	PMb LV+1

ACCUMULATED CVP	
✚	⊙

Stonne 1940

THE CH RELEASE LIST

#	Item Name	Product Category	Price	Availability	Description
1	CH Issue #1	Magazine	$10.00	Out of print	10 scenarios + articles
2	CH Issue #2	Magazine	$10.00	Out of print	10 scenarios + articles
3	CH Issue #3	Magazine	$10.00	Out of print	15 scenarios + articles
4	CH Issue #4	Magazine	$10.00	Out of print	10 scenarios + articles
5	96 Special Edition - "Tanks"	Magazine	$15.95	Out of print	10 scenarios + overlay
6	CH Vol. 4, No. 1	Magazine	$15.95	Available	8 scenarios, counters
7	CH Vol. 4, No. 2	Magazine	$15.95	Available	8 scenarios, overlay
8	97 Special Edition - Stalingrad	Magazine	$19.95	Available	8 scenarios, HISTORICAL
9	CH Vol. 5, No. 1	Magazine	$15.95	Available	8 scenarios + articles
10	CH Vol. 5, No. 2	Magazine	$15.95	Available	8 scenarios + articles
11	CH Vol. 6, No. 1	Magazine	$15.95	Available	8 scenarios + articles
12	Operation Compass Annual	Magazine/HISTORICAL	$21.95	Available	22 scenarios, Beda Fomm Map
13	CH Vol. 6, No. 2	Magazine	$15.95	Available	13 scenarios + articles
14	Rout Pak I	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Out of print	8 scenarios misc. topics
15	Rout Pak II	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Out of print	8 scenarios misc. topics
16	Rout Pak III	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios misc. topics
17	Ops of Schw 102 in Normandy	HISTORICAL module	$10.00	Out of print	British vs. Tigers in Normandy
18	Leatherneck I	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Out of print	USMC in Pacific
19	Leathneck II	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	Army and USMC in Pacific
20	Jatkosota	HISTORICAL module	$15.95	Out of print	Finnish Continuation War
21	Tips for Tankers	Strategy book/scenarios	$8.95	Out of print	2 scenarios, strategy tips
22	Euro Pack I	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Out of print	8 scenarios misc. topics
23	Euro Pack II - Battle of the Bulge	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios Battle of the Bulge
24	Euro Pack III - Late War '44-'45	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios Late War Actions
25	Euro Pack IV - North Africa	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios North Africa
26	Euro Pack V: East Front	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios East Front
27	Euro Pack VI: Partisan Warfare	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios Partisans and Irreg.
28	Aussie '96 Pack	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Out of print	10 scenarios misc. topics
29	Aussie '97 Pack	Scenario Pack	$10.00	Available	8 scenarios misc. topics
30	Aussie '98 Pack	Scenario Pack/Overlay	$12.00	Available	8 scenarios new overlay
31	All American Kellam's Bridge	HISTORICAL module	$24.95	Available	82nd AB in Normandy Series
32	All American Timmes' Orchard	HISTORICAL module	$24.95	Available	82nd AB in Normandy Series
33	All American Shanley's Hill	HISTORICAL module	$26.95	Available	82nd AB in Normandy Series
34	All American Gamers Guide	Book/CG/scenarios	$11.95	Available	Booklet for 82nd series fans
35	Soldiers of the Negus	HISTORICAL	$15.95	Available	Italo-Ethiopian War + cntrs.
36	Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works	HISTORICAL module	$24.95	Available	Stalingrad module
37	Ruweisat Ridge	HISTORICAL module	$24.95	Out of print	1st Alamein module
38	Those Ragged Bloody Heroes	HISTORICAL module	$24.95	Out of print	New Guinea module
39	Pointe du Hoc	HISTORICAL module	$32.95	Available	Rangers on D-Day
40	Stonne 1940	HISTORICAL module	$29.95	Available	France 1940
41	Scotland the Brave I	HISTORICAL module	$26.92	Available	Operation Epsom series
42	Scotland the Brave II	HISTORICAL module	$27.95	Available	Operation Epsom series
43	Platoon Leader 2.5	Campaign game rules	$12.00	Available	Campaign game rules ver. 2.5
44	Arnhem: The Third Bridge	HISTORICAL module	$32.95	Available	Battle of Arnhem + die cut cntrs.
45	Gembloux the Feint	HISTORICAL module	$17.95	Available	France 1940
46	GENESIS '48	HISTORICAL module	$39.95	WIP	Israeli War of 1948/56 + cntrs.
47	Cassino: Operation Diadem	HISTORICAL module	$29.95	Available	Battle of Cassino 2-game series
48	Westerplatte	HISTORICAL Module	$24.95	WIP	Poland '39 Module
49	Point du Hoc Gamers Guide	Book/strategy	$11.95	Available	Game tips and history
50	Armored Stand	PL CG	$10.00	Available	Late War Pacific CG + overlays
51	Ordeal Before Shuri	HISTORICAL module	29.95	Available	Okinawa Module 1
52	Item Pocket	HISTORICAL module	29.95	WIP	Okinawa Module 2
53	Uncommon Valor	HISTORICAL module	28.95	Available	Iwo Jima Module 1
54	Uncommon Valor II	HISTORICAL module	29.95	WIP	Iwo Jima Module 2
55	Hells Bridgehead	HISTORICAL module	28.95	Available	Kursk; 2nd SS vs Guards
56	Kursk #2	HISTORICAL module	28.95	WIP	Ponyri
57	Anzio The Factory	HISTORICAL module	29.95	WIP	Anzio Module 1
58	Cemetery Hill	PL CG	$8.50	Available	Crete CG + overlays; 2nd Ed.
59	Valor of the 37th Guards	HISTORICAL module	19.95	Available	Stalingrad; LARGE HEX MAP

Volume 6, Number 3

US $22.95

Critical Hit

TACTICAL LEVEL GAMING



BRAND NEW HISTORICAL MAP AND SCENARIOS FOR GENESIS 48 INSIDE!

2005



GENESIS DESIGNER'S

One of my historical interests in undergraduate and graduate study has been, and still is, the history of the Middle East; from the dawn of mankind to current events. Combining that passion, with my passion for ASL® (and wargaming in general), I always knew a project like this was down the road for me.

So what got this one kickstarted? A discussion with Ray and Steve of CH to nitpik what I felt was an OB error in a scenario covering a battle in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. One thing led to another and soon enough, I was looking at a contract and a few years of work.

Enough of that, let's talk about the module. Many, many decisions were made (and changed) during the design and playtest of this first volume. Rather than discuss each one, I want to highlight a few for you here.

Israeli MMC broken side morale

The Zahal soldier of 1948 tended to rally quicker than his Arab brethren. It was a frequent occurrence for a squad or a platoon that just minutes before had broken under fire to gain their courage soon after and accomplish their mission. One thought was to give Israeli leaders the Commissar ability of negating DM modifier while rallying but it was quickly realized in playtest that this was too large an advantage for the Israelis and made them much too like the Super-Man myth that is incorrectly attributed to them. I decided to experiment with the one higher broken morale and this worked well in playtest. You will find that the Israelis do tend to break nearly as often as the Arabs but tend to rally and re-enter the fray sooner.

Israeli Molotov Tank Hunter Hero

Numerous sources (from all sides) described accounts where Jewish "soldiers" would advance through withering fire to toss or drop Molotov Cocktails on Arab armor. These heroics were displayed at Degania, Yad Mordechai, Jerusalem, and other places. Frequently, these individuals paid for their heroism with their lives. I tried to create a rule to simulate these "charges" but I couldn't work up anything that satisfied me. Then one day, while being subjected to one of Phil Pomerantz's litany's of his latest exploits with the Japanese in a playtest he was doing, it dawned on me that maybe an adaptation of the Japanese DC/Tank Hunter Hero was doable. To my surprise, modifying that rule to be used with MOLs worked very well and playtesting proved it to be an accurate representation of what occurred in many *kibbutzim* (plural for *kibbutz*, a collective farm) in 1948. As the Israeli player, don't waste your few opportunities to use it on any target. You only get 1 to 2 shots in most scenarios so use them wisely. As the Arab player, always be on the lookout for situations when the Israeli may spring this on you. Be careful where your covered arcs are (and aren't). It can turn a scenario around when you least expect it.

Israeli Leaders

In all of the Arab-Israeli wars, the Israeli officers sustained a much higher casualty rate than most other combatants. This has occurred due to the style of leadership that developed through modern Israeli history. Since the Haganah and Palmach were underground organizations in the early 1940s, there was no formal officer schooling and no formal rank structure. Promising soldiers were picked to lead sections, squads, platoons, companies. When war came in 1948, Zahal officers tended to lead from the front, taking more risks than their counterparts from other nations. This 'lead from the front' nature allowed for better fighting spirit among the units but came at a high price. Applying the "break = wound" rule to them seemed to work well in playtest, so it was adopted. Players will see that the Israelis tend to have more leaders in the scenarios but that they will be eliminated more often as well. Armor officer casualties are taken care of in the Sinai 1956 "CE" rule.

48 NOTES

by Bob O'Connor

Looting

When one reads about the 1948 war, one is amazed at the numerous accounts of the Palestinian and Arab Irregulars looting the Jewish positions they captured. This occurred time and again and more than once cost the Arabs a victory in battle because when looting took place, it usually started immediately. The irregulars' looting in Old Jerusalem even frustrated the men and officers of the Arab Legion who complained that it interrupted their advance into the Jewish sector of the Old City. This is a harsh rule, but it drives home the difficulty of leading these polyglot forces in a military endeavor. This also forces the Arab player to keep his leaders up front when playing with irregulars (which also fits historically).

Egyptian AFV Crew Morale

Equipped with perhaps the largest armor inventory in the Arab world, the Egyptians never received the level of training that the Arab Legion had. The crews lacked confidence in their steel "monsters" and in battle were very tentative and performed very poorly. Many Egyptian assaults were stopped not by massive casualties, but due to the armor retreating after the loss of only one or two vehicles, leaving the poor infantry exposed. This rule simulates this condition well. In effect, it creates a morale check for the armored forces. The main difference is that they cannot rally and return to the fray. This rule, while simulating the events rather well, can give the Egyptian player fits if he has a string of bad dice.

The Scenarios

My goal in the scenario selection process was to try to give the players a taste of the various aspects of the war and of all its combatants. Each nationality comes in play in at least one of the scenarios and we see the Israelis both on the defense and on the attack. I also wanted to allow the players to experience the battles that the Israelis both lost and won historically. I believe I have accomplished this.

Etziongrad was included to portray the desperate situations the new state could expect in the months to follow. The fall of the Etzion Bloc was a severe blow to the Israelis. In this scenario, one will immediately see the difference in the well-led Arab Legion and the Palestinian/Arab irregulars. A second Kfar Etzion scenario depicting an assault in January 1948 by irregulars is done and may show up in a future issue of CH. The players will then be able to see the differences in the level of Jewish preparations for the defense of the Bloc. Many details for the scenarios came from the book "Siege in the Hills of Hebron", which is a compilation of diary notes of the defenders and also includes notes from Arab Legion officers. It is worth reading if one wants to experience the human aspect of the war.

I have also included a couple of the classic opening battles of the 'official' war. The Syrian assaults on Degania A **(Sons of Galilee)**, Mishmar Hayarden **(Fatih-Allah)**, and the combined ALA, Lebanese, and Syrian attack on Malkieh **(Triple Play)**. I added another classic assault, that of Yad Mordechai **(Buying Time)**. Readers will note that a Yad Mordechai scenario was published in CH #4. Is my version a remake? Not at all. **Buying Time** covers the last fateful day of the battle, three days after Steve Parillo's "Yad Mordechai" scenario. Readers will also note that Steve and I handled certain aspects of the battle differently. Does that mean one of us (or both) is wrong? Nope. It just shows that there are many ways to skin a cat, or in this case, tell a story. Steve has a vision of the battle that he wanted to create which led to certain decisions, as well did I. As you can see however, the OBs are nearly identical as well as the overall situation with most of the differences emanating from the fact that the scenarios are situated three days apart.

I also included scenarios covering various Israeli assaults. The Palmach and Haganah were trained to fight at night and the night assault in **Trapping Nasser** portrays one such typical action. It also lets the reader see that the Egyptian soldier, while poor on the attack, was a tough customer on defense. One of the more controversial operations was the Israeli night assault against the gates of the Old City in an attempt to relieve the besieged Jewish quarter **(Gate Crashing)**. Uzi Narkiss, the Palmach commander that broke through, would suffer criticism for years after withdrawing his exhausted forces after opening a lifeline to the Jews in the city. While perhaps being a wise military decision, it carried with it the emotional price tag that Narkiss would have to bear for years. Another action in Jerusalem that was important to the war was the Arab Legion assault on Notre Dame **(The Cathedral)**. This was important in that it was the only victory of significance that the Israelis had over the Arab Legion and convinced Glubb Pasha not to commit any more of his well trained Legion to city fighting in Jerusalem.

Unbeknownst to the casual reader, there were many times when the Israelis stuck their necks out too far and had their

noses bloodied by the Arabs. One such action occurred at Jenin **(I Dream of Jenin)**. Over-extended and over-exposed, the Israelis took a beating by the counterattacking Iraqis before pulling back and giving up their attempt to occupy this important city. This was the Iraqi Army's shining moment, in what was otherwise a poor performance by them in the war.

One of the scenarios that the playtesters had a ball with is **Locust Storm**. This wild affair leaves the issue of victory in doubt until the very end. Information for this scenario was pieced together from many sources. See the bibliography elsewhere in this issue for my source list (does not include Hebrew sources).

More 1948 and later scenarios are included in this magazine issue. In upcoming issues of CH, new scenarios will cover the numerous failed Israeli assaults at Latrun, Operation *Naschon* (the early operation to open a corridor to Jerusalem), and Operation *Dani* (which resulted in the capture of Lydda and Ramle). Other scenarios will depict the capture of Haifa and Safed and the Irgun battles with British armor in Jaffa.

Jerusalem Old City Map

This map was primarily adapted from a 1:5,000 British map dated 1945. One look at that map and photos from the 1940s and I quickly new that a lot creativity and "design for effect" would have to be used to portray the fighting in this part of the city. The scale that ASL® portrays terrain at cannot cope with the incredible density of buildings nor the heavy slope that most of the old city sits upon (it is over 120 meter drop from northwest to southeast on the map). Fudging contours and accounting for some critical LOS's still left me with the numerous elevation levels in the final game map.. I was initially worried that there would be too many elevation levels, but playtesting reduced my concerns on this score and the resulting map has been reviewed after printing by those that have both visited Jerusalem. and play ASL® and it passes muster.

The Old City has numerous winding and catacombing streets and alleys that are also impossible to represent accurately at ASL® terrain scales. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Jewish and Arab sectors of the Old City, where buildings line up to each other, back to back, and side by side. Access to many areas was only through weaving and undulating alleys. The only structures that took up large areas were the synagogues, churches, and mosques. Ten to fifteen buildings typically occupy one 40 meter hex, consisting of a mixture of shops and homes ranging from one story to 3-4 stories tall. Therefore, I strove for the "effect" design again while trying to stay true to the actual positions in the actual terrain. When one plays on this map, one will immediately feel its very restrictive nature and numerous impediments to quick travel through it. Success in the campaign game will be based on the capture of one building. Or one block. If one feels this effect, then I have done my job.

Even with the "design for effect" approach, certain critical aspects had to remain true to reality however; such as ensuring the LOS from the top of Mt. Zion Church over the Wall and showing just what an obstacle that Wall can be.

Conclusion

I hope you enjoy GENESIS 1948 and it educates you on the military aspects of the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. I will consider GENESIS 48 a successful endeavor If you are spurred to read more on the history of the region. We added a little bit of SINAI-1956 to this package as a 'teaser' and to show you what can be done with ASL® in a modern setting. The next module will concentrate on the Six-Day War of 1967, as well as more of 1956, with the 'teaser' being some 1973 and later actions and units. More 1948 will likely be added too, and information on the Syrian and Jordanian forces in the 1950s will be included as well. We'll be deciding what material to cover in CH magazine and what to add to the modules. Subscribers of this magazine are in the best position to stay informed. You will also note a membership card for the new Arab-Israeli Wars Gaming Association came with GENESIS 48. Drop CH a line or sign up at their website (www.Criticalhit.com) as a member (if you did not buy your module direct from CH) and you'll get a special (and free) newsletter just for members.

I want to give special thanks to Abraham Edelheit who helped out with the research and was able to provide translation on the Hebrew sources. Abraham's touch will be shown again in the next module, *Lightning Out Of Israel*. I also want to thank Phil Pomerantz who volunteered to make a couple of 'detours' for me when he visited Israel with his family. Thanks also go out to Marilyn Burke who was kind enough to get us some documentation while in Israel. I also want to thank my primary playtesters, Dave Mugmon and Chris Trout who had to deal with my nagging on a regular basis. I also want to thank my wife for putting up with Dave and Chris at our house all the time.

This module is dedicated to all the sons, fathers, brothers, sisters, daughters, and mothers on all sides who have died for what they believe in, in the hopes that someday, a true peace will be found. A special dedication is printed in the rulebook to Hershel Edelheit, Abe's dad and mentor in his careers as author and history professor.

GENESIS 48 BIBLIOGRAPHY (Annotated):

1. Allon, Yigal, "The Making of Israel's Army", NY, Bantam Books, 1971, 3rd ed
2. Allon, Yigal, "Shield of David: The Story of Israel's Armed Forces"
3. Avigur, Shaul et. al., "Short History of the Hagana", Tel Aviv, Ministry of Defense Publications, 1978 (Hebrew)
4. Bahat, Dan, "Carta's Historical Atlas of Jerusalem", Jerusalem, Carta, 1976, Revised English Edition
5. Bakr 'Abd al-Wahhab, "The Faulty Arms Myth and the PalestineWar of 1948", LA, Cal. State University 1988
6. Banks, Lynne Reid, "A Torn Country: An Oral History of the Israeli War of Independence", NY, Franklin Watts, 1982
7. Baratz, Joseph, "A Village by the Jordan: The Story of Degania", Tel Aviv, Ichud Habonim Press Dept., 1960
8. Bar-Joseph, Uri, "The Best of Enemies: Israel and Transjordan in the War of 1948", London, Cass and Co. Ltd, 1987
9. Bell, J. Bowyer, "Terror Out of Zion: The Violent and Deadly Shock Troops of Israeli Independence, 1929-1949", NY, St. Martin's Press, 1977
10. Ben-Ami, Yitshaq, "Years of Wrath, Days of Glory: Memoirs from the Irgun", NY, Shengold Publishers, Inc., 1983, 2nd Edition
11. Ben Gurion, David, "Israel: A Personal History" , Tel Aviv, American Israel Pub. Co. 1971
12. Bercusson, David J., "The Secret Army", NY, Stein and Day, 1984
13. Berkman, Ted, "Cast a Giant Shadow: The Story of Mickey Marcus", Philadelphia, Covenant Books, 1968, 2nd Ed.
14. "Carta's Historical Atlas of the Hagana", Jerusalem, Carta Publications, 1991 (Hebrew)
15. Collins, Larry and Lapierre, Dominique, "O Jerusalem", NY, Simon and Schuster, 1972
16. Crow, Duncan and Icks, Robert J., "Encyclopedia of Armored Cars", Seacaucus NJ, Chartwell Books, 1976
17. Crow, Duncan and Icks, Robert J., "Encyclopedia of Tanks", Seacaucus NJ, Chartwell Books, 1975
18. Dayan, Moshe, "Moshe Dayan: Story of My Life", NY, Morrow, 1976
19. DeRogy, Jacques and Carmel, Hesi, "The Untold History of Israel", NY, Grove Press Inc., 1979, English Edition
20. Dupuy, Trevor, "Elusive Victory: The Arab-Israeli Wars 1947-1974", Dubuque, Iowa, Kendall/Hunt, 1992, 3rd Ed.
21. El-Edroos, Syed Ali, "The Hashemite Arab Army, 1908-1979", Amman, The Publishing Committee, 1980
22. Elliot, Matthew, "Independent Iraq: The Monarchy and British Influence, 1941-1958", London, Tauris Academic Studies, 1996
23. Eshel, David, "Chariots of the Desert: The Story of the Israeli Armoured Corps", London, Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1989
24. Flappan, Simha, "The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities", Panther Books, 1987
25. Gilbert, Martin, "Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict", NY, Oxford University Press, 1993, 6th Ed.
26. Glubb, Sir John, "A Soldier with the Arabs", London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1957
27. Habar, Eitan and Schiff, Zeev "Israel: Army and Defense, A Dictionary", Tel Aviv, Zmora, Bitan and Modan, 1976 (Hebrew)
28. Heckelman, A. Joseph, "American Volunteers and Israel's War of Independence", NY, Ktav, 1974
29. Herzog, Chaim "The Arab-Israeli Wars", NY, Random House, 1982
30. "History of the War of Independence", Tel Aviv, Maarachot/The IDF Press, 1959 (Hebrew)
31. Hoffman, Bruce(ed), "The Failure of British Military, Strategy Within Palestine, 1939-1947", Ramat Gan, Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983
32. Ilan, Amitzur "The Origin of the Arab-Israel Arms Race", NY, New York University Press, 1996
33. Joseph, Dov "The Faithful City", NY, Simon and Schuster, 1960
34. Katz, Samuel "Fire and Steel: Israel's 7th Armored Brigade", NY, Pocket Books, 1996
35. Katz, Samuel "Follow Me! A History of Israel's Military Elite", London, Arms and Armour Press, 1989
36. Katz, Samuel "Israeli Elite Units Since 1948", London, Osprey, 1988 Elite Series #18
37. Khalidi, Walid(ed) "All that Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948", Washington DC, Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1992
38. Kimche, Jon and David "A Clash of Destinies", NY, Praeger, 1960
39. Knohl, Dov(ed) "Siege in the Hills of Hebron", NY, Thomas Yoseloff Publishers, 1958
40. Kurzman, Dan "Genesis 1948: The First Arab-Israeli War", NY, Dacapo Press, 1992, 2nd ed
41. Laffin, John, "The Israeli Army in the Middle East Wars, 1948-1973", London, Osprey, 1982, Men at Arms Series #127
42. Laffin, John "Arab Armies of the Middle East Wars, 1948-1973", London, Osprey, 1982, Men at Arms Series #128
43. Larkin, Margaret, "The Six Days of Yad Mordechai", Givatagim, Pel Printing Works Ltd. 1970, 6th printing
44. Levinberg, Haim, "The Military Preparations of the Arab, Community in Palestine, 1945-1948", London, Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1993
45. Liron, Aharon "The Old City of Jerusalem in Battle and Siege", Tel Aviv, Maarachot/The IDF Press, 1978, (Hebrew)
46. Lorch, Netanel, "Edge of the Sword", NY, GP Putnam Sons, 1961
47. Louis, W.R., "The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951", London, Oxford, 1986
48. Luttwak, Edward and Horowitz, Dan, "The Israeli Army", NY, Harper and Row, 1975
49. Milstein, Uri, "History of the War of Independence: Vol. 1 "A Nation Girds for War", NY, University Press of America, 1996
50. Milstein, Uri, "History of the War of Independence: Vol. 2, The First Month", NY, University Press of America, 1997
51. Naguib, Mohammed, "Egypt's Destiny", Westport Conn., Greenwood Press, 1984, 2nd ed
52. Naor, Mordechai(ed), "Ha'Hagana", Tel Aviv, Naidat Press Ltd.,1985
53. Nordeen, Lon, "Fighters Over Israel", NY, Orion Books, 1990
54. O'Ballance, Edgar, "The Arab-Israeli War 1948", NY, Praeger, 1957
55. Pappe', Ilan, "Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1951", NY, St. Martin's Press, 1988
56. Pearlman, Moshe, Lt. Col., "The Army of Israel", NY, Philosophical, 1950

continued on page 26

A Military Overview of Israel's

Israel's War of Independence came as the culmination of Jewish efforts to end the British mandate for Palestine/Eretz Israel. These efforts, representing a diplomatic and military struggle against Great Britain (the power granted governmental authority in Palestine/Eretz Israel under the terms of the 1922 League of Nations mandate), ended when—on November 29, 1947—the United Nations (UN) voted to partition Palestine/Eretz Israel into Arab and Jewish states (with Jerusalem to be held as an international enclave under UN control), but can be traced back at least fifty years — that is to the origins of the modern Zionist movement founded by Theodor Herzl in 1897. In fact, however, the background to Jewish statehood can be traced back even farther — to the Jewish people's two millennium-old dream of restoration. Although important to understanding the broad historical background to the 1948 war and to all events since then, this is not the forum for a complete retelling of the history of Zionism. Instead, this article hopes to provide a brief overview of the military aspects of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, thereby helping to fill in the gaps for players of the Critical Hit *Genesis 1948* module.

Three caveats are in order. First, in the interest of full disclosure, I must note that I am the coauthor of a recent book on the history of Zionism. I am a supporter of the goals of Jewish nationalism, but I am also a professional historian who takes the concept of objectivity seriously. Second, it is a reflection of the highly charged atmosphere in the Middle East that, even after the Oslo Accords, there is no universal agreement on the name for the conflict. Israelis call the war against the Arab states that broke out in late 1947 the War of Independence; in this conceptualization, the preceding struggle against Great Britain is designated "The Revolt." By implication, then, the term War of Independence covers only the period from November 1947 to October 1949. By contrast, Arabs call the events Al-Nakba (the disaster), lumping together the different phases that resulted in the creation of Israel as a single whole that began with the crushing of the Arab Revolt in 1939. Furthermore, military historians generally look at the war in a much narrower sense, using the term Arab-Israeli War (further designated as either the First Arab-Israeli War of the Arab-Israeli War of 1948) to refer only to the fighting that took place after the invasion of Israel by the conventional Arab armies (that is, after May 1948). In this article, I shall use the term War of Independence or First Arab-Israeli War interchangeably, but will refer to the period from November 1947 until the end of the major fighting in March 1949. In a similar vein, writers even argue over the name of the territory: Palestine is the name most often used (even by Israeli authors), even though the mandated territory was officially named Palestine/Eretz Israel (Eretz Israel = the Land of Israel). Geographers know the territory as Cis-Jordan, the near bank of the Jordan River (when looking from the Mediterranean), as opposed to Trans-Jordan, the far bank. In the 1940s the Arabs did not recognize any distinctions, calling both banks of the Jordan River "South Syria." and viewing the entire territory as a single unit. Here again, I shall use my own approach: calling the territory Palestine/Eretz Israel when referring to events prior to May 1948 and simply Israel thereafter.

Overview and Per Iodization

Fighting broke out between the Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine/Eretz Israel almost immediately upon announcement of the historic UN decision on partition. With the British announcing their intention to leave before August 1948, attention shifted from the Jewish struggle against the mandatory administration to the growing civil war between Jews and Arabs. Fighting escalated into all out war between the newly established State of Israel and its Arab neighbors within hours of the Israeli declaration of independence on May 14, 1948: the new-born state was invaded by units from five neighboring Arab armies (Egypt, Trans-Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon) which obtained financial and other assistance from members of the Arab League.

In the main, military historians divide the War of Independence into four phases: (1) From December 1947 to May 1948, the period in which the war was essentially a civil war. During this phase of the fighting, the Israelis held the initiative —except insofar as isolated Jewish settlements were attacked by Arab irregulars — in what was essentially a battle to control the roadways between the major cities. The primary events of this phase of the fighting were the Hagana's (the Jewish community's main military force, soon to be united into Zva ha-Hagana le-Israel, the Israel Defense Forces, hereafter IDF) efforts to open secure road communication with Jerusalem and the capture of Haifa and Jaffa, which provided the new state with secure flanks for further operations. (2) From May 15 to June 10, 1948, the period of Arab invasion and the near destruction of the new-born State of Israel. During this period Israeli forces were placed on the defensive, but were able to maintain most of the territory they controlled. Also during this period, communications were effectively cut between Jerusalem and the rest of Israel; Jordanian failure to capture the city led to a

War of Independence

by Abraham J. Edelheit, Ph.D.

prolonged siege. Egyptian and Syrian threats respectively to Tel Aviv and the Galilee were checked. This phase of the war ended in a virtual stalemate with both sides accepting a UN brokered cease-fire (the First Truce). (3) From July 9-18, 1948, the so-called Ten Days, a period when the First Truce broke down. During this phase of the fighting the Israelis once again gained the initiative. IDF units succeeded in reopening a tenuous supply line to Jerusalem and were able to contain and throw back the Syrians and Lebanese, thereby securing the Galilee once and for all. This phase of the fighting once again ended in a UN brokered cease-fire (the Second Truce) which lasted from July 18 to October 10, 1948. (4) From October 10, 1948, to March 10, 1949, the final phase of the war, pitted Israeli forces against the Egyptian army for dominance of the Negev. This phase ended after a series of lightning fast mobile operations by the IDF, secured the Negev and completed the removal of all enemy forces from Israeli territory. Thereafter, a series of armistice agreements were signed between the Arabs and Israel, although these did not result in true peace.

Bitter fighting marked the entire war, with the Arabs proclaiming their intention to "Throw the Jews into the sea" and thereby to guarantee that the State of Israel would be stillborn. By contrast the Jewish forces were not prepared for conventional fighting and did not have the equipment or training necessary for sustained combat. The Jewish forces did have the advantage of better leadership and commitment to a cause, to which must be added the effect of desperation on morale: whereas the Arab conventional armies knew that defeat in the field would not effect their countries, the Israelis sufficiently believed Arab statements to fear for their lives. Atrocities were committed by both sides, although by and large, Jewish forces attempted to reduce the number of civilian casualties, a factor that did not animate their Arab opponents. Arab irregulars, and regular troops as well, often massacred entire populations of the Jewish settlements that they captured—including, for instance, the massacre of Jewish prisoners of war by the Trans-Jordanian Arab Legion at Gush Etzion. By contrast, only one alleged case of massacre has ever been attributed to Jews: the Deir Yassin incident (April 9, 1948). It is indicative of the combatants' different goals that while the Israeli provisional government strongly condemned this incident, no Arab power (then or since) has ever condemned atrocities committed by their forces. For their part, the Israelis were satisfied to instill fear in the local Arabs and increase their proclivity to flee.

The First Phase: November, 1947-May 1948

Inter-communal fighting erupted on the heels of the United Nations decision to partition Palestine/*Eretz Israel*. During this first phase of the fighting, the initiative initially lay with Arab irregulars, militias that (to one degree or another) answered to the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Huseini. Typically, the Arab forces adopted a three-tiered military policy: terrorist attacks against Jewish urban targets, attempts to besiege Jewish-held localities, and all-out attacks on outlying and isolated Jewish settlements. All of these operations were undertaken by a number of different units, commanded by a host of different leaders, of widely varying experience and quality. For example, in the Galilee, most Arab units were commanded by Fawzi al-Kawkaji, a leader of dubious military capability whose zeal, however, was undisputed.

Jewish efforts during this stage were mainly concerned with keeping the lines of communication open so that isolated settlements could remain supplied and provisioned. Despite recommendations, the Israeli political leadership refused to evacuate isolated settlements, hoping that they could be held and thus fill out the borders of the Jewish state. In effect, this strategy was one of modified underground operation. The Hagana neither planned nor undertook operations that were in any way different from those previously undertaken (during Arab rioting in the 1930s, for instance).

The essential front was Jerusalem: the main task at hand was to keep the convoys moving so the defenders and the civilian population could remain equipped and fed. This was easier said than done. Numerous Arab villages lined the only all-weather road to the capital city. At any of these an ambush could be laid; indeed, numerous ambush sites existed all along the route. Yet, the fact was that the battle had to be fought. David Ben-Gurion, soon to be Israel's first prime minister, laid out the strategic reality bluntly. He is quoted as telling one foreign visitor that the new state of Israel had three cities— Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa. The soon-to-be-declared state could survive if one city was lost, as long as Jerusalem was not the city. On March 31, 1948, irregular forces under the command of the Mufti's nephew Abd'el Kader al-Huseini (probably the most gifted of the Arab leaders in 1948), reinforced by hundreds of local villagers, cut the road to Jerusalem and forced the Ben-Nun II convoy to turn back.

The cutting of the road to Jerusalem was the culmination of a very trying month for the Jewish forces. Mount Scopus, the site of the Hebrew University and Hadassah Medical

Center, was already under siege, as was the vital settlement bloc at Gush Etzion. The latter protected Jerusalem's southern flank. If Gush Etzion fell, Arab forces could concentrate on Jerusalem and would likely conquer the city. This was not the only bad news. Heavy fighting continued in Haifa (whose populated was almost evenly split between Jews and Arabs) and throughout the Galilee, where Jewish settlements and towns were isolated. On the evening of March 25-26, a worse misfortune struck in the northern sector. The Yehiam task force, assembled to break out of besieged Haifa to bring supplies to embattled settlements in the Lower Galilee, was ambushed and annihilated.

Simultaneously, the Hagana began a thorough reevaluation of its operational doctrine. To that point, the Hagana had continued to operate like an underground militia, albeit one with nation-wide responsibilities. As independence approached, such a policy no longer made sense. The Hagana now had to fulfill the tasks of a conventional military force that was to protect the newborn state of Israel. After careful study, a new operational plan, dubbed Tochnit D (Plan D) was proposed. Tochnit D included six points: (1) defense against Arab regular and irregular forces would be given equal footing; (2) first priority in planning operations was to be placed on gaining control of means of communication and supply (mainly the road network); (3) second priority was to be given to capturing forward bases (as the British abandoned them) in order to prevent their use by the Arabs; (4) deterring Arab attacks by besieging their villages and destroying the Arab community's economic infrastructure; (5) once that was accomplished, priority would be given to destroying Arab guerrilla bands; (6) high priority was to be placed on capturing government institutions and installations located inside the Jewish state's borders.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the initiative changed. By the end of April 1948, the road to Jerusalem was temporarily reopened. Haifa, Safed, Tiberias, and Jaffa were in Jewish hands, thus providing the soon-to-be-declared state with a secure base of operations. Outlying Jewish settlements such as Mishmar ha-Emek and Tirat Zvi had beaten off coordinated attacks by al-Kaukji's Arab Liberation Army, thereby fleshing out the Jewish State's borders. During this period, the single most significant battle took place at Kastel, a ruined Crusader fortress and Arab settlement that dominated the road to Jerusalem. Kastel was considered so critical that a special Palmah task force was assembled for this mission only. On April 6, 1948, the Palmah force was able to occupy Kastel and hold it for nine days. A major Arab counterattack on April 15 pushed the Jewish forces out of Kastel, but the fortress was in Jewish hands (permanently) twenty-four hours later. In addition to heavy casualties, the Arab forces lost perhaps their best resource. Abdel Kader al-Husseini, who was killed during the battle. Against these positive developments, there was one major Israeli loss, Gush Etzion, which fell in early May, meaning that the direct route to attack Jerusalem from the south was now in Arab hands.

These military developments had important diplomatic consequences. In particular, the *Yishuv*'s ability to hold its own against the Arab onslaught strengthened the position of those Zionist leaders, including Ben-Gurion, who advocated declaring independence immediately upon the mandate's termination and weakened those who advocated delaying or canceling the declaration altogether. The military developments in April also resulted in the quick dispatch of one final U.S. State Department effort to undermine President Truman's stated intention to recognize the Jewish State when it declared independence by having the General Assembly impose a trusteeship on the former British mandate. This last-ditch effort to bloc Jewish statehood failed, however, and paved the way for the end of the mandate, which was now set for May 14, 1948.

As the date for the termination of the mandate approached, Zionist diplomats attempted to obtain agreements with the neighboring Arab kingdoms (mainly Trans-Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt), hoping to keep them out of the war. This effort was not crowned with much success. A tentative agreement reached with Emir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan soon collapsed. The basic problem was that Abdullah was playing a dual game and hoping to obtain the maximum benefit for himself. On the one hand, Abdullah repeatedly assured the Jews of his good intentions and proposed a federation between Trans-Jordan and the U.N. proposed Arab state that would terminate any hostilities before they began. This plan, or so Abdullah argued, would leave the radical Palestinian Arab leadership (especially the Mufti) with no choice but to negotiate with the Israelis and would prevent all-out war. Simultaneously, Abdullah was reassuring members of the Arab League of his intentions to help forestall a Jewish state by any means, including all-out war. Somewhat disingenuously, Abdullah also promised the Arab League that he would not negotiate with the Zionists at precisely the moment he was negotiating a timetable for Trans-Jordanian troops to enter Palestine/*Eretz Israel* and capture the areas promised by the U.N. for the Arab state.

This dual policy had an unfortunate set of consequences.

Abdullah had kept his contacts with the Zionists secret and had permitted a vicious propaganda campaign to begin in Trans-Jordan that whipped up hysteria for intervention. At first, the Arab Legion was transferred into Palestine/*Eretz Israel* only to prevent total Arab collapse and to gain control of the territories Abdullah coveted. However, once the Arab Legion was in the former mandated territory, clashes could not be avoided with Jewish forces. As a result, the Trans-Jordanians found themselves (albeit reluctantly) involved in direct combat with the Hagana (and later Zva ha-Hagana le-Israel). Months of bitter fighting followed, as did behind-the-scenes efforts to find a lasting peace between Israel and Trans-Jordan.

Efforts to negotiate a truce also came to naught. It had been hoped, mainly by the U.N. Security Council, that the transition from mandate to independent state would be peaceful. Obviously, that was not to be: a truce implied a compromise and, again, the Arabs were in no mood to compromise. To the contrary, the fighting turned gruesome as atrocities (by Arabs and some overly zealous Jewish forces as well) began to proliferate. On April 13, an unarmed convoy of medical personnel en route from Jerusalem's city center to the Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus was attacked and massacred. Four days earlier, Irgun Zvai Leumi (IZL, the National Military Organization) and Lohmei Herut Israel (Lehi, Fighters for Israel's Freedom, better known as the "Stern Gang"), units operating in coordination with (but not under the command of) the Palmah during the assault on Kastel attacked the Arab village of Deir Yassin. Recently the village had been quiet, although previously considerable gunfire had been directed at Jewish neighborhoods from the village, it was a legitimate military target. Indeed, Iraqi irregulars had been based in the village and had prompted the decision by the Jerusalem garrison commander (David Shaltiel) to permit the dissidents' attack. During the course of the operation the attackers killed some 250 Arabs, including 110 civilians. Although the local IZL commander declared that the civilians had been killed accidentally during the course of military operations, British representatives (who also publicized reports about sexual assaults by Jewish troops subsequently disproved) and Arab leaders characterized the attack as a massacre. The Israeli government entirely repudiated the operation, in effect apologizing for an act that it was not responsible for, certainly a unique undertaking in the annals of international relations and one that was not reciprocated by Arab leaders openly advocating genocide.

Final efforts to impose a truce under Security Council auspices prior to the mandate's termination collapsed in late April and early May. By then the Zionists felt that they had no alternative to an unequivocal declaration of independence, even though that virtually guaranteed an Arab invasion and all-out war. By May 13, 1948, all final preparations had been made. As British forces completed their withdrawal on Friday, May 14, 1948, JAE chairman David Ben-Gurion would declare independence. And that is precisely what happened. At 4 P.M. (local time), in a solemn ceremony at Tel Aviv's Mann Auditorium, Ben-Gurion read a proclamation declaring Israel's independence. Fifty-one years after the First Zionist Congress, Herzl's dream of a Jewish state had come into being. American recognition of Israel followed within a few hours. The Jewish State was a reality. All-out war soon followed.

The Second Phase: May-June, 1948

Within minutes of Ben-Gurion's declaration, Tel Aviv was struck by the first Arab air raid; the ground invasion followed within twenty-four hours as five armies assisted by units from three other states poured into the Jewish State. Egypt, Trans-Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq sent their armies while the Saudis, Moroccans, and Yemenis sent troops who fought under Egyptian command. Whereas the Israelis had wrested military initiative from the Arab irregular forces led by the Mufti and his followers, the regular Arab armies were another matter. Recent studies seem to suggest that the military disparity between the forces was not as great as it appeared at the time, Israeli forces were nonetheless nearly swamped.[2] On almost every front the Israelis had to concede territory, trading precious space for time in the hope that a counterattack could be organized to restore the situation. On the positive side, Israeli defensive operations exacted a heavy toll from the invaders, thus lessening Arab fervor for military operations.

By June the Arab armies had reached their high-water mark: Tel Aviv was threatened by the Egyptians; Jerusalem was once again besieged, this time by the well-trained and led Arab Legion; and the Syrians, Lebanese, and Iraqis (operating in an uncoordinated fashion) had almost cut off the Galilee from the rest of Israel. Still, the Israelis had managed to stabilize the front. They had staved off complete defeat and, unlike the invaders, were becoming stronger with each passing hour. There were a number of interrelated reasons for this. First, despite the fact that most U.N. members adhered to the Security Council arms embargo, the Israelis were able to scour battlefields in Europe for World War II surplus weapons that had been abandoned. Second, sympathetic governments, such as Czechoslovakia agreed to

look the other way while the Israelis transferred arms and equipment (some of which was smuggled) purchased throughout the world to Israel. The Czechs actually went a step farther, selling surplus aircraft to the fledgling Israel Air Force.

More significantly than the purchase of weapons was the availability to Israel of manpower resources that the Arabs lacked, especially the Jewish and non-Jewish volunteers who comprised Mitnadve Hutz la-Aretz (Mahal), men who had gained considerable combat experience during World War II and brought their expertise to the Israelis. Mahal included such figures as Colonel David "Mickey" Marcus, the American Jewish officer who commanded the Jerusalem front until his death just prior to the first truce; Al Schwimmer, another American Jew who later founded Israel's aircraft industry; Ben Dunkelman, a Canadian Jew who commanded Israel's first mechanized battalion; and George F. "Screwball" Beurling, Canada's highest scoring ace during World War II and a non-Jew who came to Israel for the adventure. At the other end of the scale, Israel also obtained manpower from Jewish Displaced Persons (DPs) in Europe (and, to a lesser degree on Cyprus) who formed a conscript army known as Giyus Hutz la-Aretz (Gahal). Though poorly trained and, in many cases, still suffering the after-effects of Nazi persecution, Gahal troops were generally well motivated. They were fanatically committed to creating a homeland that would erase the dishonor of the Holocaust and ensure that Jews were never again victims. Their fanaticism infused them with a sense of purpose; many Gahal troops were fated never to see the country they fought to establish.

Finally, Israel had one other advantage over its Arab enemies. Whereas the latter were united only by their unalterable opposition to a Jewish state, they had no specific purpose beyond preventing Israel's establishment, and they did not cooperate on operations. The Israelis faced no such problem. On May 28, 1948, the Israeli Provisional Government ordered all the underground movements to disband and to unite into Zva ha-Hagana le-Israel (Zahal). The IZL disbanded only reluctantly and then only after civil war threatened during the Altalena affair and the Palmah viewed dissolution as a politically motivated (rather than militarily necessary) decision. Both the IZL and Palmah protested and held out as long as possible, but unification into a single military entity was completed by mid-June. In turn, organizational unity permitted Zahal to concentrate on preparations for the upcoming battles.

Phase Three: June-July, 1948

New fighting was not long delayed. The two U.N. mediators Count Folke Bernadotte and (after Bernadotte's assassination by Lehi gunmen) Ralph Bunche successfully negotiated a truce that lasted from June 11 to July 9, 1948. Both sides used the truce to prepare for renewed fighting, but the Israelis had worked out a systematic plan of operations in case the truce broke down. From now on, Zahal would attack while the Arabs—though certainly capable of causing many Israeli casualties —waited for the blows to fall. On July 9, 1948, these plans were set into motion. Ten days of heavy fighting ensued, the most important operation of which was Operation Dani. Remaining in a defensive posture against the Egyptians, Zahal units undertook a series of swift, mobile campaigns that broke the back of the Lebanese, Syrians, and Arab irregular forces besieging the Galilee. Simultaneously, the Israelis pushed the Jordanians back on the central front, occupying the crucial towns of Ramle and Lod. Both were strategically important since they sat astride the approaches to the road to Jerusalem (which was still blocked); Lod was also important for its airport.

A renewed effort was also made to open the road to Jerusalem. Repeated attempts to capture Latrun from the Arab Legion failed; the position was a natural defensive asset and could not be conquered easily. That meant that direct communications with the besieged city were still almost impossible. However, in the interim Israeli units probed the Trans-Jordanians' flanks and discovered a difficult but not impossible route around the main line of Arab resistance. This route, covered from direct observation, was also considered to be free of Trans-Jordanian fire, meaning that almost any type of vehicle could make the journey. Dubbed the Burma Road (in honor of the road built during World War II to bring Allied supplies from India to China), the route was improved (if that word could be used in the context of something that is, fifty years later, still a dirt track) by Zahal engineers. Soon sufficient supplies were pouring over the Burma Road to break the siege.

Phase Four: October-November, 1948

These new Israeli operations were halted by the U.N. Security Council, which imposed a new truce on July 18 that lasted until October. The second truce had been part of a larger U.N. effort to end fighting altogether. Again, fighting ceased, this time for a span of three months, but peace was not brought any closer since the Arabs refused to concede. Both sides once again used the truce to prepare for further fighting. When renewed fighting broke out, instigated by the

Egyptians, Zahal was ready for them and began another series of moves designated Operation "Ten Plagues" (also known as Operation Yoav). Initially holding a defensive posture on the northern and central fronts, Zahal concentrated on the Egyptians, liberating Jewish settlements in the northern Negev. These settlements had been surrounded by the Egyptians since the war began. Most had been kept supplied by the Israel Air Force, but the end game was about to unfold.

Zahal put Operation Yoav into effect on October 15, 1948, after the Egyptians fired on an unarmed food convoy passing, as permitted by the truce, near the town of Faluja. Testifying to the rapidity with which Zahal had matured into a professional army from a collection of motley undergrounds, Operation Yoav was undertaken entirely by mobile forces. Despite heavy fighting, Zahal prevailed: the Egyptian lines were broken, the Negev settlements were liberated, and Israeli sovereignty was established all the way to Elat, Israel's outlet on the Red Sea. Significantly, Zahal operations turned the tables on the Egyptians, completely surrounding considerable Egyptian forces in the so-called Faluja Pocket. Further operations on the northern, central, and southern fronts culminated in the brief Israeli occupation of El Arish (in the northern Sinai) and left no question about the war's outcome: Zahal, and Israel, had emerged victorious.

Armistice talks began on the Island of Rhodes on January 13, 1949. Agreements were difficult but were reached: with Egypt on February 24, Lebanon on March 1, Trans-Jordan on March 11, Iraq (an agreement actually signed by Trans-Jordanian representatives acting as plenipotentiaries for the Iraqi king) on March 15, and Syria on July 20. Not only was the Israeli-Syrian armistice the most difficult to negotiate, but it was also the most fragile, collapsing within months of signing. The armistice agreements, however, were viewed as nothing more than interim agreements to a comprehensive peace, which did not follow.

Notes:

1. This article has been adapted from Hershel Edelheit and Abraham J. Edelheit, *History of Zionism: A Handbook and Dictionary*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000. All rights are reserved.

2. For one recent interpretation, citing considerable statistical material, see: Amitzur Ilan, *The Origin of the Arab-Israeli Arms Race*, London: Macmillan, 1996.

⇨ *Source for the table at right: Archion Toldot ha-Hagana (ATH), War of Independence Collection*

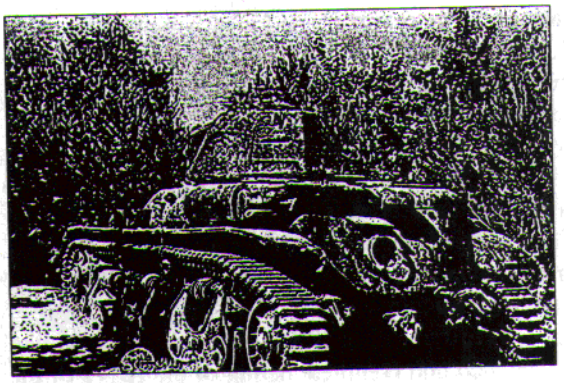
ZAHAL BATTALIONS IN THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

#	Name	Brigade
1	ha-Emek	Yiftah
2	ha-Negev ha-Zfoni	ha-Negev
3	ha-Galil	Yiftah
4	Ha-Porzim	Harel
5	Sha'ar ha-Gai	Harel
6	Yerushalayim	Harel
7	Be'er Sheva	ha-Negev
8	ha-Negev ha-Dromi	ha-Negev
9	ha-Peshita	ha-Negev
10	ha-Meshurian	Harel[1]
11	Alon	Golani[2]
12	Barak	Golani
13	Gideon	Golani
14	Dror	Golani
15	Goren	Golani
21	--	Carmeli
22	--	Carmeli
23	--	Carmeli
24	--	Carmeli
31	--	Alexandroni
32	--	Alexandroni
33	--	Alexandroni
34	--	Alexandroni[3]
35	Agaf Hadracha	Alexandroni[4]
37	--	Alexandroni
42	--	Kiryati
43	--	Kiryati
44	--	Kiryati
51	--	Givati
52	--	Givati
53	--	Givati
54	--	Givati
55	--	Givati
57	--	Givati
58	--	Givati
61	Moriah	Ezioni
62	Bet Horon Ezioni	
63	Michmas Ezioni	
71	--	Seventh[5]
72	--	Seventh[6]
79	--	Seventh
82	--	Eighth[7]
89	--	Eighth
91	--	Oded
92	--	Oded
	--	Nashon I[8]
	--	Nashon II[9]
	--	Nashon III[10]

1. The battalion name was unofficial.
2. Transferred to Oded during June 1948.
3. Composed of instructors and advanced trainees that were organized into an infantry battalion in the summer of 1948.
4. In some documents this battalion was referred to as Battalion 35B, implying that it was detached from the 35th Battalion. In fact, the two were completely independent.
5. Composed almost entirely of Canadian, British, South African and American volunteers, the 72nd Battalion was commanded by Benjamin Dunkelmann. The battalion for the unofficial nickname of "Anglo-Saxon". See also: *Mitnadvei Hutz la-Aretz*.
6. Composed largely of foreign volunteers, the battalion was re-designated the 73rd Battalion in July 1948.
7. Re-designated 81st Battalion in July 1948.
8. Battalion-sized battle-group composed of units from the Palmach and from the Alexandroni and Givati Brigades, operational for the duration of Operation Nashon in 1948.
9. Battalion-sized battle-group composed of units from the Palmach and Harel Brigades, operational for the duration of Operation Nashon in 1948.
10. composed of units from the Palmach and Givati Brigades, operational for the duration of Operation Nashon in 1948.

THE SCENARIOS OF

GENESIS is an extensive module with fifteen scenarios. My plan here is to walk the reader through the first five scenarios in the set to provide a little of the modules 'flavor'.



SONS OF GALILEE (GENESIS #1)

Despite the modest size of the orders of battle for both sides, the first scenario in GENESIS 48 pulls out all the stops in terms of variety. Armor, artillery and infantry clash in this battle for Kibbutz Degania A, the hometown of Moshe Dayan.

The terrain is simply gorgeous, with the natural tones of boards 40 and 43 making them among the most attractive ever. The new Kibbutz overlay makes it first appearance, here placed on board 43.

Israeli Advantages: Fanaticism; Terrain; MOL Capability; and Leadership

The Israeli villagers, represented by 4-3-6 squads, begin play Fanatic. This makes them de-facto 4-3-7 squads, and represents a major statistical jump up in staying power. This is especially beneficial when one considers these very squads are going to be hunkering down in stone buildings for a good part of the scenario.

The Israeli leadership advantage is referenced simply because they receive a 9-2. As far as this writer is concerned, in any scenario in which one side receives a 9-2 and the other side does not have an equivalent, high-quality leader, the receiving side has a major advantage. The leadership edge is even more outstanding in this scenario when viewed in light of the impact of a leader-led PIAT shot on a Syrian AFV. If the Syrians lose more than 20 CVP it's curtains.

The risk to AFVs also points up the importance of Israeli MOL Capability. As per GEN1.12, one or more of those nasty MOL Tank Hunting Heroes can be generated in any scenario where the Israelis have MOL Capability. The Syrians simply cannot afford to take risks with their armor. And forcing conservative play on the Syrian player makes his tanks that much less potent. Forget those fancy Bypass-Freeze (sleaze) plays and don't get too close to the enemy. Burning tanks and defeat will result.

The terrain is referenced because defenders in stone buildings and trenches behind barbed wire and wire fences have a natural advantage. My mother (she was an army sergeant) told me so.

Israeli Disadvantages: Time; Ammunition Shortage; and Numbers

Time is *not* on your side. If the Syrian player plays it smart and brings his infantry in on turn two, he has plenty of time to grab one of his objectives for a win. Even if he waits to enter them on turn three, he still gets five player turns on-map to do the job. And he can take a few extra risks if he doesn't burn off those extra CVP on early entry.

Ammunition Shortage is always a bummer but the Israelis better get used to dealing with it. The Arabs get all the bullets in this war. A few bad dice rolls can kiss off your valuable support weapons and that gun, not to mention the effect on your infantry rolling a '12'. Our advice? Shoot smart. Roll low.

The Israeli player has a long front to cover and is outnumbered 6-0 in armor and 11-7 in squads. The overall firepower available to the infantry of each OOB (determined by counting the squads, SW and Guns) is almost equal. However, the Syrians can concentrate on one chosen part of your line to create a local manpower advantage far in excess of their 11-7 (1 1/2 to one) overall edge.

Syrian Advantages: Varied Victory Conditions; Armor; Artillery; and Maneuver

The Syrian player has the choice of three different Victory Conditions that he can opt for anytime. This is no small advantage. The choice to go for the bridge in 40I2-I3, or 11 CVP or 17 building Locations forces the meager Israeli force to cover it all. And not risk taking too many losses themselves. Knock out that Hispano Suiza gun and its crew and you are almost halfway to victory in CVP earned.

Armor is always a major advantage when you have it and the other guy doesn't. The Syrian order of battle sports no less than six AFVs to the Israeli's none. And while the risk of losing armor was pointed out above, an historical use of your heavy-metal assets to stand off and blast away will not only make you feel like a real tanker (instead of a cardboard-pushing, rules-bending weenie), it will get you 'promoted'; promoted right to the next scenario (we assume you are playing all 15 in chronological order like a real *mensch*) with

GENESIS 48

by Raymond J. Tapio

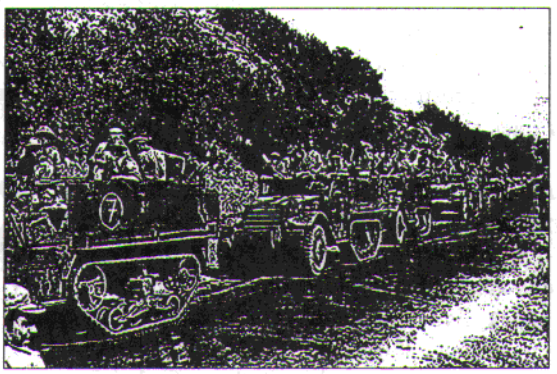
a win under your belt.

The Syrians get artillery and the Israelis don't. That about sums up the edge that 70mm battery represents as those pop-guns are not going to dig too many of the enemy out of their stone building and trench strong-holds. That said, the inclusion of artillery assets makes for a true combined-arms assault for the Syrian player. Organize your combat 'tools' right and you better get a win for yourself here or headquarters will send your tail out to the Sinai desert.

Maneuver is king when your opponent has to cover the previously-mentioned three victory conditions and you can enter along a wide swath of board-edge. It may not seem so wide, but consider the fact that a small Israeli order of battle has to cover both the south and east edge and you get the picture.

Syrian Disadvantages: Forced Piecemeal Assault

Yes, the scenario designer forces the Syrian player to piecemeal his attack. Blame the commander of the Syrian 1st Brigade, he did it first! The effects of this: un-escorted Syrian AFVs enter on turn one, and must wait until turn three for their infantry contingent to make the scene. The Syrian player may bring his foot-sloggers on a turn earlier, on turn two, but must pay a 5 CVP cost to do so. It's up to the Syrian player to decide if this is worth the risk. There isn't enough time for the armor, entering on turn one, to make an impact in the game for the Syrian player to take a 'wait and see' attitude. It is doubtful the Israeli player is going to give you much in the way of targets during the Defensive Fire Phase of their player turn one. And if you don't make your move to enter early on turn two, well it's going to play out according to the 'orders' of higher command (i.e., infantry enters on turn three).



LOCUST SWARM (GENESIS #2)

From the lush, cozy confines of your kibbutz out to the hot sands of the desert. The Israelis face another horde of enemy armor. This time they get a little themselves.

What makes this scenario unique is that the Egyptians have to get their steel monsters off the battlefield before the bell rings and this thing is over. The Israelis are awarded 2 VP for every mobile Egyptian AFV left on map at game end. With 13 AFVs in play, that's a lot of armor to push off the map edge. Note that the rules for EXIT (A2.6) allow units to leave the mapboard. However, only AFVs exiting between 27G1-27K1 get the Egyptians VP as per SR.

Israeli Advantages: Guns; Sangars; Reinforcements; and Compact Set Up Area

The fact of the matter is you get enough ordnance to do the job here. The Egyptian armor is so thin-skinned that even your 20L pop-gun can pop a few holes in some HT, Carriers and Locust tanks. The 57L will eat them for lunch, as will the PIAT if any enemy AFVs get close enough. Even that 3" mortar can do a number on the OT Carriers and HT if given the opportunity. And considering the open terrain and the range of said medium mortar, it *will* get the opportunity.

What can one say about Sangars? Your guys get to hunker down in them while the other guy has to come across open ground. Where would *you* rather spend the war? Remember that Overrun of a Sangar zaps a Gun in it too if the fully-tracked AFV was mobile when the OVR went down, as per F8.41.

The Israeli reinforcment column can play heck with enemy foot-soldiers trying to cross the open desert. Of course, it can also have the heck shot out of it, giving the Egyptians valuable VP. Then again, if the Egyptian infantry tries to take a shortcut by entering on the west edge on board 27, say around GG1-GG5, he'll have to think twice in light of the Israeli reinforcements entry area literally in his face.

You don't have too much ground to cover so a mutually-supporting set up can be accomplished in the compact area delineated as your world. Not much of a down side to that with one exception: crowding makes one more susceptible to OBA and the sons of Egypt get a 70mm Battalion Mortars.

Israeli Disadvantages: Time; Ammunition Shortage for AA and AT Guns; and AFV Numbers

Time is not on your side. Seven turns provides enough of the *chronos* (chronological time) commodity for the Egyptian to lay in a set-piece assault aimed at your elimination when the *kairos* (time as in timing) is right. The other guys have all the tools: men, tanks and artillery. And the time to lay a hurting on you.

Ugh! Who forgot the shells for our AA and AT guns? Can

someone ring up David Ben-Gurion on the field phone for me? I have a complaint to file with Tel-Aviv. The effects of Ammunition Shortage (A19.131) leads to these Guns beginning play considered to have a circled B# (D3.71) one lower than their inherent B#. Choose your shots carefully and hope no enemy players are reading this so they won't take advantage of your weakness.

AFV numbers are all for the Egyptians. Hey, if the other guy can't figure out how to make hay with 13 AFVs racing across the desert sands he better get back to Chapters D and F for a little review. Or read *The Rommel Papers* or something. Those little steel boxes are going to get you if you don't make sure your guns are mutually supporting with a PIAT or two close by for last-ditch defense.

Egyptian Advantages: AFVs; Artillery; and Time

Hello and welcome to the desert. You have a gaggle of AFVs, which we hear are quite useful in this kind of terrain. Eleven of your AFVs are fully-tracked. That makes them gun-eliminating Sangar-tipping monsters. And we trust you've taken note that Vehicle Dust (F11.74) comes into play due to the Dry EC. Look at those two little white dots behind the armor factors on your Carriers. Those suckers are double small. Lead the way with them on the move, spewing big clouds of vehicle dust in their wake to screen the rest of your armored column as you close with the enemy, who hopefully is popping off with his guns ineffectively, risking the effects of Ammunition Shortage all the while. Ooh la-la!

When you have artillery and the other guy doesn't, well we covered that ground already. Your edge. In this scenario, you have to deal with Scarce Ammunition, a negative, but get the up sides of open terrain for LOS, an offboard observer and Battalion Mortar, all factors that make contact more likely.

Time is noted as an advantage again simply because you have enough time to move into position for an organized assault. This must be remembered when you think of rushing any part of your attack prematurely. Be patient and grind away with a set-piece attack.

Egyptian Disadvantages: Locust Un-Reliability; Open Ground; and Infantry Numbers

A roll must be made on the table provided by SR for each Locust in your OOB. Odds are, something bad is going to happen to most of your Locusts. The 'bad' ranges from temporarily slowing them down to disabling the MA and CMG *and* permanently slowing them down.

Crossing open ground is tough for your infantry. And we might as well talk about the fact that your infantry are outnumbered by the Israeli squads of the Golani Brigade. The scales are further tipped when the 1.5 squads of the Israeli 8th Armored Brigade arrive on the scene. You cannot afford to take too many risks with your manpower. Then again, how does a company of men cross the open desert without taking risks? Better hope for some artillery to screen your approach.



ETZIONGRAD (GENESIS #3)

Designer Bob O'Connor presents us with another stellar terrain morsel, this time depicting the embattled kibbutz at Kfar Etzion. Vinyards (F13.6) and the crag-strewn heights above the kibbutz make for a unique battlefield.

The Israelis are defending a virtual fortress, with mines, wire, Sangars (representing shallow foxholes dug in the rocky ground in this case) and unique 360° pillboxes on the scene. They are fairly well armed, with machine-guns, light and medium mortars and an anti-tank rifle.

Command control for the Arab Army of Salvation and Arab militia troops is depicted in an interesting fashion by SR. The AAS squads must take a NTC to move or advance unless adjacent to a leader. And the 11 squads AAS provided in the overall Arab OOB (they also receive six Arab Legion squads, not restricted by the SR) only receive two leaders, poor ones at that, in the form of a 7-0 and a 6+1.

Israeli Advantages: Fortifications; MOL Capability; and Medium Mortar

So we made your analysis simple this time around. The Israelis are sitting pretty with 12 AP mine factors, 4 AT, a roadblock, five Sangars, eight wire and four pillboxes of the aforementioned 360° type.

To make things even better, there are heights west of the kibbutz that can be used as a perfect location for the 3" MTR. This medium mortar can rain down HE from a practically untouchable perch in any number of different Level 2 or

higher hexes on board 9. If the Arab player goes after the MTR, it will dilute his attack on the kibbutz.

MOL Capability brings M-T-H into play and those pesky heroes have a specific goal in mind: get two of the five enemy AFVs you need to knock out for an automatic victory.

Israeli Disadvantages: Attacked From All Sides and Ammunition Shortage

The enemy comes at you from three of the four board edges in this scenario. How do you cover it all? You don't, of course, especially in light of the fact that this game is in essence a point defense assignment for you.

What makes it a point defense is the requirement that the Arab player *must* control building 35oW2. This shack has cellars and all and the fact that, no matter what else shakes out in the form of VP for other buildings, the enemy has to wrest control of this place from you. That means you know he'll be coming for it and can plan accordingly by placing most of your strength in and around the 'point' at 35oW2.

A good set up can turn your one disadvantage into an advantage. Make the other guy pay to get 35oW2.

Ammunition Shortage gets you once again. We told you to get used to it. The usual advice holds: pick your shots and roll low.

Arab Advantages: AFVs; Deployment; and Motorized Infantry

The other guy may know you are heading for 35oW2 but you can strike from almost any direction, limited only by terrain. You have the trucks to move a pincer this way and the AFVs to move another that way. You enter on three of the four map edges. This maneuver advantage allows you to seek a weak spot and try and roll up the Israeli defense before making the big push for 35oW2.

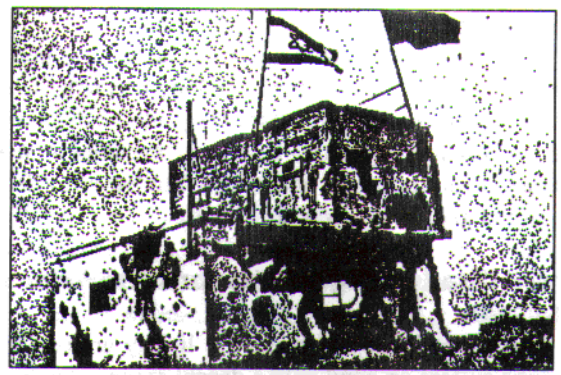
Scout cars, can you say, "scout cars"? You get six of these puppies and a captured Homemade AC. That's a lot of armor against a foe lacking even one AT-gun. Be wary of the PIAT and ATR and these AFVs should turn the tide for you.

Arab Disadvantages: Israeli Automatic Victory; AAS Command Control and Limited Objective

Any time the enemy can end it all with automatic victory (or should we call them "automatic defeat") conditions, you are at a disadvantage. In this case, the loss of five AFVs means you have to pack it in. This may not sound so easy to accomplish, but with two possible MOL Tank Hunting Heroes, light armor and a couple of nasty anti-tank projectors and rifles lurking about, things can go south in one turn of good dice by the Israeli.

The Israeli player knows you need to capture the two-hex building in 35oW2. He has the means to make that difficult. The use of mines, wire, pillboxes and Fanatic villagers hunkering in cellar hexes (35oW2 has Cellars by SR) can make it tough (read time consuming and casualty inducing).

Getting those AAS squad to where you need them is going to entail keeping leaders close at hand. And stacking. This makes them more vulnerable.



BUYING TIME (GENESIS #4)

David Ben-Gurion believed in defense via a system of fortified *kibbutzim*. The residents, including women, would remain to fight for their homes after evacuating the children. The original concept was that keeping wives in the kibbutz to fight alongside their husbands would raise morale. The opposite was often true as the desperate and brutal nature of combat was brought to bear on the civilian and reservist 'soldiers' of Israel.

In 'Buying Time' designer Bob O'Connor brings us to yet another embattled kibbutz, this one straddling the all-important road to Tel-Aviv. The proximity of the settlement to this highway meant it could not be bypassed by the Egyptians.

CH holds the modern-day record for scenarios depicting the fighting for Kibbutz Yad Mordechai, currently at three and counting. Like the wire in this scenario, the subject must be "contagious"! Steve Parillo's prior effort, entitled 'Yad Mordechai', represented a different part of the six-day battle. The new historical version, found in this magazine, plays on the HSL map of the battlefield.

Israeli Advantages: Fortifications; Infantry Numbers; and MOL Capability

Kibbutz Yad Mordechai is surrounded by a wire perimeter that runs from 42A1-42A8-43Z9-42R5 (ignore the part of the

perimeter definition that is outside of the playing area as per the errata). Since the orchards are brush by SR, the two hills on board 42 (the grain on board 42 is SSR'd into a Level 1 hill) have excellent lines of sight. The historical kibbutz was ringed by small hills, each containing a bunker. This may not be a bad approach in game terms either.

Israeli mines are not plentiful, but can be used to create a killing zone in a spot that the Egyptians seem likely to cross. Perhaps they should be tied into the pond, placing 6 AP factors each in 42F9 and 42G10 to create a three-hex 'obstacle' to movement.

The biggest single advantage the Israelis have lies in their infantry numbers. While there is a long perimeter to defend, the fact of the matter is eight Israeli squads are defending here against only four Egyptian. If any opportunities arise for CC against enemy infantry, take them. You've got a few extra guys (and gals) to go around.

Israeli Disadvantages: Weapons and Ammunition Shortage

In a nutshell, the defenders are lightly armed. The only weapon system on hand with a decent range is the Browning MMG. And it starts out at B#10 due to Ammunition Shortage (B#11 on the counter). Everything else the Jews have in the way of support weapons are short range: light machine-guns, a couple of light mortars and a PIAT.

Egyptian Advantages: AFVs; Artillery; and Bombardment

Hey, Cairo wouldn't throw you guys of the 6th Battalion in here without softening the place up, would they? Apparently not. This place gets a severe shelling before the attack—a Bombardment in game terms. The Egyptians also receive a module of 80+mm OBA directed by an Offboard Observer. This place is going to get hit with some lead.

Under the cover of all this comes your armored car and Bren Carrier horde. Since you lose immediately if the Israelis knock out four AFVs, we have half a mind to get the extra 1.5 squads out of the three Carrier A's to bolster your meager infantry force. The Carrier 2-in MTR can also provide more men and another weapon. Then press forward with the four AC's and be sure not to lose all four.

Egyptian Disadvantages: Manpower; Egyptian AFV Morale; and Automatic VC

So Cairo sent you in with tons of artillery and armor. Where's the rest of the guys when you need them? Probably lying in the fields around Kibbutz Yad Mordechai, the victims of the earlier, unsuccessful assaults. You just don't get much of an infantry force here so you'll have to make the best of it. Consider taking my advice to get more guys out of the Brens, but make sure to park them somewhere safe.

You can't push around Egyptian AFVs in 1948 without taking note of the rule for EGYPTIAN AFV MORALE (GEN1.221). This rule says that Egyptian AFVs within six hexes and in LOS of an Eliminated or Recalled AFV must take a NTC. Failure results in a normal Stun result (sending some AFVs home with a Recall the first time around and all others after the second Stun result). This is not a trivial matter and forces the Egyptian player to be that much more conservative with his armor. Or piecemeal it and keep it at least seven hexes apart. Doesn't exactly let the Egyptians serve up a *Blitzkreig* of massed armor.

We're back to discussing automatic victory conditions and how they apply to your use of armor. If you are the daring type, try surprising the Israeli player and throw caution to the wind. Perhaps rolling all of your armor into the middle of the kibbutz will tip things in your favor. Most likely it will put a smile on the Israeli player's face as his M-T-H Heroes run out and relieve you of a couple of your AFVs.



TRIPLE PLAY (GENESIS #5)

The war continues with 'Triple Play'. Elite Palmach troops of the Yiftach Battalion came in and captured the village of Malkieh, called the "Gateway to Galilee". They soon transfer out and are replaced by less experienced troops in the form of the recently mustered 9th 'Oded' Brigade. Of course that's when the Lebanese, ALA and Syrians come together for a combined assualt on the place.

Malkieh has open ground to the east, the direction the Arabs are approaching from. Hills to the north provide some cover for the attackers if they swing their main thrust in that direc-

tion. The Jewish defenders have a wide area they are allowed to set up in, providing lots of choices.

Israeli Advantages: Mines; Time; and Set Up Area

The Israelis receive 60 AP mine factors. This is a lot of mines! They can be used in cute little spots all over the Israeli set up area or you can make like a real commander and create one, or perhaps two real obstacles in the form of extensive minefields. Think in terms of a two five-hex-long 6 AP factor minefields or perhaps one two hexes deep. If covered by fire, these are going to be practically impassible. You can then focus the bulk of your firepower on the non-mined portion of the defense.

Since you have a wide set up area, you don't have to tip off where the minefield(s) is. You can move quickly to new postions after set up as you have little to tote around that might slow you down. Note the hill on board 43 in hexes P6-Y7 makes for a pretty large swatch of open ground. You may well be able to cover this with some guys in foxholes, using a LMG for a Fire Lane. Note the absence of Ammunition Shortage allows you to use Fire Lanes for the first time.

Time is on your side because 6.5 turns just isn't that long to capture buildings when you have open ground to cross on foot. The Arabs don't have the luxury of wandering into a large minefield. By the time they rally the resulting broken units or detour around it under fire, critical time will tick off the clock.

Israeli Disadvantages: Manpower

Let's face it, you have an awfully long perimeter to cover with only nine squads. And seven of them have a Range of four or less. Not exactly 'reach out and touch someone' range. With this small group you have to face down 24 enemy squads, a 3:1 advantage *before* the Arabs focus their attack. You are going to have to use the mines to create a barrier and hunker down near the village. Any far-flung missions out on the wilds of board 33 are strictly out. You can't afford to even have a HS get cut off and eliminated cheaply.

Arab Advantages: Numbers and Artillery

If you can't take a 3:1 manpower advantage and make it a local 6:1 somewhere along the line we have a new version of Chapter K for you to read. Sure, your OOB sets up scattered all over the map. OK, so they can't stack or form multi-national Fire Groups. They have legs, which allows the two groups setting up in the north to become one group.

And remember: you get 24 squads and there is no limit to the casualties you can suffer in this scenario. That's a hint, Patton.

The Lebanese get a module of 70+mm OBA with Scarce

WEAPONS HOLDING OF ZAHAL AS OF MAY 28, 1948

Manufacturer/Caliber/Weapon Type[1]	# Available
Pistols	5,607
Sten 9mm Submachine Gun	8,892
Thompson .45 cal. Submachine Gun	681
Other Submachine Guns	691
Lebel 8mm Rifle	589
Lee-Enfield .303 Inch Rifle	7,842
Mauser 7.92mm Kar-98K Rifle	13,124
MG 34 7.92mm Light/Medium Machineguns	1,650[2]
KM Machine Gun	159[3]
Stu Light Machine Gun	527[4]
Besa 7.92mm Medium Machine Gun	22[5]
Browning .30 cal. Medium Machine Gun (AC)	20
Browning .30 cal. Medium Machine Gun (WC)	37
Schwarzlose 7.92mm Medium Machine Gun	67
Vickers .303 Medium Machine Gun (WC)	488
Hotchkiss 13.2mm Heavy Machine Gun	38[6]
Besa 15mm Tank Machine Gun	12
2 Inch Mortar	682[7]
3 Inch Mortar	105
120mm French Mortar	12
Davidka	16
Boys Anti-Tank Rifle (0.55 Inch)	27
Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank (PIAT)	48
Hispano-Suiza 20mm Anti-Aircraft Gun	30
French 65mm Light Field Gun	30
Krupp 75mm Field Gun	10

Notes:

1. Details given where pertinent; when no manufacturer is cited, it is either unknown or not applicable.

2. Of which 1,364 had only recently arrived and had not yet been distributed to combat units.

3. These were ground fighting versions of the Russian "KM" series of aircraft machine guns. Usually 7.92mm, the Russians had the KM33, KM35, KM36 and KM41 machine guns used on aircraft. The Israelis in 1948 were adept at using aircraft machine guns in a ground role.

4. This is bascically the Bren LMG. It was a direct copy, produced locally.

5. What the Israelis (and others) call the Besa was the Czech ZB53 (also known as the ZB37). It was used as a medium machine gun by the Germans in WW II.

6. Of which 15 arrived in April 1948 and had not yet been distributed to combat units.

7. Including some versions locally manufactured by Ta'as.

Ammunition. It may never come down and if it does it may have little effect against defenders in buildings. Plus, it ties down a valuable leader. To this end we suggest using the OBA to fix Israeli defenders in the part of the line you are *not* attacking. If placed judiciously, the OBA can divert or outright block enemy infantry from reinforcing the sector you are hitting with the sixteen squads that make up the northern group. Use the artillery to fix the defender and your eastern wing as a diversion. That's starting to sound like a plan. No kibbitzing!

Arab Disadvantages: Time and Distance

Six and one half turns just isn't a lot of time to get to the village on foot. A well placed minefield or Fire Lane can really hold things up. So orders are to move out! Get close to the village so you can Search for any large minefield and lay in an organized assault. If you lose a few squads along the way, so be it. You have the luxury of taking a few casualties in this one without the Israeli player breaking into the *Hatikvah* to celebrate his victory.

Conclusion:

Drop us a line if you'd like to see this article continued with more analysis for the remaining eleven scenarios of GENSSIS 48.

NEW! VALOR OF THE (37th) GUARDS



This is a VARIANT. Owner

You didn't think we were going to do all this new Combat! Stalingrad stuff and forget about our loyal Squads & Leaders following, now did you?

Of course not! The Battle of Stalingrad comes alive again in **THE VALOR OF THE GUARDS: THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD**, our new set for the Squad-leading enthusiast that owns Red Barricades™.

Valor of the Guards consists of nine new scenarios, all set on a gorgeous large-hex map rendition of the Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works. No, this is not Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works in a second edition; the scenarios are all new! We've kept the price cheap for this add-on. Valor of the Guards includes 9 new scenarios, one campaign game, all printed on cardstock, plus special rules and a 22 x 34 map with 1" hexes (they love those big hexes!)

This is the product the Stalingrad nuts have been asking for since the release of DTW! (Ownership of Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works not needed to use this product.)

GENESIS Bibliography continued from page 9

57. Phillips, John, "A Will to Survive", NY, The Dial Press, 1976
58. Postal, Bernard, and Levy, Henry W. "And the Hills Shouted for Joy: The Day Israel Was Born", NY, David McKay Company, 1973 3rd ed
59. Reich, Bernard(ed), "An Historical Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict", Westport Conn., Greenwood Press, 1996
60. Safran, Nadav, "From War to War: The Arab-Israeli Confrontation, 1948-1967", Indianapolis, Pegasus, 1975, 5th ed
61. Schiff, Zeev, "A History of the Israeli Army", San Francisco, Straight Arrow Books, 1974
62. Shamir, Shlomo, "No Matter What - To Jerusalem", Tel Aviv, Maarakhat, 1994 (in Hebrew)
63. Shteiner, Puah "Forever My Jerusalem: A Personal Account of the Siege and Surrender of Jerusalem's Old City in1948", Jerusalem, Feldheim Publishers, 1987
64. Tal, Duby and Haramat, Moni, "Skyline Jerusalem", Mod Publishing House, 1996, 3rd English Ed.
65. Vardi, Rafeal et al(eds), "The Hagana Lexicon", Tel Aviv, Ministry of Defense Publications, 1992, (Hebrew)
66. Westwood, J.N., "The History of the Middle East Wars", NY, Bison Books, 1984
67. Zaloga, Steven "Tank Battles of the Mid-East Wars: (1) The Wars of 1948-1973", Hong Kong, Concord Publishers, 1996
68. Zaloga, Steven, "M3 Infantry Half-Track, 1940-1973", London, Osprey, 1994, New Vanguard Series #11

Archives:
1. US National Archives, Washington DC
2. Middle East Institute, Washington DC
3. IDF Archives, Tel Aviv, Columbia University, NY