ASL annual '93a
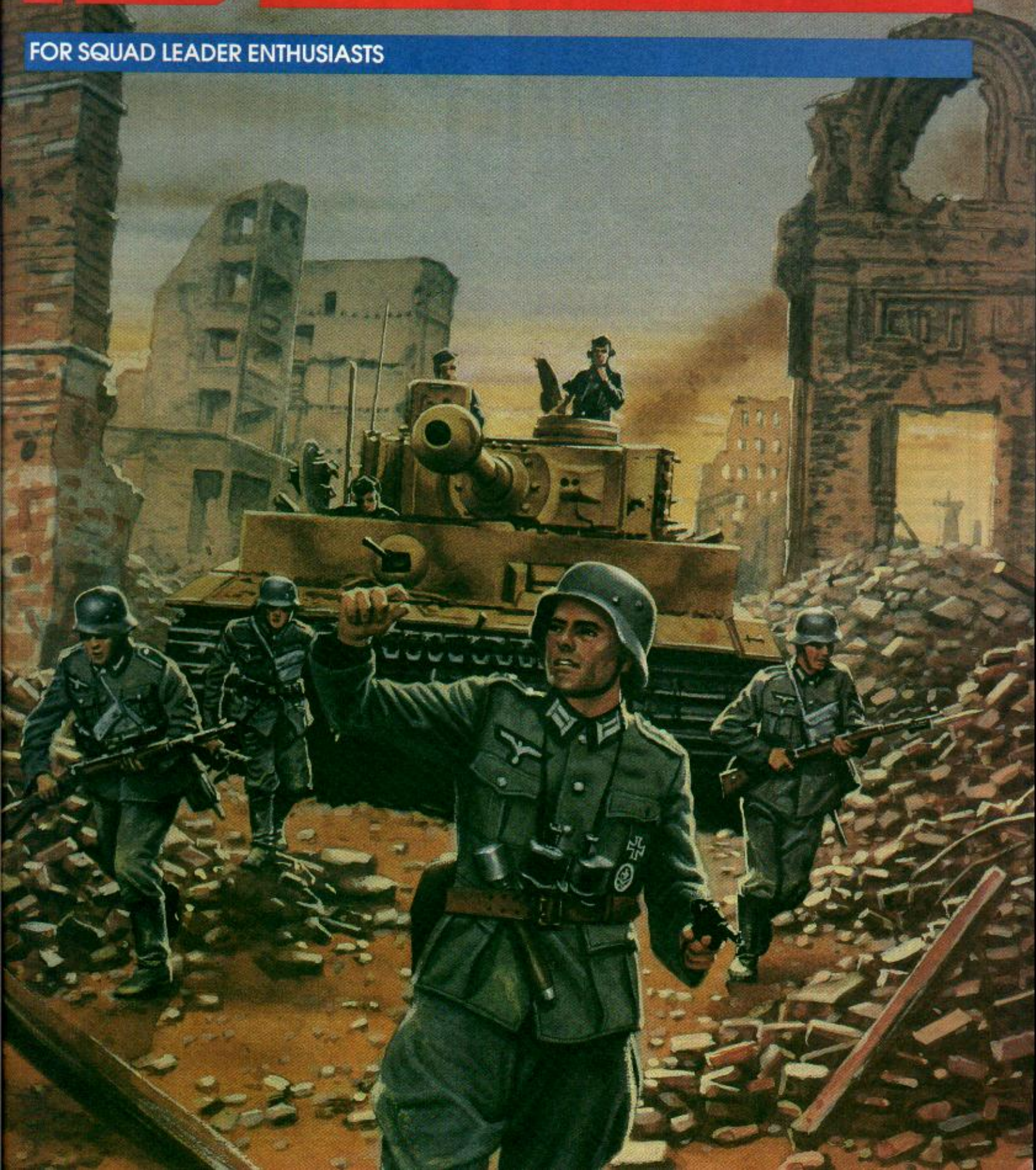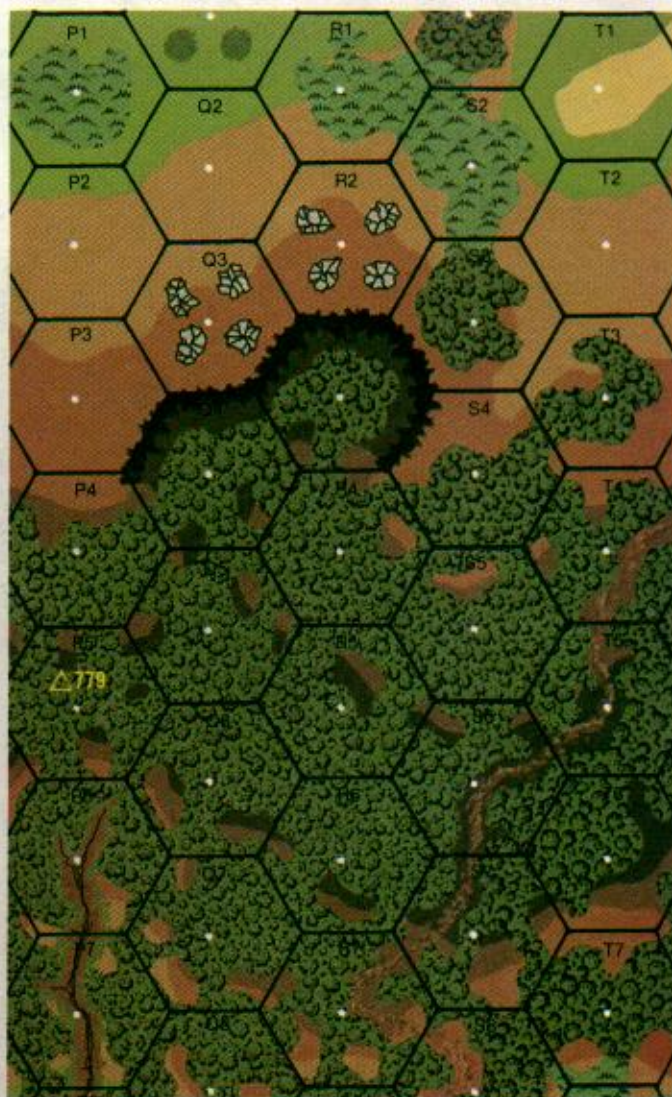
GUNG HO!

January 22nd, 1942... A Japanese battalion has successfully infiltrated along near-impassable mountain slopes in the thick jungle of Bataan, trapping the I Philippine Corps by cutting its only road link to the south. General Wainwright, I Corps' commander, hurriedly orders a mixed force of Filipino and US troops, including light tanks and SP guns, to concentrate north and south of the Japanese. As his tired troops arrive on the scene, they are thrown into a piecemeal attack from both directions in a desperate bid to eject the defenders from their stronghold astride the road. Failure means certain disaster for I Corps . . .

July 21st, 1944... The invasion of Guam is under way. The Navy's big guns have ceased firing, and LVTs carrying Marines, trailed by LCMs bearing Sherman tanks, clamber across the reef offshore of Chonito Cliff. On their left lies Adelup Point, its heights portending the deadly menace of enfilading fire. Ahead, US aircraft continuously bomb and strafe the shoreline. As the Marines approach Red Beach One, the Japanese defenders suddenly open fire. Their orders are straightforward: annihilate the enemy at the water's edge . . .

December 9th, 1944... Bhamo, a river port on the Irrawaddy, has been turned into a fortress by Japanese determined to keep the Burma Road out of Allied hands. Anti-tank ditches connect the lagoons that flank the town, numerous buildings are fortified, and wire and panji stakes guarded by automatic weapons in bunkers cover all avenues of approach. Despite their formidableness, the defenses are about to be hit by the Chinese 114th Infantry Regiment. These veteran jungle-fighters, though strangers to urban combat, are well prepared. With air and artillery support, flamethrowers and bazookas, they launch a coordinated assault. But for many, it will be their last . . .

You've fought on the Eastern and Western fronts, in the Mediterranean and North African theaters, on the plains of Manchuria and in the jungles of Burma and New Guinea. You've experienced paradrops, glider-borne landings, Stuka attacks, and opposed river crossings. Only one major type of combat remains unexplored: the classic amphibious assault. Now, in **GUNG HO!**, this too is added to the repertoire of **ASL**. And what better way to present beach landings than with the introduction of the U.S. Marines. **GUNG HO!** offers four types of USMC squads, reflecting their evolution through the war years, along with the most comprehensive tactical-level amphibious rules ever in a wargame. It's all here in the balance of Chapter G: deep and shallow ocean beaches of variable width and slope, sea walls, piers, beach obstacles, reefs, heavy surf, naval gunfire, and all the important types of landing craft used by the Allies and Japanese throughout WW2. As if this weren't enough, **GUNG HO!** also brings the rules and counters to recreate the infamous cave defenses employed by the Japanese, plus new infantry counters for the early US Army in the Philippines and the entire order of battle for the Chinese Army. Last, but not least, two new mapboards (#38 and #39), several sheets of overlays and eight scenarios are included. (*Note: GUNG HO! is not a complete game; ownership of BEYOND VALOR, YANKS, WEST OF ALAMEIN and CODE OF BUSHIDO is required.*)

GUNG HO! is now available for $50.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add $6.00 for domestic shipping ($12.00 for Canadian orders; $18.00 for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

ASL

Croix de Guerre

May 13th, 1940 ... In the chill of the Arctic spring, a French Foreign Legion battalion prepares a hasty assault on a supply depot north of Narvik. Currently in German hands, the depot holds the arms desperately needed by the Norwegians fighting in the mountains. In the face of Wehrmacht machine guns, audacity—and two Hotchkiss tanks—might be the key to the Legionnaires' success.

May 18th, 1940 ... The French 9th Army is disintegrating rapidly. Its headquarters, just setting up in the village of Le Catelet, is not even sure how far the Germans have advanced. Suddenly the alarm is raised—enemy approaching from the north! Armored cars quickly take up positions to fight a holding action, while the small HQ staff and the local garrison hurriedly make what defensive preparations they can. Their day promises to be desperate.

June 20th, 1941 ... Elements of the Free French Division must take the rugged, boulder-strewn stronghold of Hill 740, the last Vichy position covering the road to Damascus. Tanks, guns and men stand ready amidst the wadis and broken ground, but no one is enthusiastic about having to fight his erstwhile brothers-in-arms. Regardless of which side prevails, it is bound to be a sad day for France.

November 8th, 1942 ... The Americans have landed in Morocco, but in their ranks confusion reigns. Some mistakenly advance in the wrong direction, and in a small village find themselves subjected to a steadily escalating attack by Vichy infantry with armor and artillery support. The green GIs know they're in the "big leagues" now—and, whether they like it or not, it's time to play ball.

Here at last is the long-awaited addition of the French to the *ASL* family. Compared to the original *Crescendo of Doom* gamette, **CROIX DE GUERRE** offers greatly expanded coverage of the French, in terms of both counters and historical research. Contained in the module is not only the entire *ASL* order of battle (all personnel, weapon and vehicle counters) for the French during 1939 and 1940, but also that of the subsequent Vichy regime's overseas coloinies, plus many extra counters for the equipment used by the Free French but not included in *YANKS* or *WEST OF ALAMEIN*. Also included are two new mapboards (#40 and #41) depicting typical European terrain, a new sheet of building and stream overlays, eight new scenarios, the usual detailed historical and DYO information on vehicles and ordnance (including much never before published in English). Eight revised rulebook pages for earlier chapters continue the process of refining the play of *ASL*; last but not least, the Chapter N divider makes its appearence, carrying an updated Sequence of Play and a standardized check-list of pre-game activities. (*Note: CROIX DE GUERRE is not a complete game; ownership of BEYOND VALOR, YANKS and WEST OF ALAMEIN is required.*)

CROIX DE GUERRE is now available for $35.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add $5.00 for shipping and handling ($10.00 for Canadian shipment; $15.00 for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

PANZER GEGEN PANZER

Tank Warfare in ASL

By Bruce E. Bakken

The engine roars obediently as the driver hurries to carry out your latest order: "Forward eighty meters." Slowly, almost grudgingly, your tank grinds up the hill, until finally it reaches the crest. Before you lies a picturesque rural valley; scattered farmhouses interspersed with grainfields and a loose cluster of woods. Now to assess your position.

"Assume hull down status." It is a maneuver your crew has made dozens of times, and after a few minor adjustments you're satisfied. Only the turret is visible from lower elevations now.

From the intermittent chatter in your headphones, you know that a platoon of enemy armor is approaching from just behind that slight rise to the left, so you swing the turret to face that direction. A brief sweep of the area with binoculars from an open hatch reveals nothing. All you can do now is wait, as nerves stretch taut in anticipation of combat with the unsuspecting enemy.

Then, there he is! The first enemy tank appears right where you expected, apparently oblivious to your presence as it approaches. "Hold fire; hold fire. Steady now; not too soon..."

Abruptly the enemy tank stops, swinging its turret. Surely he has spotted you. "Fire!" A hit! It appears to have had no effect, for still the enemy turret swings towards you. Then, a tiny puff of smoke indicates that he is firing, followed quickly by the jolt of his shell impacting on the slope below. Again, before he can reload...

"Fire!" This time, the explosion offers grim testimony to the validity of your tactics. Once again your patience and experience have paid off. No enemy crew are seen escaping the burning tank...

Even though tank-to-tank warfare may not be quite so dramatic in a game, *ASL* does offer the finest playable system available for simulating armored combat. From its birth with the original *SQUAD LEADER*, through its coming of age with *COI* and continued growth with *COD* and *G.I.*, the AFV aspect of this great game has matured into a simulation system that is remarkably realistic and elegantly detailed. And, like every other aspect of "wargaming's premier tactical simulation", to become really proficient at armored tactics on our cardboard battlefield requires study and, above all, practice.

In *ASL*, when called upon by the scenario, the player assumes the role of a single tank commander—each vehicle distinct, regardless of the number in your OB. Much more so than for Infantry (which may break or become berserk), you, the player, have total control over your tank's actions, and the decisions you make will determine its fate.

The basic premise of this article is that a tank's primary task is to destroy enemy tanks, and that the enemy tanks pose the greatest threat to your own tanks. This is a generalization, of course, but your on-board AFVs will usually be your best anti-tank weapons. Certainly, whenever opposing tanks appear on the *ASL* battlefield they almost invariably tend to seek each other out, and at some point during his career an *ASL* player can expect to become involved in a "tank battle".

Fundamental to any study of tank combat is an understanding of the weapon itself, the tank. Three principles have characterized the tank from its inception: "Firepower", "Protection", "Mobility". In *ASL*, these principles are expressed in the tank's Main Armament Type (turret-mounted; D1.31-.322), Armor Status (Close-Topped; D1.24), and Movement Type (Fully Tracked; D1.13), respectively. This article is divided into parts roughly correlating with each of these principles and is based upon the capabilities and mechanics of handling a tank during play, though many of the points raised will (of course) also apply to other types of armored vehicles and/or to ordnance in general.

At its most basic level, tank combat in *ASL* is a two-step process, as per rule C3.1: "First, the firer must determine if he has hit the target; if he has, he must then determine the effect(s), if any, of that hit." Each step in this process requires a DR, first a TH DR (C3.3) and then a TK DR (C7.11). Since the winner of a tank-versus-tank encounter will usually be the one possessing the best odds (either To Hit or To Kill), the objective in a tank battle at the individual level becomes that of increasing one's own odds while reducing the opponent's odds. These "odds" are determined by any number of several Hit Determination DRM (C5. and C6.) and Basic TK# Modifications (C7.2); much of the following discussion will revolve around the application/avoidance of these modifiers.

Before proceeding further, however, it becomes expedient at this point to introduce a term which will greatly aid in our understanding of how *ASL* tank combat works. The term "Engagement" will lay the foundation for our discussion of armored tactics. Simply put, a tank is said to "Engage" the enemy when it places a half-inch "–1" Acquired Target counter on its target, thus enabling it to apply the Case N TH DRM to its next shot (C6.5). An "Engagement", in my view then, takes place when opposing tanks have Acquired (Engaged) each other.

The term "Engagement" is merely a convention used to describe the situation in which this mutual Acquisition occurs, and as such provides a convenient means of reference for this event. Implicit in its definition is the understanding that the firer will continue shooting at the target until it is destroyed. Indeed, the whole purpose of placing an Acquired counter on a target is so you might benefit from a favorable DRM and so get a better crack at it with your next shot. In the meantime, the enemy will likely be firing back, and if his first shot fails he will also place an Acquired counter on you.

If the objective of a successful tank battle is to "increase one's odds" of killing and surviving, the purpose of all this interrelated activity is to "win the Engagement". Our purpose could alternately be expressed as "destroying the enemy when both you and he have Acquired one another", but this is rather cumbersome. It becomes much simpler to use a single understood term, and so to build the discussion around it.

There are many factors to be considered in winning an Engagement. A given side's odds may change drastically from situation to situation within a single scenario, and will largely influence the course of action you take at any given moment. For now, however, we will assume that the odds remain equal for both sides, in which case success or failure becomes more a question of timing. From this assumption can be established certain principles which might be referred to as my "Rules of Engagement":

1. *Take the First Shot.* No great stretch of cognitive ability is required here. He who shoots first can kill first. Such a shot may occur at any opportunity, and may not actually lead to an Engagement per se. Nevertheless, by remaining alert and actively seeking that first shot, you present yourself with favorable opportunities, such as a shot at the enemy's side or rear facing as he moves. Furthermore, the side shooting first will usually benefit from Rule #2 also.

2. *Take the First Shot of the Engagement.* This could be stated as, "Take the first shot that benefits from the Case N DRM." Once the Engagement is under way, the first side to benefit from Case N receives a considerable advantage. Since both protagonists will likely be stationary, few positive modifiers will apply (the exceptions being those for TEM or LOS Hindrances), and even the

penalty for being BU (Case I) will be negated by Case N. What will usually result is a "straight" shot, or even one with a negative modifier. At close range, a hit may become as "automatic" as it will ever get.

3. *Take More Shots Than the Enemy.* This may, but does not have to, include using Intensive Fire; it is similar in philosophy to Rule #1 in that the more shots you take, the more chances you give yourself to destroy the enemy. A so-called *ASL* "realist" might point out that more shots also means more likelihood of a Gun malfunction, but consider that the odds of this occurring are usually identical to that of obtaining a CH. Think positive!

The key in winning an Engagement is to strive to follow these Rules of Engagement, and the easiest way to assure adherence to these rules is by integrating them into the phased nature of play. Thus, an examination of shot selection during play will quickly reveal that your first shot (Rule #1) will likely occur during your DFPh; that your first shot of the Engagement (Rule #2) will occur during your ensuing PFPh; and that by following rules #1 and #2 throughout the scenario you will accumulate more shots than your opponent (Rule #3). It will be assumed for the remainder of this article that you will indeed seek to engage the enemy at every opportunity, and that you will do so within the tenets outlined in my Rules of Engagement. Keep in mind throughout the discussion that generally only Chapters A-D will be relied upon here, and that any Optional Rules or those cited as applicable by SSR have not been considered in the tactical thinking presented below (unless specifically mentioned).

Part I: Hit To Kill

Once you have decided to engage the enemy, your first decision involves which Target Type to use. Only two choices are available; either the Vehicle Target Type (C3.31) or the Area Target Type (C3.33) must serve. The Vehicle Target Type is the most obvious, and is assumed barring a declaration by the player to the contrary (C.9). Your decision may be influenced to some limited extent by the ammunition available, a topic that will be looked at shortly. Generally, however, if AP is on hand there is little question that you will choose the Vehicle Target Type against the enemy tank.

Under certain combat situations, however, you may find yourself facing a formidable AFV which your MA has little or no chance of destroying using the Vehicle Target Type and the ammunition available. If such an enemy has you trapped, and the odds of escaping make it seem likely that you will be destroyed in the attempt, you may decide to go down with "guns a-blazing" and hope for a CH (C3.7) using the Vehicle Target Type (an unlikely occurrence not to be relied upon). Or, you could fire using the Area Target Type.

The odds of a CH using the Area Target Type remain the same, but a normal hit with such gives you one more chance to destroy the enemy, a chance you would not have using the Vehicle Target Type if his AF is greater than your Modified TK#. Area attacks versus armor are resolved as per rule C1.55. The first thing to note is that AF *never* apply to such an attack. Instead, a "–1" DRM applies to an Area attack if all the enemy's AF are four or less, and a "+1" DRM applies if all the enemy's AF are eight or more. The only other DRM which could apply to such an attack is that for TEM.

Granted, any positive modifiers to an Area attack would make a kill all but impossible, since a Final KIA is required. However, a K/# or one greater than a

K/# would result in the enemy's Immobilization (which might force the crew to leave its vehicle; D5.5) or an automatic Shock (which in itself may result in the vehicle's elimination; C7.4). Keep in mind that a CE enemy crew will be more Vulnerable to a General Collateral Attack (A.14B) when using the Area Target Type than with normal HE Equivalency (C8.31) using AP shot. Overall, the circumstances in which you might choose the Area over the Vehicle Target Type are probably very limited; but always be aware of your options. If desperate situations call for desperate measures, consider using the Area Target Type as a last resort.

Regardless of which Target Type you choose, the C3 To Hit Table will have a direct bearing upon the Range at which you engage the enemy. That table is divided into columns of six-hex increments, with the Basic TH# in each column decreasing as the range increases. Obviously, the closer you are to the target, the better are your odds of hitting it. Notice also that there are two Basic TH# listed for each Range column, one black and one red. Your nationality will determine which color you will use (A25.), though this sometimes varies with the date of the action. The increasing discrepancy (left to right) between the black and red TH# means that the side which must use the red TH# will probably attempt to get fairly close to the target to insure a rough parity.

These Basic TH# are modified by the C4 Gun & Ammo Basic TH# Modifications, which may further influence your decision of the optimum range at which to open the Engagement. For instance, if your MA has an "L" or "LL" Gun Type, you may want to keep an enemy at a longer range in order to take advantage of your gun's "standoff" capability, somewhat analogous to a boxer with a longer reach keeping his opponent at an optimum distance. Except for the desert boards, most *ASL* mapboards do not offer LOS much beyond twelve hexes, so the opportunity to use the "L" or "LL" (especially) modifiers will rarely present itself. If an open expanse does exist, or if any dominant hills in the area afford excellent LOS, then you may wish to engage the on-rushing enemy at longer ranges.

Conversely, the modifiers for "*" Guns, or for smaller calibers, tends to decrease the TH# more rapidly as the range increases. The modifier for small caliber may be offset by the "L" modifiers discussed above; but generally such a tank will still likely prefer to engage the enemy at the shorter ranges. Notice that the modifier for a Gun less-than or equal-to 40mm is cumulative (C4.2). Finally, the Basic TH# is reduced even further if you use APDS/APCR. (SMOKE will be discussed later.)

Bear in mind that all the C4 modifications are cumulative, and serve to transform the Basic TH# into a Modified TH# (C4.5). Any player interested in an excellent study of the effects of range, red-versus-black TH#, and C4 Modifiers should play "Counterattack At Sidi Bou Zid" (Scenario A20) a couple of times. More than any other, this scenario will help you develop a real "feel" for the C3 To Hit Table.

In order to hit the target, the firer must make a Final TH DR that is less-than or equal-to the Modified TH# (C3.3). The TH DR itself is modified by various Firer- and Target-Based DRM, which can (more or less) be controlled by the players. In particular, an attacker can directly "increase his odds" by limiting the effects of any C5 Firer-Based To Hit DRM which apply to a given shot. What follows is a brief analysis of some of the C5 DRM which most commonly affect the outcome of an Engagement. For convenience's sake, they are presented in the order they appear on the table.

Case A: Fire Outside CA. This should be self-explanatory for the *ASL* veteran: "C5.11; All Guns use Case A to fire at targets outside their current CA when changing their CA for a shot in that phase." The actual DRM is determined by the type of ordnance and the number of hexspines adjusted for the shot. For tanks with a "T" type turret (D1.31), the penalty is less severe than for a "ST" type turret (D1.32).

A tank has two CA, depending on the point of reference. The VCA (D3.11) determines the CA of the vehicle itself, which is used for movement purposes and for Target Facing and hit location should an enemy shot score. Being turreted, a tank also has a TCA (D3.12), which exists independently of the VCA. When firing outside of its CA, a tank will typically only change its TCA for that shot in order to incur the lesser Case A DRM, but it is not required to do so. You could indeed change the entire VCA instead, but then the NT (Non-Turreted) DRM would apply as your first hexspine adjustment. If you do decide to change the VCA when firing, just keep in mind that "the TCA changes the same number of hexspines while retaining its position relative to the VCA. Any further changes of TCA incurs normal TCA Case A DRM, in addition to the NT Case A DRM of the VCA change." (D3.51)

Note as well that "the Case A DRM is doubled if the firer is in woods/building/rubble...Furthermore, once such a Gun...fires from woods/building/rubble it may continue to fire during that phase from that hex only inside its current CA." These factors alone present a strong argument against placing your tank in such restricting terrain. The benefit gained from the TEM may be offset to a large degree by these penalties, not to mention the initial hazard of Bogging to enter the terrain in the first place.

Remember that any Gun may change its CA without firing at the end of any fire phase and is still able to fire without using Intensive Fire (C3.22). This tactic may prove useful in avoiding the doubled Case A DRM for woods/building/rubble, though if VCA is changed in this manner in such terrain you would still have to pass a Bog Check (D2.11).

An additional "+1" penalty applies to the Case A DRM for a vehicle which changes TCA to or through a side Target Facing while in Bypass (D2.321). Furthermore, a "TCA based on a Bypass side Target Facing...must pay appropriate Case A (C5.1) penalties for firing within this enlarged CA", unless the target is Acquired (engaged).

Ideally, you would rather not have to change CA when firing. This is not always possible, particularly as the enemy is expected to avoid your field of fire whenever possible. Since you, as a player, can usually see where your opponent's units are located on the mapboard (the "omniscient officer" syndrome), as least you will be able to position your tank to face the direction of the greatest threat.

Case B: Fire AFPh. Case B applies to all "Guns firing during the AFPh which did not enter their current hex during that Player Turn" (C5.2). Very rarely will Case B apply by itself during an Engagement. In most such cases, you will invariably fire during the PFPh, since waiting until the AFPh only allows the enemy to intervene in the duel with Defensive Fire. Of course, it may be that the enemy was destroyed during Prep Fire and that no decent targets remain, perhaps being concealed or outside the firer's CA. You might want to sit tight and await developments rather than move during the MPh, particularly if you occupy an excellent tactical position.

Case B will probably be used most often when a vehicle changes its CA in lieu of firing (as per C3.22), in which case the Case B DRM may actually be less than the appropriate Case A DRM would have been. Keep in mind, however, that a vehicle may only fire once during the AFPh, may not use Intensive Fire, and that Case B is increased to +3 for a firer in woods/building/rubble.

Case C: Bounding Fire. Case C applies to any vehicle which has entered a new hex during the MPh, but does not fire until the AFPh. Case C is based upon Case B and the vehicle's Turret Type, and is the likely situation in which Case B might apply.

Bounding Fire involves *moving* into the enemy's LOS (since it may be presumed that you would Prep Fire otherwise), and presents him an opportunity to fire at you in the meantime during his DFPh. Thus it would seem that Bounding Fire breaks the cardinal

Rules of Engagement discussed previously, since the enemy would get that first shot (Rule #1), and that the enemy would then get the first shot using Case N (Rule #2) as well. Indeed, it appears the enemy holds all the advantages in this case and that Bounding Fire should rarely, if ever, be planned.

As a broad generalization this might be the case indeed, if the only factors involved were your single tank and a lone enemy in open terrain. Certain situations may occur in which you might find it advantageous or prudent to work your way into a favorable position to destroy the enemy before an Engagement even develops, the idea being that you would hopefully destroy the enemy before he can take his second shot. For instance, it may happen that the enemy is already engaged with a different friendly unit. By moving another tank into this enemy's LOS, you offer him the rather unpleasant prospect of becoming the target of two different attackers. Or perhaps the enemy currently occupies restrictive terrain (woods/building/rubble), thus enabling you to maneuver around him while confronting him with an excessive Case A DRM should he choose to fire at your AFV. In any case, should the enemy fire and miss, and should you fire in the ensuing AFPh (Case C) and miss, the enemy would regain the advantage. This strategy is certainly a calculated risk.

On the other hand, if your tank is virtually invulnerable to his threat, then you may have no reservations about moving right up and allowing the enemy that first shot. This should be regarded as the exception rather than the norm, however, so Bounding Fire is generally not the ideal way to open an Engagement. However, if your strategy is to destroy the enemy before an Engagement actually develops, you may be able to do so before he can even shoot by firing at him during your MPh.

Fire during your MPh is termed "Bounding First Fire" (D3.3), and also uses the Case C DRM if you have had a continuous LOS to the target for more than three MP. There is, thus, no greater penalty for firing during the MPh than if you had waited until the ensuing AFPh. The exception to this occurs when you have had a continuous LOS to the enemy for less than three MP, in which case there would be an additional "+1" (Restricted Aim; C5.31) or "+2" (Limited Aim; C5.32) added to Case C. Since a target cannot become Acquired using Bounding First Fire (C6.55) anyway, this is nothing more of a "hit-and-run" tactic, intended to destroy the target in passing rather than to become involved in a perhaps lengthy Engagement.

This is all well and fine, provided the enemy obliges you by letting you shoot at your whim. Unfortunately, you subject yourself to possible Defensive First Fire with every MP expenditure. If he was so inclined, chances are quite good that the enemy would get the first shot at you during your MPh. Even so, you may possibly pre-empt his Defensive First Fire by declaring a Gun Duel (C2.2401). Provided you need not change CA, you may then Bounding First Fire before he fires *if* your total C5 and Acquisition DRM are lower than his. Since Case C for a Bounding First Firer is at least "+4", the situations in which an ATTACKER is able to win a Gun Duel are probably pretty rare. If you are planning to use Bounding First Fire, try to approach the enemy with a view toward winning any potential Gun Duels.

It may occur to the reader at this point that an ATTACKER could fire at the start of his MPh prior to expending any MP, thereby avoiding any possibility of Defensive First Fire (per A8.1). However, a complete reading of C5.33 will show that the DEFENDER is able to declare a Gun Duel against a Bounding First Firer that declares a shot prior to any MP expenditure. This, by the way, is the only case in which the DEFENDER may declare a Gun Duel and puts a real damper on the shoot-before-moving theory of Bounding First Fire espoused by some players.

The application of Case C during the MPh assumes that the firer has stopped as per C.8, but it is not actually necessary to stop before using Bounding First Fire. You may use Motion Fire (Case C4; C5.35), a tactic favored by the Russians more for its psychological effect than with any great expectation of causing real damage. The psychological effect is, unfortunately, lost in *ASL*; but the inherent inaccuracy of such fire remains, that being the appropriate Case C DRM with a doubling of the lower dr on top of all else. This is indeed the proverbial "long shot", and would typically only be considered by a Motion vehicle during Defensive Fire, or when you want to retain every available MP during the MPh and yet want to take a crack at the enemy on the way towards or past him.

Finally, any vehicle with a multiple ROF using Bounding First Fire must expend at least one MP between shots, which of course allows Defensive First Fire each time. Also take particular note that once any vehicular weapon fires (except for a MA retaining ROF), its other weapons may fire in that phase only *from* that same hex (D3.51).

Case F: Intensive Fire. A Gun which has exhausted its normal ROF may take one additional shot as Intensive Fire (C5.6). Intensive Fire entails a calculated risk for the firer in that the B# of the Gun is reduced by two (A.11). Hence, a "12" TH DR will result in a Disabled gun and a Recalled tank. A Gun unable to use Intensive Fire will be so indicated by "No IF" on the back of the counter. Intensive Fire suffers a loss of accuracy by adding the "+2" DRM of Case F. Since Case N can apply to an Intensive Fire attack, at least Case F can be reduced or negated. Intensive Fire can also be used to place an Acquired counter, or to flip an already existing Acquired counter to its "–2" side.

Yet it still comes down to that reduced B#, and this should be your determining factor in deciding whether or not to use Intensive Fire. You should generally hold off using this option until the Engagement is well under way, when the enemy has a good chance of hitting you with his next shot. Excessive or untimely use of Intensive Fire will invariably lead to grief.

Case G: Deliberate Immobilization Attempt. "Often an AFV target's AF is so formidable that it makes a kill by certain Guns unlikely if not impossible." Even if this were not the case, you may decide at certain times that an Immobile enemy is as good as a dead one (particularly if he must exit units to win), and so may attempt to Immobilize him using Case G (C5.7). To try Deliberate Immobilization, the ammunition you use must have a Basic TK# greater than the target's lowest hull AF, and you must score a hull hit at no more than six-hex range. A kill is not possible using Case G, but a hull hit automatically Immobilizes the target and forces the crew to pass a TC (D5.5). Target Acquisition does not apply to a Deliberate Immobilization attempt, though you may gain Acquisition with such a shot. The "+5" DRM of Case G makes this a rather tough proposition, so it really becomes a tactical decision by you made on the spot.

Case I: Buttoned Up. The pros and cons of remaining CE or BU will be discussed more fully in the next section. For now, just keep in mind that firing while BU incurs the "+1" DRM of Case I, but does protect your commander from small-arms and sniper fire.

Of the three C5 DRM not mentioned thus far, one (*Case H: Captured Weapon*) does not occur under normal circumstances; another (*Case E: Firing Within Hex*) comes into effect only under special conditions; and the last (*Case D: Pinned Firer*) does not affect a CT AFV as such (see A7.82). A few miscellaneous DRM remain under the heading of C5, listed as "other". Of these, the penalty for overstacking (A5.12) should be avoided whenever possible. If your CE crew should happen to become Stunned (D5.34; more on that later), you will just have to pay the price in the form of a "+1" DRM for the remainder of the scenario. The rest either do not apply to armor or have been touched upon previously.

One very important To Hit DRM remains to be considered. Even though it is treated as a Target Based DRM, its application depends solely on the firer, and its use forms the basis for my concept of the Engagement. This is, of course, the modifier for Acquired Target, Case N (C6.5).

Whenever a Gun fires at a Known unit, it may place a "–1" Acquired counter on its target, which then applies as a TH DRM for subsequent shots at that target. That target will remain Acquired so long as certain conditions are maintained, these being list in C6.5. Most of these conditions ultimately depend upon the firer, since the only way the target can shake off an Acquired counter is by leaving the firer's LOS after entering a new Location/vertex (as per C6.15).

Of the firer-based conditions which cause loss of Acquisition, the only one the firer has no control over is having the Gun malfunction. Basically, as long as you do not leave your present Location or change CA without firing at the Acquired target, maintaining Acquisition should not be a problem. Remember, however, that these same restrictions apply to the firer's CMG, so Acquisition is also lost if the CMG attacks or Interdicts a different target.

The Acquired counter will otherwise remain on the target for as long as it stays in LOS. Thus, if the enemy moves out of your Gun's CA but is still Acquired, Case N would reduce or even negate the applicable Case A DRM for change of CA when firing. Notice too that if the enemy succeeds in leaving your LOS, the Acquired counter will remain in the last in-LOS Location occupied by that target, and would then apply to any other Known unit which subsequently enters that Location.

These same principles also apply to Area Acquisition (that is when using the Area Target Type). However, Area Acquisition applies only to the target *hex*, and may not follow the target when it leaves that hex. This in itself is not a great concern during an armored Engagement, since the circumstances in which you will prefer the Area over the Vehicle Target Type are probably very limited. Actually, such acquisition will most likely affect an Engagement when used against an *empty* hex.

Since "a Gun can fire on a hex not containing a Known enemy unit" when using the Area Target Type (C6.521), and since you as a player can see where the enemy units are located, you could place Area Acquisition in those hexes the enemy must traverse in order to Engage you. If the enemy entered one of these Acquired hexes, you could then transfer (C6.52) that Area Acquisition DRM to the Vehicle Target Type when announcing the shot. If nothing else, you might influence the route the enemy will take by covering the terrain choke points with Area Acquisition markers. The only disappointing side to this tactic (and it is a serious enough one) is the risk of Gun malfunction while firing at an empty hex. What is advised here is not indiscriminate firing, but rather a carefully crafted interdiction plan.

Scoring a hit is only half the battle, as it were, because then you must make a TK DR in order to destroy the AFV. The means available to "increase one's odds" are somewhat limited during this TK process, but there are ways you can optimize your chances.

First, you must consult the appropriate TK Table (C7.3) for the ammunition type used in order to find the Basic TK# for your Gun's Caliber Size. Certain TK modifications serve to create a Modified TK#, from which the target's AF is subtracted to reach a Final TK# needed to destroy the target (C7.11). Typically, a tank is able to fire both AP or HE. If the Caliber Size is overscored, then AP is not available; if underscored, HE is not available. Some tanks also have "Special" Ammunition (C8.) available to them, as indicated on the back of the counter by a symbol and Depletion Number representing the type and availability of that ammunition. In the case of certain Guns, AP or HE may even be considered Special Ammunition and is likewise represented and governed by the rules for Depletion Numbers (C8.9). If

available and not considered special, the firer is assumed to be using AP versus any armored target barring a declaration to the contrary (C2.21).

When using the Vehicle Target Type, there is really little choice in deciding whether to use AP or HE. The HE Basic TK# for a given caliber lags far behind the AP Basic TK# for the same Gun, so it serves no practical purpose trying to defeat armor using HE if AP is available.

You may, however, be confronted with an enemy AFV that is invulnerable to your AP shot in its current facing. We have already looked at the possibility of using the Area Target Type in such a situation above, but if such an enemy is CE then yet another option presents itself: fire on the Vehicle Target Type using HE. Of course, you cannot hope to kill the target outright in this case, but you just might blast that CE crew with a Specific Collateral Attack (A.14A). A Specific Collateral Attack uses the ammunition type's IFT FP and the same Original Effects DR that resolves the attack against the vehicle, and is modified *only* by the CE DRM (D5.31). Even the smallest caliber thus has a *chance* to Stun the target. It won't put him out of action permanently, but it may buy you time to work your way into a more favorable position.

The availability of Special Ammunition presents other options. For anti-armor purposes, only APCR/APDS (C8.1) and HEAT (C8.3) interest us here. Both of these types are governed by Depletion Numbers (C8.9), which means their use and availability are strictly limited. After announcing his intention to use special ammunition, the firer must make an Original DR less-than or equal-to the Depletion Number. If the Original DR is greater than the Depletion Number, the firer no longer has that ammunition and is not considered to have fired for any purpose except for a possible Gun malfunction. Presumably, you could then move your vehicle instead of subsequently firing with a different ammunition type. If the Original DR is equal to the Depletion Number, that special ammunition is used to resolve the shot but the firer is then considered to have run out of that ammunition for the remainder of the scenario.

Since the odds of depleting your Special Ammunition are usually greater than the odds of retaining it, the timing of its use could become a critical matter. There is simply no accounting for the many conceivable situations which might occur, so no hard and fast rules can be established for the use of your Special Ammunition. As a general rule, you should consider holding off using it until such time as the Final DR needed to hit the target is roughly equivalent to the Depletion Number. At least if you then do hit your target, it will be with the enhanced TK odds of that Special Ammunition.

Regardless of the ammunition you choose, the Basic TK# is modified by various factors to reach a Modified TK#. There are four possible modifications to the Basic TK#, but only three that apply to Direct Fire from a tank, and only two that the firer (you) may have any control over. The first one we will look at is actually the fourth on the list, Case D (*Range Effects; C7.24*).

Only an AP/APCR/APDS round is affected by the range. No great mathematical formula is required to use the appropriate range chart; simply look in the correct row for the caliber you are using and cross-index that with the range to the target to find the TK modification that applies. Notice for AP that the smaller calibers tend to fall off more rapidly at longer ranges, while benefitting from a better modifier at very close range. APCR, which has a higher Basic TK# than the corresponding AP round to begin with, becomes especially lethal at close range—though it does diminish rather quickly beyond eighteen hexes. APDS rounds are relatively unaffected by range.

This TK element of range, combined with the TH modification for range, will generally dictate that your Engagements will take place within twelve hexes for smaller calibers, and up to eighteen or more for larger calibers, terrain permitting. Engagements at

one- or two-hex range can quickly become quite deadly, but are correspondingly more rare because of the difficulty in getting that close and surviving. The range you decide to open the Engagement at should be influenced by the range modifications that apply to both the enemy's and to your own MA. A certain amount of "hex counting" may be required to find the optimum distance, but a single "–1" on either the TH or TK table can make a difference.

Of course, the easiest way to increase one's TK odds is by striking the enemy's weakest AF. This should be self-evident, if not always easy to achieve. The lower his AF, the greater your Final TK# and consequently the greater your odds of penetrating and KOing him. This is further enhanced by TK Case A, which adds "+1" to the Basic TK# for any hit scored on the rear target facing (C7.21).

An examination of D3.2 (Target Facing) is very important here. Note that the "Target Facing is determined...depending on which target hexside is crossed by the firing unit's LOS", not on the target's VCA (as one might expect). You may be in for a nasty surprise the first time you discover that an expected side hit actually strikes the front. Ironically, the front Target Facing is also the largest of the three since a LOS which runs exactly along a hexspine uses the Target Facing *least* favorable to the attacker. Not surprisingly, then, most kills will occur from the front; historically this was the case as well. The final consideration to keep in mind is that Target Facing is determined differently for a vehicle in Bypass (D2.32), where it is based upon where the fire originated rather than on the hexside crossed.

Once a hit is scored, there is damn little the player can do to further increase his odds of destroying the target. The hit's the thing, and the greater part of your attention during any Engagement will be spent in securing the best odds for a hit, and in achieving the optimum location for a hit, rather than worrying about insuring a killing blow. In the meantime, however, the opposing player is doing everything he can to destroy your tank as well. To win an Engagement you must also ensure your own survival, and this is where the second principle of the tank, "Protection", comes into play.

Part II: Staying Alive

Protection can be characterized in two different ways, the first and most obvious of which is the tank's armor. Armor protects the crew from small-arms fire and artillery shrapnel, and allows the tank to move forward in the face of the enemy. This does not mean that a tank is impervious to enemy fire altogether, of course, since the enemy is likely to possess guns capable of penetrating your tank's armor. Before armor can be defeated, however, the shot must first hit the tank, and this leads to the second—and best—means of protection, that of avoiding fire.

Of these two types of protection, the first is "literal" and the second is "circumstantial". During a tank battle involving several vehicles, you can expect that your tank will be hit, eventually; if the enemy's Basic TK# is larger than your AF, you can only rely upon luck to survive such a hit. Since the player has virtually no means available to increase his tank's literal protection (its armor), he must concentrate on minimizing the circumstances in which he must rely on that armor (being hit). In particular, this section will offer a contra-distinction to some of the points raised earlier, and will concentrate primarily on using certain TH DRM to decrease the enemy's odds of hitting you. First, however, let's take a look at the physical manifestation of a tank's protection, its armor.

In *ASL*, a tank is given an armor rating known as an "AF" (D1.6). Each tank has four such AF, which

are used to represent the armor thickness of each particular Aspect (C3.9). Again, this armor protects the crew from small arms and most other non-ordnance attacks (A7.307), but is effective against the enemy's guns only in that it transforms the enemy's Modified TK# into a Final TK#. Unfortunately, the *ASL* player cannot supplement his tank's armor in the same manner as his World War Two counterparts could with field expedients. You may be able to "increase" your tank's AF—relative to the enemy's gun—by increasing the distance and incurring the Case D TK modification, which would decrease the enemy's Basic TK# (and thus the Final TK#) needed to destroy you. But the problem with this concept is that negative Case D modifiers do not come into effect until you reach a range of nineteen hexes, which will likely prove difficult on most of the scenario board configurations. Furthermore, your own Basic TK# will also suffer accordingly and so the benefit gained may prove negligible in relation to the decrease in your AFV's striking power.

Since there is no question of actually increasing your AF, the best you can strive for is that any hit at least strikes the aspect with the greatest AF. Except for very light or very heavy tanks, this will usually mean the front AF (D1.61). The objective here, then, is to ensure that your frontal Target Facing or aspect is toward the enemy whenever possible.

Recall that the front Target Facing is the widest of the three. Since you will likely have at least your MA facing the direction of the greatest threat, then the front Target Facing of your VCA will probably also be facing the greatest threat. At any rate, the turret's front AF will almost always be larger than the hull's side AF, so if you must, or choose to, move in front of the enemy such that you present a possible side hit, you should at the very least have the turret facing the enemy so that a turret hit would use the turret's front AF rather than the (usually) inferior hull-side AF. A good rule of thumb is to always maintain the turret's front aspect towards the enemy, not only for its added protection but also so fire can be brought to bear immediately without having to pay TH Case A for changing CA.

Certainly you will always avoid being struck from the rear Target Facing. Even though the side and rear AF are identical (D1.62), the enemy's Basic TK# is increased by one if he strikes you in the rear (which is really the same as reducing your rear AF by one). Rear shots are relatively rare during an Engagement, but once a large armored battle has been raging for a few turns the action may tend to become muddled and hectic. If the enemy is at a range from you that is about half of his movement allotment, he will definitely be able to get behind you if you allow him to do so.

The most vulnerable part of your tank is its underbelly, and it is possible for the enemy to score an Underbelly Hit (D4.3) with the right set of circumstances. As you cross a wall/bocage or exit a stream/gully, an enemy that is within six hexes and within your VCA, and is at the same level or lower than you, could possibly score an Underbelly Hit. Quite simply, under such conditions a hit which would otherwise be considered to impact your turret strikes instead the underbelly of your tank, which would then use the Aerial AF (C7.12) to resolve that hit. The LOS for such a shot is controlled by the ATTACKER, since the firer's LOS in this case must be drawn to a specific vertex of the ATTACKER'S choice. Once this vertex is chosen, it may not be changed for subsequent shots, so remain alert to any enemy in the area and take care to select the proper vertex.

It was stated earlier that a tank's armor protects its crew from small-arms fire, but a crew can become subjected to such attacks by declaring CE status (D5.3). A CE Inherent crew is Vulnerable to Collateral Attacks as per rule A.14. Certainly the greatest risk to a CE tank is the threat of a Recall (D5.341), which occurs when a Vulnerable crew suffers a

K/KIA or Casualty MC, or when an already Stunned (i.e., if it now has a "+1" counter) crew suffers another Stun result (D5.342). Even if not Recalled, a Vulnerable crew which fails a MC per D5.1 becomes Stunned (D5.34), which forces the crew to immediately BU and utterly incapacitates the tank until the end of the current player turn. Thereafter it must always add "+1" to any TH (and MG) DR it makes, which is in addition to the Case I DRM for being BU, though it may become CE again if it wishes to further jeopardize itself. Note that a 1MT AFV is Recalled as a result of *any* Stun.

Being CE does provide certain advantages, however, the primary of which is the ability to use the one-half MP Road Rate (B3.41); and, of course, a tank must be CE in order to use its AAMG (D1.83). In addition to Case I, a BU AFV must add "+1" to its HD Maneuver dr (D4.22), so being CE will in effect negate those penalties. An AFV must be CE to assist another vehicle's unbogging attempt (D8.3). There are no special penalties for remaining BU other than those already mentioned (for instance, the DRM for any Armor Leader would still apply, D3.44), although a BU AFV would be unable to Interdict routing enemy units if it could only use armament penalized by Case I (A10.532), and a crew may not remain CE while entering/exiting a building (D5.3). Finally, keep in mind that a tank with either a RST or 1MT MA Type may fire neither its MA nor its CMG while CE.

Whether or not to remain CE probably comes down to personal preference, though the primary consideration involves any hazards invited by doing so. A CE counter may be voluntarily placed or removed during both the MPh and APh, but it may not be both placed and removed during the same phase. During the MPh, CE/BU status may not be changed if the vehicle has already *fired* during that player turn.

Clearly, from the discussion so far it should be evident that the armor on a tank does not offer complete protection. Indeed, rather than hoping that your steel plate can withstand a hit, perhaps the best protection lies in avoiding being hit altogether. Avoiding fire successfully means, in the final analysis, that the enemy's Final DR is greater than his Modified TH#, thus resulting in a "miss". Recall that the Modified TH# is determined by accumulating the various C4 Gun & Ammo Type modifications found on the C3 To Hit Table (and described in C4.1-.5). These C4 modifications are a function of range, as is the Basic TH# which they modify.

To begin, it may occur to the player that the first step in decreasing his odds of being hit lies in maintaining a greater range from the enemy and thus reducing the enemy's Modified TH#. Unfortunately this works both ways, since the same modifiers (but not necessarily the same Basic TH#) apply to both sides as we noted above. Even if the combination of Basic TH# and C4 modifiers favors one side, the other side will naturally try to offset that advantage by reducing the range before opening the Engagement. As a means of avoiding fire, using range alone will likely not prove very practicable.

A more practical way to avoid fire is to influence which of the TH DRM the enemy must apply to his shot. As was already mentioned, the To Hit modifiers are divided into two types: the C5 (Firer Based) and the C6 (Target Based). By definition, one might expect that a target will have more influence over which C6 DRM may apply, and generally this is true. However, you can—to a limited extent—force the enemy to use certain C5 DRM, so these should not be overlooked. What follows is a brief look at the To Hit DRM which the target can use to avoid fire. Again, for simplicity they will be presented in the order they appear on the table.

Case A: Fire Outside CA. A Gun which changes its CA to fire at a target outside its current CA must add the Case A DRM to that shot, which is a minimum of "+1" (C5.1). Naturally the enemy will try to avoid

Case A when firing, so it follows that you should try to approach that enemy from outside his CA to take advantage of this penalty. Remaining outside the enemy's CA may prove easier in principle than in practice, however. The primary difficulty here is that the area within a CA expands as LOS is traced outward from the firing unit (see the example for rule C3.2). The farther you are from the enemy, the more you will have to travel laterally to escape that enemy's CA, a problem compounded by the fact that he will do everything he can to keep you in his sights.

One way to "reduce" the enemy's field of fire is to position yourself among a group of obstacles so that, even though you may be within his CA per se, his LOS may be blocked as you move from cover to cover. This would result in a relative loss of mobility, as can be expected, as you expend extra MP to negotiate the terrain (preferably by going around rather than through the obstacle). Another way to avoid the enemy's CA is to try to remain in a hex that lies within one of the "two diagonal rows of hexes" that converge on the enemy's hex. Hex E9 in the C3.2 example would be one such; a move to F8 would put your AFV immediately outside the enemy's CA in this case.

Once the Engagement is well under way, Case A will rarely apply. At any rate, since both you and the enemy will always try to keep the other in your respective CA, you will seldom be able to force Case A on him.

Case G: Deliberate Immobilization Attempt. Even though not a threat to your survival as such, if you must exit units to win, and especially if the enemy possesses inferior armament, he may be just as satisfied to see you immobilized and so may try for Deliberate Immobilization (C5.7). If your lowest hull AF is greater than his Basic TK#, then you need not worry about this possibility. Otherwise, be wary if the enemy has markedly inferior weapons, or if you must exit the board. The only real way to protect yourself from Deliberate Immobilization is to remain at least seven hexes from the enemy threat.

Case I: Buttoned Up. "Any BU, CT AFV must add the +1 DRM of Case I to its To Hit DR." (C5.9) The decision regarding whether to remain CE or BU has already been discussed, and is mentioned again here only in the context of forcing the most possible DRM upon the enemy. An enemy CE Inherent crew should be considered an important target in-and-of itself, albeit subordinate to the destruction of the AFV. The primary object of firing at a CE crew is to force it to BU and use Case I. Further incentive is provided by the possibility of Stunning or Recalling the tank. At the very least you should fire your CMG at such a CE crew of a tank you are currently Engaging, since firing the CMG at a different target would cause you to lose that all-important Acquisition. If possible, combine the BMG and CMG into one attack, because Mandatory FG (A7.55) applies to vehicular MG fire (D3.5). You might further encourage him to BU by using HE rather than AP (see A.14A) for a shot or two. Once the Engagement gets rolling, the enemy will usually take the prudent course and BU anyway (just as you will).

Case J: Moving/Motion Vehicle. The "+2" DRM of Case J applies to fire directed at a vehicle "which has entered a new hex during that Player Turn, or is/was in Motion status during that Player Turn" (C6.1). More than that, C.8 defines in greater detail when a vehicle may be considered moving for To Hit purposes and thus be eligible for Case J. Namely, Case J would apply "…only if during the current Player Turn it has entered a hex, or used VBM (D2.3), or began its MPh in Motion (D2.4), or is currently in Motion."

The first thing to note is that Case J does not apply simply due to the target having expended a Starting MP (D2.14) or for changing VCA. Furthermore, once a vehicle becomes eligible for Case J during its player turn, the "+2" would apply whether the vehicle is Stopped or Non-Stopped. "Non-Stopped" is just

another way of saying "in Motion during the friendly MPh"; and, of course, a "Stopped" vehicle is one which has expended a Stopping MP (D2.13) and has not yet expended another Starting MP (D2.1).

When you do decide to move (and you will invariably have to move at some point in the battle), be sure to take full advantage of subcases J^1 and J^2 (C6.11 and 6.12, respectively). To quote from C6.15: "Case J^1 and J^2 deal with a moving (C.8) vehicular target's expenditure of time in the LOS of a firer since the last hex occupied by that target out of the firer's LOS. A target that begins its MPh…in the firer's LOS is unaffected by these Cases until it is out of that LOS after entering a new Location/vertex." In dense or built-up areas you should have plenty of suitable obstacles to impede enemy LOS, but this may prove more difficult in relatively open areas (and virtually impossible in the desert). Just remember that "the subcases of J apply only to Defensive First Fire shots" (C6.16)!

Case K: Concealed Target. "Ordnance firing at a hidden/concealed target…must add the +2 DRM of Case K to its TH DR vs that target" (C6.2). Even though this is one of the shortest and seemingly most straightforward paragraphs in the entire *ASL* rulebook, its implications for tank combat are considerable. Foremost among these is the restriction found in C6.57, which states that a target may not become acquired using the Vehicle Target Type unless that shot causes loss of concealment, which means that it must be hit by that shot (Case A of the Concealment Loss/Gain Table). Since Target Acquisition forms the basis for the entire concept of "Engagement", it can be seen how important it becomes to gain and/or retain concealment.

It is perhaps contrary to common experience to think of "concealing" a vehicle, probably because a vehicle loses concealment so easily. Referring to the (A12.121) Concealment Loss/Gain Table, we find that a vehicle loses "?" immediately when in enemy LOS and not in concealment terrain (Case H). If in concealment terrain, a vehicle would lose "?" if hit by ordnance (Case A), if it expends any MP, itself fires, or successfully fires a Smoke Discharger (Case B), or if it changes CA (Case D).

Notice in A12.2 that the "rules of concealment apply equally to vehicles". This means that a vehicle may gain "?" in the same manner as Infantry if there are no unbroken enemy units in LOS (A12.1). Namely, the "?" counter is automatic if the vehicle is in concealment terrain and in Good Order (which means that the inherent crew is neither stunned nor shocked)—and if not in concealment terrain it may make a "?" Growth dr (A12.122). A typical vehicle has a US# of "4" (A1.6), which would require a "?" Growth dr of "1". A large or very large vehicle has a US# of "5", which would make "?" impossible in Open Ground. The "?" Growth dr is modified by any in-hex hindrance DRM, however, which could include SMOKE and wreck(s) and which might then allow that large tank to gain concealment after all.

The latter method of "?" gain may seem a waste of time, since if not in concealment terrain when in enemy LOS a vehicle would lose its "?" automatically. This is certainly true, but the effect to be gained by this is mostly psychological. Since far too much information is freely "given away" to the *ASL* opponent in any case, concealing a vehicle in this manner will at least cause him to mentally keep track of which unit is which. If there are many such counters cluttering up an area, in the heat of battle your opponent may forget whether that "?" counter moving about behind your lines is a tank or a truck. This possibility is, admittedly, rather remote against an experienced player, but why deny yourself an opportunity to deceive the enemy? Concealment is one of the few ways available to confuse and deceive.

Case L: Point Blank Fire. Case L (C6.3) is one of the Target Based DRM which are actually *detrimental* to the target. The firer is entitled to a "−1" DRM if the target is at two-hex range, or a "−2" DRM if the target is at one-hex range. Certainly you would rather

not increase the enemy's odds of hitting you, but your desire to remain more than two hexes from the enemy does not preclude him from moving that close himself, though presumably you would get the first benefit from Case L if he initiated the move. Generally, only an increasingly desperate (or an invulnerable) tanker would move that close to Engage the enemy. The exception to this might occur in those situations where the moving tank could win a Gun Duel or have markedly superior odds in the PFPh, or in difficult terrain or at night where the two sides must be in such close proximity simply to gain LOS to each other.

Case P: Target Size. "All vehicles (D1.7)...are rated for size, based on their height and bulk. Ordnance firing on such a target...must add the applicable Target Size DRM...to its TH DR." The appropriate DRM is determined by the color of the target's AF (as per D1.7). Of course, the player has no control over the size of his tank (unless you've opted for a DYO match). The only thing you can do is compensate for any Target Size DRM by adjusting your actions in relation to the other Target Based DRM. For instance, a (Very) Large target (D1.72) should especially strive for the extra "–1" DRM of Case J[1] and J[2] or for any available TEM, whereas a (Very) Small target (D1.74) might be more prone to risk movement across the enemy LOS. For a concealed vehicle, any Target Size DRM is revealed only if it turns a miss into a hit, or a hit into a miss (A12.2). A revealed Target Size DRM which turns a hit into a miss does not itself cause that target to lose its concealment.

Case Q: TEM. "TEM applicable to the target must be added as a DRM to the TH DR of a shot taken on the Vehicle...Target Type" (C6.8). The TEM which apply to Direct Fire at a vehicle are as follows: Bridge (+1, conditional upon LOS), Hedge (+1), Hill (+1 for Height Advantage; B10.31), Woods (+1), Graveyard (+1), Building (+2 or +3), Rubble (+2 or +3) and Wreck (+1). Notable by their absence from this list are the Wall and the Roadblock, but these will be discussed shortly.

Any positive DRM to the TH DR should be viewed as beneficial to the target, so it may seem that TEM should be sought whenever possible. Even the relatively meager "+1" of some of these will serve to reduce or negate Case N, and every little bit helps. Unfortunately, the more beneficial TEM (Building and Rubble) also happen to be Bog hexes (D8.2), and even the minimal protection of Woods can only be gained after risking a Bog Check. For these, a trade-off is involved, that being the decision between the possibility of losing your mobility or gaining extra protection.

In a fluid battle, where maintaining you mobility becomes even more important than might usually be the case, the TEM likely to be used most often is that for Height Advantage, where there is no risk involved in gaining the cover. It is simply not usually worth the chance of bogging your AFV just to gain an extra couple DRM, especially in view of the restrictions for changing CA which were discussed earlier.

Related to TEM, but distinct from it, is a defensive tactic called "Hull Down" (HD), which is used to describe "any situation wherein the LOF to the bottom half of a vehicle is blocked by terrain, making that portion of the target incapable of being hit by Direct...fire." (D4.2). Such a vehicle would be considered hit only if struck on the turret/upper superstructure (C3.9). The odds of striking a HD vehicle for any given Modified TH# are reduced by more than half, since the colored die of the TH DR must be less than the white die. This is a significant advantage, so rather than seeking TEM for protection, a survival-minded tanker might be better served to search out a HD position instead.

The first HD position to consider is that formed by a hill Crest-Line hex. Simply being in the higher-elevation hex does not automatically bestow HD status; but, during the MPh, a vehicle may attempt to gain HD status by declaring a HD Maneuver Attempt (D4.22), either upon entering the Crest-Line hex or

after changing VCA while in that hex. A HD Maneuver Attempt costs two MP, and this is in addition to any cost for entering the hex or changing VCA. The number of HD hexsides that result is determined by a Final dr (as given in the D4.22 table). A Final dr of "3" or less is required to receive any HD protection, and the only non-setup drm that apply are "+2" for a CT Russian AFV, "+1" if BU, and that for any Armor Leader modifier. For Russian tanks in particular, a successful HD Maneuver Attempt without the benefit of an Armor Leader would prove virtually impossible. Regardless "of the outcome of the HD Maneuver Attempt, the vehicle must then immediately end its MPh by expending a Stop MP if still Mobile."

If successful, the owner would place a HD counter beneath the vehicle to indicate which hexside(s) are affected. Any Direct Fire from at least one full level lower that crosses an affected hexside is treated as occurring against a HD target. Such a HD tank may freely change its TCA, but if the vehicle Starts (without Stalling) or goes into Motion, the HD counter is immediately removed.

Becoming HD in a Crest-Line hex provides a very fine tactical position, first because of the HD status itself, and second because a sufficient elevation will afford excellent LOS over any obstacles in the area. Unfortunately, only about ten boards of the 41 currently available offer any form of elevation overlooking countryside that is also good "tank country". This means that such positions are usually hard to find in the published scenarios.

Now so Walls, however. Many boards have at least one wall, and to become HD behind one requires only that the vehicle be placed in a hex that has a wall hexside (D4.21)! Any Direct Fire which crosses that wall would bestow HD status upon the target. Note that a Roadblock is considered a wall for TEM purposes (B29.2), and so will also bestow HD status. If your tank occupies other protective terrain in that hex, it becomes a very difficult target to take out.

Consider: even though "TEM of the hexsides/ hexspines of a target hex is not cumulative with that of other terrain in that hex" (B9.31), notice that a "vehicular target fired on by Direct Fire through a wall...hexside that would affect that fire with a +2...TEM...is instead considered HD to that fire." (D4.21), and that a "HD target may not claim a Case Q TEM DRM for a TEM based on a wall...that also grants it HD status" (D4.2). Thus, a vehicle occupying an obstacle may claim the TEM of that obstacle, and be considered HD—if the LOF crosses a wall which conforms to the hexside of that hex, *since there are no "cumulative" TEM* in this case!

Viewed logically, a vehicle does not have to be right up against the wall in order to be considered HD. No matter where within the hex the vehicle is located, the "LOF to the bottom half of the vehicle" (D4.2) would still be blocked by the wall; in reality, the farther a vehicle is from the wall the more of it that will be blocked by that wall, until at a range of forty meters (one hex) LOS is blocked entirely. Therefore, a vehicle in hex 3T3, for instance, would have its lower half shielded by the wall (i.e. the "LOF to the bottom half of the vehicle is blocked by terrain"), and the part that remains visible (and can therefore have a LOF drawn to it) would be protected by the +2 TEM of the building it occupies. A formidable position indeed! Note, however, that a vehicle in such a position would automatically lose Wall Advantage to an adjacent enemy unit (B9.321).

Case R: Hindrance. "Each applicable Hindrance DRM must be added directly to the TH DR of any shot" (C6.9). For our purposes there are two types of Hindrances, those which occur naturally (terrain), and those that are "artificial" (such as SMOKE).

Hindrance hexes are unbiased, affecting both sides equally, and so are strictly defensive features. The typical terrain Hindrances found on most boards are those for Brush, Orchard and Grain. Brush hexes are usually scattered about, but you may be able to find larger clusters of orchards or grainfields which offer

admirable protection in some scenarios. Since a total Hindrance of "+6" will block LOS completely (B.10), some of the sprawling grainfields (in particular) will totally impede LOS. Many Hindrance hexes also happen to be Concealment Terrain, so you could park your AFV in one of the outer-hexes of a grainfield, thereby possibly gaining concealment and having the unguarded flank covered by lots of Hindrance.

Some tanks carry around their own inherent source of LOS Hindrance in the form of a Smoke Dispenser (D13.), or as Special Ammunition in the form of a SMOKE round (C8.5). SMOKE creates a LOS Hindrance (as per A24.2), but is different from terrain hindrances in that terrain only adds a DRM for fire that is traced through the hex (A6.7), whereas SMOKE hinders fire that is traced into, through, or *out* of the hex. Actually, SMOKE is more effective as a hindrance to fire that originates from within the SMOKE hex, since such fire must add "+1" in addition to the normal effects of that SMOKE (A24.8).

Smoke rounds (C8.5) may be fired at the start of the owner's PFPh/DFPh, and WP (C8.6) may be fired at the start of any friendly fire phase; but in both cases SMOKE must be fired before any unit makes a non-SMOKE attack, and may be placed with full effect only during the PFPh. If placed during any other phase, it is Dispersed (which means it will be removed at the start of the next friendly PFPh). SMOKE is governed by Depletion Numbers; certainly that will play some role in your usage of it. However, using SMOKE adds "+2" to your Basic TH# at 0-12 hexes, so your odds of successfully placing are pretty good (providing you do not exceed the Depletion Number). During an Engagement, you will rarely use SMOKE since once you fire you may not move. A SMOKE round is more of a support weapon, to mask friendly movement or to protect a friendly unit Engaged in unfavorable circumstances. For protection of the subject tank, a Smoke Dispenser may prove to be more effective.

There are four types of Smoke Dispensers, as listed in D13.1. The basic rules governing their use are the same for all of them, though each has certain characteristics unique to its type. A player fires a smoke dispenser by making a Final DR less-than or equal-to the Usage Number printed on the back of the counter. The Usage Number for a smoke dispenser is treated somewhat differently that a Depletion Number, because a Final DR greater than the Usage Number means only that it has failed to fire during that one player turn, but you may make further attempts during a subsequent player turn. The only DRM which applies (for all types) is that for being BU, which is understandably "+1".

You may attempt to fire a Smoke Dispenser only once per player turn during the MPh. Such an attempt during the friendly MPh costs one MP. During the opponent's MPh, an attempt can be made after any MP/MF expenditure by enemy units in LOS as if intervening with Defensive First Fire. In neither case may an attempt be made if your AFV has already fired any weapon during that player turn.

How each type of smoke dispenser is used tactically is dictated by the effect of its effect. Smoke Dischargers (sD), Smoke Pots (sP) and *Nahverteidigungswaffe* (sN) each place dispersed smoke in the AFV's own hex. This means, first of all, that such usage will greatly hinder the tank's own return fire if it remains in the hex. Second, these smoke dispensers are only marginally effective in masking the tank's movement since it will have entered enemy LOS initially before firing it. Note that this refers to the firing tank's own movement, since placing smoke in this manner will certainly mask the movement of any other friendly units in the area. These three types of weapons will be used primarily when one wishes to attempt to escape rather than Engage the enemy.

A Smoke Mortar (sM) offers more flexibility, since it places smoke in any hex that is 1-3 hexes from the AFV and in LOS (D13.32). A usage attempt could precede movement through an open area, thus

providing excellent cover. An attempt from a moving/Motion AFV (i.e., one eligible for Case J) must add "+2" to the DR, and since the target hex must lie within your TCA, the Case A DRM also applies if the CA must be changed. Finally, any Hindrance between the AFV's hex and the target are also added to the usage DR. Flexibility is not without its cost.

"Avoiding fire" is your primary means of surviving an Engagement, all the time while the enemy is doing everything he can to "increase his odds" by positioning himself to strike you on your weakest spot. Tank combat is a cat-and-mouse game, which highlights the most important element, and the third principle, of the tank: Mobility.

Part III: Going Mobile

Heinz Guderian, generally regarded as the founder of the German *Panzerwaffe*, once stated that the engine of a tank is no less a weapon than its gun. He knew that it was the tank's mobility which allowed it to bring its firepower to bear at the time and place of the commander's choosing, and that it was through movement that the enemy's weak points could be discovered, and a breakthrough achieved. Once the front had been pierced, the tanks advanced into the enemy's rear to spread destruction and confusion, and it was the tank's mobility which afforded it the best protection when behind enemy lines.

Even though Guderian may have been referring more to the strategic or grand tactical level of war, his comment is also pertinent to the lower tactical levels (such as that simulated by *ASL*). The tank's relatively high MP allotment allows it to position itself quickly at the "crisis point" of the current battle. Indeed, for some players this mobility is the most enjoyable aspect of *ASL* tank warfare; certainly it adds to the game's dynamic nature.

Mobility refers to more than just a tank's speed (MP allotment), although speed is an important element of "Mobility". A masterful understanding of Mobility in *ASL* includes how to best take advantage of a vehicle's movement options, and how to maintain that mobility throughout the battle. A tank which fails to remain Mobile (D.7) becomes much more vulnerable to attack, virtually a "sitting duck" to any roaming enemy AFV. A corollary to winning the Engagement, then, is to protect and maintain your tank's mobility.

Movement takes place during the MPh, naturally, and a "vehicle may expend up to its full MP allotment...in accordance with the COT entered" (D2.1), as listed in the MP Entrance Cost column of the Terrain Chart. With the inclusion of Chapter F, a vehicle is now not prohibited from expending more MP to enter a hex than the minimum required (F11.74). Aside from the distinction that vehicles expend MP rather than MF, the "mechanics of vehicular movement are much the same as for Infantry (A4.2)". The most important part of A4.2 is the statement: "The player is not allowed to take the unit back to a previously occupied hex and begin again." Notwithstanding that most games are "friendly", a player is well within his rights to invoke A4.2 while his opponent is moving. Indeed, this is one of the few rules which preserves something of the spontaneity of combat, and helps lend a "snap decision" nature to the game. A real-life tanker would have no opportunity to correct an oversight and "begin again".

Once the decision to actually *move* your tank has been made, a "vehicle not under a Motion counter must expend one MP to start movement before entering a new hex or changing its VCA during the MPh" (D2.12). Furthermore, a "vehicle must expend one additional MP in its current hex to stop movement, unless it is ending its MPh under a Motion counter"

(D2.13). A vehicle may, of course, stop and start as often as it wishes during a single MPh providing it has sufficient MP to do so.

Since a vehicle "must move within its current VCA as it enters a hex" (D2.11), and since most *ASL* mapboards are strewn with various obstacles, figure on having to change your vehicular CA at least once during the MPh. VCA can be changed at the cost of one MP per hexspine, which is doubled if you occupy a woods/building/rubble hex.

Taking into account these costs for starting, stopping and changing VCA, a tank may end up with only about three-quarters of its printed MP available for actually moving—that is, for entering a new hex. Depending on the terrain, this number may be lower still, but this is not as bad as it may seem. Most tank Engagements will take place within twelve hexes, over terrain not generally conducive to far-reaching moves, anyway. Once the battle begins in earnest, movement will probably consist of small adjustments as both sides jockey for position.

One unique feature of vehicles is their ability to remain in Motion at the end of the MPh. This occurs when a "Mobile vehicle...has used its entire printed MP allotment during its MPh, without expending a MP to Stop (2.13) or Delay (2.17) at the end of that MPh" (D2.4). There are three primary advantages of remaining in Motion. First, an in-Motion vehicle does not have to expend the Starting MP to begin movement in its next MPh, a particularly useful point for vehicles with a red MP number (D2.51). Second, a vehicle in Motion receives that useful Case J To Hit DRM for any shots taken against it, regardless of phase (C6.1). Third, Point-Blank Fire (Case L) does not apply versus a Motion vehicle (C6.3). These advantages may be considered defensive in nature, since they decrease the enemy's odds of hitting you, but may provide you with the opportunity of entering a new hex before the enemy can intervene with Defensive First Fire.

However, a moving vehicle is virtually powerless to strike back at the enemy, since an in-Motion vehicle must use the To Hit Case C4 (which is at least "+4") with a doubling of the lower dr. Because only a Stabilized Gun can claim Case N (C6.55) while in Motion, and since an AFV in Motion may not use Prep Fire, the enemy may get two fair-to-good shots at it before your moving tank can effectively return fire.

For these reasons, it may not be a good idea to remain in Motion if the enemy is in LOS or is within movement range. Of course, at times the two sides will be widely separated and it will be clear that the first couple turns will be spent advancing to contact. Then, a vehicle commander might elect to remain in Motion to "gain" those couple extra MP which would otherwise be spent to stop and start movement. A hopelessly outclassed tank may even wish to remain in Motion in order to avoid combat. But if the tanker's objective truly is to Engage and defeat the enemy's AFVs, then Motion status will probably defeat that purpose. Besides, if you find it desirable to remain in Motion, there is yet another option available.

A DEFENDER's Mobile AFV may attempt to gain Motion status during the enemy MPh (D2.401). Such a "Motion Attempt" is successful if the DEFENDER makes a dr less-than or equal-to the "number of MF/MP expended by an enemy ground unit in its LOS during that MPh. The enemy unit must be one that had not been in the vehicle's LOS during that Player Turn prior to entering it during that MPh." Note that if a qualifying ATTACKER unit expends six or more MF/MP in LOS, the Motion Attempt *automatically* succeeds. Also note that a vehicle may not make such an attempt if it is already marked with any sort of Fire counter, and that "a vehicle in Motion may make a Motion Attempt dr in this manner so as to freely change VCA at that time."

Keep in mind that Motion status may be attempted as a result of *any* enemy movement, not

just vehicular. The enemy may believe that he has cleverly maneuvered himself into an excellent position, only to find that your Motion status becomes automatic as a result of some careless movement of his halfway across the board. Of course, you must be alert to such opportunities if your intention is to gain Motion status.

Which leads to the next decision you face: when is it best to try a Motion Attempt rather than fight it out? Actually, the answer is usually quite clear, if you but keep in mind our earlier stated objective of "winning the Engagement". If your position is favorable for engaging the enemy, sit tight. If you are outnumbered or in an unfavorable position, it may be time to "bug out". The timing of a Motion Attempt is important, because the enemy can use that Motion status as an opportunity to approach you with impunity. In this connection, a Smoke Discharger used in combination with gaining Motion status may prove very effective in helping you escape, since there is nothing to prevent you from attempting to gain Motion status after firing a Smoke Dispenser. The dispersed smoke you place will be removed at the start of your next PFPh, but the whole idea is to survive the enemy's AFPh. Providing it has made optimum use of terrain, an in-Motion vehicle should be able to make good its escape during the next MPh.

In addition to travelling forward, a vehicle may also use Reverse Movement (D2.2), namely when it "may wish to leave its present hex without directly entering a hex within its current VCA." This will usually occur when an AFV is unwilling to present an inferior side/rear armor facing to the enemy, yet does not wish to engage the enemy at that time. As might be expected, reverse movement is much slower than forward movement, being quadruple the normal MP cost. This is slow going indeed, and a tank will not get very far using reverse movement. However, a vehicle may combine forward and reverse movement in the same MPh (D2.23), with all that implies for maneuver. Most of the time a tank will use reverse movement as a defensive measure, as one of those "small adjustments" of position referred to above.

Unfortunately, an AFV cannot *remain* in reverse motion, and thus cannot claim reverse movement as a result of a successful Motion Attempt. But remember that a tank which starts the MPh in Motion is eligible for Case J when fired upon, so if the frontal armor must face the enemy, a tank which starts its MPh in Motion could stop, start into reverse and back out of the position. Defensive First Fire would be unavoidable in this case, but at least Case J would apply.

If insufficient MP are available to reach a desired position, a tracked vehicle may attempt to exceed its MP allotment by risking ESB (D2.5). Using ESB, an AFV may gain up to an additional one-fourth of its allotment by passing an ESB DR, which is modified by the number of MP gained and by a nationality DRM. Failure of the ESB DR results in Immobilization, which (of course) is irreversible. Perhaps the most common mis-use of ESB occurs when a vehicle finds itself with one MP remaining, but has its VCA facing the wrong way and also wishes to stop in its present hex. Overlooking the poor planning that led to such a state, the player expends that last MP to change VCA, then attempts ESB to gain one extra MP to stop. This particular application of ESB could be avoided if the player was more aware of *when* VCA can be changed. Remember that you can change VCA "at the end of any fire phase in which it is still eligible to fire its MA" (D2.11). Thus during the AFPh you could change VCA to face the appropriate direction and avoid ESB entirely in this case.

A tank may also expend MP by doing absolutely nothing. Such expenditure is termed "Delay" (D2.17), and there are a couple of instances in which it might come in quite handy. Besides using Delay

"in LOS of its target during that MPh before firing (so as to use To Hit Case C instead of C or C)", Delay might also be used while out of enemy LOS just before entering view. The idea here is to discourage Defensive First Fire by expending as few MP in enemy LOS as possible, thus incurring one of the subcases of Case J. This can be accomplished simply by hiding behind an obstacle using Delay, then expending the final two MP to move to an adjacent hex and stop.

Many novice players seem unconcerned that a "moving vehicle that ends its MPh with MP remaining is assumed to expend all those MP in its present hex"(C6.16), but since an ordnance weapon may Defensive First Fire at a target as many times as the number of MP expended by that target in that Location (C6.17), the enemy can claim several shots at you before the MPh is even over. Another benefit of the above Delay tactic is that the enemy will have lower odds of making a successful Motion Attempt, thus possibly giving you a chance to shoot at him in the ensuing enemy MPh without Case J should he choose to move rather than engage.

Because a tank is classified as "Fully Tracked" for movement purposes, there are few terrain features which totally impede a tank's movement. A tank may travel just about anywhere it wants, and usually at a lower cost than that for other vehicles. For instance, from time to time you may feel moved to enter an obstacle (building/woods/rubble) hex in order to benefit from its TEM. To do so, however, requires a Bog Check DR (D8.2), the failure of which results in the vehicle bogging in its current hex, thus becoming Immobile. Since preserving your tank's mobility is a relatively high priority, the actual benefit of entering the obstacle should be weighed carefully against this possibility. But the possibility of such movement is open, and is one not available to most other types of vehicles.

But if the tactical situation is such that the risk is deemed acceptable, then all that remains is to ensure that your tank has sufficient MP (half of its MP allotment) available. If entering a building, the Bog Check DR may result in the AFV falling into the Cellar (B23.41), or in the building becoming rubbled and possibly requiring yet another Bog Check due to Falling Rubble (B24.121). Bogging is the only concern for entering a woods hex, but if successfully traversed a fully-tracked vehicle will place a Trail Break (B13.421) across the hexsides of its path of movement; thereafter a fully-tracked vehicle may use the TB without the threat of Bog. Bog checks are also required for a vehicle leaving a stream hex via a higher elevation hexside (B20.46), and for crossing a bocage hexside (B9.54). Why, movement itself may even prove a weapon of sorts; a Fully Tracked vehicle can remove a Wire counter by successfully passing a Bog Check in that hex if the colored dr is a "1".

Provided it has not fired during the PFPh, a Bogged vehicle may attempt to recover its mobility by making a Bog Removal DR (D8.3). A Bogged vehicle expends, as a Start MP, an amount of MP equal to the colored dr times the white dr, and is freed on a Final colored dr of "1-4". It may then continue to move normally with any remaining MP. If the Final colored dr is "5", the vehicle becomes Mired (D8.31), which adds "+1" to the colored dr of any subsequent Bog Removal DR. A Final colored dr of "6" immobilizes the vehicle. Any armor leader modifier would apply to the colored dr as usual.

Like infantry, a vehicle may move "through" a building/woods hex using a form of movement known as "Vehicular Bypass" (D2.3). Using VBM, a vehicle may travel *around* the obstacle along the hexside, and may even end its MPh in Bypass of that obstacle (D2.34). The most important point to remember is that "the interior of each hexside traversed must be clear of any obstacle depiction to the depth of an edge of a unit counter for VBM to be usable", and that the "hexside clearance measurement cannot be made until the VBM and all applicable MP costs are announced" (The tendency among most players I've met has been to allow an opponent to use VBM without challenging the clearance measurement.) Care should always be taken to ensure sufficient clearance before claiming VBM, and if the enemy uses VBM, be alert and invoke D2.2 if necessary.

The obvious advantage of VBM is that a vehicle may traverse a woods or building obstacle without the threat of Bog, and usually at a lower MP cost. In a village or city, the main avenues of enemy fire might be avoided by staying off the roads and using VBM. One the other hand, VBM imposes certain restrictions and penalties upon VCA or TCA changes. In particular, Bypass VCA cannot be changed as a result of a successful Motion Attempt (see D2.33). Also, Bypass presents a more restrictive Target Facing (D2.32) that usual, which may make a vehicle in Bypass more susceptible to a side hit under certain circumstances. And finally, since LOS to/from a Bypass vehicle is drawn from the CAFP (D2.37), the field of vision of such a vehicle can be somewhat limited.

"Maintain your mobility." "Avoid fire." "Increase your odds." These are all general precepts that any player will use as a guideline in developing his own brand of armored tactics. But no matter how carefully that player studies the rules, no matter how perfectly he executes his plan, there is one intangible element to armored warfare which plays an crucial role on our cardboard battlefield. Some might refer to it as "fate", or the "fortune of war". Whatever its true name, it is utterly impartial, and can strike with devastating effect any time that dice are involved: Luck.

Part IV: Dice Game

Some wargamers have derisively referrred to *ASL* tank battles as "dice games", no doubt owing to the propensity of their solid hits resulting in no effect to the target. It would do little good to point out to these disgruntled few that *ASL* infantry combat is actually more of a "dice game", with a wider spectrum of possible outcomes occurring as the result of a single throw of the dice. But, the point is taken. AFV combat is fairly black-'n-white: you either hit or not, you then either kill or not. There is very little variation within this simple To Hit/To Kill process. And every player has at least one horror story of a Critical Hit turning into a Dud at a pivotal point in one of his games.

Dice come into play at two important moments during an Engagement: the To Hit process (C3.3) and the To Kill process (C7.11). Since you must first hit the target before you can kill it, we'll briefly look at several possible outcomes of the TH DR first.

As reviewed earlier, in order to hit your target, the Final TK DR must be less-than or equal-to the Modified TH#. Once a hit is scored, you must then determine where it has struck that target in order to know which aspect is used to find the correct AF (C3.9). Put simply, a hit on a vehicle strikes the turret/upperstructure aspect if the colored dr of the Original TH DR is less-than the white dr. Otherwise, it strikes the hull. Since the odds of striking the hull are greater than the odds of striking the turret, one can see how important a HD position becomes. Likewise, when moving laterally in front of the enemy, keeping your turret facing him will ensure that your frontal AF will be used for a turret hit rather than the usually-inferior side AF.

When a small caliber Gun of 15mm to 40mm scores a non-CH while rolling an Original Doubles TH DR, it has achieved two hits instead of one (Multiple Hits; C3.8). The firer may then make *two* TK DR and choose which one to apply. The first To Kill DR of a Multiple Hit determines the location of the second hit as described above. Note that certain American AFV with Guns greater than 40mm may also score Multiple Hits (U.S. Vehicle Note R), which is signified by the AFV's ROF being printed on a white background.

The possibility of multiple shots (ROF; C2.24) is represented by a number encased in a square on the front of the counter. If the colored dr of the Original TH DR is less-than or equal-to this encased number, that Gun may fire again during that player turn. ROF for a vehicle is not allowed during the AFPh (C5.2), but is allowed during Bounding First Fire (D3.3). A Bounding First Firer must expend one MP between shots (even if just Delay), and may even fire from more than one hex if ROF is maintained (D3.51).

Every time the Gun fires, there is a chance—lesser or greater, depending on the weapon—that it will Malfunction (D3.7). The tank's MA is assumed to have a B# of 12; otherwise the B# will be listed on the counter. An Original To Hit DR equal to the B# causes the gun to Malfunction, which is indicated by placing an appropriate Malfunction counter on the vehicle. Notice that the attack which caused the Malfunction is still resolved (A9.7), so you could conceivably still hit the target, including the resolution of any Multiple Hits. Remember also that the B# is reduced by two when using Intensive Fire, and changes the original B# to an X#!

An AFV with a circled B# may possibly suffer a "Low Ammo" result (D3.71). Such a vehicle's Gun still malfunctions with an Original 12 To Hit DR, but any other Original To Hit DR greater-than or equal-to the circled B# suffers from Low Ammo (and is marked with a Low Ammo counter). The original B# then becomes an X#, and creates a new B# that is one less than the original.

Any weapon that malfunctions is the subject of possible repair during the RPh. Provided the crew is not Shocked or Stunned, a dr of "1" during the RPh will repair the errant gun. A dr of "6" will disable it. Any other result has no effect. An AFV whose MA and Secondary Armament (SA) are all Disabled is immediately Recalled—unless it also has Passenger/Towing capability.

When using the Vehicle Target Type, an Original "2" TH DR results in a CH (C3.7), which doubles the Basic TK# for the ammunition type used (C3.72). Note that a CH versus a HD target will *always* strike the turret. If only the lowest possible Final TH DR would yield a hit, a CH can still occur with a subsequent dr of "1"; otherwise it is considered a normal hull hit (or a normal turret hit versus a HD target). If the lowest possible Final TH DR would still be a miss, a hit just might occur with an Original TH DR of "2". A subsequent dr of "1" is a CH, a "2" is a turret hit, and a "3" is a hull hit (C3.6). Any other has no effect.

Once a hit is scored, a DR less than the Final TK# will destroy the target, and if less-than or equal-to half of the Final TK# will create a burning wreck (C7.6). If the DR equals the Final TK#, or if (for HE) is one greater than the Final TK#, an Immobilization or Shock will occur, depending on the location of the hit. A hull hit would result in an Immobilization, which causes an automatic Crew TC (D5.5); a turret hit would Shock the AFV (C7.41).

A Shocked AFV must immediately BU and comes to an automatic halt (without need of a MP expenditure), and may do absolutely nothing until the end of the next RPh, when it may roll for recuperation. On a dr of "1" or "2", the Shock counter is removed and the AFV is again fully functional. On a dr or "3-6", the Shock counter is flipped to its UK (Unconfirmed Kill) side. The AFV is still utterly incapacitated in every way until the end of the *next* RPh, when it must again roll for recuperation. This time a dr of "1-3" will remove the UK counter and restore the AFV to its full capabilities. But, horrors, a dr greater than "3" would eliminate the AFV with no possibility of Crew Survival.

A Shock may possibly occur if the non-HE To Kill DR is one greater-than the Final TK#. In this case, the AFV must take a NTC, failure of which results in a Shock.

Finally, any Original TK DR of "12" results in a Dud (C7.35), which has no effect whatsoever on the AFV. As a point of interest, notice that only a *TK* DR of "12" has no effect and is considered a Dud. An Effects DR of "12" on the IFT following a hit would still be resolved normally.

During this entire To Hit/To Kill process, the dice are in the attacker's hands. All the target can do is sit and hope for the best, and is not given even the illusion of controlling its own fate the way an infantry unit is allowed (by rolling its own MC). In this sense tank combat may be considered "boring" to some, but there is plenty of tension and drama for both sides in the firing of the gun, in waiting to see if your armor can withstand that hit that scores. And there is immense pleasure for the attacker when a lucky hit sends that tank and its crew blazing to oblivion!

Conclusion

Great emphasis has been placed throughout this article on "increasing one's odds" in order to "win the Engagement". A detailed and thorough understanding of the *ASL* rules for armor will certainly help one do that; and of course there is no better teacher than experience. However, knowledge of the rules alone will not guarantee success during a tank battle. A certain amount of preparation must be done before play begins in order to take full advantage of what you have learned.

First, know your own forces. Be intimately familiar with the special characteristics of each of your tanks going into the scenario. Second, know the enemy's forces. Determine what you are up against. In both cases, take the time to consult the Chapter H listing for each AFV in play. Learn the respective strengths and weaknesses for each. The tactics you should apply will be directly related to the capabilities of your tanks and to those of the enemy.

Familiarize yourself with the terrain. Where do you (or your opponent) have to go, and what is the best way to get there? Keep an eye out for terrain "choke points" and armor "killing zones". Is this good "tank country", or will there be a lot of close-in fighting? Where are the Hindrances? Lay out the boards and take a few moments to consider HD positions. You've an advantage a WW2 tanker rarely enjoyed: a leisurely bird's eye view of the lay of the land. Use it wisely.

At set-up, look for positions which allow a HD Maneuver Attempt. A "−1" drm applies during this placement; but once the attempt is made, the vehicle may not be "reset-up" in another hex (D4.221).

The Scenario Defender may choose one Bore Sighted Location within 16 hexes for each vehicle's gun during set-up (Case M; C6.4). A gun firing at a target in a bore-sighted hex receives the "−2" DRM of Case M, though if Case N also applies the firer must choose one *or* the other. Bore Sighting is permanently lost if the vehicle leaves its initial location or changes its VCA.

After your placement is complete, conceal your tanks (A12.12). If one side begins with no forces on board, the other side may completely conceal all of his units before his opponent may look at the board. During set-up, terrain is irrelevant to Concealment if the unit is out of LOS of all unbroken enemy ground units within 16 hexes of it. Also, half-inch Dummy "?" counters provided in the OB may be freely exchanged for the larger "?" counters, allowing you to create stacks of Dummy vehicles, complete with half-inch "?" counters to represent "Dummy" turrets.

Once play begins, follow the "Rules of Engagement": Take the first shot. Take the first shot of the Engagement. Take more shots than the enemy. Integrate these rules into the phased sequence of play, and you are ready to "rock-'n'-roll"!

But, keep your eye on the prize. Your goal ultimately is to win the scenario; so even though your stated object is to defeat the enemy's armor, do not let yourself become side-tracked from the Victory Conditions solely to engage his armor. Strategy is dictated by the Victory Conditions—though, if tanks are involved on both sides, they will almost inevitably come to grips with one another. However, do not let yourself become distracted!

From the points raised throughout this article, it must seem that the "successful" tank commander adopts a primarily defensive posture during an armored battle. In fact, by following the Rules of Engagement and through judicious use of mobility, a tank tends to behave very much like a hunter stalking its prey. Depending on the game being hunted, a hunter will either wait quietly for his quarry to cross his path, or he may try to flush the prey out from its cover. Either way, a good hunter uses stealth to approach and surprise his victim.

Likewise, the successful tank commander waits for the enemy to move into his sights, or carefully moves into an advantageous position to destroy the target. Conservative play is the by-word here, since the DEFENDER will almost always hold the upper hand initially during an Engagement. Whatever the case, allow the enemy to make the first mistake while you wait to take immediate advantage. Above all, patience is the virtue which most distinguishes the successful tank commander.

...The minutes pass slowly as the enemy tank burns fiercely in the distance. The rest of the enemy platoon is nowhere in sight, but you know that they are there—behind those woods—and obviously intent on avoiding their comrade's fate.

Time is running out. You are under orders to wear the enemy down by attrition, and since the battle does not seem to be going well on the other sectors, that enemy platoon must be scattered and destroyed. Finally, you decide you can wait no longer, so you give the order: "Start up. Forward full speed."

Your tank tops the crest and churns down the other side of the hill. Only one route is available to get at the enemy, though the choice is an uneasy one. An uneven dirt road winds through the valley, flanked on both sides by short stretches of woods. Very little room for maneuver there; but still, you have no choice. "Along the road".

As you round the bend, an enemy tank comes into view. It occupies a small wooden farmhouse, but is facing the opposite direction. Quickly you duck down into the turret and dog the hatches. Even as the driver brings the machine to a halt, the loader slams in the next round. "Fire!" Your shell crashes harmlessly into the wooden structure.

For some reason the enemy AFV does not fire back, but rather revs its engine in a struggle to leave the building. No time to wonder. "Fire!" This time nothing! Your gun has jammed!

Suddenly, another enemy tank crashes through the woods to your right. "Driver, evasive measures!" But nothing happens quickly in a 20-ton vehicle, and suddenly the folly of stopping to fire at that second tank becomes apparent. Then, the enemy is right upon you. He fires!

Almost miraculously, his shot misses. There is still hope. The gunner and loader both curse violently as they struggle to free the jammed mechanism, but to no avail. "Smoke Dischargers!" With a "pop" the canisters fire free, and quickly you are engulfed in smoke. "Driver, start up! Into the woods!"

Is the enemy firing? What is happening? What the hell is happening? Slowly your tank grinds into the dense underbrush of the woods, engine and treads screaming their protest. With a high-pitched wail, all your forward movement suddenly stops. The tank will no longer respond to the driver's urgings.

Before you even have time to react to this latest disaster, a jarring thud rattles your teeth. At the speed of thought you are aware that you have taken a serious hit to the engine. Everything suddenly seems surreal, your arm moves in slow motion as you instinctively grab for the hatch overhead. Another thud. A terrific bang! Orange; heat. Flames!

Mercifully, the blackness follows quickly ...

CLASH ALONG THE PSEL

ASL SCENARIO A51

Near PROKHOROVKA, RUSSIA, 12 July 1943: By 10 July—the fifth day of Operation "Citadel"—elements of the SS Panzer Korps had reached the River Psel, the last natural barrier in front of Kursk, and were pushing northeast along the Teterevino-Prokhorovka road. On the 11th, German attacks pushed back the Soviet units defending Prokhorovka and a breakthrough appeared imminent. However, initial German successes compelled STAVKA to release the 5th Guards Tank Army from reserve before planned, and elements of it began assembling near the town late on 9 July. Early on the 12th, as the Germans moved to renew their advance, the 5th Guards Tank Army counterattacked along a ten-mile front with four corps in echelon. As the morning progressed, hundreds of AFVs were compressed into a corridor bordered by the Psel River on one side and the Belgorod-Kursk railway embankment on the other. The ensuing struggle raged for eight hours, punctuated by four major armored clashes. One such came about when the Russian 18th Tank Corps, moving along the left bank of the Psel, ran head-on into elements of the SS-Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win immediately when they have amassed ≥ 54 VP. The Germans win immediately if at the end of any Game Turn they have amassed ≥ 116 VP. Both sides receive Casualty VP, and the Germans receive Exit-equivalent VP for each friendly Mobile, non-Recalled AFV on/east-of hexrow Q [EXC: crews do *not* count for either Casualty or Exit VP purposes]. Any other result is a Draw.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✠ Light Dust is in effect commencing with Turn 3.

★ Russian forces enter along the east edge on Turns 1-3; at least one "Group" must enter each turn, having already expended 6MP of their printed MP allotment.

TURN RECORD CHART

✠ GERMAN Moves First	✠ ★ 1	✠ ★ 2	✠ ★ 3	★ 4	5	6	7	END

Elements of of SS-Panzer Regiment 1 and SS-StuG Abteilung 1 enter along the west edge on Turns 1-3; at least one "Group" must enter each turn, having already expended 6MP of their printed MP allotment: {SAN: 0}

Group 1:	Group 2:	Group 3:	Group 4:
6	6	4 2	4

Elements of the 181st Tank Brigade enter along the east edge on Turns 1-4; one "Group" must enter each turn, having already expended 6MP of their printed MP allotment: {SAN: 0}

Group A:	Group B:	Group C:	Group D:
10	10	10	4 4

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Dry, with a Mild Breeze (determine Direction as per B25.64 prior to play) at start. Light Dust (F11.71) is in effect commencing with Turn 4, and increases to Moderate Dust (F11.72) at the start of Turn 6.

2. Steppe Terrain (F13.2) is in effect. Place overlays as follows: **W1** on 26Q6-R6; **W2** on 27G8-G7; **W3** on 27Q6-P5; **W4** on 26EE6-DD6; **H2** on 27J9-K9; **H3** on 26H3-G4; **H6** on 29V10-W10; **S1** on 27T9-S10; **S3** on 29N3-N2; **S4** on 29U7-T7; **S5** on 29Y3-X3; **S6** on 26T3-S4; **S7** on 29I6-I7; and **S8** on 26K1-29K10. Rule F5.427 is in effect.

3. Prior to the start of play, place a divider along hexrow Q such that neither player may see the other half of the mapboard. Turn 1 is played with this divider in place, each player moving his pieces out of the opponent's view. No fire is allowed during the first Game Turn. After set up of all units entering on Turn 2 by *both* players, remove the divider and resume normal play. (The Russian player should keep his offboard units due to enter on the second turn hidden from his opponent by any convenient method.)

4. All units of both sides are considered Elite (C8.2) for Ammunition Depletion purposes.

5. Case N (C6.5) and Crew Survival (D5.6) are NA.

6. Crews may not voluntarily abandon their vehicle. A crew required to abandon an AFV as a result of a failed Immobilization TC (D5.5) must re-enter their vehicle at the first possible opportunity and may not take any other action (EXC: rout, rally and/or movement) until such time as they do.

AFTERMATH: The clash along the Psel was typical of the intense fighting which flared up throughout this day of mobile action. According to the Soviet Official History, the "battlefield seemed too small for the hundreds of armored machines." The confusion was total, as each tank commander maneuvered independently to gain an advantage or just to survive. Eyewitnesses to the battle at the Psel spoke of individual tank duels taking place at close range, of turrets being hurled fifty feet by explosions, of T34s "streaming like rats" over the field. Losses were very heavy for both sides, and at dusk the Russians withdrew from the field to regroup. Even though the fight would continue through the 14th, for the Germans it had now become defensive and they made no further progress towards Kursk. With the armored battles of 12 July, Operation Citadel had been stopped. Marshal Koniev was later to declare the failed campaign the "swan song of the German armor."

SWAN SONG

ASL SCENARIO A52

VILLERS-SUR-MAREUIL, FRANCE, 29 May 1940: De Gaulle's 4th Armored Division, called upon to eliminate the German bridgehead across the Somme at Abbeville, attacked on the 28th and succeeded in pushing the Germans back some four kilometers before halting for the night. The morale of the defending 57th Infantry Division—at least of the men in the front lines—was severely shaken by the failure of their 37mm anti-tank guns to make much impression on the French tanks. So, during the hours of darkness, German artillery and AA guns were brought forward to bolster its defenses. The French assault resumed just before dawn and early morning found elements of the 22nd Colonial Infantry Regiment, temporarily attached to the 4th Armored, and the 8th Demi-Brigade of light tanks approaching the hamlet of Villers-sur-Mareuil.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✠ The Germans may use HIP for two squad-equivalents (and all SW/SMC stacked with them).

◎ French ELR is "3".

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The French win if at the end of any Game Turn they Control the majority of existing Level-2 Locations on Board 12. Beginning on Turn 10, each B1-bis tank with manned and functioning MA/SA that is still onboard (see SSR 7) deducts one from the French total currently Controlled.

TURN RECORD CHART

✠ GERMAN Sets Up First [164] ◎ FRENCH Moves First [0]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	END

Reinforced elements of Kompanie 1, Infanterie Regiment 179 [ELR: 3] set up on board(s) 12/16 on/north-of hexrow BB, and on board 19 on/north-of hexrow F in hexes numbered ≤ 4 (see also SSR 3): {SAN: 4}

4¹-6-7	2-4-7	9-2	9-1	8-0	MMG 7-16	MMC 5-12	LMG 3-8	MTR 50* [2-13]	ATR 1-12	DC 30-1	Phon 11	?
12	5			2	2	2	2	2	2	2		10

Set up on board 19 on/north-of hexrow F in hexes numbered ≤ 4:

AT M12 37L HE[9]	2-2-8
2	2

Foxhole 5 / 1S OVR, OBA: +4 Other: +2 — **8**

AA Gun from Batterie II, Flakgruppe 64 sets up within three hexes of any graveyard hex:

AA M④ 88L A8/4/4	2-2-8

FRENCH

Elements of of the 2/24ème Bataillon de Chars de Combat enter on Turn 1 on/between hexes 19A1 and 19S10:

37* -/2*/*	9-1 Red Lt
6	

5ème and 7ème Compagnies, 22ème Régiment d'Infanterie Coloniale [ELR: 2] enter on Turn(s) 2/3 on/between hexes 19A1 and 19S10; all, some or none may enter on each allowed turn: [SAN: 2; see SSR 5]

4-5-7	2-3-7	9-1	8-1	8-0	dm MMG 2FP	LMG 2-6	dm MTR 60mm	Radio 7
20	3			2	2	3		

Elements of 46ème and 47ème BCC enter on/between 12GG5 and 16GG5 on a dr at least two < the current turn number:

B75* 47 1/2*/*	8-1 1st Inf
6	

6ème Compagnie, 22ème RIC and elements of the 44ème BCC enter along the south edge of board 12 on a dr at least three < the current turn number:

4-5-7	2-3-7	8-0	dm MMG 2FP	LMG 2-6	37* -/2*/*
6					2

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start.

2. All buildings are stone. The road 16A5-16N4-16Y4-16GG5 is paved, and each hex of that is an orchard-road. All woods hexes *between* roads 16A5-16N4-16Y4-16GG5 and 19I10-19Y6-19GG5 are orchards. Grain is in season. Kindling Attempts are NA.

3. Prior to German setup, the French, then the German, player each places one Rubble counter at ground level in any building hex. No Falling Rubble ensues.

4. The Germans receive one module of 80+mm battalion mortar OBA (HE and Smoke), with one Barrage-capable Pre-Registered hex. The French receive one module of 70+mm OBA (HE and Smoke).

5. The French Sniper counter is placed onboard when French Infantry first set up to enter play.

6. Each "PTC" or "–" result caused by any attack from a French-manned AFV on a Good Order German MMC [EXC: crew] in/ADJACENT-to the AFV's Location is instead treated as a "NMC" if it has the potential of causing at least a NMC on a DR

of 2. Further, each German MMC suffers an additional +1 DRM to any PAATC it takes during the APh.

7. No AFV may enter a building, be voluntarily abandoned, nor have its MA/SA voluntarily malfunctioned or disabled. B1-bis tanks may exit the playing area on/after Turn 9, but only on/between hexes 16I10 and 16Y10.

AFTERMATH: The Renaults advanced ahead of the colonial troops, and traded shots with the enemy 37mm AT guns. As the tanks bore down on their lines, a number of the still-shaken German soldiers broke and ran, allowing the *poilus* to close. Intense house-to-house fighting ensued for control of the village. As the fight raged, a depleted company of Char B tanks approached along the tree-lined road to Abbeville, in the process knocking out an 88mm flak gun set up near the cemetery south of the town. But, after waiting in vain for their refueling vehicles, these French tanks turned west to attack the village of Bienfay. Later still, the 6th Company of the 22nd Colonial Infantry arrived from Huchenneville, fresh from a stiff firefight they had just won. With their help, Villers-sur-Mareuil finally fell around noon. But the French were now a spent force—disorganized, exhausted, short of supplies and suffering from heavy losses. The Germans had received a scare, but their hold on the river crossings had not been loosened. The Abbeville counterattack proved to be the "swan song" of the French armor; when the panzers broke out, the French had few armored reserves left to oppose them.
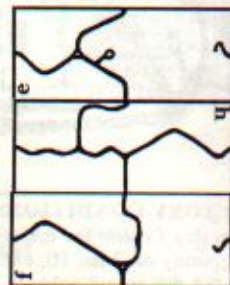
SICILIAN MIDNIGHT

DELUXE ASL Scenario A11

West of FAVARA, SICILY, 16 July 1943: Under direct orders from Patton himself, the 3rd Ranger Battalion stepped off at dusk on the 15th to seize Porto Empedocle. Marching in a column of companies, the Rangers made good time across the Sicilian hills. But just after midnight, scouts stumbled onto a roadblock at the junction of highways 122 and 116 manned by troops of the Italian 208th Coastal Battalion. To the north, another Italian detachment was emplaced on a hillock. Pulling back, the scouts informed Colonel Dammer of the presence of the enemy ahead. After a brief discussion with his officers, and realizing the need for speed in the bold adventure, Dammer sent two companies forward to attack both the roadblock and the high ground.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win immediately at the end of any Game Turn if they currently Control the hex containing the Roadblock and all four Level-2 hexes of Hill 108.

BALANCE:

Ⅲ Increase Italian mine factors to 32.

☆ The American player may make a Recon dr (E1.23).

TURN RECORD CHART

Ⅲ **ITALIAN Sets Up First**	☆ **1**	☆ **2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**END**
☆ **AMERICAN Moves First**								

Ⅲ Elements of 208° Battaglione Costiero [ELR: 1] set up as indicated: {SAN: 2}

Set up HIP on board h (see SSR 4):

3-4-6	7-0	LMG 2-5	Roadblock
4	**2**		

Set up within three hexes of hex eL3:

3-4-6	9-	8-0	MMG 4-10	LMG 2-5	Minefield	Foxhole 5 1S OVR, OBA: +4 Other: +2
10				**2**	**24** factors	**4**
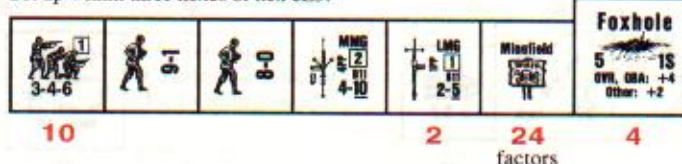
☆ Elements of the 3rd Ranger Battalion [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 on hex fH5: {SAN: 2}
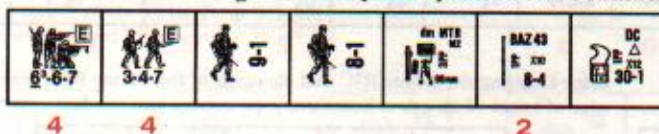
6-6-7	3-4-7	9-	8-0	MTR	BAZ 43 8-4	DC 30-1
4	**4**				**2**	

Enter on Turn 2 on hex fH5:

6-6-7	3-4-7	9-	8-0	MMG	BAZ 43 8-4	DC 30-1
4	**4**				**2**	

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.

2. Night Rules are in effect. The initial base NVR is three hexes, with no Cloud Cover and no Moon. The American player is the Scenario Attacker and the Italian player is the Scenario Defender. Majority Squad Type for the American is Stealthy; for the Italian, Lax. Italian units are not subject to Straying DR (E1.53).

3. All Orchards are Olive Groves (F13.5).

4. The Italian roadblock must be placed in either hex hH2 or hK3 (Italian choice of road hexside blocked); a minimum of one Italian squad and the SMC must be placed in the hex with the roadblock.

5. Note that the four hidden squad-equivalents on board h are in addition to the usual 25% allowed the Italian player (E1.2).

AFTERMATH: Making full use of the cover of darkness and the element of surprise, the Rangers quickly overwhelmed the Italian guards manning the roadblock. Pulling it down, they moved on toward the small hill. The Italians there, alerted by the firing, made ready to repulse the enemy. Protected by a scattering of mines around the base of the slope, for a few short minutes they held their own, causing several casualties among the Americans. But the weight of Ranger fire soon began to take its toll. When the officer in command of the detachment fell, some took the opportunity to flee while the remainder surrendered. This itself caused as much consternation as their brief resistance, for Dammer had no wish to be burdened with prisoners and did not have the manpower available to guard them effectively. However, noting the passivity of the Italians, he decided to send them back to Allied lines under the watchful eye of his dozen wounded. Those Americans unable to walk were carried by the newly captured PoWs. As the strange procession moved off, the bulk of the Ranger battalion resumed its westward "recon in force".
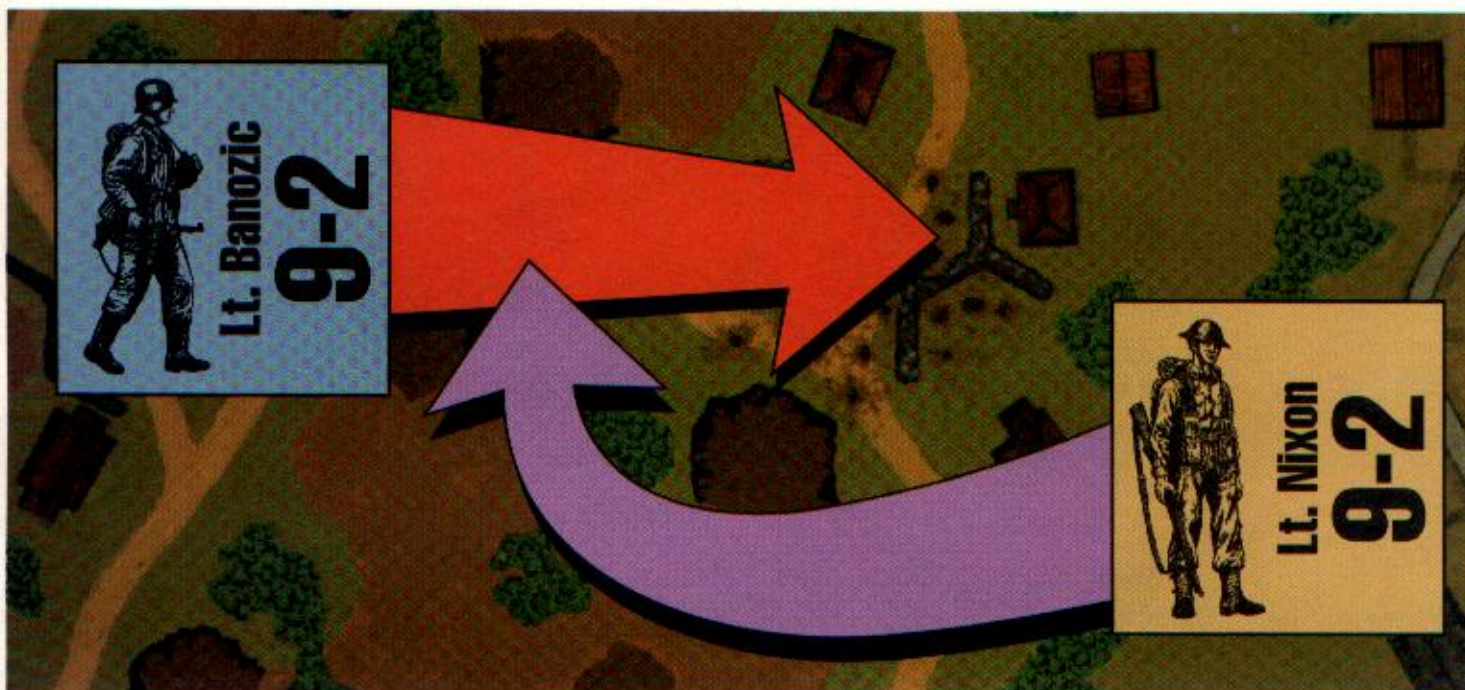
ANNUAL CROSSFIRE
PROBING LAYFORCE
By Robert Banozic & Mark Nixon

INTRODUCTION

Robert S. Banozic:

I still remember how, as a high-school sophomore in 1978, having by then sampled a number of Avalon Hill titles, I resisted even trying *SQUAD LEADER* for the longest time. (I mean, really, a game with eight phases in every turn? Who'd want to play that?) But once I did, I was forever hooked, and over the next several years I managed to get in multiple playings of every "official" SL scenario (there didn't seem to be so many in those days). It was natural enough for me to make the move to *ASL* in 1986. Fortunately, the Chicago area has a very active wargaming community, including a number of die-hard *ASL* afficionados; I estimate that this opportunity has enabled me to play *ASL* face-to-face 500+ times over the last six years.

The appearance of amateur *ASL* 'zines in the hobby encouraged me to try my hand at writing about the game finally. One of my favorite features in the first *ASL Annual* is "A Question of Balance", in which Howard Sylvester and Eugene Murrell agreed that "To The Square" (scenario #9) is unbalanced. The peculiar point of their discussion, though, was that they completely disagreed as to which side is favored. I think that it always is interesting to see such divergent opinions about particular scenarios.

So, when I discovered (through Philippe Léonard's *ASL News*) that "Stand Fast the Guards" was widely considered by many to be extremely pro-German, and since I had reason to believe from the playtest proceedings that venerable Mark Nixon bore some responsibility for this, I challenged him to explain his reasoning in print. Well, it turns out I was misinformed. Mark, like most everyone else, agrees the scenario *is* pro-German. However, he suggested that we compare notes on some other scenarios, and I readily accepted. That exchange and collaboration led to the first article, on the "Crux of Calais".

Mark and I hope to produce more of these joint analyses (although it seems more often than not that we agree on play balance of the published scenarios

from Avalon Hill). Still, we believe that a comparison piece featuring different strategies and styles of play might be of interest—and hope most readers will agree. And we'd love some input from the *Annual* readership, be it contrary opinions, suggestions for additional scenarios for discussion (just tell us of your "worst nightmare" scenario; maybe we can shed some light into the dark corners), reports of bizarre events, or whatever. I have to admit that I am flattered to find myself, with Rex Martin's encouragement, in the "big-time", especially with someone of Mark's caliber as a co-author. I hope that my analyses will be as much fun for you to read as they have been (and will be) for me to write.

Mark Nixon:

I first met Robert at Origins '88 in the third round of Charlie Kibler's *ASL* single-elimination tournament, which right off told me that my job was cut out for me. At least that's what I recall thinking as we sat down to play "Liberation of Tulle". Several years later, early in 1991 to be more precise, Robert contacted me about the possibility of working on some articles in a joint venture similar to the one by Howard Sylvester and Eugene Murrell which appeared in the *1989 Annual*. In the ensuing year-and-a-half, we have exchanged over 200 pages of typed material while analyzing eight scenarios. The first two of these pieces appeared in the pages of *At The Point* (issues #8/9 and #10); this latest installment marks the beginning of what we hope will become a regular feature of the new *ASL Annual*.

In the meantime, Robert and I did personally meet once again (in late 1991), but disdained a face-to-face playoff of any of the scenarios we had considered in the series thus far. Instead, we opted to prove what dedicated Avalon Hill playtesters we were with a game of "For Honor Alone", one of the *CDG* offerings under scrutiny at the time. Our only other meeting in the flesh has been a brief handshake at Oktoberfest '92, where we exchanged our latest packets of material but otherwise were too involved playing the

many other fans of the game gathered there to spend much time speaking together (or entertaining any other normal activities, for that matter, Oktoberfest being what it is).

This brief picture, I hope, paints an accurate image of the two of us spending a great amount of time and effort establishing a working relationship by mail which we hope proves informative, entertaining and, of course, a bit controversial. Robert and I favor noticeably contrasting playing styles, formed largely as a result of facing distinctive groups of able "regulars" in our own *ASL* gaming communities (he in Chicago and me in Cleveland). You will likely note the differences as soon as you begin reading. Typically, I might try to convince you my strategy will win more games; but then Robert gets to counter with his own words; and so on, back and forth, until we force ourselves to quit lest we break into a brawl—or, worse yet, run the risk of printing material grown sour from repetition (the "more-taste/less-filling" syndrome). So far we two haven't gotten to any verbal (or otherwise) fistfights; but if we ever do, you can read about it in these pages! More important, I hope no reader ever finds this series boring. If you do, please let me know, for I have an opinion about that too...

BRITISH (Mark Nixon)

Rating: 80% British

Advantages: Interior Lines; TEM; Leadership; Matilda; Terrain; SAN

My first impression of this situation was that the Germans had plenty to get their job done; but after playtesting it four times to four British wins, I see the British advantages simply too tough for them to overcome. My British will take maximum advantage of fighting on interior lines by setting up strong in the center, with several squads on each flank poised to delay enemy moves, and my reserves prepared to move towards the main thrust. Everyone is able to collapse upon the final defensive positions on the western half of Board 9. Throughout the battle, I will

have the better TEM, especially from those stone buildings I'll occupy, and excellent leadership everywhere I turn. My troops will have a much easier time finding Rally Terrain than the enemy. Then too, the SAN will work to my benefit, and that Matilda ought to make a decent impression on the foe at some point of the conflict.

Disadvantages: Range; SW

Oh, I know I will be frustrated by the short inherent range of my squads; in fact I am already discouraged just thinking about it. Likewise, I could really hammer the enemy's opening moves from my starting positions—if only I had more than three LMGs to fire at long range. Because of these shortcomings, I will not be able to accept a firefight with the enemy beyond a four-hex range with my best troops, nor beyond five hexes with my Australians. The MMG and the Matilda are exceptions to this state, of course, but mostly I will have to adhere to the trusty "fall back, advance forward" shuffling sort of defense in order to dodge the enemy DFPh shots and still oppose their MPh. That will be the order of the day, except where I can hold a stone building position against enemy with +1 or no TEM.

Set-Up:

There are several confusing aspects of this scenario that survived the playtest. I find it odd that SSR #6 specifies the 6-4-8s as Commandos without also making provision for Commando leaders and HS. There seems to be no use for the Tracks specified in SSR #2, unless someone happens to be in a hurry to get from 1511 to 2110; the orchards on Board 15 are still orchards (not Olive Groves). My force is entirely "British" by definition so there is no problem mixing leaders of different nationalities (apologies to any taking offense). And let us not forget that, even though the Matilda takes an automatic Bog when it leaves the road, it still can *leave* the road nonetheless. It can also try for Bog Removal and further off-road movement in subsequent turns. In fact, if you should ever want to try it, that Matilda could theoretically reach Level 4 at 9Y6 as early as Turn 3 (although much later would be more likely, and perhaps *never* quite probable).

But, my opening position for the Matilda at 9R2/6/1/CE (see the accompanying illustration) targets hex 2X4 in order to keep the Germans out of 2W5. Should I roll a "start-up" Immobilization, hex 9R2 is the best spot to be; and if the Germans move into 2AA6 on Turn 1, I might need to use the sD6 to lay smoke in 15S8 to cover the move of my lone MMG to 15R8 (2nd level). Squads at 15R8 and 15S5 are also available to lay smoke for this purpose if suddenly needed.

The seemingly odd spot for my 9-2 is explained by the fact that I want him coupled with the MMG as soon as possible, and they will both APh to the first level of 15Q8 on Turn 1. Too, the 9-2 in 15Q8 is ready to rally either 6-4-8 from 15S5 or 15Q4 should German advancing fire do any damage there. Once positioned in the upper level of this building, I expect the 9-2 and MMG to dominate any German moves to the top of Hill 621 and sweeping enemy moves on the eastern edge of Hill 538. Of course, if the enemy moves elsewhere in force, my response must be fluid to match the threat. Yet no matter where the 9-2 will be moving on Turn 1, attaining even the first level in 15Q8 will require some running due to the lack of a stairwell in that hex.

Elsewhere, I have a single squad manning two LMGs at 15Q4 with the specific assignment of hitting the first target which enters 2U2 with a 2(−2) shot. If I wanted to KIA someone, I would have started the 5-2 here as well; but I am mostly interested in placing the residual FP, and the single 6-4-8 can accomplish that (residual 1FP), thanks to British immunity to cowering, without exposing my 9-2 to

enemy fire. The other three squads in the center are located for possible smoke placement (as mentioned earlier) duties, for possible entrenchment attempts, or simply because I want the core of my strength here in the center and yet do not want them exposed further forward. I will be mostly responding to the enemy attack, and have no plans to leave anyone exposed to enemy fire out here in low TEM once concealment is blown. The 8-1 leader helps move the MMG forward and then departs, probably off to the 15H5 building where the other two 4-5-8s with the LMG will be in the building's upper locations.

I have started one squad deployed in 15K1 just to make it appear to be a more potent stack than it truly is. These two 3-3-8s will likely recombine in my first Rally Phase. They offer me a number of options, however. Most exciting, they could CX to 2M6 and advance, still concealed, into 2N5 and 2M5, although any Germans who have attained hexes on Hill 538 (such as Y6 and AA5) could strip my concealment, and probably would convince me to not make this move. But full squads here would be tough in 2I9 and 2M9, against Germans on the top of Hill 621, especially backed by my 9-2-directed MMG in 15Q8. These front-line squads would certainly go down eventually, but my bet is the time they buy will make the sacrifice well worth it. On the other hand, I might just back-off or move east or west to take up firing positions.

My one LMG in 15Z4 won't do very much with a mere 1(−2) shot at long range—other than convince the enemy commander to avoid moving full platoons against it. That will at least slow the attack a bit, as fewer enemy squads can then gain the Leader Bonus so long as fire from this lone LMG is withheld. As soon as it fires without retaining ROF, though, the rest of the Germans will be freed to move with their leaders and CX to reach spots such as 2V5, 2Y5 and 2AA5. It is worth holding its fire just to keep as many enemy units back that extra two hexes as possible. No need firing something which won't leave residual fire until an extremely good target presents itself. Should none ever materialize, I'll retain concealment and thus not risk a break in the coming German AFPh. Even enemy Advancing Fire at long range could harm me, so I must guard against that remote chance if nothing valuable is dangled in front of my gun barrel.

The two 6-4-8s, one 4-5-8 and 9-1 on this flank will be used conservatively to slow the enemy during their MPh as they try to cross the valley between hills 538 and 714. The 9-1 is located to try to rally that foremost 6-4-8 should it break on Turn 1, for 15Z7 is a location safe from enemy fire until Turn 3. Should no enemy attack materialize along this edge, these squads will all move west behind cover to form the rearguard defense of the victory area. No matter what, the 2-4-8 HS is holding strong in the 15DD3 building in order to maintain a British presence here. A single unit in this location might have tremendous influence on future German Rout Phase activity should the enemy wedge himself into the 15Q10 area on the way to Board 9. If a strong German attack hits the east edge, I'll likely reinforce my HS. The enemy won't be able to move into western Board 9 successfully without stifling this threat to their rear.

Looking at my set-up, the one thing which stands out as most unorthodox is the use of unattached leaders. But I feel in this situation, for the reasons I have given above, it is for the best. I have planned for the enemy to come at me anywhere, although I normally expect them to come straight for Hill 783. But should they do so, I will end up exactly where I want to be, in the stone buildings south of that hill, and I *know* the enemy commander would rather not confront me in those buildings. Therefore, I wouldn't be surprised to see Herr Banozic direct his force around Hill 714 and come at the victory area from the east, around the 9Z1-15X8 region. I would be very surprised if the German attack strikes out across the western board edge, for they would run out of time in

the process, only to find they still must contend with those stone buildings at the end of their lengthy trek. I really don't expect to have to fall back into those sangar positions very often, for the battle will usually be won before it comes to that. One alternative which I have successfully used but not presented here, is to start most of the 6-4-8s forward and move into those Board 2 stone buildings in the V8 area. Coupled with moves into 2M9, the Matilda to 15T4 and the Australians forward to the Board 15 heights, this can devastate the German attack. Those 6-4-8s led by "−1" and "−2" leaders are very tough in the stone buildings.

I would like to be more specific about the results of my proposed set-up, but so much will depend on what shape the attack assumes that it is pointless to go on. I see the enemy contingent as a bit short of leadership (especially since one leader will be trying to use the radio), and so will look with particular care for any early chance to KIA a leader (any leader). The Germans are already short-changed with their move hard on me (and broken units usually rout in the wrong direction), general lack of rally terrain and meagre leader-to-squad ratio (for the Germans anyway) of 1:3.6. That's only 1:4.5 if the radio leader is discounted; and a lousy 1:6 if I actually do manage to KIA a leader. Well, the more reason for the enemy commander to protect his leaders, which also happens to work to my benefit. To help combat those leaders, what better than my healthy SAN 5? I should get twice as many sniper attacks as the enemy with their SAN 3, and will use any meaningless SAN "2" results to home-in on the radio leader or the German 9-2 (if possible). Also, because I want to generate as much SAN as possible, I will always look for shots at stacks of enemy units rather than at single units, for if I can force three or four German dice rolls, my SAN chances are much better. An obvious exception to my rule-of-thumb would be seeing the German 9-2 running in the open within normal range of my 9-2-directed MMG, and other such quixotic occurrences.

GERMAN (Robert Banozic)
Rating: 50-50
Advantages: Range; OBA

At first glance, the Germans in this scenario appear to have little advantage in FP. For example, the *Gebirgsjägers* edge those Brits by only 72 to 66 in raw MMC-inherent FP, far less than the FP advantage which an *ASL* attacker usually needs and expects. But the vastly superior range factors of my squads ought to rewrite this story as squad-for-squad, and SW-for-SW, I can outrange anything in the British inventory. This advantage will be especially telling here, where there will be plenty of opportunities for long-range fire in relatively open terrain. I particularly intend to keep those commandos at arms-length (my arm here being 9-12 hexes long), so that I can bring some of my squads' inherent FP to bear without a sharp reply in kind. The extra reach and hitting power of my MGs contrasts favorably with that of the Brits also, and I will be sure to exploit this at every opportunity. And I am favored with the possibility of some 80mm OBA support, so I am hoping for at least three fire missions which I will probably use to call in Smoke to assist my crossing the board.

Disadvantages: Open Ground; A-T Weapons

All that open terrain may enhance my range advantage, but it will also make it difficult to get across the hills and dales of this scenario without giving away a lot of negative modifiers for FFMO and FFNAM. I will have to maximize whatever cover might be available from the Olive Groves, Crags, HA and Smoke. The few stone buildings won't be of much use to me until near the end-game; but they will be very useful to Mark, and I don't expect him to give these up without a fight. A-T weaponry is also a problem for me because, practically speaking, I don't have any. The Matilda II just
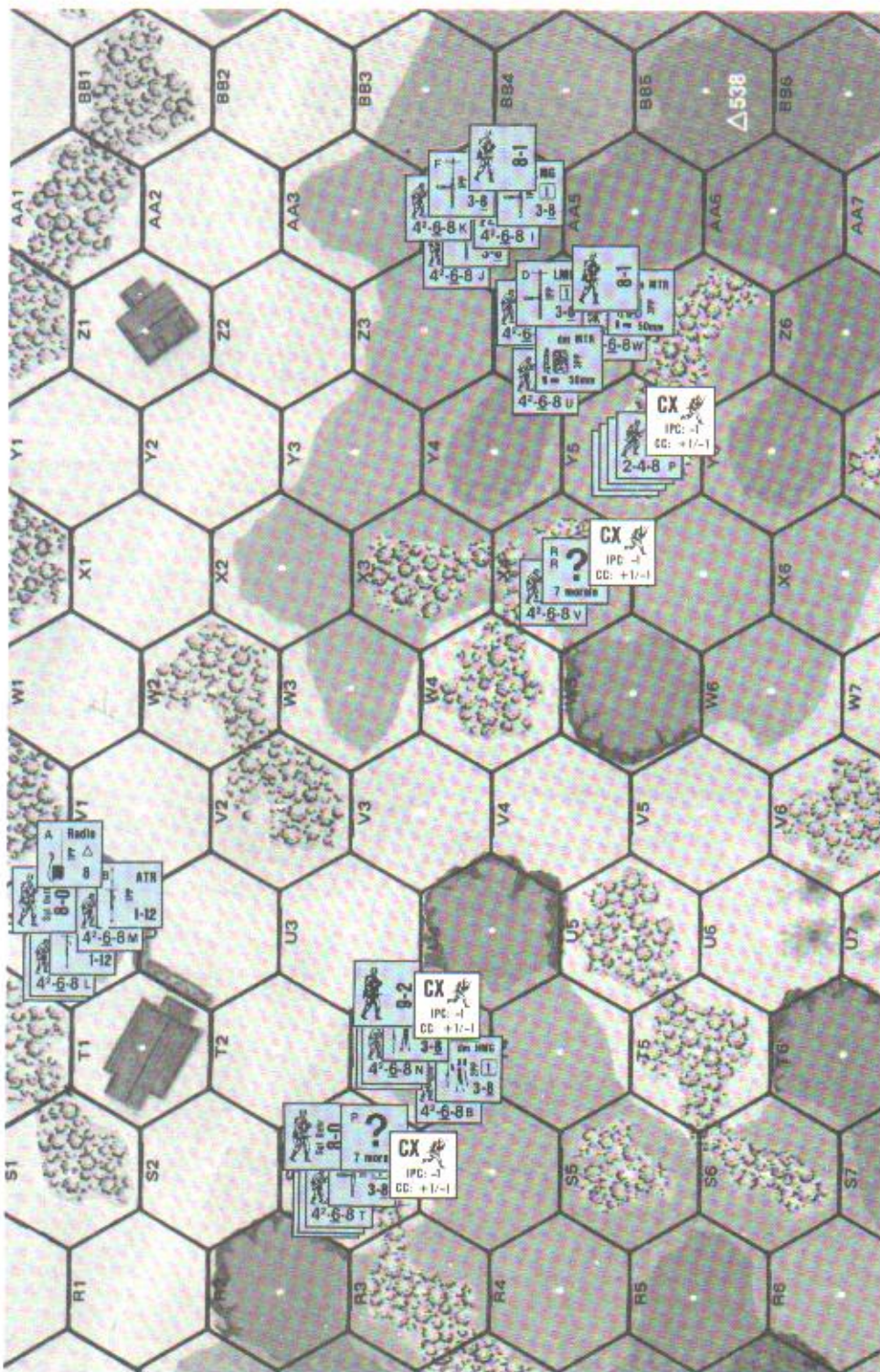
Figure 2: Banuzic's Attack. The end of the first German turn finds them pressing forward across the hills of board 2.

laughs at my puny ATRs. And although OBA HE could hurt the metal monster, the odds aren't high enough that I would want to devote a precious fire mission to the task. I can still kill the tank, of course, and I intend to—but it'll probably be the ugly, old-fashioned way: Close Combat.

Attack:

My strategy for this scenario is to attack across the entire width of the board so as to stretch the British defenses. It would be possible to concentrate my troops and smash my way diagonally across the board by brute force, but in so doing I would allow Mark to mass his scattered forces in my path. In addition, I would probably find Mark's troops moving in on me from my flanks. Instead, I will press the attack across the entire board, and although I won't make a breakthrough everywhere, I ought to penetrate the British

defenses somewhere. Then it will be I who am hitting Mark's units on their flank and rear, which should help my lagging units to move forward to reach the victory area by game end.

That's the plan. The reality may not work out quite so neatly, and I immediately noticed that Mark didn't forget to cover hex 2U2. I expect that his stack at hex 15Q4 consists of a squad, LMG and leader, which can hit U2 with 1FP and a negative leadership DRM. This isn't much, true, but combined with the FFMO and FFNAM "−2" DRM, it's more than I want to risk. This enemy position will probably slow the progress of a couple of my FGs on Turn 1, as I expect to have to maneuver to avoid this hex.

In a face-to-face game I wouldn't ordinarily count counters, but I can't help but notice that Mark must have deployed one of his Commando squads. I also

expect to find LMGs in 15Z4, K1 and 9I1. The British MMG team looks to be at 9Q1, ready to move into the 15R8 stronghold; while I'd wager that the boys at 9I1 are headed for the building in 15H8.

The only real surprise for me in Mark's placements is the stack at 15K1. Putting this group so far forward is a pretty clear indication that these guys plan to get cute and move in my direction, ending Turn 1 CX at 2M5 or N5. I can't hope to stop this move, so will have to focus on pushing the Brits right back off of Hill 621 as soon as possible.

My HS will enter first, one at a time, at Y1 and move CX up to Y4. I am hoping to draw some of the defensive fire here, particularly from 15Q4, but I don't really expect Mark to take the obvious bait. A single squad follows and moves CX into X3. The HS and this lone squad are already designated as expendable, because they'll get every dirty job that comes along. They'll run ahead of the main group to draw fire for the FGs behind; they'll head for the tank for a little CC action if it gets too close; and generally they'll try to make nuisances of themselves for the British. The HS will advance into Y5 and the squad to X4 on Turn 1.

One 8-1 with three squads and three LMGs enters at 2Z0 and moves to AA3. The other 8-1 with three squads, two dismantled light mortars, and an LMG also enters at 2Z0 and moves to Z3. In the APh, these FGs will move to AA4 and Z4 respectively, from where they can throw out an impressive amount of FP at Hill 714. The LMG teams at AA4 will also be out of range of that British LMG at 15Q4. I expect the Brits on Hill 714 to duck my Defensive Fire on Turn 1, but by my second-turn PFPh the mortars will be assembled and I am hoping that their 2(+1) attacks on 15Z4 will at least cause the Brits there to lose Concealment. This will then allow a 16FP attack by my 8-1s' FGs, or 8FP otherwise, if everyone is healthy. Possible ROF from the LMGs could help, too. I at least want to Pin that LMG to allow free movement for me on Turn 2 through hex 2Q5. Note that while my units at 2Z4 will be subject to LMG fire from 15Q4 (probably 1FP), if my troops shrug that off the LMGs in the two 8-1 stacks will be able to return fire with 6FP. I am counting on my sturdy morale-eight troops to come through these low-FP attacks in good shape.

Meanwhile, an 8-0 commanding three squads and an LMG enters at 2X0 and moves CX through V1-V2-U3-T2, avoiding the dangerous U2 crossroads (unless Mark has First-Fired his LMG sited in 15Q4, which would allow me to move a bit further to S3). Similarly, the 9-2, three squads, dismantled HMG and MMG follow the same path CX to U3 (or through U2 to T3 if Mark has fired the machinegun). These stacks will be advancing to S3 and T3, respectively (or S4 and U4, if I was able to take the highway). The MGs will then and there be assembled during the next player turn.

My last group, comprising the 8-0 with radio, three squads and two ATRs, enters at 2X0 (moving through one hex offboard) and moves to V0, thence to U1 in the APh. These guys can't stay concealed (in fact, the only Germans who will be concealed at the end of my first turn are the FG which finishes at S3, and the lone squad entering at Y1), so Mark will know my observer is. But my object here is to deter Mark from moving his stack at 15K1, pre-designated as an HE FFE. Since it can only miss by one hex, I will be able to see the blast height of the SR if it lands anywhere except hex L4. And while the British can reach M5 still concealed, since it isn't Concealment Terrain they will be considered Known to my observer for OBA activity (only) per C1.6. It is therefore very likely that I will meet the C1.333 requirements for SR conversion to an FFE. No C1.21 extra chit draw would be required.

Of course, knowing all this, Mark might advance to hex N5 instead. Since that is out of my observer's LOS, I'd have to accurately correct the SR to M5 (where I can see the base level of the hex) and make

the extra chit draw to convert it to an FFE. Hmmm. That's too problematic for me. I could instead correct the SR out to the 15R4 or Z4 areas, possibly pre-designating an HE FFE conversion; or perhaps cancel the SR entirely and pocket the fire mission, depending on what Mark has done. That's the nice thing about cancelling SRs, you don't lose the fire mission (C1.336 & 1.35), so you don't have to draw for Battery Access again so the next time you place an AR. For that matter, I could simply leave the SR in place and move on Turn 2, so long as I end each turn with a LOS from my observer to the SR. Note that although you can't voluntarily drop Radio Contact and keep the Fire Mission, it is considered a "voluntary" loss per C1.22 only if your observer doesn't have a LOS to the SR/FFE (which I presume means that the SR/FFE must be in play but out of LOS before failure to roll for contact results in fire mission loss). So a voluntary failure to keep contact often won't be C1.22 "voluntary".

Assuming, now, that the Brits have been scared away from 2M5 by my OBA (and other FP in U1) and have advanced to N5 instead, I will finish Turn 2 with the 9-2's FG advancing to 2P5 (remember, I am hoping to have suppressed the enemy LMG I expect to be in 15Z4), the three squads and LMG to O5 (with their leader hanging back at P4), and the squads and ATRs from U1 and Q1. This would give Mark an interesting choice between pounding one of my stacks and then finding his own FG decimated in return, or running away. If he runs, I expect that his FG will be largely neutralized, because once the *Gebirgsjagers* gain undisputed control of Hill 621 I will be sure to make life miserable for any Brits caught in the lowlands of Board 2.

Beyond the expected struggle for the high ground in the north, my plans must be flexible to respond to Mark's defense; and without knowing what he has in store, I can't be specific about what I'll do. But, generally, I expect my FP from the 9-2 led group and the two 8-1 stacks to clear the heights of Board 15 in short order, so that by Turn 3 the 8-1 platoons will be resuming their advance along the east edge of the board, hiding behind the hill masses from the enemy MMG which will be in 15R8. On Turn 4, the 9-2 should be moving up the middle, and an 8-0 should be leading a FG over to and along the west edge. If I have to, I'll leave a couple of squads on Hill 621 for a turn or two to control the area if a British FG is still hiding out in the west end of Board 2. Also by Turn 4, I will get my radio operator over to Hill 538, where he will have an LOS to the second level of 15R8 (I hope to have him at 2BB6, with a clear LOS to the whole 15R8 building complex). This should be just in time to lay down Smoke to support the thrust onto Hill 714 by the 8-1s' groups and/or the move to the 15P2/P3 area by the powerful 9-2 stack.

At least, that's the plan.

BRITISH RESPONSE

The German commander seems to have a pretty solid grasp on the nature of my defense, which makes it all the more surprising that he's elected to attack across the entire board. I disagree with his decision to split the attack, for that forces the Germans to break through in two or three places in order to get the required 20VP into the victory area, for 20 points won't make it from either the east or west groups alone. All I have to do is stop one of the two nine-squad companies; if 19 VPs make it to the victory area, I don't really care. I'll even let them pass if it allows me to better concentrate on the unit representing that 20th VP. I don't see this broad attack stretching my defense as much as it will overtax those heavily burdened German leaders as they attempt to maintain Good Order and keep the attack moving in several directions.

Robert has been very careful with his opening move, allowing me no decent shots at other than single units in the FFNAM/FFMO danger zone, so I enter Final Fire without having fired a shot. The only

worthy target is in hex 2Y4 (those four HS), and I won't hesitate to fire my two LMGs at 15Q4, followed by the third LMG at 15Z4. My rationale is that I might actually harm this stack with these two and one firepower shots. Besides, the simple act of forcing four German DR might help even more with some SAN activity. My LMG squads have nicely done their job by keeping the big enemy stacks back a few hexes and sure won't be sitting out my coming MPh in place; they will be firing or moving out of the way of enemy Defensive Fire. The fact that these troops are facing no return APh fire doesn't hurt, either.

Prep Fire on my first turn will be light, although the two LMGs in 15Q4 will fire yet again, but at the 8-1 led platoon in 2Z4 this time. More chances on the 2FP column and more SAN potential. If I somehow get lucky and mangle this stack, the LMG in 15Z4 will also fire, but at the other 8-1 platoon in 2AA4. He shoots at the second stack because, if the first one has been hurt, there would be fewer Germans rolling the dice on any PTC; and because of that decent probability on the "1" column, I want to take advantage of the added SAN chances. In any case, it is very likely my 15Z4 squad will still be facing the combined fire of both 8-1 platoons as well as the enemy 9-2 directed machineguns—should the German commander opt to fire instead of reassemble those weapons. So if my initial 2FP shot at 2Z4 did absolutely nothing, I will simply assault move the 15Z4 squad back to Z5. If it happens that I have fired this LMG already, the risk I have taken is not as bad as it might seem because that would mean the one 8-1 stack has already been hurt. If my boys break from the attack of the other 8-1, chances are Robert will opt to reassemble the MMG and HMG rather than try to nail my broken squad; and even after I rout to 15Z7, the 9-1 there will have lots of time to rally this squad as the hex will be safe from enemy fire for a long time. I may suffer a break in this relatively "safe" situation, but will probably not take a casualty; and in the meantime I will have enjoyed a shot at a stack of four enemy units.

My movement kicks off with the Australian 4-5-8 in 9AA1 moving CX to 15FF7, which will culminate in an advance to 15FF6 where he will remain concealed and cover the southeast corner of Hill 538. This squad will likely move up to 15DD5 next turn. My HS at 9DD2 shuffles back to 9EE4 to await future developments. The two squads on Hill 714 try to hold their two hexes. If my LMG squad has pulled back, he will transfer the weapon to the still concealed squad in APh, so that it can be advanced back to 15Z4 while the original owner regains concealment in 15Z5. The squad in 15R8 moves CX and advances to 15M7. The tank, upon passing his Mechanical Reliability roll, moves to 15T4 where he will end the AFPh facing 15T4/4 (TCA/6) buttoned up. This covers the top of Hill 621, and I can swing the turret to hit the lane out to 2EE9. My 9-2 and the 8-1 MMG troops all move to the first level of 15R8. The 8-1 will advance to 15Q8 to take up any rally duties the 9-2 left undone, and then off to my left flank next turn. The 9-2 led MMG team will still be concealed as they advance to 15R8 (2nd) to capitalize on the guaranteed shots on Hill 538. These will be 1FP or 2FP shots beyond 16 hexes at non-moving targets; any full squad who moves takes a 1(−4) (which makes the "1" column the equivalent of a 24 even attack for K and KIA results), so I'm sure Robert will not be allowing any. But I'll also be surprised if he keeps his platoons stacked to face this kind of abuse, for which he has no immediate response, especially with my MMG ROF potential. So long as no enemy units come closer than 17 hexes in the LOS of my 9-2, I'll continue to retain concealment while firing these shots on Hill 538, which might come in handy later given Robert's plans for OBA activity around building 15R8.

My two squads in 9I1 CX and advance to 15H5, where they will soon move to the upper levels. They will be joined there by the 8-1 leader, as their LMG

throws more FP at Hill 621 while the squads' fire can hit 2K7 and 2L7 (important for my up-front squads with the 9-1). I could do a lot of different things with those two squads, and the smart (or safe) move would be to simply withdraw back across Board 15 to prepare for the endgame with +3 stone buildings surrounding these troops. But I also like the idea of going forward to disrupt enemy plans, and since I have suggested the British could win this encounter with two 6-4-8s deleted, I am using this force to hinder enemy progress. I will make some concealed moves and end my APh with a CX concealed HS in 2N5, a CX concealed 9-1 in 2L6, a concealed HS in 2M9 and the concealed squad in 2J8. If the enemy SR does land on target in the area, I won't be too terribly concerned since the FFE would have to err to 2M6 to hit more than one of my units, and I'll trade the up front HS for an enemy OBA mission. But I bet all these troops will escape the big guns, for there is only about 50% chance that initial contact and "black" access will be made, and even then only another 33% chance the AR will be accurate. Also, it can err as much as six hexes if inaccurate, which may ruin enemy Prep Fire intentions.

But the point is, my brave front-line boys don't really expect to keep the Germans off Hill 621, although they may slow them a bit. What this command is planning is a bit of guerilla warfare in and amongst the olive groves on the south-western slopes of Hill 621. The enemy 9-2 leader thinks he will be making life miserable for my lads caught in the valley, but when he reaches the top of Hill 621 he'll get a surprise when he realizes he can't see through the Olive Groves where the commandos will be waiting. On Turn 2, the Germans gain hexes 2O5 and 2P5, but my infantry simply pull back and fade away. I can hide in this manner until the enemy are forced to come down to get me, which will put me at my inherent range and we'll have a real fight of it then. If they attempt to cross over to Hill 783 instead, they'll be taking flanking fire from these squads. I don't see these stout lads going down any too fast, and most certainly not without delaying the enemy attack and taking some of them down as well.

Elsewhere, my squads at 15N4 and 15S5 assault move to 15N5 and 15R5, only to advance back up to N4 and R4. Hex 15R5 is a particularly evil location to entrench and bring fire out to the 2K1 area, but I also don't want the enemy to have the advantage of a foxhole in this spot, or much of anywhere else for that matter, so you won't see a lot of digging attempts on my part. To this point I have revealed only two of my 6-4-8 squads, so there is still some uncertainty for the German commander; perhaps those British on Hill 621 are three squads and a leader after all?

With the stage set, I just don't see the Germans getting 20VP onto Board 9 for the win. I haven't even fallen back to my best positions yet, those stone buildings, and the Germans are going to have to spend too many turns forcing me off the hills. I won't quibble with Robert's expectations of moving forward on turns 3 and 4 to assault the board 15 heights, but it is already too late at that point. The radio leader trying to gain LOS to my MMG and 9-2 from Hill 538 will have to first withstand several rounds of MMG fire himself before taking his potential OBA chance. My Matilda is going to kill infantry trying to run forward, and any who don't run will run out of time. I see time as the German's biggest disadvantage in this scenario, and am surprised Robert didn't list it. If we suppose no Germans would break and the fastest 20VP to run to western board 9 could all make it, things would be different. But these Germans will break, thereby slowing the assault while leaders attempt to rally the broken, thereby leaving the attackers longer exposed to my fire from the stone buildings. I view any expectation of getting three useful OBA modules into play as a major stretch; positions on Board 2 don't offer much of a view into the key spots of southern board 15, and the radio man will be targeted by leader-directed fire and SAN alike.

I do give the Germans a 20% chance of victory, because sometimes the British MMG will malfunction and not come back, or the 9-2 could take a serious hit, or the Matilda could be rendered useless in a number of ways, or the Germans could simply outplay the British or (egad!) out-dice them. Of course I will be dodging the enemy OBA and 9-2 fire as much as possible, but these could just get lucky enough to bring on a German win.

I see the Germans running out of time in this scenario. They will spend the first two turns getting established on Board 2 for some lethal firing, but I will merely duck it for the most part, and advance back to force the Germans to use their own Prep Fire to force me away from my heights. Eventually they will have to come at the British, and so will spend the next three or four turns getting over hills 714 and 783—only to find I've taken shelter in the stone buildings on the southern side. Meanwhile, the Matilda and the 9-2 directing my MMG will continue to grind away, my commandos in the Board 2 Olive Groves will harass the enemy assaulting Hill 783, and my SAN of "5" will (hopefully) keep shooting. It boils down to about a four-turn scenario with the Germans on the hills trying to run past my high-morale squads in stone buildings. This is one scenario where I'll not hesitate to offer my opponent the "Balance" provision, for I'll not even need those Sangars. A better provision would have been to allow the Germans another platoon of 4-6-8s and an 8-1 and three LMGs, or maybe delete those two 6-4-8s and the 9-1 from the commandos. Now that would liven play quite nicely, I believe.

GERMAN RESPONSE

I don't expect Mark to allow anything like 19 VPs to pass by quite as easily as he claims, but anything that does get through from any of my groups will naturally take that much pressure off the remaining groups. So if even just 3-4 VPs make it through from my western platoon, the rest of my OB will now only be responsible for contributing 16-17 VPs, and those extra few points may well be the German margin of victory. In any event I won't be too much slowed by squads occasionally breaking, as my 9-2 and 8-1s have orders not to stop to rally single MMC. They will keep moving with the bulk of my infantry for speed, fire direction and MC help. This is not that much of a sacrifice, since I expect that few of the 4-6-8s are going to break from the 1FP and 2FP shots the British are generating in the early play. Those that do may opt to just stay in place and try to rally back from DM, with leadership DRM, during the next RPh. It seems to me that Mark must be optimistic about his prospects with these shots; everywhere I look I have to accept low-odds attacks while responding with 6-16 FP myself. I don't need too much optimism to determine how those match-ups are usually going to be resolved. Sure, there will be the occasional game when the dice allow even paltry shots to devastate my stacks, but that isn't going to happen anywhere near often enough to justify Mark's 80% pro-British rating. But Mark is quite right about his Sniper, and I am actually more concerned about the British SAN opportunities his early attacks might generate than I am about the damage they could do directly. Any German MMCs which get left behind should have reasonable self-rally chances, anyway.

Nothing has been said that might make me change my battle plan, so I project that my 8-1 groups will be in the vicinity of 2FF6-FF9 by the end of my third turn, the exact position depending on whether the 4-5-8 is in Good Order at 15DD5 (but it might not be, due to possible shots coming from my 9-2 FG at 2P5). The guys at 2P5 will be exposed to fire from the tank in 15T4, sure, but about the only redeeming feature concerning that Matilda (from the German point of view) is its low utility against infantry. If it turns to shoot, it will be well-placed for my suicide teams running up the middle to swarm over it on Turn 4 from outside of its

TCA. I am actually glad it's where I can get at it early, because I was afraid Mark might have it sit back for the endgame, where it just might stop some of my thinned-out troops from crossing into the victory area. Well, it could move back, but then it won't be doing much to slow my midgame forward progress.

Mark has, naturally, won his bet about how the Brits on Hill 621 will avoid the OBA, since as I indicated above I wouldn't even try for the FFE here unless I could see someone at M5; I can't, so I won't. This is fine since I would really rather be getting that radio operator over to Hill 538 and conserve his fire mission for later use. The squads at 2U1 will move singly to Q1, risking what I will think is a 2(–1) shot (but is actually a 1FP attack) from the concealed CX unit at N5. These three German squads will become my western platoon, to be joined by the 8-0 on Hill 621. As I figure it, these guys should be approaching board 15 around hexrow D on Turn 5, which leaves five full turns to cross the dozen or so hexes into the victory area. They may have to fight their way past the Brits in 15H5 but, using the range advantage and some smoke grenades, have a decent chance to make it.

My units on Hill 621 still move as planned if things haven't gone awry, with the 9-2 advancing into P5 and the stack of squads into O5 on Turn 2. The enemy HS at N5 may be revealed by now due to its own or my fire, but I would make this advance even if it was still concealed. The worst that could happen to the O5 guys is a 12(+1) attack, which I would risk to break this logjam. As you can see, I'm counting on that "8" morale again. But, as it turns out, it's only a 6(+1) and Mark is going to run away anyhow. My 9-2 can cast some nasty 8(–1) shots out to 15Z4/Z5 with ROF, which ought to further complicate British plans to hold there. Crags aren't "Concealment Terrain", so any squads trying for concealment in Z5 will have to make a dr, and can't even do that once I gain Level 3. Of the squads at 2O5, one with the LMG will run down into the valley with the rabble, while the other two will be detailed to control those renegade Brits hiding out in the olive groves. The key is to assume commanding positions where he can't bring much FP to bear, but which deter him from moving out to cause trouble. Where I go precisely will depend on where these suicide commandos are, but hexes L8 and M9 look promising. When my 9-2 moves on Turn 4, these two squads will press in to draw fire, cut rout paths, cause encirclement, or whatever else I can manage. The 9-2 can end his fourth turn movement at 2T9, too far from the commandos in the olive groves to risk much damage. About the only way the Brits will get any flanking shots at my 9-2 stack is if they place themselves in harm's way, and my FG can create a lot more harm than those commandos ever will. I'm pretty confident about how this exchange is going to turn out.

I don't understand Mark's contention that it will be "too late" for me to move forward on turns 3 and 4, since my personal timetable doesn't anticipate that I'll be blasting into building 15R8 before Turn 7. This gives my 8-1 groups four turns to reach their positions on Hill 714, and three turns for the 9-2 to get to 15P2/P3 (or possibly CX onto Q4). That's enough time, even allowing that the assault up Hill 714 will be slowed by some intense—but brief—fighting. The three squads Mark has committed here aren't going to hold my six squads armed with LMGs. And although my platoons will probably no longer be at full strength, it won't be any surprise if the 8-1 groups combine for a powerful 20FP or 24FP (+2) shot into the building, with another 20-24 FP coming from the 9-2, with some ROF possibilities. I am hoping that this will be sufficient to knock down the defenders so the three or four German MMCs still functioning around 15T6 can run in and grab it; otherwise they'll shoot, too. At this point nearly all of my surviving, Good Order units should be within turns turns of reaching the victory area, and there are

three turns to go in the play. That's not a large cushion I'll grant, and I won't be expecting to win this scenario early anyway, but taking the victory in "Probing Layforce" in ten German game turns is very much do-able.

Why is the main assault scheduled to commence on Turn 7? Because that's when I expect the Smoke to lift. Assuming that I can maintain LOS to the SR, my radioman will end Turn 2 in a hex such as 2X3 or Z1 and then move into BB5 on Turn 3, where I can see into 15R8 (2nd level). I don't think the British 9-2 will be maintaining concealment for long, since my half-squads will have taken up positions such as 15X1, W1 and V1. It also isn't the case that my observer will necessarily have to endure "several rounds" of 1(–2) FP shots from the British MMG. If, for example, the SR is at 2M3, I could correct it to 15R8 in the third turn DF, and convert it to a FFE in next PFPh. This would allow only the one turn PFPh for Mark to interfere. That could be a single 1(–2). What are the chances that my 8-0 can survive this? PTCs won't hurt my radio abilities (but could draw a Sniper), and by my calculation I'll come out OK about 83% of the time.

Now I realize that everything may not go so well, since I could miss radio contact, or the SR could land out of LOS, and/or Mark could move his units downstairs out of LOS, forcing me (since I can't see the base level of the hex) to fiddle with the SR and wait until I advance into BB6—subjecting my observer to possible 1(–1) attacks, with a 90% chance of emerging Good Order from each—to try for the FFE. So I don't really expect to land the Smoke until turn 4 or 5, in which cases it will lift in my turn seventh PFPh. This is the only fire mission I will really be counting on, since I didn't need one back on Hill 621. Any additional OBA can be used by my observer, who may have presciently advanced to 2AA6 to try for Smoke around hex 9Q1. This would certainly help my endgame run for the rest of my units, especially against any long-range fire from 15H5. If this isn't necessary and there are no other likely targets, the radioman will tune in some Wagner and run down into the valley to rally stray broken troops which might yet make it into the victory area in the last few turns.

Through it all, I will be counting on the high morale of my elite troops to weather Mark's low-FP shots, even when risking FFMO/FFNAM fire (as many will be called upon to do in the course of the game). The context of this scenario offers every German MMC a realistic opportunity to act like a Hero, because the low volume of enemy fire beyond his normal range should give my boys a good chance to run right through it when the need arises, and survive. My troops will be doing a lot of running in fact, particularly in the last few turns, so this ability should not be underestimated. And although the morale of Mark's squads is equal to that of mine, I really don't expect his units to wear nearly as well in the face of my firepower as mine will versus his. Sure, I expect to take some casualties, and everyone won't make it to the victory area; but I can afford to have 55% of my OB drop out along the way and still win the game.

Now I'm not trying to pretend that what I've outlined here is some kind of a fool-proof plan, and I only expect the Germans to win about half of the time. There are plenty of bad things that could happen to these *Gebirgsjägers* (most especially if there's no OBA support), with early loss of the 9-2 vying for top spot on that list of bad things. But similar misfortunes could as easily befall the Brits. My own Sniper might get lucky, or their MMG and/or tank could malfunction (as Mark has mentioned); so I think that these dangers even out. I do agree with Mark about the German Balance provision, though, being pretty worthless. No matter; I won't be asking for it anyway.

THE RAATE ROAD

ASL SCENARIO A54

Near RAATE, FINLAND, 13 December 1939: With the invasion, two reinforced Soviet divisions crossed the border in the north with orders to cut Finland in half by seizing Oulu, 150 miles to the west. But the Russian 163rd Rifle Division was soon trapped at Suomussalmi. And so, a third Soviet division was committed, pushing westward into the snow-clad forests. To halt the slow-moving column of Vinogradov's 44th Rifle Division, General Siilasvuo dispatched the Finnish 27th Infantry Regiment to block the Oulu Highway, the only east-west lateral available to that Soviet division in their sector. The obvious spot was at the mile-wide isthmus between lakes Kuivas and Kuomas, some six miles west of the village of Raate. There Lt. Col. Makiniemi, in command of the 27th, placed two companies to prepare defensive positions. On 8 December, these Finns repulsed the Soviet recon troops. The next day, the rest of the Soviet 44th Division drew up behind the stalled point. On the 13th, after several days of desultory bombardment, the Russians launched their first coordinated assault.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win immediately when they have Exited ≥ 16 VP, exclusive of prisoners, off the west edge of board 5.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

N

	7
	5
	32

BALANCE:

🛡 Finnish units have MOL capability (A22.6).

★ Add two 4-4-7 to the Russian OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

🛡 FINN Sets Up First [174] / ★ RUSS. Moves First [170]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	END

Elements of the 3rd Company, 27th Infantry Regiment, 9th Division [ELR: 4] set up on/west-of hexrow N: {SAN: 5}

Reinforced elements of the 197th Assault Regiment [ELR: 2] set up on/east-of hexrow G: {SAN: 2}

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Snow, with no wind at start. Deep Snow (E3.73) and Extreme Winter (E3.74) are in effect.

2. The stream is Shallow (and frozen as per E3.722). The islands and all land hexes north of the river on board 7 do not exist; Ice rules (B21.6) apply to all such hexes, as well as the mapboard river.

3. The road 5A5-5H3-5Y10-5EE6-5GG6 is plowed (E3.733). Further, movement to connecting trench hexes remains one MF (per B27.54), even though Deep Snow is in effect.

4. All Finnish Personnel are Ski-equipped (E4.) and have Winter Camouflage (E3.712). They may commence play in Ski mode at the Finnish player's option.

5. The Finns may Bore Sight, and treat the Russian AT Gun as captured ordnance (the penalties for Russian weaponry—E3.741—still apply).

6. The Finns have Booby Trap Level A (B28.9) on all boards.

7. The Russians receive one module of 120+mm OBA with Plentiful Ammunition.

AFTERMATH: The Finnish positions were well planned, well situated to meet any Soviet thrust. Movement by the Russians on the frozen lakes would be detected immediately by the machinegunners and result in mass slaughter. Hampered by the deep snow and the thick forest, the Soviet artillery was unable to deploy off the road and could provide only limited support for a frontal attack. The only alternative to one, however, was for the Ukrainians to enter the dense timber, leaving behind their armor, and attempt to flank the Finnish line. This their commander proved unwilling to undertake. The result was bloody defeat as the entrenched Finns destroyed or immobilized the Russian armor and caught the accompanying infantry in a deadly crossfire. The first of many such failures, the initial attack cost the Russians two tanks and hundreds of casualties. An entire Soviet division was paralyzed in the snow by 350 Finns, in a bumper-to-bumper traffic jam, numbed by numerous raids by the *Sissi*, until such time as Siilasvuo could spare more troops for the "final surgery".

SMITH & WESTON

ASL SCENARIO 53

Near WARONG, BURMA, 26 March 1944: Under pressure from Stilwell, the Chinese 22nd Division attacked southwards down the Kamaing Road. The American 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional)—popularly known as "Merrill's Marauders"—was to slip past the Japanese flank on side trails and take up positions astride the road in their rear to disrupt communications and supply and prevent any large-scale retreat. Over the protests of both Merrill and Hunter, Stilwell ordered the force split to cut the road in two places, at the village of Shaduzup and again near Inkangahtawng. The 2nd and 3rd battalions, under the command of Col. Hunter, reached the latter on the 23rd of March after an arduous 11-day trek. The enemy reaction was immediate and furious. Some 16 assaults were beaten back by the Marauders during the first 24 hours. But the failure of the other force to reach Shaduzup and the slow progress of the Chinese advance, coupled with dwindling supplies, made the situation even more critical. Hunter had no choice but to order a retreat. Two platoons, Lt. Logan Weston's Intelligence & Recon platoon and Lt. Warren Smith's rifle platoon of the 3rd Battalion, had been left in place to block the trails leading east to Auche, thus covering the Marauders' route of withdrawal. On the morning of the 26th the regimental headquarters and a battalion of the Japanese 114th Infantry Regiment, some 800 jungle-wise troops, moving to outflank the roadblock, struck the two platoons.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Japanese must Exit more VP off the north edge than the Americans.

BALANCE:

● In SSR 4, each group must contain ≥ seven squad-equivalents.

☆ Up to three American squad-equivalents (and all SMC/SW stacked with them) may use HIP.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

TURN RECORD CHART

☆ AMERICAN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
● JAPANESE Moves First									

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) [ELR: 4] set up on/between hexrows G and Q: {SAN: 4}

8	2	2				

Elements of the 114th Regiment, 18th Infantry Division [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 in two groups, one each on 5A5 and 34A5 (see SSR 4): {SAN: 3}

18	2	2			2	3	3

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect.

2. Place Overlay 4 on board 34 normally.

3. Prior to setup, the American player may Deploy as many of his squads as desired. Further, up to two American squad-equivalents (and all SMC/SW stacked with them) may use HIP.

4. Prior to U.S. setup, the Japanese player must secretly divide his entire force into two groups and record a different entry hex for each. Each group must contain at least: eight squad-equivalents, one leader, one dm MMG and one dm MTR.

5. American Personnel are Stealthy (A11.17).

AFTERMATH: Under heavy pressure, the Americans fell back slowly, employing the tactic of successive ambushes to buy enough time for their comrades to pass through Auche to their rear. By that night, the two platoons had been forced back to Warong, where Smith and Weston joined forces but found themselves unable to break off the engagement. Next morning, using each platoon as a fire team, the two lieutenants fell back in bounds, each group providing covering fire as the other withdrew through it along the trail to set up another defensive position. When they at last reached Auche on the evening of the 27th, the 2nd Battalion had established a perimeter, while behind it the 3rd moved on towards Nhpum Ga. Incredibly, Smith and Weston's platoons had held up a Japanese force ten times their size for two days—killing about 60 of the enemy with not a single fatality themselves. However, along with the bulk of the 2nd Battalion, they would be trapped at Nhpum Ga.

GETTING THE LEAD OUT

A Parable for ASL

By Steve Powlesland

The infantry squad is strung out along a gully in the woods, waiting for an order to move out into the open. No one looks forward to that order, but everyone expects it. Their objective, a two-level stone building on the edge of some nameless town, is also home to a Jerry machinegun. The two or three frantic Krauts who man the weapon are obviously alert and jumpy. The shredded sparrow carcass on the road is merely one illustration of that. Not bad shooting for Krauts. Probably a 9-1—maybe even a 9-2—leader up there.

The Sarge peers over the edge of the gully at the building and grinds his teeth even tighter on the stub of the cigar projecting from his mouth. None of the boys in the squad can remember the cigar ever being lit. It is the same one Sarge was chewing on when they hit the beach at Normandy. The Irish non-com, Corporal "Radio" O'Really, swore that the Sarge never took it out, even in the sack.

"Get up here, Meatball," the Sarge growls.

"Juzaminute," yells Private "Meatball" Andy Spaghetti, the squad's obligatory U.S. citizen of Italian extraction. According to Rule A358.26, having an Italian in each American squad is necessary to justify the presence of an 8-0 leader. And Spaghetti had no scruples about explaining this politically-correct rule—"Me uncle is da personal undertaker for da Senator from New Joisey"—to his buddies. For the Sarge, he had only a special swagger. The Sarge threatened to off Meatball at least once a week, but could never manage better than a "10" on the "Is Anybody Looking" Table.

"What do ya want now, Sarge?" Spaghetti asks after finishing his nature call at a nearby tree. Flopping down beside the Sarge, he adds a sneer and fixes his dark eyes on the squad leader.

Sarge ignores the provocation. Instead, he points at the imposing building. "We gotta KO that Jerry nest", he says. "We know where it is, but we don't know what else might be lurking around. I need a scout… someone real slippery…to work his way over there and see if there's anything on that first floor."

"What are ya talking about?" Spaghetti replies with some heat. "Ain't ya seen da way dose guys are shootin'? I mean, didja see what dey did to dat bird?"

"Yeah, I …"

"And didja see the way they harvested that grainfield over there?"

"Yeah, I …"

"Well, howse about the way they carved initials in that big tree over thataway?"

"So what?"

"So what!" Spaghetti repeats, almost screaming. "I 'spect dey got Rommel himself in dere. Or at least a 10-3 directing dere fire. Any fool setting foot on dat road is going be going both directions at once."

"You ain't scared, are you, Meatball?" the Sarge taunts.

"Whadda ya mean, scared? I jus don't tink you'll getta low enough roll. What makes ya tink anything's over there besides the MG?"

"Are you blind as well as yellow?" The Sarge nods towards the dirty grey walls. "Can't you see that great big question mark sitting on the ground level?"

"Probably a dummy."

"Well, you would know," the Sarge observes. "But why would the Krauts be using one of those as a dummy here? Na. I think it's hiding something. Something bad."

"Yeah? Then who better than you ta go find it for us poor GIs, Sarge?"

"Go on back to your tree, Meatball. By the way," he calls as Spaghetti slithers away, "I saw what you were doing over there. Don't you know that a private ain't allowed unless he rolls doubles first."

"Ya can't BS me, Sarge. I read da book. I can relieve myself any time I wants, on a tree or on a building even; I only gotta roll doubles if I need to do it in a bunker or entrenchment!"

"Awright, you foxhole lawyer. I was just testing you. Now get outta my sight before I roll on that table again. O'Really!"

"Yo, Sarge."

"Get yer butt over here!"

Corporal O'Really is the battlefield philosopher of the squad. Everyone knows that when the war is over he would either become famous … or take over his Father's butcher shop in Boston. To O'Really, it was the same thing. The skinny, red-haired non-com crouches alongside the Sarge. "What is it, boss?"

"Listen…we've got to find some way into that building without getting the squad routed clear back to Dover."

O'Really shakes his head. "Tough lookin'. Anybody moving across that open road will be broken if the Krauts just spit right. How about some smoke?"

"Smoke? You really think this bunch even know what a smoke exponent is, much less could roll one? Who's gonna smoke in this outfit?"

O'Really shrugs eloquently. "Maybe the Lieutenant can."

The Sarge stifles a guffaw and glances over at Lt. Cart Bored, the nominal platoon leader, who is absorbed at that moment in playing with the radio. Ever since Cherbourg, the 2nd Looie has been promising his platoon that he had personal influence with a 105mm battery. But somehow he'd never been able to pull a black card.

The Sarge shakes his head. "I don't think the Lieutenant has any smoke," he observes. Unless it's between his ears, he adds to himself. A 6+1 if ever he'd seen one.

"What are we gonna do then, Sarge? You ain't thinkin' of a direct assault, are you?"

The Sarge chomps down hard on his cigar. "Maybe. Just maybe. Get Beerstein up here, will ya."

In a couple of minutes, maybe a turn, the Sarge and O'Really are joined by Private Holden A. Beerstein, a fellow of unusual talent. Beerstein had gotten into the group after new rules adopted by the Multi-Army Commission had specified that any mixed ethnic squad had its morale raised by one. Spaghetti had been heard to proclaim that the ELR dropped by two at the same time, but the Sarge had told him to shut up. No one wanted to fight MAC's regs along with the Krauts.

Nor did anyone argue about the fact that Beerstein added an important dimension to the squad, one indispensable to modern warfare. He was quick as lightening in calculating probabilities.

"Hey, Beerstein," the Sarge spits, "tell me what our chances are of getting into that building by following the hedgerow over to the stone wall, then rushing in across that grainfield and in the backdoor."

Beerstein's eyes gets glassy for a few seconds as he examines the route. "Are you talkin' about doubletimin'?" he asks in his Arizona drawl.

"If we need to, yeah, why not?"

"Are ya'll thinkin' of tryin' to close combat that there machinegun nest on this turn?"

"That's the idea."

"Are we gonna by-pass them woods over there?"

"Got to."

"Any FFEs, AFVs or other diversions?"

"Nope. Leastways, not that I know of."

Beerstein shakes his head and falls to muttering.

"So, what's the odds we get through this?" Sarge demands.

"Well … you better make sure everyone's got their affairs in order before we get outta this gully."

"That bad, huh?" O'Really asks.

Beerstein grabs his bayonet, squats and starts scribbling in the dirt. The first bunch of numbers he labels "Table 1", the second "Table 2" and a third set "Table 3". The number-cruncher looks up at the others, "As you can see, the odds depend on the Kraut leader up there. He might be an 8-0, or a 9-1 or even a 9-2. I figure the probability of our squad surviving through the CC are as high as 8% if all goes well."

"How bad can it be?" asks the Sarge.

Beerstein points to the lower corners of his tables, "Somewhere around the square root of Pi, I would say."

The Sarge shakes his head now, "You're right. It does not look good."

"Can I help?" Sarge grimaces as Lt. Bored scrambles up to the crest of the gully and peeps over the edge at the village.

"The boys and I have been tryin' to figure how we can get into that building on the other side of the road," the Sarge explains. "You got any ideas, Sir?"

The Lieutenant studies the situation for a few seconds. The scion of an old and wealthy Baltimore family, a graduate of Groton and Yale, Bored had been the perfect candidate for frontline officer training. He was quick to admit his lack of experience with actual combat when he got the assignment, but he argued that his encyclopedic knowledge of the rules more than compensated for that lack when the competition got tough. In Normandy, he'd had a chance to display this when—pointing out that tanks were more vulnerable from the rear—he'd led an attempt to sneak up on a Tiger while it was pointing the other way in bypass. Unfortunately, the armor leader in the tank had shifted into reverse. Although he screamed loudly that the enemy SOB couldn't do that, the Lieutenant had barely escaped being turned into a Belgian waffle, along with the whole squad. The voluntary rout had been an ignominious start to his career. Later, during the push into Aachen, the platoon had run into an active sniper and been pinned down. However, since the sniper was firing at everyone but the Lieutenant, Bored refused to allow a sniper check. He claimed he was waiting for their own sniper to speak up. The others guessed that he was just miffed at the insult.

"We do have a problem there, don't we?" Bored admits. He pulls out his dog-eared copy of the voluminous book he always carried with him. "Well, let's see what we can do here. Ah. No. I've got it!" he says after leafing through the first chapter. "We can roll on the 'Enemy Preparedness' table. Maybe they're drunk up there. Or asleep!"

Beerstein rolls his eyes. "Drunk? Asleep? Look, Sir. Considerin' the time of day, and the fact they have already fired three times in the first turn, you'd have to roll snake-eyes twice and pull five red cards in a row, to get them drunk. It's even worse to put 'em asleep."

The Lieutenant nods. "Oh yeah, I forgot about the cards. That does make it tough." He thumbs through a few more pages until he gets to Chapter E. Suddenly his face lights up. "How about this? It's rather obscure, but it might work. First, we defensive fire on them during our Prep Fire—just to throw them off balance. Then we hop on assault boats and float down to that airfield we passed. There we load onto planes in our Advance Phase. They fly us over for a

paradrop on the building during the Kraut Prep Fire, and we drop in before they know what hit them."

The Sarge takes a deep breath and peers around, as though looking for the strength to control his sudden homicidal impulses. Either that, or a support weapon. "A wonderful plan, Sir. However, you may have noticed that there is no water in this particular gully."

"Must be the time of year," the Lieutenant muses.

"And we don't have any boats. Even if we did..."

"Wait; wait." Bored begins riffling through the pages like a demon. "I'm sure there's a rule in here about flooding gullies. I just barely remember reading it. Maybe it was in the Annual Signals? Or was it modular errata? Maybe it's only applicable in PTO terrain! Just hold on. I'll find it."

"What about calling in that 105 OBA, Sir," the Corporal suggests, giving the Sarge a covert wink.

"Yeah, O'Really. That's a good idea. Why don't you get back on that radio, Sir?" Sarge adds drily.

"All right," Bored agrees. "I can hunt up that reference while I'm calling my friend in the 1052nd. It just doesn't seem to be in the index here." He pulls himself erect. "Carry on, men."

"Thank you, Sir." The Sarge offers a decidedly weak salute as the Lieutenant moves back down into the gully.

"Don't you got any ideas, Sarge?" O'Really asks.

The Sarge glances at his corporal and his number-cruncher, then over at the building. "Just one. This is the way I figure it. We divide the squad in half during Rally. I'll lead one and you lead the other ..."

"But I'm not even rated," O'Really protests.

"I know. But if we're real lucky we can get you shot at, you take a MC and roll for a field promotion."

"Begosh and Begorrah! Dad'll be so proud ..."

"Anyway, I figure we rush the building from two directions at once. They can't fire at both of us, and they won't have penetration from up there, and they can't..."

"But Sarge, if only one half-squad gets through the odds'll be worse on the close combat," Beerstein interrupts. "Even being optimistic, I would say the probabilities are that half of us end up working in a steel mill in Czechoslovakia and the other half will be pushing up daisies."

"Hang the #%@&$*~ probabilities!" the Sarge yells.

"I heard that, Sergeant," shouts the Lieutenant. "You know the rules. An 8-0 has to roll a five or more on one die before he can use language like that ... unless he is in LOS of an enemy AFV bigger than ten tons. I don't want to have to put you on report; so watch it."

The Sarge gives his cigar a particularly vicious chomp, and mumbles something under his breath. "All right. Unless you guys have a better idea, that's how we'll play it. O'Really, let's you an' me start counting off the men into two groups. I'll go ..."

"Just a minute, Sarge," Bored calls. "I've got contact on the radio!"

The Sarge's eyes are actually wide. "You mean you've got battery access? Well, call it on in, Sir."

"It's not exactly battery access, Sergeant," the Lieutenant replies. "I'm picking up the BBC. From London it seems."

"The BBC?" repeats Corporal O'Really. The Sarge lowers his head and shakes it, while staring at the ground.

"Yes. It's a special broadcast. It appears that while we've been worrying about that MG, the Allies have crossed the Rhine, the Russians have taken Berlin, and the Wehrmacht is routed. The war is over!"

There is a moment of stunned silence. Then every man in the platoon throws his dice in the air and his rulebook to the ground. They all begin marching off to the west edge, slapping each other on the back and planning the articles they will write about this.

Only the Sarge is left in the gully, his face a model of dismay. Even the cigar stub has fallen from his mouth. "Well, I'll be a ...," he mutters. "Now I'm gonna be a #%@&$*~ 8-0 Squad Leader for the rest of my life!"

TOPOGRAPHY

SL/ASL MAPBOARDS:

Letter	Description	Module
1	City; stone buildings	SQUAD LEADER
2	Country; two Level 3 Hills	SQUAD LEADER
3	Village amidst Level 2 Hills	SQUAD LEADER
4	Farmland; woods and grainfields	SQUAD LEADER
5	Woods; gullies	CROSS OF IRON
6	Chateau; orchard and grainfields	CRESCENDO OF DOOM
7	River; islands and marsh	CRESCENDO OF DOOM
8	River; cliffs and hill	G.I. ANVIL OF VICTORY
9	Mountain; Level 4 Hill, crags, cliff	
10	Village; rowhouses, path, pond	PARTISAN! (Axis Minor)
11	Country; hedgerows and low hills	LAST HURRAH (Allied Minor)
12	Village; gullies, graveyard	G.I. ANVIL OF VICTORY
13	Country; elevated road and stream	G.I. ANVIL OF VICTORY
14	Airfield; sunken road	G.I. ANVIL OF VICTORY
15	Mountain; two Level 4 Hills	G.I. ANVIL OF VICTORY
16	Rural Crossroads; grainfields	YANKS (American)
17	Farmland; brush, woods and grainfields	YANKS (American)
18	Rolling Country; seven Level 1 Hills	YANKS (American)
19	Open Country; bordered by woods	YANKS (American)
20	City; rowhouses and gully	BEYOND VALOR (German/Russian)
21	City; rowhouses and graveyard	BEYOND VALOR (German/Russian)
22	City; suburbs and stream	BEYOND VALOR (German/Russian)
23	City; canal	BEYOND VALOR (German/Russian)
24	Village; valley, gully and cliffs	PARATROOPER (German/American)
25	Mountain; wadis, hammada	WEST OF ALAMEIN (British)
26	Desert; scrub, hammada	WEST OF ALAMEIN (British)
27	Desert; scrub, hammada	WEST OF ALAMEIN (British)
28	Desert; scrub, hammada	WEST OF ALAMEIN (British)
29	Desert; scrub, hammada	WEST OF ALAMEIN (British)
30	Desert; scrub, hammada	HOLLOW LEGIONS (Italian)
31	Desert; scrub, hammada	HOLLOW LEGIONS (Italian)
32	Woods; stream	PARTISAN! (Axis Minor)
33	Farmland; extensive grainfield	LAST HURRAH (Allied Minor)
34	Woods; marshy stream	CODE OF BUSHIDO (Japanese)
35	Farmland; orchard and grainfields	CODE OF BUSHIDO (Japanese)
36	Wooded Hills; marshy streams	CODE OF BUSHIDO (Japanese)
37	Country; woods, orchard and grainfields	CODE OF BUSHIDO (Japanese)
38	Airstrip; farmland	GUNG HO! (Marine/Chinese)
39	Wooded Ridge	GUNG HO! (Marine/Chinese)
40	Narrow River; wooded hill and farmland	CROIX DE GUERRE (French)
41	Village; stone buildings, stream, hills	CROIX DE GUERRE (French)

DELUXE ASL MAPBOARDS:

Letter	Description	Module
a	City; factory	STREETS OF FIRE
b	City; rowhouses	STREETS OF FIRE
c	City; lumberyard	STREETS OF FIRE
d	City; gully	STREETS OF FIRE
e	Country; Level 2 Hill	HEDGEROW HELL
f	Country; sunken road	HEDGEROW HELL
g	Country; stream	HEDGEROW HELL
h	Country; farm	HEDGEROW HELL

All of the mapboards on this listing are available separately from The Avalon Hill Game Company (SL/ASL mapboards - $5.00; DELUXE ASL - $6.00). The nationalities listed in parentheses are those accompanying the named ASL module. While SQUAD LEADER, CROSS OF IRON, CRESCENDO OF DOOM and G.I. ANVIL OF VICTORY are not part of the ASL system, the mapboards of these games are fully compatible with ASL (and necessary to play many of the scenarios); the reverse is likewise true (although no scenarios in these four SL modules require use of boards released for ASL play). Note that the unmounted mapboards of RED BARRICADES (depicting the factory complex in Stalingrad where the action is centered) are not listed among the above; these "historical" mapboards are not geomorphic.

SIGNALS

Dear Mr. Martin:

Compliments on the latest *ASL Annual*. The article on the Japanese Army was particularly interesting and well-researched. I do have some further comments in relation to Charles Markuss' "Doomed Battalions" piece on the Minor Allies.

Poor training did not necessarily result in poor officers as such, but it did produce a dangerous lack of consistency. In his discussion on officer quality, Mr. Markuss tended to focus on the Poles and Belgians, and I agree with his essential points. But in the case of the Dutch Army, one can find many examples of officers showing initiative and determination, sometimes in reserve units where you'd least expect it. Such officers in key actions, such as the early airborne assault around Rotterdam, Dordrecht and The Hague, saved the Dutch from collapse on the first day, May 10. But there were also many cases where hesitancy or lack of initiative was displayed with detrimental consequences. Such was the case with the Dutch Light Division counterattack at Dordrecht on May 11-13, where junior and middle-level officers proved capable but the senior officers showed a lack of initiative and determination.

Varying outlooks and skills are here visible due to the difference between careerist officers from peacetime and the large number of new junior officers drafted since mobilization (the Dutch ordered a full mobilization two days after the German invasion of Poland). Conscription does tend to bring in a much broader base of the population than a volunteer army, and thus a wider variety of talents and skills. Those who might not have normally joined the army, for example, sometimes end up being the best leaders; but this "natural leadership", while important, cannot by itself make up for the lack of solid professional training. Nor were all peacetime officers incompetent (far from it), but the skills and social connections required for advancement in the peacetime Dutch Army did not necessarily translate into the skills demanded by frontline combat.

At the lower levels, say squad and platoon, the German infantry's tactical advantage was not that distinct—or at least not as great as it appeared in 1940 when magnified by the massive Allied debacle in France (most of the junior German officers in 1940 also lacked extensive combat experience). But the German advantage grew at an increasingly greater rate with each level of organization. Thus, a Dutch platoon could fight it out on relatively even terms with a German platoon, but a Dutch battalion was at a noticeable disadvantage. A Dutch division was outnumbered 1.7:1 in manpower and 3:1 in firepower.

The German airborne assault on Holland was initially very disorganized, and most of the combat was fought at platoon and company levels. The Dutch defenders did well, even though the forces first available were outnumbered and included many depot troops. Defence against larger and better organized German attacks proved less effective, however. Even if the first assault could be stopped, the German commanders generally had the strategic resources to eventually force a breakthrough.

Dutch infantry training followed British methods, not a bad model overall. It did tend to place more importance on the "squad leader" to the detriment of initiative from the rank and file (compared to the Germans). Dutch attacks were generally carried out with some determination, but as casualties among the officers mounted offensive momentum would rapidly stall, and as Dutch officers usually had to take a frontline role to be effective, losses were frequent.

These factors probably explain the relatively high loss rate among Dutch officers. Making up about four percent of all members of the armed forces, one officer was killed for every 16 soldiers (or 6.3% of losses). The Germans, on the other hand, lost one officer for every 20 enlisted men lost. The Dutch officer would seem to have exposed himself to enemy fire more frequently than his German counterpart, which certainly fits in with the British leadership model.

But this also shows that Dutch units were behaving aggressively, not simply running away or surrendering quickly. (Rapid surrender tends to result in high overall losses, but relatively low ratios of killed and wounded.) It is for this reason that I rated the Dutch LG factor relatively good at 5.5 in my piece (see "Broken Swords" in The *GENERAL*, Vol. 25, No. 6). But this is balanced by a relative lack of support weapons and mediocre squad quality.

(A further aside on support weapons. Mr. Markuss mentions Dutch use of the Solothurn s/8-1000 ATR, but I have only found mention of this weapon in service with the Maastricht/Limburg garrison [the 37th Infantry Regiment], which had five of these guns as their sole anti-tank defense. The Solothurn was also used on Dutch aircraft, so I suspect that these five were surplus guns mounted for ground use and use as a stop-gap measure.)

Overall losses in the Dutch Army tends to back this theory up. The Dutch lost 2200 killed over five days (440 per day, or 1.8% of total forces) out of a field army of 240000—the highest rate of loss during the western campaign, and one of the highest of the entire war. The Belgians, in comparison, lost 6200 killed, but this was from an army of a half-million over 18 days (0.7% of total forces killed per day). In the first 16 days after D-Day, combined American, British and Canadian dead totaled 5018 out of over 600000 men engaged (or 0.5% killed per day).

ASL's quality as a simulation is shown by how well the system—even though only a "game"—can model varying WW2 forces without a lot of complexity, through three basic characteristics: leader quality, troop quality, and weapons quality. A weakness in any one can ruin an otherwise good force. A typical Dutch company, and this would probably apply to some extent to most Minors forces as well, would have one or two "good" leaders (9-1 or higher) but a relatively high ratio of lower quality leaders (7-0 and 6+1) with few leaders between these extremes. Thus, as in reality, a successful defense or counterattack would rely largely on the actions of the one or two good leaders manning one of the also relatively rare good support weapons.

The Germans usually have greater depth in terms of leadership quality (and "quality" in general), even if they don't always have the single best leader, squad or weapon on the board. In the long term, that greater German depth will prove decisive, but in any single fight (a single scenario), a typical Minors OOB should have the potential of handing an equivalent German force a defeat. As a number of the *ASL* scenarios published to date show, neither side can afford to forget sound tactics, and battles involving Minors need not only be "mass versus quantity". So, with the Allied Minors' infantry forces nicely in place in the system, I now anxiously await the arrival of their AFVs and heavy ordnance.

David Meyler
Etobicoke, Ontario

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

Thank you for publishing my "Soldiers of the Sun" and "Doomed Battalions" articles in the *1992 ASL Annual*. At the risk of being accused a nit-picker, please let me make the following corrections to a few errors that crept into the otherwise very well-edited pieces.

Page 16—Total Japanese enlistments were 7.04 million, not "704 million".

Page 55—In the Dutch East Indies, not all Holland's AFVs were "wheeled"; this word should be deleted. And I forgot to mention that some Texan artillerymen also fought there alongside the Allies.

Page 60—In the conclusion, "successionist" should read "secessionist".

Finally, in the sources, the author Francois Kersandy is erroneously shown as "Kerdaudy". Whiting's *Poor Bloody Infantry* contains nothing about the Minor Allies per se, but is very good on the British and Germans (especially). Similarly, McConville's book mainly covers British military cooperation with Yugoslavian Titoist partisans, with some useful background information on Yugoslavian politics and society but little about the regular army. Velebit's book, too, dwells primarily on Yugoslavian partisan activity, with just a few snippets on the Yugoslavian defeat in 1941. The best source on the Greek and Yugoslavian armies is Mollo, if only by default. Can any of your readers recommend others, perhaps? On the Polish Army, I would also like to recommend Steven Zaloga and Victor Madej's *The Polish Campaign: 1939* (New York 1985).

On the Japanese, I would add the following sources to the list: Inazo Nitobe's *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (Vermont 1969), a book first published in 1905, which is a must for anyone wishing to compare "neo-*Bushido*" indoctrination with the real, ancient way. Written for Western readers, it compares many of Bushido's precepts with their European or American equivalents. John W. Whitman's *Bataan: Our Last Ditch* (New York 1990) is one of the few books that draws on Japanese accounts of the fighting there, and is well worth consulting on jungle warfare. Jungle fighting is also covered in Bryan Perrett's excellent *Canopy of War* (London 1990), while life in the Malayan jungle is vividly described in great detail in F. Spencer Chapman's *The Jungle is Neutral* (London 1950).

Finally, readers wishing to learn more about the Minor Axis powers should consult *Southeastern Europe Axis Armed Forces Handbook* (Allentown 1982), a reprint I came across only after writing "The Forgotten Legions" (see the '*91 Annual*).

Charles Markuss
Bolton, Lancashire

★★★★★

Rex,

The *'92 Annual* contained our Series Replay of "OP Hill", in which Chuck played the Japanese, Perry played the British and Pat provided the neutral commentary. As with most games of ASL, several errors in applying the rules were made, notwithstanding Pat's tongue-in-cheek remarks about "perfect" games. In the interest of accuracy, we would like to call attention to one error which we would not want any of the readers repeating (at least, not against us).

Entrenched units behind a Paddy Bank hexside have a same-level LOS through that hexside only into the adjacent hex (G8.4; just like entrenched units behind a hedge, B9.21). In the Replay, Chuck and Perry acted as if the Bank hexside did not restrict the LOS of Perry's entrenched units. This was wrong.

The threat posed by the mythical LOF of the entrenched British undoubtedly slowed Chuck down a bit. Those British units did not actually do any damage to the Japanese forces, however, in the game and were instead themselves pounded by Japanese fire. Perhaps the British would have been better off hunkered down in their Trenches behind the Paddy Banks, safe from Japanese fire until the attackers came adjacent. We will never know. This far past the point of commission, A.2 definitely applies.

In the spirit of the Series Replay articles, we'd hope that everyone can learn from our public mistakes, as well as our successes. One last thing before we return to hovering over the *KGP* mapboard: remember A.2, and don't rake yourself over the coals too hard when you screw up. We all do.

C. Goetz, P. Cocke, P. Jonke
Baltimore, Maryland

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

Well, I have subjected you to the Ares side of my nature, and brutally so it must seem. You responded in a business-like manner, but you did respond. Thank you. I will try to be more civil in any future contact. I obtained the *ASL Annual '92* shortly after I received your letter. Reflecting back on my great pleasure with the previous Annuals, and with the current one as well, I do not wish to spoil any contact with you I may achieve later.

Please give my generous urgings to the designers of *CROIX DE GUERRE* (I greatly prefer the early period of the war, where AFVs were a nuisance and not some indestructible menace) and *KAMPFGRUPPE PEIPER*. Please take my name and apply it to the list of opinions that we can never have too many *ASL* products. I have spent what is, to some, a staggering sum thus far. Well, I don't smoke or drink, so I can afford to buy things of value. If I may, I would enjoy suggesting a historical module on the Tawara invasion to get full use out of the Pacific forces, much as *RED BARRICADES* is the height of European indulgence.

I would lastly like to suggest a new product. How about a small boxed set that features three or four blank green hex boards (open ground, of course). Combine these with some—many—new terrain overlays. I have heard some had mouthing the overlays, but some people will complain about anything. My beef is that the current mapboards are too road-intensive, a condition which is fine for showing France or Germany but not at all for representing parts of Russia. If all I have read is accurate, then most of the fighting of the war took place in Russia with only sharp, short actions in the West (couple with tiresome sieges of fortifications). The current boards simply do not depict Russia's vastness. In game terms, I think the AFVs are played falsely as a result of the overly dense road net the boards allow. In Russia, you had to navigate as if at sea, much the same as in the desert. The overly generous road net of *ASL* blows this vital reality to bits. Blank boards, with the flexibility of overlays, gives us the best of both.

Les Baines
Lindsay, Ontario

Regarding Mr. Baines' suggestion for a PTO campaign game, no sooner said ... Actually, for all those who have requested such, the next issue of the Annual will carry a new campaign for ASL, depicting one of the lesser-known actions waged by the U.S. Marine Corps during World War 2. Replete with new overlays, three HASL scenarios, historical background, CG rules and SRs, this new offering should excite just about every player.

As for simulating the trackless vastness of the Russian steppes, I think the desert boards with F13.2 applied serve quite well. Try your hand at "Clash Along the Psel" (A51) in this issue and decide for yourself.

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

Your prompt reply received and appreciated. I am happy to see that Mr. Bakken has caught your eye and that he will be featured in the *ASL Annual*. I am certainly grateful that you will mention the fact that his work initially graced the pages of *ATP*.

I had also known that Mark Nixon had contacted you regarding the "Point Crossfire" concept some time ago. Frankly, I am less enamored of this approach to analysis of the game than perhaps you and he. For this reason, the "Crossfires" I have reviewed strike me as somewhat lopsided. Once I heard that Mark had approached you, I offered to transfer the several articles I had stockpiled for "Point Crossfire" back over to you, mostly because I see no reason for duplicating a series in both the *Annual* and *ATP*. Mark objected, of course, and I agreed to hold onto them. Since we both doubt that you lack for material as far as the *ASL Annual* is concerned, the articles are likely to see the light of day more rapidly in *ATP*. Nevertheless, that offer to transfer them still stands.

Thank you for pointing out the very reasonable care with which you have approached the IFT/IIFT issue. "Tempest in a teacup" it might be, but you have assuredly been responsible for keeping that cup a'quiverin' more than anyone else. I certainly agree that controversy does make for entertaining reading, and cannot argue that Nixon was any more thorough in his "CST" piece than was the Farris crowd in "GBA". Digressions aside, I thank you for troubling to explain to me the circumstances and concerns you faced. I'd like to suggest that you excise the last paragraph of my last letter when (and if) you decide to print it, as I am fully convinced that you are quite fair in how you have approached all this, and would rather my letter be directed at the authors and not the editor who printed their work.

Marc Hanna
Knightdale, North Carolina

I suppose I should apologize to Marc for printing this portion of his letter to me. I certainly don't intend to intrude on his privacy, but it offers me the perfect opportunity to make an important point.

As mentioned earlier in this issue, the expanded page count of the "bi-annual" ASL Annual will allow me to re-print some of the best pieces that have appeared in the amateur periodicals. Their editors are on the cutting edge of your hobby. Despite the fact that some of their material will grace these pages in the future, I would urge you to continue your support (both through subscription and through submission of articles/scenarios) to the likes of At The Point, Fire for Effect, ASL News, Rout Report and others. These publications have much to contribute to your pleasure of the game system, far more than we can re-print herein. As I've noted in the past, a vibrant amateur press is a sure sign of a healthy hobby. Don't let your support of these fine 'zines lapse in the mistaken belief that you will not miss anything significant. I can assure you that you will.
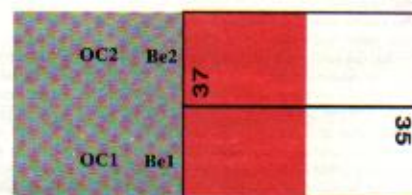
THE CAT HAS JUMPED

Near BAUANG, LUZON, THE PHILIPPINES, 22 December 1941: Upon hearing of the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor, General Jonathan Wainwright is said to have exclaimed, "The cat has jumped!" In the two weeks that followed, positioning the under-strength Philippine Army and scattered American units for the defense of Luzon occupied all his waking minutes. There was no doubt that a major Japanese invasion was imminent; the only question was where it would strike. Already two small Japanese landings had taken place. At one in the morning of 22 December, Wainwright's question was finally answered when 85 Japanese transports dropped anchor a mile off the northern coast of Lingayen Gulf. However, the bulk of General Homma's 14th Army was not landing where Wainwright and MacArthur had expected them—on the southern rim of the gulf where most of the American and Filipino defenses were concentrated—but on the relatively lightly-held stretch between Baurang and Agoo, 40 miles to the north. Despite choppy seas and intermittent rain, despite the darkness and confusion, the Japanese began to come ashore in barges at dawn. Following unopposed landings at Agoo and Aringay, the *Kamijima* Detachment, much delayed by surf and weather, neared the shoreline at Bauang around 0730 hours. Only here would the Japanese be met with fire, for here the headquarters battalion of the 12th Infantry Regiment (PA) was dug in along the beach.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Japanese win immediately when they have amassed ≥ 25 Exit (off the east edge) and/or Casualty (exclusive of prisoners) VP.

BALANCE:

🔴 Delete one MMG from the American OB.

☆ Add two 3-3-6 MMC to the American OB.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

(Only hexrows A-Q on board 37 and Q-GG on board 35 are playable.)

TURN RECORD CHART

☆ **AMERICAN Sets Up First [66]** 🔴	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	END
🔴 **JAPANESE Moves First [316]**											

☆ Elements of the HQ Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment (PA), 11th Infantry Division (PA) [ELR: 2] set up on Hinterland hexes: {SAN: 5}

4¹-4-7: 6   3-3-6: 6   9-1   8-1   7-0   MMG 8-16: 3   MMG 4-10: —   Foxhole: 10

🔴 Elements of the 9th Regiment, 16th Infantry Division [ELR: 3] enter on Turn 1 along the west edge of Overlay(s) OC1/OC2: {SAN: 3}

4¹-4-7: 22   2-2-8: 3   10-2   10-1   10-0   9-0   8+1   dm MMG: 3   LMG 2-8: 4   dm MTR: 4   DMG 39PP: 9

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet, with Heavy Winds from the northwest at start.

2. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect, including Light Jungle (G2.1).

3. Place overlays as follows: **Be1** with hexes 101-102 on 35GG1-GG2; **Be2** with 201-202 on 37A10-A9; **OC1** with 1001-1002 on 122-123; and **OC2** with 2001-2002 on 1009-1010. Beach Slope is Moderate; Surf is Heavy. The Japanese side is conducting a Seaborne Assault (G14.1).

4. Up to four American squad-equivalents (and all SMC/SW stacked with them) may use HIP.

5. All American MGs have "X11" instead of "B12".

AFTERMATH: Initially, the single .50-caliber and several .30-caliber machineguns of the Philippine Army battalion took a heavy toll amongst the Japanese in their landing craft. But several of the machineguns dropped out of action early with clogged firing mechanisms due to aged ammunition (some stored since the 1920s). As the machineguns fell silent one by one, the Japanese soldiers which had managed to reach the beach began their well-practiced battle-drill. Soon their own machineguns and light mortars started to take their toll of the untested Filipino troops. Now it was the turn of the defenders to suffer heavy casualties. After some hard fighting, the fall of several foxholes precipitated a wholesale retreat by the 12th Regiment. Despite continuing casualties from a Filipino rearguard, the Japanese slowly consolidated their foothold. Untroubled by enemy artillery or further opposition now, the beachhead around Baurang was soon secured. Large patrols were sent out, making contact with the troops landed near Aparri and Gonzaga on the 10th of December. Meanwhile, the bulk of the Japanese 48th Division was put ashore on Luzon. The next day, MacArthur transferred his headquarters to the fortified island of Corregidor.

BEATING ABOUT THE BUSH

A Look at Bypass

By Philippe Léonard

A bush? What bush? *ASL* is a game full of subtleties and variety, yet we haven't seen the "bushmen" appear in any of these marvellous modules and scenarios despite a generous use of the ANZAC forces. It's a real shame. The Gods must be crazy!

Actually, the intent of these few lines is to entertain you (and myself) by discussing the various rules and tactics of going around…bushes. You surely know how Europeans (and yes, I include the British) tend to be naturally hesitant, reluctant to make tough decisions; how they tend to use serpentine, complicated ways to reach any point. Given that inclination, the *ASL* Bypass rules were probably crafted with we Europeans in mind.

Bypass

The original bypass rules, after much debate and playtesting, eventually appeared in the third module of the original *SQUAD LEADER* series, the now delightfully obsolete *CRESCENDO OF DOOM*. (Since the French have had a rebirth in the brand new *CROIX DE GUERRE* module, the ring is nearly closed and you can relegate all those *COD* counters to the dust of your attic.) As far as I know, that new movement option seemed perfectly natural to most *SL* players at the time. And, I clearly remember that most new players to whom I tried to teach the elementary principles of movement often asked about the possibility of moving around obstacles inside the hexes well before I had occasion to suggest it. Note, however, that the rules for vehicular bypass were at that time still considered optional.

Do you really recall the major rules changes that this basically simple concept introduced? Sincerely I can't; it has somehow slipped from my memory, although it must have been quite a major change to the way we played the game. From that day on, however, most of the mapboards became far easier to move about upon, especially for the vehicles. Our cardboard battlefield was not the same anymore! One of the first clues to the potential of bypass I seem to recall is how it was necessary to repeatedly drive the German tanks straight into the stone buildings of Board #1 in the original *SL* version of "The Road to Wiltz" due to the number of roadblocks set up by the U.S. engineers. Now, one could go around them! Because of this, I fear that all these *SL* and *COI* scenarios will never have the same flavor as before, despite the best efforts of Jim Stahler and others. Trying to imagine how we once played those scenarios in that remote, pre-*ASL* epoch leaves one with the impression of watching a Neanderthal cross a busy street. Except for cultivating nostalgia, of course. But nostalgia is not what it was anymore.

The bypass rules considerably expanded the realism of the game system, placing even more importance to the way each terrain feature is drawn. Scenarios that require exiting units to satisfy the victory conditions, for instance, would be particularly affected by these rules. Generally speaking, it certainly was much easier to channelize the movement of the enemy troops when the cardboard landscape was more compartmentalized. The possibility of bypass movement is today such that I could even suggest that, when historical conditions justify it, VBM be prohibited by a SSR for the scenario duration, such as for actions set in those clustered Normandy villages.

The importance of wire, roadblocks, mines and all kinds of obstacles were consequently considerably reduced. There always seems to exist another way to reach your goal if you have the time to skirt the woods or buildings; let's call it the "all roads lead to

Rome" syndrome. Just as it is in real life actually, but field commanders rarely (*never*) have the necessary overview and full knowledge of the local topography that any *ASL* player enjoys. Recce missions usually handled that job, to a greater or lesser extent, even if within a different time span than we simulate. The real blow to "realism" in any tactical game like *ASL* remains the player's omniscience. But that's a debate I have no intention of entering into here.

In game terms, Bypass movement (A4.3 and D2.3) is a wonderful gift from the designers. It offers both the possibilities of faster movement without paying the full MF/MP cost of the hex, and also avenues of approach mostly hidden from enemy sight (since the obstacle inside the hex usually blocks LOS). Even the ever deadly street-length Fire Lanes can be avoided by using Bypass along the buildings lining the street. But there are many subtleties to beating your way around the bush. The best players understand these instinctively; for the rest of us, it is wise to keep the following in mind.

Restrictions

Of course, as with all good things, there are restrictions. Only Woods (but not Dense Jungle) and Buildings (including Huts—even if collapsed—but not Rubble) may ever be bypassed. So few terrain types? Brush/Bamboo, Marsh/Swamp, Gullies (even if *containing* woods), Ponds, Grainfields and all other terrain features may never be bypassed. And what about the edges of Hills? Well, they may be quasi-bypassed, but *only* if the hill hex also contains a building or some woods. In this case, additional MF/MP will be necessary if going uphill even if it seems to you that "bypassing" the hill leaves you at the lower level of the crestline (because of the depicted hill outline; see Figure #1). Remember that only the building/woods part of the hex is truly bypassed. Yet, you might notice that the LOS to the moving unit, if any, must always be traced to the highest level in the hex.

Skirting even these two obstacles is not always allowed either. With infantry, the obstacle cannot touch the hexside to give enough room for the passage of the units; this is usually the case except when hedges/walls are present along the hexside (see below). Basically, if the hexside is clear, you can bypass along it.

The rules are more restrictive for vehicles since the hex must be clear of any obstacle *up to the depth* of the thickness of a counter! I know few players who ever pay attention to this, yet it is often a realistic and effective way to prevent your opponent's intended

Figure #1: This movement would cost 2MF (for infantry) or 10MP (for a fully-tracked AFV) and leave the unit at the Y7-X6-X7 vertex.

move. Be aware that if you can prove that the hex is not eligible for VBM due to insufficient open space between the hexside and the obstacle, then the enemy vehicle will have to pay the cost for the intended movement in the previous hex and expand one more MP to stop, hopefully leaving it in some very vulnerable position. Moreover, that VBM check may never be made beforehand by the player moving his pieces—so giving a definite advantage to the defender. I think this a fine rule, and quite realistic. The lone quibble I might offer is that we haven't been given thicker AFV counters for the Deluxe and Historical *ASL* maps!

It could also be worth remembering that Bypass Movement is forbidden to vehicles towing guns—guns are never allowed in bypass (except along the road hexsides featured in the second *ASL* historical module, the upcoming *KAMPFGRUPPE PEIPER*). Further, remember that hedges and walls are considered extensions of the hexsides to determine if there's room enough for bypass; that broken units never use bypass (exception: Rowhouses); and that the presence of Wire or Panjis prohibits any infantry bypass along the hexsides touching the counter (even in an adjacent hex) although they each do so slightly differently (see B26.44 and G9.46).

Note too that the vehicles may remain in Bypass while infantry may use it only temporarily *during* the MPh but must end the phase inside a hex. I've found that, during scenarios where counter density is high, it is useful to dig up your old COD bypass counters (remember, they're in the attic) to mark the vehicles in bypass and indicate which hexside they're actually on. These counters are an easy way to settle arguments, especially when some doubts might arise concerning which hex the vehicle is in and whether it is on one side or the other of the hexside.

Before looking into the hazards to your units involved in the act of bypass, let me just mention some special situations you might want to check.

The typical *ASL* city mapboard (such as #20, #21 and #23, as well as the *Deluxe* and *RED BARRICADES* maps) now shows a lot of rowhouses. When in such a hex, infantry has no possibility of moving directly through the thick black bar into an adjacent rowhouse Location—without an existing Breach, that is. In this case, Bypass must be used, at ground level, to cross one vertex (instead of a hexside) of open ground between the two building hexes and then enter the adjacent building (cost: 3MF). All LOS must be traced to the vertex. Note that even routing units, otherwise not allowed to use Bypass movement, may avail themselves of this. See Rule B23.7 for more details and illumination.

Another special Bypass option will soon be provided in the forthcoming *KAMPFGRUPPE PEIPER* (KGP) release, the second *Historical ASL* module. When confronted with the problems of representing the very narrow village streets of Stoumont, Cheneux and La Gleize, it was finally decided to show these "alleys" on the hexside junction between buildings, thus creating "road hexsides" (tentatively, Rule P5.1, Narrow Streets). Basically, this will allow infantry to maintain the Road Bonus while bypassing buildings, and the vehicles will benefit from a lower movement rate (half the normal Bypass cost). However, the rotation of the bigger guns of the AFVs will be seriously restricted in the confines of the village streets. Other rules will govern the placement of fortifications and the increased vulnerability of vehicles to CC/Reaction Fire when in Narrow Streets. Suffice to say that the book on Bypass has not yet been closed.
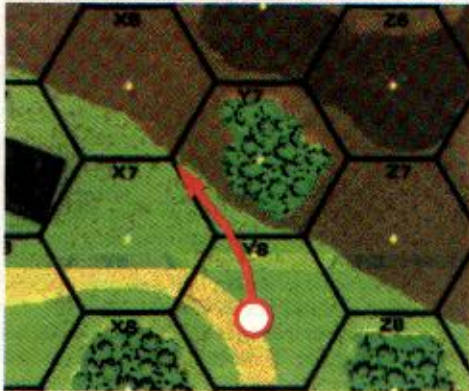
Infantry in Bypass

Bypass movement usually implies the terrifying –2 DRM for Defensive Fire (FFMO/FFNAM), since the terrain actually traversed *is* open ground and no assault movement will ever be used (obviously). So, that's the point ; bypassing is a fast way to get around something, but it also can be rather dangerous. The usual trade-off. The LOS can be traced to any vertex belonging to the hexside(s) crossed, or to the *center* dot if the LOF first goes through the bypassed hexside(s) where entering the hex. That kind of LOS is often very difficult to anticipate—due to the proximity of LOS obstacles. Even to true *ASL* grognards, it can be devastating if you, as the Defender, find the LOS clear of any blocking feature to units your opponent thought out of sight. Misjudgements like these are probably the biggest and most decisive mistakes I've seen in *ASL* tournaments, and it will cost you almost every time. It also emphasizes the "good" player's ability to detect a unique LOS at the right moment; that latter quality, coupled with well-chosen Snap Shots, is the kind of thing that will help if you want to become an *ASL* champ.

There are other tricky situations that might force you to endure even more unexpected casualties. Take a look at these:

When going "along" a hill crestline while using bypass, don't forget you will suffer the dreaded –2 DRM even from a firer down on the lower level. There are indeed circumstances when the Height Advantage (+1) does not apply. Look at the second figure again, and then refer to rule B10.31. In this case, you suffer from being treated as being on the higher hill level without getting the advantages of it. The LOF crosses the same hexside as your unit has.

What about any Residual FP left in a hex you're bypassing? Once the Residual counter is placed, it will affect all the units entering the hex, even if out of LOS of the original firer who placed it. However, the in-hex TEM must be applied in all cases instead of the –2 DRM for moving in the open (the –1 DRM for FFNAM is still applicable); that's very important since the terrain protection will often render most low Residual FP quite useless. So, as the Defender, think twice as to where you decide to place a Residual counter; better in a woods hex than in a stone building, if you've got the choice! And don't fire at the first half-squad running the gamut in face of your defense.

One caveat to this matter of Residual Fire. In *DASL*, the Residual FP counters resulting from fire at units in bypass must be placed *along* the hexside and that Residual will affect other units *only* if bypassing the same hexside or if entering the obstacle in the hex. Unfortunately, the rule (J2.23) does not say if the Residual FP fire versus bypassing units is resolved using –2 DRM (FFMO/FFNAM). *[Ed. Note: Bob McNamara states that this was the intent.]*

Walls and hedges are what I call "false", often treacherously so, protection. See rule B9.2. A wall/hedge does not block same-level LOS inside a hex even if the bypassed hexside and the wall/hedge hexside are located on opposite sides. In the case of a hedge, just imagine the same situation when the firer is using a mortar; there you are, caught in open ground (–2 TH DRM) since the TEM of a hedge is non-existent for indirect fire. Now look at Figure 2, and remember the above discussion. The ground-level 4-4-7 in the building in T8 spots the 4-6-7 bypassing the woods in Y7, and proceeds to fire on it, with the –2 DRM! Some might have thought their 4-6-7 was safe because of those hedges; foolish fellows—and probably losers in this playing.

The effects of Cavalry Charges have been greatly improved by the recent errata provided in *CDG* since every infantry unit that is attacked by a Cavalry charge is now forced to FPF, with all the usual consequences of such drastic Defensive Fire. The charging cavalry, should it (or they, see the Cavalry Wave rule, A13.62) survive, delivers a devastating attack. However, don't even think of using bypass after having declared the Charge; it is prohibited (see A13.36).
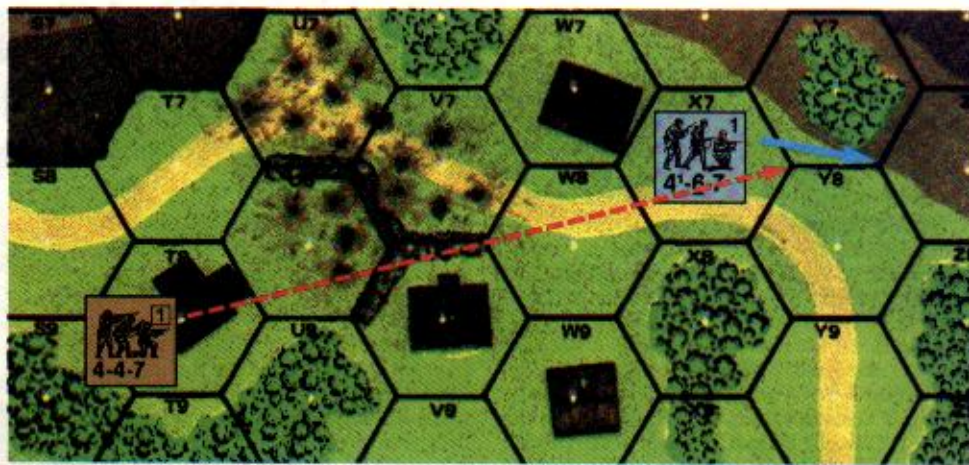

Figure #2: The 4-6-7 moving in bypass is subjected to a shot from the ground-level 4-4-7 with a –2 DRM, despite the wall hexsides.

Vehicles in Bypass

It should be clear to most readers that it is more than often necessary and unavoidable to let your vehicles remain in bypass, even if temporarily, since the MP cost for VBM is twice the normal movement expense. Simply put, vehicles usually run out of MP in the middle of "nowhere". There are, however, some obvious advantages to such a position. First, a bypass position may open an otherwise-blocked LOS for the weapons that the vehicle carries. It can be nice to have both an AFV and infantry in the same woods or building hex (possibilities of armored assault during next moves, cover of the AFV in CC, necessity of a PAATC for the enemy infantry to enter the hex to go into CC) without risking Bog. Furthermore, the enemy's Defensive First Fire directed at you should be rather inaccurate due to the probable application of To Hit cases J[1] and J[2] (restricted fire) added to Case J (since the LOS is always complicated by the presence of obstacles). Most *ASL* players also know by now how to block fire from a troublesome same-level enemy infantry position by driving an AFV (but not an unarmored vehicle) into its "Location"—even in bypass—thereby preventing the opponent from firing outside of his own hex because of the TPBF position versus the AFV (see Target Selection limits in A7.212). In this case however, the AFV could be in great danger—so this tactic should be used only when the vehicle is dispensable. The same risky movement (beware of Reaction Fire) may be used to drop smoke (or smoke grenades) in the hex being bypassed and then get away.

Contrary to the LOS rules for infantry, a vehicle in bypass may be fired upon only by aiming at its Covered Arc Focal Point (CAFP), the vertex of the hex the vehicle is facing. Moreover, if the vehicle ever uses continuous bypass along yet another hexside, further MP will all be considered to be expended at the *next* CAFP; this often enables vehicles in bypass to quickly escape by "turning the corner" of the building/woods after receiving that first shot. Note also that using Reverse movement to escape won't cost you more than usual (four times the COT for a full track AFV) if the first hex entered is not bypassed. (See Figure 3 for an example of a good "fallback" position for a vehicle in bypass that suddenly faces a threat from the front.)

When returning fire, you will have to remember that the Covered Arc of a vehicle in bypass is somewhat special; the frontal CA and rear CA are slightly reduced in area covered, while the "side CA" (all other hexes) is enlarged. The following chart highlights this phenomenon. For each of several ranges, in hexes, it displays the number of target hexes a vehicle could hit normally to the left of the slash (including, when applicable, the hex the vehicle occupies), and when in bypass to the right. The first column shows that for VCA (front or rear); the second for the side VCA. Judge for yourselves:

Range	Max # of Target hexes in VCA	Max # of Target hexes in side VCA*
0	1/0	1/1
1	3/1	2/4
2	6/3	5/9
3	10/6	10/16
4	15/10	17/25
5	21/15	26/36
6	28/21	37/49
7	36/28	50/64
8	45/36	65/81
9	55/45	82/100
10	66/55	101/121
11	78/66	122/144
12	81/78	145/169

* Note that the side CA including the obstacle itself is generally unavailable since the LOS traced through it is usually blocked [EXC: if the obstacle is Huts, then the side CA including the obstacle becomes available—although with a +1 LOS Hindrance]. However, values given here are as though it were open; for the maximum number of target hexes of the "side CA" facing away from the obstacle, use the next lower value. Thus, at two-hex range, the CA of the side facing away from the bypassed building would cover only four hexes.

Fire from the unusual and broader "side CA" when in bypass is consequently penalized by a mandatory Case A TH DRM, and an additional +1 DRM, when firing at a non-acquired target (ordnance) or at a different target than the last time (MG/IFE). Even considering this penalty, it remains apparent from the above chart that so many more hexes can be covered by the vehicular gun that it could lead any defender to adopt bypass positions for his (fast) turreted AFV guns to block the enemy's

Figure #3: The CAFP of the Soviet AFV is V8-W8-W9, but it can escape by reversing to V8-V9-W9 if in danger.
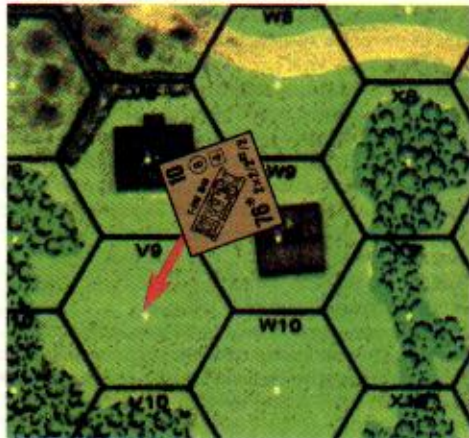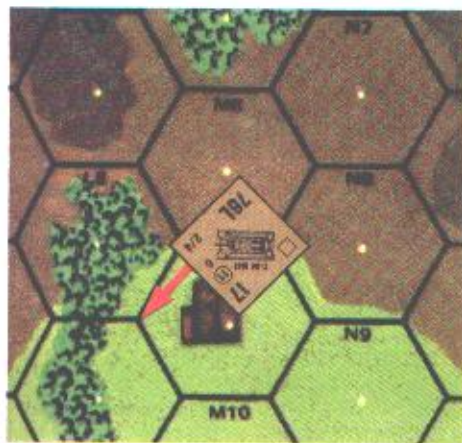
Figure #4: Threading the eye of the needle.

avenues of approach. To be more specific, a turreted (type T) MA gets, on the first shot fired at a target through its bypass side CA, the same To Hit DRM ("+1" for turret rotation and "+1" for side CA for a total "+2") as a similar gun in non-bypass that needs to rotate two hexspines to fire; but the primary point is that it's improbable that the enemy target might ever exit the side CA of a firer in bypass, while it is far easier to do so from a "normal" CA.

So, you might believe that using vehicular bypass shows several advantages.

On the other hand, vehicles are almost always more vulnerable when in bypass. One of the main disadvantages to bypassing is the peculiar definition of the facing of your vehicle an enemy shell will hit. Being in bypass is the best way to suffer a flank shot through the always too-thin armor plates of your tank's flank. Indeed, the normal CA rules are slightly altered when firing at a vehicle in bypass. Any shot against your tank not originating in the front or rear VCA is considered to strike it in the side (as per D2.32). Since the side CA of a vehicle in bypass is larger (refer to the chart), the probability of getting hit in the flank is correspondingly greater than usual when in bypass.

The VCA may not be changed when stationary in bypass, only when exiting the bypassed hexside. So don't risk your non-turreted SP guns in such death traps. They'll not be able to react to any threat but those directly in front. Heck, you can't even claim the TEM of the woods or building (D2.38) to save your hide.

Of even more concern for you when bypassing should be the possibility of enemy infantry in Close Combat/CC Reaction Fire. Should your vehicle be attacked by infantry, the odds will be against you most of the time. Woods and building hexes lead to Ambush; the enemy qualifies automatically for Ambush benefits (A11.8), even if escorted by your own friendly infantry. Assuming that it passes the PAATC, the enemy infantry will have the first shot in mandatory sequential CC. We can quickly anticipate the results. Even during the movement of the vehicle, CC reaction fire is available to enemy infantry in the hex being bypassed (again with all the Street Fighting advantages). I should also mention that the placement of DCs gets a favorable DRM (−2) against a vehicle in bypass in the same hex. Suffice to say that the overall picture for any vehicle caught in bypass by enemy infantry is rather nasty.

Space Oddities

Here's some real fun. Chapter H is a treasure to cherish for those who love the "Exception". Sure, you've already played with all these wonderfully strange AFV—or you've at least looked at those intriguing diagrams in the rulebook concerning the peculiar fields of fire of some of the odd creations of obviously overworked tank designers. The "normal" covered arcs don't apply here. And as for bypass

CAs, well...even if you're the kind of guy who knows perfectly the fields of fire of the Russian T-35 land-battleship, here's a little test that ought to prove challenging. I've collected some of the most well-known "special" vehicles used in ASL and reproduce here the illustrations showing their regular CA (as noted in Chapter H). Now pull out a pencil and sketch what their corresponding CA will be when in bypass. Don't despair; have courage and have a drink. The "solution" for each appears on the next page.
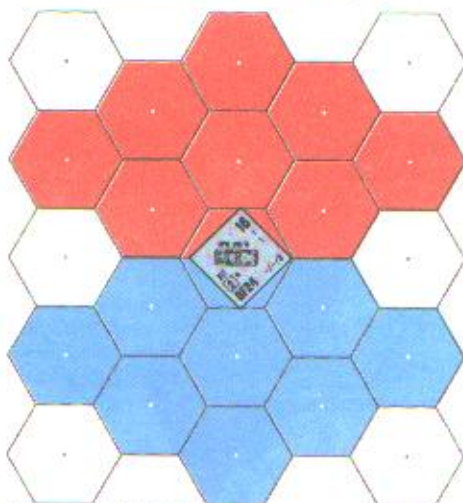

German SPW 251/16
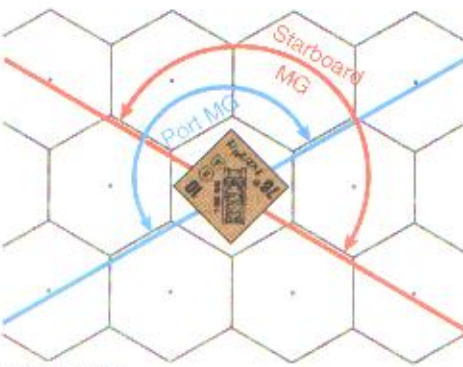
Russian T-35

American LVT4

Obviously, the bypass CA is—or should be—of more than "passing" interest when faced with an armored battle in urban or wooded terrain. For instance, consider the situation in the DASL scenario "Last Act in Lorraine" (D2 in the ASL Annual '89). The swirling action between 13 Shermans and four assorted panzers will determine the fate of the village, and victory is often resolved by how one handles one's AFVs between the buildings of Singling. Indeed, a study of bypass on the DASL mapboards reveals some fascinating insights into the play of all
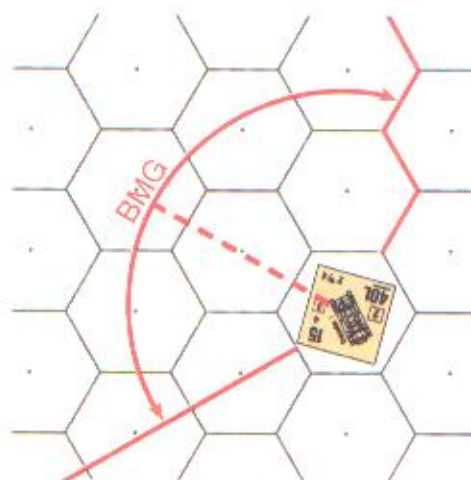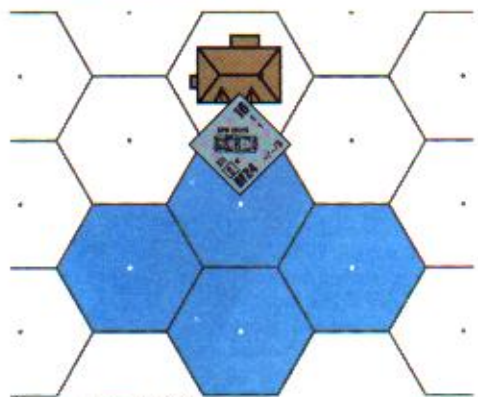

British Crusader I
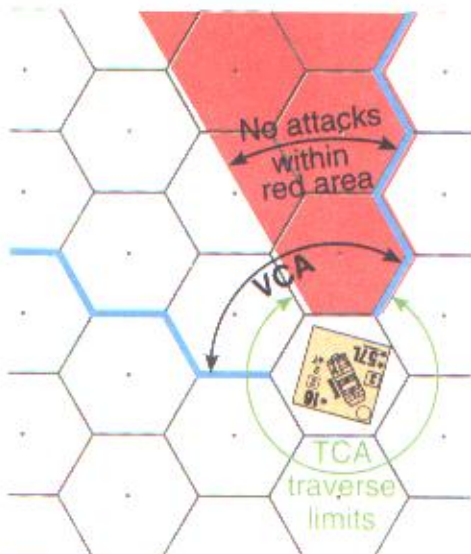
British Deacon
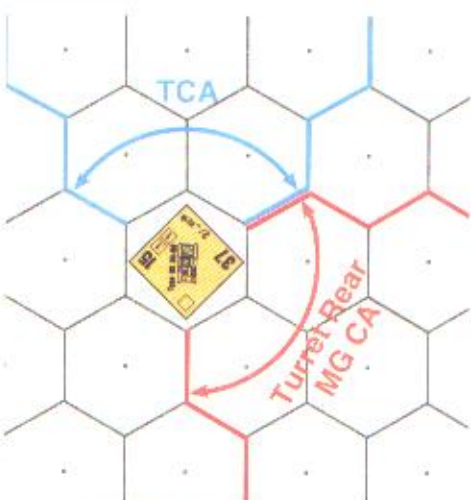
Japanese Type 95 HA-GO

those "oversized" scenarios which have become so popular of late.

With the increasing density of terrain on the mapboards—just a glance at #40 and #41 will show how sophisticated the art has become—and the impending realism promised by the release of KGP, no ASL player can consider himself a master of this game until he has become adept with the bypass rules. This little test of your abilities might enable you to judge whether you have yet reached that exalted rank. If you're having trouble, turn the page...

For all the cheats among you who did not even try to solve my puzzle, be aware that that there are more "space oddities" available in the rulebook—although the examples chosen here are the most significant for the Avalon Hill published scenarios. The Japanese HA-GO is the most notable one, I think. The already long story of the Japanese HA-GO tank RMG seems to be endless. Suppose that the HA-GO is in bypass with its turret pointed to the side; what's the RMG's CA? See the final illustration, below. You're now ready to play "Bungle in the Jungle" all over again.
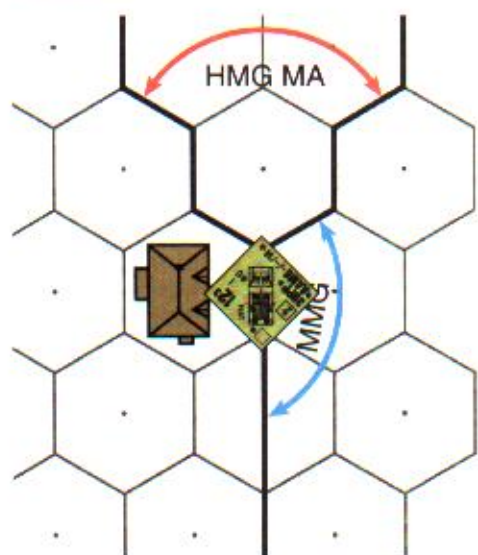
Since I anticipate your probable headache at this stage, I will end this brief look at bypass here. And I hope you've been entertained and informed, even if it took a jerrycan full of aspirins.
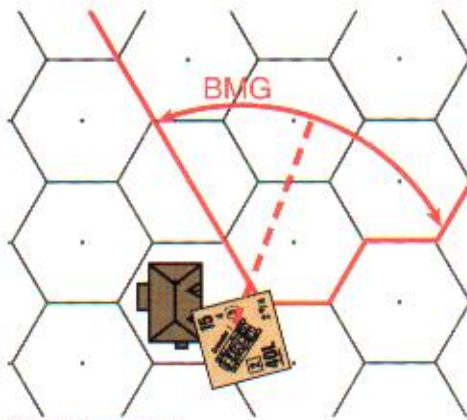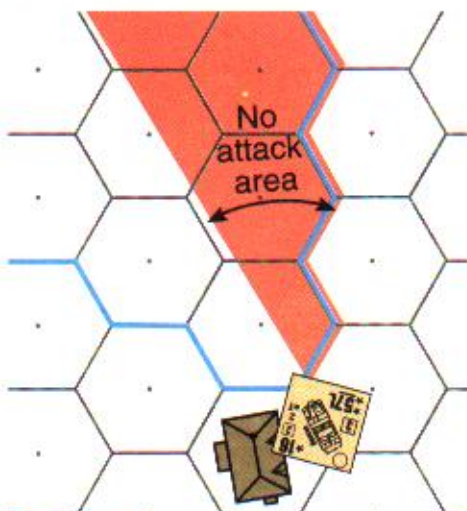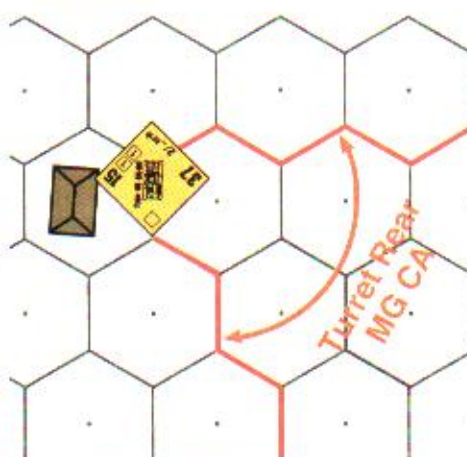

German SPW 251/16
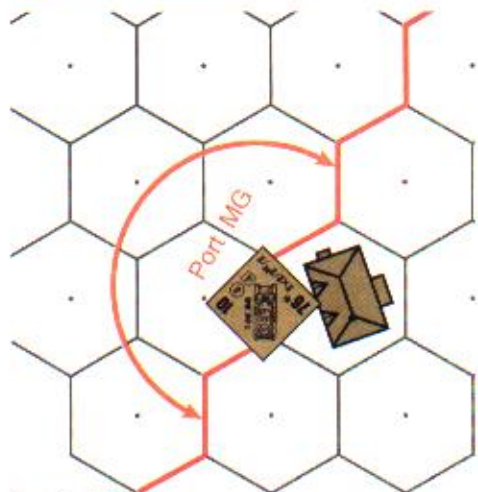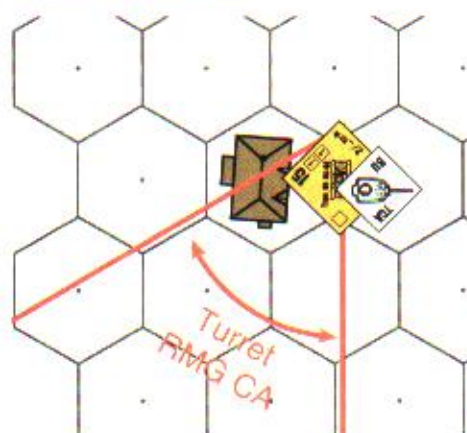

Russian T-35

American LVT4

British Crusader I

British Deacon

Japanese Type 95 HA-GO

HA-GO with rotated TCA

A GOOD PARTY

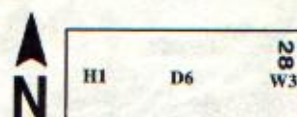## ASL SCENARIO A56

Southeast of MARETH, TUNISIA, 16 March 1943: Before the 8th Army could launch its assault on the Mareth Line, it had to clear the Axis outposts between the Wadi Zeuss and the Wadi Zigzaou. One of these, held by veterans of the 90th Light Division, encompassed a group of small hills appropriately named the "Horseshoe" by the British. Montgomery assigned the capture of this position to the untested 201st Guards Motor Brigade, one battalion of which (the 6th Grenadier Guards) had not even seen action yet. Although no ground reconnaissance had been attempted west of Wadi Zeuss, pilots reported that the Horseshoe was not heavily fortified, with few mines evident. Montgomery felt it a fine opportunity to safely blood the Grenadiers before the heavy fight to break the Mareth Line. At a meeting of the brigade's officers, he quipped, "When I give a party it is a good party, and this is going to be a good party." The plan was to launch a two-battalion night attack behind a creeping barrage; after the Horseshoe was seized, MGs and AT guns would be brought forward to bolster the Guards against the inevitable counterattack. At 2045, behind the barrage, the 6th Grenadier Guards stepped off.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The British win immediately if at the end of any Game Turn they have amassed ≥ 16 Casualty VP, provided the Germans have amassed ≤ 25 Casualty VP. Otherwise, the British win if at game end their amassed VP total is ≥ that of the Germans. [To calculate amassed VP at game end, both sides receive VP for casualties as usual. In addition, the British receive 15 VP if the hillock summit hex is *not* occupied by an armed, Good Order German MMC; and the Germans receive VP (two per squad, one per HS, etc.) for each armed, Good Order German MMC and for each Good Order SMC on/east of hexrow Q (even if hidden).]

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

N ↑

| H1 | D6 | W3 | 28 W3 |

BALANCE:

✠ Substitute a HMG for one MMG in the German OB.

◉ Extend Game Length to 10.5 Turns.

TURN RECORD CHART

✠ GERMAN Sets Up First [131] ◉ BRITISH Moves First [212]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	END

Elements of Leichte Afrika-Division 90 [ELR: 3] set up west of the wadi (see SSR 4): {SAN: 3}

4²-6-8	4¹-6-7	2-4-8	2-2-8	8-0	8-0	MMG 5-12	LNG 3-8	MTR 50* [2-13]	Radio 8	Minefield	Minefield	Dummy Minefield
6	3	3		2	2	3				60 factors (Hidden)	24 factors (Known)	4

INF 2/75* M10	Sangar IS or Gun OBA: +3* Other: +1*	Trench OVR,OBA: +4 Other: +2	Foxhole 5 1S OVR, OBA: +4 Other: +2
	8	4	3

Elements of the 6th Grenadier Guards Motor Battalion [ELR: 3] set up east of the wadi: {SAN: 2}

6²-4-8	4²-5-8	2-4-8	9-2	9-1	8-1	8-0	LNG 2-7	4in MTR 32mm	Radio 8
4	12	5				2	8	5	

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.

2. Place overlays as follows: **H1** on 28Y7-X6; **D6** on 28O4-P3; and **W3** on 28C7-C6.

3. Night Rules are in effect. The initial Base NVR is three hexes, with Scattered Clouds and a Half Moon. The British player is the Scenario Attacker (despite setting up onboard) and the German player is the Scenario Defender. The Majority Squad Type of the British is Lax; that of the Germans is Normal.

4. All German Personnel must set up at least three hexes from all wadi hexes, and all Fortifications (including mines) at least two hexes from all wadi hexes. Further, no *hidden* mine factors may be placed west of hexrow Q. The Germans may Bore Sight—but only hexes west of the wadi.

5. The British player may secretly pre-record ≤ four squads (or HS equivalent) as Sappers (B28.8).

6. The Germans receive one module of 80+mm battalion mortar OBA with Scarce Ammunition. As the Scenario Attacker (see SSR 3), the British receive a 120+mm Creeping Barrage (E12.7) with an automatically black *initial* Battery Access draw;

this module may be converted as per E12.771 (at which time it may fire IR). A Straying unit becomes TI instead if it would be subject to a minefield attack DR for attempting to leave its current hex, or if the next Location it must enter is part of a FFE Blast Area or contains an ADJACENT Known minefield.

AFTERMATH: The Grenadiers reached and crossed the wide wadi without incident. However, once across, they encountered some enemy fire and an unsuspected minefield, which caused many casualties. Struggling through, they resumed the advance and, after some stiff fighting and the crossing of a second minefield, succeeded in capturing most of their objectives. Unfortunately, in the darkness and confusion, the 201st had bypassed several pockets of German troops; these blocked the later advance of the heavy weapons, even while maintaining a steady fire on the rear of the captured hills. Worse, no proper reserve had been designated, so no further infantry were available to eliminate these pockets. This left the two battalions in poor position to meet the fierce counterattack that came at dawn, and they had to be pulled back across the wadi—again crossing the minefields under heavy fire. This bloody cock-up cost the 6th Grenadier Guards 278 casualties, including every officer in the lead companies. Monty's "good party" had been spoiled by inexperience and overconfidence.

FIRST BANZAI

ASL SCENARIO A57

Near CHICHAGOF HARBOR, ALASKA, 29 May 1943: When darkness fell on 28 May, the bulk of the American troops on Attu were poised for the final assault on Chichagof Harbor, the last Japanese bastion. General Landrum, in command of the U.S. Army ground forces, had decided to finish off the costly campaign for the island the next morning. But sometime during the evening, Colonel Yamazaki also reached a momentous decision. Of the 2300 Japanese on Attu when the Americans invaded, only about 1000 were still able to fight. Faced with the obvious end for his isolated garrison, he ordered a counterattack. His men would break out of the pocket, with the aim of rushing through Clevesy Pass in the darkness and reaching the American artillery positions. There the Japanese would capture the massed howitzers and turn them on the enemy positions in Massacre Valley. At 0300 on the 29th, Yamazaki personally led his ragtag force, soon split into several waves by the broken ground, up the valley. The Japanese first fell upon Company B of the 32nd Regiment and Company L of the 17th Regiment; the sleeping GIs barely had time to awaken before they were swept away by the heretofore silent rush. The confused survivors fled in all directions. Next the Japanese overran an aid station at the mouth of the pass, slaughtering the medics and wounded. In the pass itself, alerted by the sporadic gunfire below, the divisional engineer battalion had hastily organized a thin defensive line in the dark. Cooks and drivers, officers and engineers, signalmen and quartermasters, grabbed any weapon handy and prepared to make their stand.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Japanese win immediately upon Exiting ≥ 35 VP (excluding prisoners) off the west edge, provided the Americans have amassed < 30 Casualty VP.

BALANCE:

● Initial Base NVR is three hexes.

☆ Add a second MMG to the American OB.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

15	18	9

◄ N

TURN RECORD CHART

| ☆ AMERICAN Sets Up First [107] ● JAPANESE Moves First | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | END |

Elements of of the 13th Engineer Battalion, 7th Infantry Division [ELR: 2] set up on/between hexrows I and O: {SAN: 3}

6²-6-6	5²-4-6	2-2-7	9-2	8-1	8-0	7-0	MMG 2 4-10	MTR 3 60*[3-4S]	? 7 morale
4	6	3							8

Trench OVR,OBA: +4 Other: +2	CS 8	★Road Rate NA ★+2 for HH; +2 vs non-ord Dird in VCA
3	3	2

Elements of the 43rd Independent Mixed Brigade [ELR: 3] enter on Turn 1 along the east edge of board 18 (see SSR 5): {SAN: 2}

4¹-4-7	3-4-7	10-1	8-0
10	6		

Enter on Turn 2 along the east edge:

4¹-4-7	3-4-7	9-0	8-0
6	6		

Enter on Turn 3 along the east edge:

4¹-4-7	3-4-7	10-0	8-1
4	8		

SPECIAL RULES:

1. Weather is Ground Snow, with Wet EC and no wind at start.

2. Night Rules are in effect. The initial Base NVR (note E1.15) is four hexes, with Scattered Clouds and a Half-Moon. The Japanese player is the Scenario Attacker and the American player is the Scenario Defender. The Majority Squad Type for both players (for non-Banzai units) is Normal. Japanese units are not subject to Straying (E1.53) during the first MPh they are in play.

3. The *only* terrain features in play are: Open Ground, Hills, Gulleys, Crags, Cliffs, Brush and Woods. Therefore, ignore all buildings, bridge, roads, walls, hedges, orchards and plowed fields.

4. All American vehicles are Abandoned and Immobilized, and hence are represented by wrecks (D8.1).

5. All Japanese forces must enter play as part of one or two multi-MMC Banzai Charges (G1.5) on the appropriate turn. The Banzai occurs despite having no LOS to an enemy unit; each charge initially moves in a westerly 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 towards 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.

6. Japanese units may attempt Hara-Kiri (G1.641) at any time during a CCPh, even if not engaged in CC. Further, the American player receives Casualty VP equal to *only* half the usual value for Japanese units eliminated through Hara-Kiri.

AFTERMATH: Firing desperately, using parked vehicles and shallow trenches as strongpoints, the Americans broke the impetus of the charge. The fighting was furious, often hand-to-hand in the darkness and snow. A sort of mass hysteria seized the Japanese. They began screaming and charging pointlessly about in small groups. Any pretence at command or control by the officers of both sides was gone. In such circumstances, the better training of the GIs and weight of American fire began to tell on the disorganized mob. Now the "strange behavior" of Yamazaki's men became even more irrational—at least to the Americans. The Japanese soldiers turned from fighting the engineers and took to killing themselves, mostly with grenades. The night was lit by explosions as hundreds, feeling they had failed, committed *seppuku*. When dawn came, the slope was filled with shattered corpses. The mass suicide left the Americans numb with shock. (Of the 2300 Japanese defenders on Attu, only 29 would be taken prisoner.) Yamazaki's counterattack—the first *Banzai* charge the U.S. Army had faced—ended the fighting in the Aleutians. The "liberation" of the only portion of United States to be occupied by the enemy during World War II had cost the Americans dearly, however; over 3800 casualties had been suffered due to combat, illness and exposure on the barren island.

GRACE UNDER FIRE

A Look at Scenario Design

By Guy Chaney

During the fall of 1990, I began to contemplate running an *ASL* tournament during the upcoming year. I wanted to have new scenarios for this tournament. All *ASL* tournaments are enjoyable, but those which feature new scenarios are always the most exciting for me. Being faced with an unfamiliar situation presents a whole new set of challenges to the experienced *ASL* player. He must, in a short period of time, assimilate the scenario's order of battle, victory conditions, set-up restrictions, and special rules. After digesting all of this information, one must decide which side he prefers and then devise a winning strategy for that side. The defender in the scenario must construct a workable defense on his first try. Many players will choose to attack when playing an unfamiliar scenario for this very reason. The attacker can "go with the flow" a bit more readily than the defender, who may well live or die by his initial placement of units. Several playings of a scenario always reveal clues as to key hexes, attack lanes, and overall strategy for each side. A fresh scenario still holds many secrets for the players which they will uncover during this initial playing.

I feel new scenarios are a true test of the talents of an *ASL* player. Those who are good at thinking on the run and employ sound tactics on the first try tend to do well in this arena. A thorough understanding of the game system allows a player rapid insights into how the scenario will play. One must be able to recognize the advantages his side enjoys over the enemy. In a well-crafted scenario design, these advantages may be subtle and are often of a tactical nature. Of course, if you don't spot them, you will not be able to take advantage of them during play. Poor utilization of essential advantages may swing the scenario in favor of your opponent. The top players in this hobby pick out the key factors in new scenarios quickly and naturally. The ability to do this during the first playing of a new scenario is an excellent test of *ASL* prowess, and is what makes new-scenario tournaments so much fun.

Okay, so I'd decided to run the tournament. That was easy. Now came the tough part. Where will these new scenarios come from? How will I get them balanced, and will they be any fun to play? Prior to this, I had not designed any scenarios, but did feel myself to be a pretty fair *ASL* player and a good judge of other people's designs. I had a definite idea on what "kind" of scenarios I wanted. First, they had to be balanced as close to dead-even as possible. This point was (and is) definitely the most important to me. I find that those scenarios which are tightly balanced and produce nail-biting games are the most enjoyable to play, even by default. I also wanted them to be historically accurate in concept and feel. The actual play of the scenario should simulate the military passage from which it is drawn, with a small variance allowed for playability.

I wanted the scenarios to be of medium size and length. This would not only facilitate their use in the tournament, but most players tend to favor medium-sized actions anyway. These are large enough to provide each side with plenty of action while also reducing the luck factor somewhat. In my opinion, many tournament scenarios are too small. This is where the luck factor comes into play too heavily. In a scenario where one or both sides have only a handful of units, the luck of the dice is much more likely to wreck the game balance. This will not always happen, of course. The small scenario may be played many times without an unusual occurrence. Sooner or later though, some player in one of these overly small battles is certain to be hit by a DR that he cannot recover from within the

confines of the scenario length. This is the mark of a poor scenario design. Yes, any scenario strategy can fall apart given a *series* of unfortunate rolls, but any *one* such roll should not be the deciding factor in the outcome. The scenario designer must see to this. A player's OB should be resilient enough to withstand one devastating twist of fate. Another plus for medium-sized scenarios is that they can be set up and played in one evening. Everyone likes to lay out a "monster" scenario now and then and go at it all weekend, but this is not always possible for us. The medium-sized actions tend to see much more play. I think anyone who goes to the trouble to design a scenario wants to insure that others are going to want to continue to play it even after the tournament is over. That is the vindication for all your hard work. Finally, I wanted the scenarios to be enjoyable for each player. If they are not fun to play, the rest of my concerns become irrelevant as no one will be interested in giving them a whirl.

Like most other wargamers, I own an extensive amount of WWII literature and spend a fair amount of time reading and browsing through various books and articles. In the course of doing so, you sometimes come across an account which makes you think, "Hey, this would make a pretty good scenario." This frequently happens when the author is kind enough to give a detailed description of the terrain, equipment, force dispositions and a blow-by-blow description of the fight. Even then, however, there are usually a lot of holes to fill in as far as *ASL* design goes. This is where a scenario designer has to rely on his familiarity of the game system and what it can simulate, along with his general knowledge of WWII history and its combatants. The designer must strive to be faithful to the historical narrative, while also creating a scenario that is high in both playability and balance. This can be a tricky process. Sometimes the author just does not give enough information. Too much guesswork can result in a scenario which is more fiction than fact. No scenario is going to be an exact replica of the real-life event; but you must keep the overall effect as close to the history as possible. A little research into different sources can sometimes fill in the blanks adequately. Once you have decided there is enough information to proceed, you begin transferring the forces and the battle into the world of *ASL*.

This game system is the best in the hobby in my opinion. The rulebook and chapter notes are unequaled in their depth of coverage and overall attention to detail. As a scenario designer, you have many wonderful tools to work with in molding the historical information in front of you into a workable *ASL* scenario. We first create a viable prototype and then, through the fine-tuning of playtesting and further research, the scenario can become first-rate.

After gathering all of the historical information, a fine spot to begin the design would be in laying out the playing area. It is impossible to duplicate the actual terrain of the battle, but with the large number of *ASL* mapboards and overlays, a good approximation can be produced. All of the remaining scenario parameters must be decided: Orders of Battle, SAN and ELR values, set-up restrictions, victory conditions, and special rules. The way these fit together will determine how the scenario plays. The designer must address both playability and balance, all while staying within his historical framework. Your research should have provided enough information to allow the assignment of squad types, leadership, and ELR values to each side. As for how many squads each side receives, the source material is a starting point, but some leeway

can be used to satisfy balance concerns and to limit the size of the scenario if so desired. The simulation does not have to encompass *every* soldier in the area. Chapter H can be quite a bit of help in determining how many SW a side should receive, or in assigning a specific ordnance weapon or vehicle when only a generic reference appears in your historical text. Finally, use the victory conditions and SSRs to give the scenario the exact feel you want.

All of the above can usually be arrived at rather quickly, almost intuitively, given good source material. You now have a rough draft of the scenario. At this point, I usually get the pieces out, come up with a defensive set-up, and then play a few turns solitaire to get a feel for it. This is the first stage of the playtest process. All I'm really looking to discover are any major flaws and to decide if what I've come up with has a good chance of becoming a playable, balanced scenario. The playtest process is by far the most important step in developing any scenario. Only through actual play can problems be found and corrected. Playing the scenario will also quickly reveal its excitement level and relative balance as well. Frequently I do not even address exact victory conditions or game length until I have actually played the scenario myself.

The key things to ask yourself during this playtest are mostly related to balance. Is there an unstoppable strategy that can be employed by either side? Can any single strange event completely swing the balance of the scenario? Are the victory conditions attainable within the scenario's time frame? Does either side have to rely on lucky dice to win? Is the scenario challenging for both sides? How often is the outcome decided in the final game turn? Once the answers to these questions are consistently to your liking, the scenario design has been completed. Before reaching that point, numerous changes will likely be made and tested through constant replaying. Given two experienced and capable players, the scenario should only have to be played a few times before either reaching its final form or being discarded as unacceptable. The three scenarios presented here all underwent various changes on their way to the final versions you have before you. I'd like to discuss briefly how each one developed and then give some analysis and hints for players.

ASL Scenario A58

"Munda Mash" is my favorite scenario of these three; and, in fact, is one of my own favorite ASL scenarios of all time. There is a lot going on in this one, yet it remains of manageable size. The Japanese defender should relish developing his set-up. He has many options, given his fortifications and HIP potential. The American player, on the other hand, has tremendous firepower, fairly good terrain for his attack, and three AFVs. Sure, the AFVs are somewhat

limited by SSR #4, which came about due to historical limitations. These tank crews were seeing their first action and proved unwilling to stray far from the escorting infantry. They were certainly not going to go dashing off to overrun any Japanese flushed out by their steady advance. In fact, the tankers had orders to provide close fire support and cover for the infantry. I think SSR #4 simulates this well.

Victory in "Munda Mash" has been decided in the final half of the last game turn almost every time I've played. This is likely why I enjoy it so much. I hope it will bring you as much fun. The only change, a significant one however, that occurred during the playtest of A58 was the elimination of HIP status for the 2+3+5 pillbox. With all the pillboxes hidden, the American players were having too much trouble finding them, much less destroying or controlling them, within the length of the game. Now, at least the American has some knowledge of the general area in which to search.

Japanese Advantages: HIP, Flamethrower, Tunnels
Japanese Disadvantages: Lack of an AT Gun

One of the most enjoyable aspects of playing *ASL* for me is the sitting down to come up with a tough, intricate defense that will turn back a seemingly overwhelming enemy force. As the Japanese player in "Munda Mash", you have the opportunity to do this. The fortifications and HIP available allow you to arrange some devious "traps" for the U.S. opponent. Let's look at what is available.

The three 1+3+5 pillboxes each receive a tunnel as per G1.632. The two trenches enable you to also form bunkers with two or more of the pillboxes (B30.8). By connecting a few of the pillboxes with tunnels and trenches, a very solid defensive position can be established. Your defenders can easily move from one fortification location to the next and even to outlying jungle hexes through these tunnels and trenches with a modicum of safety. In addition, the Japanese, thanks to the pillboxes, can set up seven of their squads HIP! Two receive HIP status as per G1.631. The contents of each pillbox may also claim HIP, bringing your total hidden compliment to seven squad equivalents. Even though the 2+3+5 pillbox may not itself be set up unseen, its contents may. With all this HIP, and the 14 concealment counters, quite a bit of deception can be created. The terrain of the playing area contains numerous possible HIP locations for your pillboxes, entrenchments and men.

In concocting the defense, keep in mind the VC and your own set-up restrictions. The American player must locate and then capture (or destroy) at least two of the hidden 1+3+5 pillboxes. It may be to your advantage to keep at least two of them hidden as long as possible. It will be difficult enough for the American player to eliminate the pillboxes with the weapons available in his OB. He will probably have to take control of them to have any hope of a victory. Thus, the mechanics of gaining Control of pillboxes are very important in this match. Essentially, the U.S. player must first remove the Japanese from the fortification, then move or advance INTO it to claim control. Don't forget that a pillbox is a separate Location within a hex. This means that the enemy must enter the hex before he can even enter the pillbox. A unit cannot advance into a pillbox from an adjacent hex, only from the pillbox's own hex itself (assuming that a trench is not present, that is). This can make Control difficult to obtain. So long as a Japanese MMC is present in the pillbox hex, but outside that fortification itself, the Americans cannot move in to threaten capture until the blocking MMC is removed. Even then they cannot enter the pillbox until its occupants are dealt with sufficiently. As the Japanese defender, you must take advantage of these peculiar characteristics. Leaving at least two pillboxes hidden forces the American to find them through movement and searching. This takes time. When they are finally uncovered, he then must spend more time in dealing with their defenders as discussed above. The Japanese can make

this chore even harder by reinforcing threatened pillboxes through the tunnels. Have units in the pillbox advance out to block the hex as new occupants arrive through the tunnel(s). As game end nears, this technique can cost the powerful American force time. If he cannot get to the pillboxes with enough turns to eliminate both blocking units and occupants, he will watch his chances to control them erode. In the end, even a couple of Japanese half-squads can ensure a Japanese victory by merely occupying a pillbox and blocking (albeit momentarily) American entry of its hex.

If the above tactics are the basis for your strategy, the pillboxes should be placed as far back as possible. Make them as tough to reach as the terrain allows. Bamboo, for instance, is especially well suited for screening pillboxes due to the difficulty units have in entering those hexes. Japanese units can readily enter a pillbox hidden in the bamboo via their tunnels; but any enemy units moving into bamboo without such aid will be left CX, helping subsequent Japanese CC attacks upon them. Interior jungle hexes near the south edge of Board #37 can also be a wonderful haven for a pillbox or two. The American tanks will have a difficult time penetrating the jungle to aid in the assault. There are just too many excellent spots on these boards for me to touch upon them all in this treatise. Suffice to say that I am a proponent of placing the pillboxes near the rear and then playing a delaying/blocking strategy.

When doing so, I usually deploy one squad during set-up and place a 2-3-7 HS in two of the 1+3+5 pillboxes, a crew and ATR in the other, and a 4-4-7 squad in the larger pillbox. The 4-4-7 will be leaving right away to join the front lines. The ATR crew will engage a tank as soon as it has a decent shot. The half-squads will remain HIP until near the end of the game, when they will work with any remaining Japanese to block enemy movement and deny control of that third vital pillbox. All the hidden pillboxes will go in the rear, with tunnels running between them and towards a few front line hexes. With this placement, the rest of the Japanese will be committed to defend far forward and look to fall back as enemy pressure grows. The MGs will be used to place fire lanes through the Board #35 kunai fields, thereby greatly curtailing early American movement. After falling back, more fire lanes are just as effective in the Board #37 kunai.

I prefer to use my HIP on two "killer" stacks which will employ patience and wait to nail a juicy target. The first of these stacks will consist of the 10-1 leader, two crews and two MMGs. This will have 16FP, with a 2 ROF, against any adjacent target. The morale level of the Americans is such that they will probably not stand up to that kind of attack. With the 10-1, this stack is also able to hang tough, but it is fragile if engaged in CC. My second HIP stack will be made up of a 4-4-7 squad and the 9-0 with the flamethrower. The leader takes the FT as he is elite, thus avoiding the penalties for unqualified use. Stacking him with a 4-4-7 affords some protection from CC and sniper fire, and grants that flamethrower HIP status since the 9-0 is stacked with the hidden squad. The FT is extremely powerful, you'll find—especially against these 6-6-6s. Look for a spot with plenty of possibilities for point-blank fire. The flamethrower can also be deadly against the tanks, needing an "8" or less to kill a stationary M3A1. These forward Japanese units can use a tunnel to retreat to a pillbox if (and when) American pressure becomes too great.

It is also possible to set up your pillboxes forward and use them as the basis of your primary defensive line. Their +3 TEM and fortress-like nature make them excellent positions. Place your MGs and full squads in them if using this strategy. You may catch the U.S. player by surprise as he moves up through the dense kunai grass. Any pillbox near the front line does run the risk of early capture. The Japanese player gives up some of his advantage by reducing the distance the enemy must move to find and assault the fortifications. A possible compromise would see placing the 1+3+5 pillboxes in the front line as fighting

anchors and the 2+3+5 towards the rear to serve as a "last stand" position.

In short, the Japanese defensive set-up in "Munda Mash" can take on many variations. This helps increase the "replay" value of the scenario.

As a final word on the subject, I must note that the Japanese really have an exceptional OB. The leadership is terrific, MGs are abundant, and the fortifications are formidable. Their only real weakness lies in their anti-tank capability. Even this is not all that terrible. Their best AT weapon is the flamethrower. If set up HIP, and the player is patient, he may be rewarded with a tank kill. The 9-0 operating the FT will not break or pin, so increasing its effectiveness. Thanks to SSR #6, four T-H heroes are also available. Note that these must be created during play (HIP T-H hero placement is not allowed in 1943). While the tank-hunters are nice, it is difficult to kill a tank with one unless an AT mine is successfully rolled for. This is especially true if the tank has an infantry escort and/or is in motion. They will draw fire on their attack run if nothing else.

The last, and least effective, Japanese weapon is the 20mm ATR. This weapon has a TK# of "3" on any frontal shot versus an M3A1 at 2-6 hex range. A point-blank side or rear shot will raise the TK# to respectability, but such lovely shots will be rare (or non-existent) in your playings. The ATR's best bet is to attempt Deliberate Immobilization, feasible only if the LOS hindrances are not excessive. If the LOS is hindered by more than an aggregate "+1", I would opt to simply roll as usual (a TH followed by TK roll). The TK# is poor, but it is better than nothing. The ATR does have a ROF of "1", and there is always the slim chance of a Critical Hit. It is not a powerful weapon, but as the American player it bothers me to have this pea-shooter plinking away turn after turn. You just never know when your opponent might get lucky. The 50mm mortar also has a limited AT role; but it will likely have plenty of infantry targets to deal with instead. White phosphorous shells from the mortar can be very effective due to the American's relatively low morale; another favorite tactic of mine is to smoke up the enemy firebases and/or AFVs. These Japanese mortars are excellent weapons, and well known for their smoke-generating abilities.

American Advantages: AFVs, Terrain, 9-2 Leader, Firepower
American Disadvantages: Morale, ELR

No doubt about it, the enemy is tough, dug-in, and well armed. The American has his work cut out for him, but just maybe these 6-6-6s are up to the task. They have 101 inherent and MG factors available. The Japanese only have 76 FP, including the flamethrower. Discounting the FT, and including the AFV MGs jumps the American advantage to 119 to 52! This is a significant edge. The U.S. player will often be able to form fire groups of 16-30 FP using his squads alone. Even the Japanese have trouble standing up to this sort of punishment. The American firepower will slowly grind away the Japanese MMCs, further eroding their inherent FP. (And the Japanese MGs all suffer from a breakdown of "11".)

Yes, the American troops are quick to break and run, but they are also quick to rally. When in Good Order, they can dish out terrific punishment. The same terrain which gives the Japanese so many nice set-up locations also aids the American advance. Those kunai fields and palm trees severely hinder defensive fire. True, the American fire is similarly hindered, but here the advantage in raw FP comes into play. The larger U.S. attacks are better able to inflict casualties despite the DRMs. So, the terrain serves to screen your advance while your own heavier fire is still able to affect the enemy.

Due to the "6" morale, however, the American player must move his squads with care. Don't willingly give up "-1" or "-2" DRM shots. Keep your squads in protective terrain or behind hindrances and let your FP advantage come to the fore. When moving

through the kunai, don't run through any fire lanes the Japanese may place. Remember that kunai hindrances serve to cancel FFMO for a fire-lane residual FP attack. Therefore, any infantry moving through a fire lane hindered only by kunai grass will suffer a "−1" DRM on the attack. Should the fire lanes appear, move around them or use assault movement to slip through them. Another American strength to take advantage of is the smoke grenade exponent of "3". A few well-placed smoke grenades can cause a hindrance of "+6", thus blocking fire and negating fire lanes. (This thanks to the already high terrain hindrances.) The U.S. squads may also attempt to place WP grenades on the Japanese from time to time (a dr of "1" or "2" will net a WP grenade). The last source of cover available to you comes in the form of your three AFVs. They can serve as an additional hindrance, and provide the prime ingredient for some armored assault tactics.

The U.S. AFVs carry a large portion of the burden of your attack. They are not overpowering, but do possess a goodly amount of FP. They are also quite useful as cover, and they tend to draw attention away from your squads. These AFVs receive some special capabilities in a PTO scenario. The inherent crews are considered to have a morale of "8". If the tanks unbutton to use the AAMGs or to increase their TH numbers, that higher morale might be useful. But beware the enemy sniper if you do choose to go CE; make sure it isn't nearby. More importantly, these tanks have their Depletion Number for canister ammunition raised to "10". It can be a deadly ammo in a scenario such as this. Consciously maneuver your tanks to allow its use against clumps of Japanese, but be careful in the positioning of your own infantry as the attack will hit all hexes between the vehicle and the target hex as Area Fire. The 37mm canister has 12FP and ROF is possible while firing it, so it may be used upon occasion to hit even larger numbers of Japanese under ideal circumstances.

Your 37mm MA is also very effective against the enemy pillboxes. Thanks to the updated pillbox rules, these guns can fire AP ammo at one while ignoring the CA defense modifications on the To Hit and effect dice rolls. This makes AP hits easy to obtain, especially with acquisition. Each hit will bring a 2 FP attack with no modification. This may sound like small potatoes, but believe me they can add up. Once doubly-acquired, the tank can switch to HE. The CA defense modifier will now affect the TH roll, but any hits will be resolved on the "4" column.

SSR #4 may limit the mobility of the tanks, but it doesn't prevent them from being active. You will want to get your vehicles in the forefront of the attack. This will maximize their value as cover, and bring their MGs close to the enemy. Each tank must start its MPh using armored assault, but if its escort breaks, pins or stops, the AFV may still continue to move as far as the infantry *could* have moved. (This is inherent to D9.31.) If your escorting infantry don't wish to move adjacent—even with armored assault—to the enemy, halt them two hexes away and have the tank move up alone. The escorts can then use the APh to reach the tanks, ready for the next MPh. Try to end each turn with an MMC under each tank. This allows the vehicle to remain in fairly continuous motion, and guards it against T-H heroes and CC assaults by desperate Japanese. Don't be frivolous with your armor, but these AFVs are expendable. Use them aggressively to crack the defense. Get them moving right away, as it will be slow going through the kunai due to SSR #4.

In general, keep your squads spread out, avoiding stacking. This helps reduce the effects of the Japanese fire. Arrange large fire groups and keep moving forward. Form a firebase with the 9-2 leader, all three MGs, and a combination of squads and half-squads. This stack will have from 20 to 30 FP. Using a few half-squads frees a couple of MMCs for movement while reducing the FP of the total stack very little. The 9-2's modifier will lessen the effect of LOS hindrances; as noted above, these same hindrances serve as a shield for the stack.

These 6-6-6s have assault fire, so even maneuver elements may have good AFPh shots during the turn. Searching, on the other hand, is difficult due to the +2 drm of G1.63. A hidden pillbox will be revealed only if you enter its hex. You must use movement and the pressure of your numbers to make the Japanese units reveal themselves for your fire. Keep a weather eye on the Turn Record Track, as the Japanese may use the delaying tactics I've described above. Close Combat versus the Japanese is always dangerous, but you may have to risk a few men to keep the attack rolling forward. Your inherent FP advantage may see you through the inevitable CC in good form. Try to grow some concealment during play; it will aid in the Ambush rolls. The Japanese will no doubt place units in the front line to deny you concealment at game start. However, if attacking up the west side, hex 35A5 is a nice spot to start a stack; it is out of Japanese LOS, allowing you to conceal any Americans who set up here. During the advance, try to rout your broken units far enough back to prevent enemy fire from keeping them under Desperation Morale. The hindrances help in this. Keep your spare leaders busy rallying any stragglers. Afterward, the leader can apply his movement bonus to get them back into the fight.

One last thought strikes me: those bazookas are good only for pot shots against the pillboxes. But be very careful not to let the enemy capture a bazooka. Imagine the ignominy of supplying the Japanese with a bazooka as his best AT weapon. And then watching in horror as he explodes a tank with it!

ASL Scenario A59

One of the best features of "Death at Carentan" is the fact that it can be set up and played very quickly. The scenario can usually be finished within three hours. Two groups of elite paratroopers slugging it out amongst the hedgerows provide the players with plenty of action. The scenario's development was rather painless, and it remains virtually unchanged from the original draft. Despite its straightforward design, "Death at Carentan" is very exciting, with each side sweating out every fire attack and morale check. Pure infantry battles are the heart of the game system, so its "back to basics" with this one (with some artillery action thrown in to liven things up).

German Advantages: 5-4-8 MMCs, Reinforcement Entry

German Disadvantages: Weak Initial Forces

Both sides end up attacking in this scenario, but at the outset you Germans are quite definitely on the defensive. The initial German troops have no chance of halting the Americans. In fact, with the hindrances supplied by the Turn 1 smoke mission, these Germans are barely enough to slow the enemy down. With this in mind, all your onboard German units can hope to do is survive and await the Turn 3 reinforcements. They can be placed in buildings from which they can rout to safety if necessary (and it will be). I like to put the 5-4-8 with MMG in S4, a 2-3-8 with LMG in R5, and a 2-3-8 and 8-0 in S6. The half-squads can use the first German APh to link up, with thoughts of recombining during the American Turn 2. The final 2-3-8 HS can

go in P2, from where he may hinder U.S. movement a bit, or in Building P4 to deny the Americans control of that structure by default. In either case, use HIP for it. If you opt to place that half-squad in Building P4, I prefer the first level of hex Q4. It won't be discovered until the American attempts to move up there, and will then deny control of the building until eventually dispatched. Hopefully, he will be forgotten until other German units arrive to begin increasing the pressure on the Americans; in the heat of the moment, the U.S. player may be unaware that he has failed to secure the building. However, Building O6 should be avoided, as it will surely be surrounded by smoke counters; any units placed there at start are dead men.

The Americans will push you around for two-and-a-half turns; but once the rest of the German force shows up, you are in business. The American player has the advantage of being able to rely upon the cover of any buildings he captured during his first three MPhs. Once your reinforcements enter, he will find himself surrounded. Entering squads along the east *and* west edges will accomplish this; you'll be able to bring encircling fire to bear, along with denying paths for rout with some careful placement of your units. Use the hedgerows near the eastern edge to shield your advance towards the buildings. (You must note that the hedgerow running from O1/N0 to O4/N4 does exist in its entirety, despite the presence of the overlays.) Establish firing positions from behind the hedgerows. A couple of squads and MGs behind the N7/M8-L6/K7 hedgerow can pound away at buildings O6 and P4 while having good cover and rout paths available. The rest of your reinforcements should push from the woods along the west edge towards buildings R5 and S6. The Americans will have a strong hold on P4, but they must control at least two other buildings to claim a victory. The German player should be able to put pressure on these outposts while also firing on the U.S. firebases in Building P4.

Your 5-4-8s are truely exceptional units. They are perfect for an attack through this terrain. Remember that they posses both Spraying and Assault fire, along with a decent smoke grenade exponent. The morale of these troops will enable them to withstand a lot of fire, moreso than a lesser force. Your morale advantage over the Americans might prove telling over the course of the scenario. Although there are no AFVs around, don't forget that these fellows also have panzerfausts. If a 5-4-8 is within two hexes of an enemy-occupied building location and has no MG to fire, try for a PF. Although the To Hit number might be poor, any luck will give a 16 (even) attack against some hapless paratroopers. It is certainly worth a try. I would, however, advise against suffering any backblast effects or rolling for A PF with any unit which would be hung out to dry by a "6" pinning him.

The U.S. artillery is a major worry. There are several things you can do to limit its effectiveness. Fire at the American radio operator whenever possible; it is perfectly possible that you will be able to put him out of action for a few turns by breaking him. Just as important as direct action, be aware of what the American player can do with his SRs and FFEs. Due to the cluttered terrain, you can make it difficult for him to correct or call in fire. At the very least, you can try to force him to make extra chit draws to hit you with the OBA. Maintaining and growing concealment will further complicate enemy artillery action. (Remember the special concealment growth and retention rules for hedgerows.) And there are always possibilities for fickle radio contact and battery access. Oftentimes, just as it looks like you are about to be plastered, fate will intervene. Any failed contact roll or red access chit will give you a respite. Both events should occur at least once during the course of this scenario (although not something to bank on). In short, the American artillery can be tolerated. Be patient, and wait out any particular troublesome fire mission. If your troops are under cover, they may well weather even a direct strike due to their high morale. The enemy artillery by itself cannot defeat you. It is a

major obstacle that you have to deal with, but it by no means spells your doom.

American Advantages: 9-2 Leader, Artillery

American Disadvantages: Surrounded, Dispersed Objectives

As the U.S. player in "Death at Carentan", you begin with a tremendous advantage and then must hold on as the enemy counterattacks. The initial American surge should sweep the Germans from the farmhouses. The initial smoke mission can help you get into the buildings rather easily. I like to center the Smoke FFE on hex O5. This insures that the entrance to the complex will be covered by smoke. LOS to many hexes will be blocked by that "+6", preventing the placement of fire lanes and allowing you to run Cole and his boys through the orchard into O5. There is not much to fear from the enemy at this point due to their set-up and movement restrictions. If the Smoke FFE happens to err, don't rush to allow any "–1" or "–2" shots versus your men. You know where the Germans are, so simply watch where you move.

If all goes according to plan, advance the 9-2 and at least two squads into P4. The third 7-4-7 can hang back to prevent a lucky German shot from breaking the entire force. As the rest of the paratroopers rush onboard on Turn 2, CX them forward and concentrate on capturing buildings O6, P2 and P4. Try to determine where the HIP German unit is located. The Germans don't have much firepower at the start, so don't help them with negative modifiers for their shots. As your full force comes to bear, the 9-2 leader should be united with the two MMGs and two 7-4-7s. This fire group should take up residence in Building P4 where it will remain for the duration. The 8-0 and his radio also go into this building. It might be difficult to place and correct effective artillery fire from there due to the limited lines of sight, but this building does offer the best vantage point and most protection.

It is an absolute must for you to run a 3-3-7 into the N8 woods and then on into Building P9 on Turn 3. From there it will severely hamper German entry along the west edge of the map. Just as important, this 3-3-7 will cause the Germans to lose their concealment as they enter on this flank. The 3-3-7 will probably be cut off and eliminated, but its sacrifice is definitely worth the trouble it causes for the German. I would send the other 3-3-7 into the J7 woods. From here, it can prevent the enemy from running free to positions behind the M8-K7 hedgerow, as they are apt to do. As the German paratroopers begin to swirl all around your troops, spread out a bit to lessen the heavy impact of their fire. Take as many of the buildings as possible to give you all the options on how best to hang onto five points worth.

The massed FP of your own paratroopers can be very effective. Try to arrange some 20 and 24 FP attacks to pound the nearest enemy threat. Remember that the bazookas (as well as the German PFs and Psk) can only be used against buildings in this scenario; all of the walls are hedgerows after all. Suffering a bazooka's backblast is probably not a good idea unless in a dire emergency.

When calling in your artillery, the clever player is aware that a Harassing mission can cover an extremely large area of the mapboard. Such will greatly curtail enemy movement—especially in the open—and allows attack against many hexes not in your observer's LOS. Near the end of a desperate fight, it might even be necessary to call a fire mission down right on top of P4. If the Germans are rushing the building, artillery shells falling in the road is a good way to stop them. The American troops will receive the +3 TEM (+2 building and +1 for overhead level) of Building P4. Be careful, however, of dropping artillery on your own troops too early in the match. It is not hard to mistakenly do this given the small playing area. This is one problem you'd rather not have to deal with, much to the amusement of onlookers.

ASL Scenario A60

Out of these three scenarios, "Totsugeki!" has undergone the most radical changes. The original version was played on a full map (#37), with the Japanese entering a group along each of the south and east edges. Given the much wider playing area and the presence of Japanese units on two sides, the Chinese were hard pressed to stop the assault. This was true, even though that version contained four guns. Eventually the playing area was cut in half, the Japanese were limited to entering along the south edge, and the number of guns was reduced to three. At this point the Victory Conditions required that the Japanese eliminate all three guns to win the game. The Chinese OB differed in that it contained only twelve squads, no concealment counters, and only one squad was allowed to utilize HIP. I was very happy with this version and still feel it to be equal or better than the one which appears here.

When I initially sent "Totsugeki!" to Rex, it seems that his playtesters had a problem with the Victory Conditions. They feared that the Japanese would fail in their attempt to destroy the guns due to the +2 drm applied to all Recovery attempts in jungle. Failure to recover the guns before the AFPh of Japanese Turn 7 would prevent their destruction and result in a Japanese loss. I was aware of this possibility, but it did not worry me then, and still does not today. The Japanese, with a vastly superior OB given seven turns to move eight hexes through good covering terrain, were up to the task I thought. The tough VC, and the mechanics of capturing and destroying the guns, were one of the obstacles the Japanese had to overcome in order to win the scenario. The Chinese could use this to their advantage by blocking the progress of the Japanese to the guns and attempting to throw the Japanese off their timetable. The Japanese player was forced to push hard to ensure that a series of bad recovery rolls wouldn't cost them the game. This was the key—a series of bad rolls was required. Any Japanese player who only allowed himself one recovery dr on the last gun was just asking for trouble. A good Japanese player would have been in the hex during his seventh Rally Phase, thus giving himself the RPh and MPh for recovery attempts. It is not unlikely that the Japanese could shoot for Turn 6 to minimize the luck factor in the recovery rolls. Given their OB, capturing guns on Turn 6 was not a stretch for the Japanese. They could also use leaders and deployed half-squads to improve the recovery chances even further. All in all I felt the scenario was evenly balanced as it stood.

When it was first sent out for the *Annual* playtest, the VC were changed to require the guns only be captured/destroyed/hex-occupied to give the Japanese a win. This of course skewed the balance towards the Japanese. The VC change was equivalent to adding one or two turns to to the game length. Now the Japanese did not even need to recover the guns. They could merely clear the hexes with fire attacks and then advance in on the seventh turn for the win. Of course, the Japanese were winning most of these matches. It was decided to add two Chinese squads, four concealment counters, and an additional squad HIP ability to the Chinese OB. This resulted in the version you see here. In all honesty, I have not played the scenario as

it now appears. I will make no claims as to balance until I have done so. Maybe it is better now, but I felt it was fun and balanced before. Time will tell how this version fares. Whatever your judgement, this is how the scenario evolved to its present publication.

Chinese Advantages: Guns, Dare-Death Squads, MMGs

Chinese Disadvantages: Low inherent firepower, ELR

Squad-for-squad, the Chinese are definitely outclassed by their foe. However, the nature of the VC, the presence of the M1A1s, and the Chinese numerical advantage all serve to bolster their chances for a victory. The Chinese player might want to exhibit Chinese patience and practicality, looking to harass and slow the Japanese advance at the beginning of the game and then fall back on the gun positions for a final stand. But the Japanese need only move eight hexes in seven turns to place themselves near the victory hexes. With the enemy already so close to the guns, the Chinese player cannot afford to give up any more ground without a fight. Remember that all of your units, save the guns themselves, are expendable. In fact, a victorious Chinese player in "Totsugeki" may find himself with few squads left at the end of the battle. Such is the nature of close-quarter combat against the Japanese.

The enemy should be engaged immediately to prevent rapid and unhindered movement, to cause him to lose concealment, and to inflict excessive casualties if the Japanese player proves too aggressive at the outset. With this in mind, my initial Chinese set-up places many squads in the "3" hexrow. Squads with LMGs in hexes FF3 and AA3 can place criss-crossing fire lanes in the southwestern kunai field, greatly hindering first-turn Japanese movement in this quadrant. Chinese squads in EE4 and BB3 will provide support for the LMG outposts. The Japanese, with their unique capabilities, can usually overwhelm a single defender; the Chinese player must be careful to establish mutually supportive positions. The enemy will surely make a push up the Y1-Z3 path through the bamboo grove. At the very least, you will want to have a squad in Y3 to block that path. If so, I would also recommend squads being placed in X3 and V3. The latter could even be given the last LMG to place a fire lane through the X2-W3 patch of kunai.

The Chinese can establish the first of their ambushes in hex Y3 as well. This brings me to the role of the Chinese "Dare-Death" squads. These unique MMC are valuable because of their special CC ability and, to a lesser extent, their ability to go berserk voluntarily. The existence of the Dare-Death squads may make the Japanese player a bit hesitant in forcing CC upon you at every opportunity. The possibility of Hand-to-Hand CC, and the "–1" DRM, help the Dare-Death squads stand toe-to-toe with the Japanese despite their firepower disadvantage. These DD squads have the best chance of being able to take advantage of any ambush of the onrushing Japanese. A "normal" Chinese squad will need a "5" or less to cause casualties to a lone ambushed Japanese squad; in contrast, a DD squad would need an "8" or less. Quite a difference! An HIP Dare-Death squad in Z3 could look to move into CC with any Japanese who advance into hex Y3 during the Chinese Turn 1 APh. The Dare-Death troopers will be concealed while the Japanese, due to the presence of the squads in X3, Y3 and V3, will not.

Returning to the topic, the bamboo provides a natural chokepoint in this area of the board. By keeping squads on the path and in hexes flanking the bamboo, Japanese movement is curtailed in the center. The enemy will just have to root you out with fire attacks and CC. This is why a HIP DD squad can be useful. As the Japanese probe for an opening in your lines or try to muscle you aside, the Dare-Death squad may be able to spring its trap. Keep the path blocked as long as possible, but bail out if it looks like the Japanese may get around behind. (Hexes U3 and AA8 are also

good locations for a HIP Dare-Death squad.) Bamboo is a perfect haven for a HIP defender due to the difficulty an attacking unit has in entering it. An infantry unit must use a minimum move to enter bamboo during the MPh, and will become CX when advancing into it. For these reasons, bamboo will usually be avoided by an attacker under most circumstances. This allows your HIP squad(s) to lie in wait and spring upon an unsuspecting foe. The best case occurs when the enemy advance unconcealed into the bamboo, and becomes CXed just in time for the ambush. It might even be worthwhile to stack the Chinese 7-0 with one of the HIP Dare-Death squads so that a 1:1 attack may be obtained. This would also allow the DD squad to go berserk.

If the HIP allotment is not used to hide the Dare-Death squads, then it should be used on the 9-1 leader, and two squads with the MMGs. I would place these units, HIP or not, in foxholes either adjacent or in a gun's hex. This is your only significant fire group, capable of hitting point-blank targets with 24 FP. With the 9-1's fire direction, the ROF of the MMGs, and the possibility of point-blank fire from the gun itself, such a position can be deadly for the Japanese to approach. This hex will be the last-ditch stand for your Chinese.

The remaining squads and dummy counters in your OB should be spread across the front line and just behind it as a reserve. Be sure to start a squad in R3 or S3 to guard your left flank. Remember that your troops cannot stand toe-to-toe with these Japanese. You will have to "fight smart", knowing when to pull back and when to die in place with each squad, in order to win this game. Stacking the front line will force the Japanese player to either lose his concealment immediately or slow his rush in order to approach your positions with that advantage.

Concealment, as might be seen, is very important in the flow of this scenario. The Japanese player, due to their prowess in CC, will attempt to keep concealed units available in order to threaten to ambush key Chinese positions. Only under the worst of circumstances should the Chinese player accept CC with a concealed Japanese stack unless also concealed. Instead, he should break the threatened unit and rout away. The Chinese should conduct little Prep Fire with their squads unless they are trapped or in the gun positions themselves. Fall back into the jungle and regain concealment at the end of your turn. Try to have some concealed squads in reserve to move into the front line and then advance adjacent to the Japanese to disrupt their movement. Use your own defensive fire to whittle the undying enemy down. In general, CC should be avoided, but a timely advance onto a pinned or CX Japanese unit may be worthwhile. Carefully pick your spots to be aggressive.

The playing area in "Totsugeki" is very limited, so this fall-back defense is only viable for a few turns. Sooner or later, you will have to stand and fight. The areas around the guns is obviously where you will want to do this. Use your squads and the terrain to try And channel the Japanese into hexes you have placed "-2" Acquisition counters into with those 75s. On the first turn, for instance, swing the 75s around and fire to get acquisition on adjacent hexes. Some players worry overly about malfunctioning the guns (breakdown number of "11"); this is pointless. Far better to malfunction a gun early and have the time to repair it than to wait and break it on the first shot against the Japanese at close range. Besides, that –2 DRM is just too handy to pass up. A M1A1 firing at an unconcealed target in an adjacent, acquired jungle hex will score a Critical Hit on a DR of "6" or less. The resulting 24(–1) attack is quite impressive. The very presence of those acquisition markers may persuade a timid enemy to avoid that location. These 75mm guns can be deadly. An run of ROF against adjacent targets could quickly clear the jungle of Japanese troops.

The Chinese guns need infantry support, however. Some Chinese squads can prevent the enemy from

completely surrounding the M1A1s, and can serve to strip the concealment the Japanese so desperately covet when staring down the barrels of those 75s. Make the Japanese player fight for each gun. Perhaps less effort is invested to defend the first two guns threatened; even a modest number of Chinese squads will make taking out these guns less than automatic for the Japanese. Force them to pay a price in time and troops for their capture. That last gun will, of course, be defended with everything at all costs. Do not hesitate to use Intensive Fire with the first two artillery pieces, especially if you can cause significant casualties with a hit. These two guns are expendable. But I would quail at the idea of using Intensive Fire with the last gun unless the game was on the line.

As for the location of that last gun, it tends to be in BB8 as the bamboo helps block one avenue of Japanese approach. Three adjacent hexes are kunai grass, which provide less cover for the Japanese assault troops. But, depending on how the wily Japanese player's planned strategy develops, your own plans may change. As always in *ASL*, be flexible.

Japanese Advantages: CC, Resilience, DCs
Japanese Disadvantages: Numbers

Despite their vastly superior units, the Japanese cannot afford to simply throw themselves on the enemy. As mentioned above, the Japanese player has plenty of time to move this modest distance. Therefore, patience and prudence are in order. You cannot afford to trade squad-for-squad with the Chinese. Instead, we will employ the better Japanese squads to their full effect, but without being foolhardy. I feel that many players tend to be too reckless when playing with the Japanese. The IJA units are very good, but they are not invincible supermen. One should still avoid unnecessary step losses and questionable CC opportunities. Strive to preserve your force. There may be times when a bold stroke is justified, and the unique Japanese capabilities will carry the day. But just as often there will be a safer, less flamboyant approach to the same situation. In "Totsugeki", given the amount of time, patience is paramount for victory.

The entire Japanese force should enter between GG1 and U1. On the first turn, I suggest you have some units enter using non-assault movement, others will assault move onto the board, and the last few will advance onto the map. Do not allow any negative-modifier attacks on this first turn. Don't rush things. In fact, I will probably not even move adjacent to a Chinese unit on Turn 1 unless that enemy unit had already First-Fired. Use the ensuing APh to advance adjacent to several Chinese squads. Maintain several concealed units, and advance these closer to the Chinese. I don't bother entering east of U1 unless I elect to set up the mortar with the intention of eventually moving it into hexes hexes FF8 or FF9. From here, it can fire at the BB8 gun from behind the cover of the kunai. A well-timed Smoke round into BB8 may be just the thing to crack that strong position.

During your DFPh of Turn 1, assemble the MMG. I like to stack it and crew with a 4-4-8/LMG and the 9-1 leader. This grouping has 20 FP against an adjacent target and is at the same time very tough to hurt. As long as the leader remains viable, those morale-8 MMCs have an effective morale of "10"! The other two Japanese leaders should be stacked with squads to take advantage of their MF bonus and morale increase. Keep your leaders active in the fighting; there is no reason to hold them out of the attack. I sometimes give the 10-0 one of the two DCs. His morale is the best (better even than a DC Hero's) and he does not have to have a gun in his LOS to begin a move to place his DC.

Keep the pressure on the Chinese. Try to threaten them with CC from concealed Japanese MMC. I would not advise advancing into it at every opportunity, however. Wait until you have a distinct advantage (such as concealment or a pinned foe). A Close Combat between a single unconcealed Japanese and a single Chinese squad is risky, as I noted above. The

net Ambush drms are even if the Chinese are defending in jungle, kunai or bamboo. With no ambush, the enemy needs only a "6" or less to reduce the Japanese squad. This is far too high for my tastes, especially when outnumbered at the start of the game. Whether the Chinese unit dies or not is immaterial. Trading a 4-4-7 or 4-4-8 for a Chinese 3-3-7 is a terrible waste. Unless you have a good chance at ambush, be content to sit next to the Chinese and blast them with fire attacks—especially in the early stages. CC is an important weapon, but don't wield it just because it's available.

Look to move some of your squads around the enemy and into his rear. This will put an end to his strategy of a fallback defense. The ability to outflank and surround an enemy is the Japanese player's most potent tactic. Because the units do not break, Japanese squads can absorb effective fire and continue to move to their destination. This is especially true if faced by these 3-3-7 squads, which can barely defend themselves anyway. With a broken morale of only "6", and the ELR of "2", many of the Chinese squads will take a while to return to action once broken. Strive to keep the broken enemy units under DM.

When the final assault on a gun comes, do so from as many directions as possible. If time allows, grow some concealment and advance adjacent to the hex, spreading out as much as possible. Place your best stacks outside the gun's CA. Hopefully, it will not revel in a ROF run and there will be too many targets for it to deal with in the end. If you make your final approach during the MPh, use assault movement to get adjacent. This will reduce the negative DRMs for First Fire and maintains concealment.

A DC placement from outside the gun's CA is a fine way to open your attack. This is especially true if the placing unit is a leader or DC Hero. If the Chinese are forced to fire at the DC-bearing unit, your squads should have an easier time moving on into the position. If the Chinese hold their fire, the 30 FP attack may well knock the gun out. A squad with a DC in hex FF8 or FF9 can create a DC Hero to attack that 75 in BB8; this is one of the few places on this terrain-cluttered map where a unit not adjacent to a gun can create a DC Hero. If there are Chinese squads surrounding the gun you are attacking, you must break or eliminate them first if you've the leisure to do so. Once stripped of their supporting infantry, these guns are easy meat. But the guns can be deadly in and of themselves, especially once they have acquired a target. If your Japanese hit them from various directions with enough units, however, they should fall.

Late in the match, though, there may not be enough time for such a carefully coordinated attack. This is what the Chinese plans are based upon. Remember that you do not need to actually enter the guns' hexes until the final APh. But you do need to sweep those hexes of enemy infantry by game end. If a gun position is overrun early, go ahead and spike it and move on. It is probably best to take on only one or maybe two gun positions at a time. Push through the outlying Chinese defenses, and converge on the guns systematically. This way you'll be able to maximize your effort against each artillery piece. Do try to avoid being CX near the Chinese guns; remember that the Dare-Death MMCs could lurk nearby.

With this issue of the *Annual*, my efforts at scenario design pass into the *ASL* lexicon. I hope that the above provides you with enough information and insight to, someday, turn your own hand to adding to our collective fun. When you do, I'll be waiting in line to play.

MUNDA MASH

Near LAIANA, NEW GEORGIA, 16 July 1943: The swift capture of Munda Point and its airfield was vital to the American effort to clear New Georgia. On the 2nd of July, the 169th and 172nd Infantry Regiments were landed at Zanana Beach to the east of the point. From there, the two regiments were to move overland three miles to the Barike River, then deploy and attack west to capture the airfield. The overland approach to Munda involved a march through the rough, jungled, swampy ground typical of New Georgia. The combination of hellish terrain and steady resistance by the Japanese 229th Infantry Regiment showed the American plan to be unrealistically optimistic. Soon short of supplies, with mounting casualties among his men, on the 11th General Hester ordered the 172nd Infantry to swing southward to the village of Laiana and open a beachhead for the landing of reinforcements and supplies. On the 13th, along with the 103rd Infantry Regiment, the tank platoon of the 9th Marine Defense Battalion came ashore to quicken the lagging campaign. Turning back to their route of advance, the 172nd two days later reached the defenders' main line on the peninsula. The Japanese were there in force, in cleverly concealed positions ranging from pillboxes to "spider holes". Some positions were so well hidden, in fact, that the occupants were discovered through smell rather than by sight. It was decided to put the Marine tanks to use, employed alongside the infantrymen, providing close support. It was to be the first use of armor on New Georgia.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win immediately when they Control or have eliminated the 2+3+5 pillbox and any two 1+3+5 pillboxes.

BALANCE:

● Substitute a HMG for one MMG in the Japanese OB.

☆ American ELR is "4".

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

(Only hexrows A-P are playable.)

TURN RECORD CHART

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
● JAPANESE Sets Up First										
☆ AMERICAN Moves First										

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 229th Infantry Regiment [ELR: 4] set up on/between hexes numbered ≥ 5 on board 37 and ≤ 3 on board 35 (see SSR 5): {SAN: 4}

Elements of 172nd Infantry Regiment [ELR: 3] set up on/east-of the (non-existent) road 35A5-35P5 (see SSR 4): {SAN: 2}

Elements of 9th Marine Defense Battalion set up on/east-of road 35A5-35P5 (see SSR 4):

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start.

2. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect, including Light Jungle (G2.1). Kindling Attempts are NA.

3. Place overlays as follows: **Wd1** on 37K10; **Wd3** on 35C1-D1; **Wd5** on 37F9-G9.

4. The 3-4-6 HS in the American OB must set up, one each, with the three American AFVs; no other friendly units may be set up in hexes occupied by the AFVs. Further, an American AFV may not change Location unless it and a friendly MMC begin the MPh using Armored Assault (D9.31) [EXC: Recall]. Finally, the AFVs may not enter any Location containing a non-hidden Japanese unit.

5. The Japanese 2+3+5 pillbox may not use HIP. The remaining pillboxes in the Japanese OB must be set up, no more than one per hex, within four hexes of the 2+3+5 fortification, but may utilize HIP. Each pillbox must be occupied by at least one MMC at game start.

6. The Japanese player may create *four* T-H Heroes during play (instead of the two normally allowed by G1.421).

AFTERMATH: The Marine tanks took the point in leading the line of infantrymen through the undergrowth. As pillboxes were discovered, the escorting infantry would fire tracers to aid the tankers in spotting the enemy. Several pillboxes were eliminated with accurate, short-range 37mm fire. The Japanese were far from awed by the AFVs however. In one instance, an enemy MG concealed in a bypassed hut opened fire on the escorting infantry; an M3A1 simply traversed its turret and shredded the structure with canister, eliminating the problem. In another episode, one tanker suddenly found himself doused with a foul-smelling liquid by a screaming soldier. Luckily for him, the flamethrower fuel did not ignite and the offending enemy was dispatched. All along the route, Japanese soldiers literally leapt from concealment in fruitless attempts to place charges on the slow-moving AFVs. Finally, after an advance of several hundred yards, the Marine tankers lost contact with their escort teams and pulled back to regroup. Although accorded a success, this action would set the tone for the next frustrating weeks. With the aid of the tanks, each day saw a few Japanese fortifications eliminated and few hundred yards gained, but no breakthrough. The airfield on Munda Point would not be secured until the 5th of August.

DEATH AT CARENTAN

ASL SCENARIO A59

Near CARENTAN, FRANCE, 11 June 1944: At dawn on 10 June, the 101st Airborne Division was to step off in an attempt to capture the key road and rail junction of Carentan. American occupation of Carentan would link the Utah and Omaha beachheads. Charged with defending the town was Lt.-Colonel August Freiherr Baron von der Heydte and his crack 6th Paratroop Regiment. There the Germans established a series of barriers on *Route Nationale 13*. To reach the town, the Americans would have to cross a causeway carrying the highway from Saint-Comte-du-Mont through the low-lying swamps. On the 11th, a concerted attack was launched upon the extended German paratroopers. But the going wasn't easy for the "Screaming Eagles". As the 3rd Battalion pushed towards the town, Germans in a grouping of farmhouses sheltered by hedgerows poured rifle and machinegun fire into the exposed Americans. They were pinned down and subjected to withering fire whenever they attempted to move forward. Lt.-Colonel Bob Cole, in command of the 3rd, finally tired of the steady losses and radioed for a smoke barrage on the farm complex. And ordered his men to fix bayonets.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

✠ Substitute an 8-1 SMC for the 8-0 in the onboard German OB.

☆ American units in building P4 are Fanatic (A10.8).
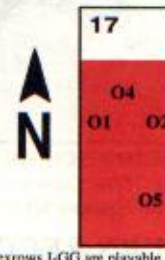
(Only hexrows I-GG are playable.)

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win if at game end they Control buildings worth ≥ five "points". Building P4 is worth three points; buildings O6, P2, R5, S4 and S6 are worth one point each; all other buildings are worth no points.

TURN RECORD CHART

✠ **GERMAN Sets Up First**	☆	✠							
☆ **AMERICAN Moves First**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END

Elements of Fallschirmjäger Regiment 6 [ELR: 4] set up in buildings within three hexes of P4, with no more than one MMC per hex: {SAN: 4}

Enter on Turn 3 along east and/or west edge(s):

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment [ELR: 5] set up in hex K4: {SAN: 3}

Enter on Turn 2 along the north edge:

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.

2. All buildings are wooden. All playable hedges and walls, including those along overlay edges as per G.9D, are Bocage (B9.5). Place overlays as follows: **O1** on 17O7; **O2** on 17O2-P1; **O4** on 17L4/M4; **O5** on 17W3/W4.

3. The Americans receive one 100+mm OBA (Smoke only) with one Pre-Registered Hex (Barrage is NA) that must be recorded prior to German setup. For its only Fire Mission, which automatically occurs during the PFPh of Turn 1, no Radio Contact nor Battery Access is necessary. The FFE must land onboard, and maximum extent of error is one hex. After placing the Smoke counters, remove the FFE counter.

4. One German HS (and all SMC/SW stacked with it) may use HIP. No German unit may expend MF during the first German MPh.

5. The Americans receive a second module of 100+mm OBA (HE and Smoke), but

Radio Contact may not be attempted prior to Turn 4.

6. Kindling Attempts are NA.

AFTERMATH: As smoke shells enshrouded the German positions, Cole leapt to his feet and dashed towards the enemy-held buildings. Only a few paratroopers followed. But across the roadway, Major John Stopka screamed "Let's go!", and followed with several squads of his own. Furious fighting broke out amongst the farmhouses. Vicious close combat and short-range fire took a heavy toll of both sides. Lt.-Colonel Cole's survivors managed to wrest control of the complex from the Germans. But within minutes, they were under counterattack from several sides. In danger of losing the hard-won position, Cole called for an artillery barrage to land directly on top of the farmhouses. After a momentary delay, explosions rocked the area and white-hot shrapnel rained down. The Americans hugged the floor as salvos shook the buildings, but the Germans were not lucky enough to have such cover available. They lost heart, and faded back into the hedgerows. When von der Heydte learned that, along with other positions, the farm complex guarding the causeway had fallen, he feared that the 6th Parachute Regiment would be encircled and annihilated. Towards dusk, he gave orders for the town to be evacuated and the troops to fall back to prepared positions southwest of Carentan.

TOTSUGEKI!

ASL SCENARIO A60

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Japanese win if at game end all three Chinese 75mm Guns are eliminated/captured or in hexes occupied solely by Good Order Japanese MMC.

Near KANTAU, BURMA, 10 January 1944: General Sun Li-jen, commander of the Chinese 38th Division, was charged by Stilwell with the task of clearing the Hukawng Valley as a prelude to breaking the stalemate in northern Burma. General Sun's plan called for a regimental combat team to swing around the flank of the Japanese 18th Division, while the rest of the 38th Division attacked along the front. The enveloping force, the 114th Infantry Regiment with the 6th Field Artillery Battery, was sent circling south to cross the River Tanai at Kantau. Crossing the Tanai in the second week of December, the Chinese regiment collided with the enemy in a series of sharp actions along two small creeks. The jungle made it difficult for the Chinese to organize and coordinate their attacks; the supporting 6th Battery could not even take part until fields of fire were cut. But as this arduous task was underway, infiltrating parties of the Japanese 55th Infantry Regiment surrounded the battery. Nor could the 3/114th, charged with supporting the guns, help for it was split into four fragments, no two of them in contact. The Chinese gunners were forced to fight to save their guns, and themselves, alone.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

○ The Japanese win only if all three Chinese 75mm Guns are eliminated/captured.

● Add one DC to the Japanese OB.

(Only hexrows R-GG are playable.)

TURN RECORD CHART

○ CHINESE Sets Up First [88]		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	END
● JAPANESE Moves First [165]									

Elements of the 6th Field Artillery Battery, 38th Division [ELR: 2] set up as indicated: {SAN: 3}

In hexes numbered ≥ 3:

3-3-7	9-0	8-0	7-0	MMC 4-12	LMG 2-7	? 7 morale	Foxhole
14				**2**	**3**	**4**	**3**

Hex V7 (CA: U8/V8):

2-2-7	ART M10 75*

Hex Y7 (CA: X7/Y8):

2-2-7	ART M10 75*

Hex BB8 (CA: AA9/BB9):

2-2-7	ART M10 75*

Elements of the 55th Infantry Regiment [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 along the south edge: {SAN: 4}

4²-4-8	4¹-4-7	2-2-8	10-0	9-1	9-0	dm MMG	LMG 2-9	MTR 50* [1-16]*	DC 30-1
4	**7**						**3**		**2**

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start.

2. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect, including Light Jungle (G2.1). Kindling Attempts are NA.

3. The Chinese guns are set up unconcealed, are not Emplaced, and may not be moved from their setup hexes. No canister ammunition is available. Bore Sighting is NA for either Guns or SW.

4. Two Chinese squad-equivalents (and all SMC/SW stacked with them) may use HIP.

5. A Repair dr of "6" does not eliminate the M1A1 from play; however, it is assumed to have suffered permanent breakdown and is henceforth ineligible for repair. Nonetheless, it remains onboard (disregard C2.28 and mark with a "Gun Disabled" counter) and must be destroyed/captured/hex-occupied to fulfill Japanese VC. (However, a roll ≥ 11 for an Intensive Fire TH DR will eliminate an M1A1 as usual.)

AFTERMATH: The initial probing attacks by the Japanese on the 9th were followed by a major push to overwhelm the isolated battery on the 10th. Every Chinese trooper—officers, gunners, ammo bearers, porters, cooks—took up arms to defend their tenuous position around the clearing they had so laboriously hacked from the jungle. Shouting "Totsugeki", the Japanese rushed forward. The southern wing of the concentric attack even neared the gun positions themselves. Swinging the 75s, the Chinese crews fired point-blank into the tangled jungle, even as others fought with whatever was at hand from foxholes dug the previous day. The attack was beaten off, as was another the next day. The regimental commander, Colonel Li Hung, arrived at this point and quickly restored the situation. The scattered portions of the 3/114th began to attack and soon thrust the Japanese back. After the second battalion arrived on 15 January, the Chinese were able to force a crossing of the Sanip Hka with the aid of the artillery. Here the Chinese halted for a week, while supplies were brought up and isolated pockets of Japanese were dug from their holes along the river bank.

THE ILLUSTRATED & LEGIBLE
ADVANCED SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Given the small type required to fit the new Advanced Sequence of Play (ASOP) on the Chapter N divider, coupled with the aging eyes of many *ASL* grognards, we thought it worthwhile to present this crucial information in readable format. And, as an aid for failing memories (another plague of advancing years), we've made liberal use of color and a few counters to highlight the ASOP. Otherwise, the following is identical to the chart found in *CROIX DE GUERRE*, the most recent addition to the system. As listed in the ASOP, each phase is broken down into three general parts: *Start*, *During*, and *End*. Next to each phase number, the player(s) involved is specified as **A** (ATTACKER), **D** (DEFENDER), or **B** (Both). The ASOP should be followed strictly (e.g., units that start the MPh berserk must move before non-berserk units—Steps 3.21A and 3.22A), even if the order listed for specific actions is not mentioned elsewhere in the rulebook; however, all activities with the same phase number may be conducted in any order unless explicitly stated otherwise.

† Sniper Attacks/Checks are possible during this phase (A14.1; A14.4; E1.72; E1.76; G12.603; G14.261; *RB* SSR CG8).

1. RALLY PHASE

Only one action (attempt) allowed per unit per RPh [EXC: repairing > one SW/Gun (A9.72); leader rallying > one unit (A10.7)].

1.1 START of RPh:

1.11A Roll for any provisional (SSR) reinforcements (including Air Support; E7.2). Set up, offboard, all forces due to enter in this Player Turn (A2.51-.52 {DD tanks, D16.8; Cloaking, E1.41; Gliders, E8.1; Parachutes, E9.1-.11; LC, G1.664/G14.23}).

1.12A Check for Wind Change (B25.65 {Blazing building collapse, B25.66; NVR change, E1.12; Civilian Interrogation, E2.4; Fog level, E3.312; Rain/Falling-Snow intensity, E3.51/E3.71; Dust, F11.76-.77; Heavy Surf, G13.448; if DYO note also G16.2 footnotes}). During Gusts (B25.651), remove Vehicle Dust (F11.74) and Dispersed SMOKE, then flip remaining SMOKE counters to their Dispersed side [EXC to both: SMOKE in cave; G11.851].

1.13B May Recombine Good Order HS if Good Order leader present, and/or Unarmed/Guard/Finn/Carrier HS without leader (A1.32). May place/remove Animal-Pack counter(s) in *initial* RPh of Game Turn (G10.3) {Pack-TI; G10.11}. May (un)load Animal-Pack Gun(s) if halfway through (Un)packing Period (G10.31).

1.14B May attempt to Recover SW/Gun(s) in same Location (A4.44; G.5) {Ski-use dr; E4.21}.

1.2 DURING RPh:

1.21A May (attempt to) Deploy Good Order squad(s) if Good Order leader present, and/or Unarmed/Guard(s)/Finn(s)/Carrier-HS/U.S.M.C.-7-6-8(s) without leader (A1.31; G17.11). Infantry MMC may attempt to Scrounge abandoned vehicle(s) or non-burning wreck(s) (D10.5); place Scrounged and TI markers.

1.22B May attempt to repair SW/Gun(s)/vehicular-armament (A9.72; A13.33; D3.7). May Transfer SW/Gun(s)/Prisoner(s) (A4.431; A13.33; A20.5; D6.31) {Ski-use dr; E4.21}.

1.23B May attempt to Rally broken unit(s) (A10.6); those with Commissar-(A25.222)/Japanese-leader-(G1.41) which fail to Rally are Replaced or eliminated. First ATTACKER MMC Rally attempt (or first *two*; *RB* SSR CG17) may be Self-Rally/Field-Promotion (A10.63; A18.11).

1.24A Determine final Drop Point for each Para Wing, then place all Sticks (i.e., Parachutes; E9.12) onboard in Aerial Locations.

1.3 END of RPh:

1.31B Roll for Shocked/UK AFV recuperation (C7.42); remove or flip marker/AFV as appropriate. May/must remove DM markers from eligible broken units (A10.62).

2. PREP FIRE PHASE†

2.1 START of PFPh:

2.11A Remove his Dispersed SMOKE (checking for any Napalm terrain-Blaze/weapon-destruction; G17.41); then flip his SMOKE counters to their Dispersed side (A24.4). Leader(s)/MMC/CE-AFV may attempt to fire Starshell(s) (E1.91-.921). Check for Vehicle Dust removal (F11.77).

2.12A May fire ordnance-SMOKE-(C8.5-.51)/MTR-IR-(E1.91; E1.93-.932), after designating Spotter (C9.3) if necessary; resolve ensuing WP NMC. May fire MOL-Projector(s) (O10.2). Check for ensuing Flame(s) (A24.32; O10.44). Place Prep Fire or Gunflash counter(s) as required.

2.13A May attempt Radio Contact (C1.2; G.7) if necessary (C1.63; E12.77). If successful may (must, for FFE:C; C1.34) attempt (Sighting TC [E7.61] and) Battery Access (C1.21; G14.63); if successful may place AR (C1.3) and either SR (C1.3-.31) or Pre-Reg. FFE/IR (C1.731/E1.931), or must place rocket AR and FFE (C1.9) or remove or replace FFE:C (C1.34-.343; G14.671).

2.14A May (must, for a Creeping Barrage FFE) Correct/Convert or Cancel SR/FFE (C1.33-.337; C1.35-.4; E12.73-.74; E12.76; E12.771) [EXC: rocket Correction is NA; C1.9].

2.15A May place OBA SMOKE-(C1.71; E12.51)/IR-(E1.91; E1.93-.932), resolving ensuing WP NMC (C1.71; C3.76; G14.65) and checking for ensuing Flame(s) (A24.32). Then resolve HE FFE (C1.5; C1.52-.56; G14.65), checking for shellhole/Flame/rubble creation (B2.1/B6.331/B25.13/-B24.11/G13.7), wire/roadblock/pillbox removal (B26.52/B29.5/B30.92/-G14.56), minefield/panji removal/reduction (B28.62/G9.72/G14.56), and sangar/trip-flare elimination (F8.41/G.8B). Check for Column Disbandment (E11.533) and Reverse Slopes (G14.66-.661).

2.2 DURING PFPh:

2.21A Infantry MMC may become TI and: Mop Up (A12.153) {Casualties; A12.154}, or; attempt to entrench (A25.21; B27.11; F.1B; G3.5; G13.3; G13.82), placing Labor counter if unsuccessful. Infantry may make Kindling Attempt(s) (B25.11; MMC requires leader who passes NTC); place Prep Fire counter on each unit involved.

2.22A May designate Spotter(s) for MTR(s) that had no original Spotter (C9.3). May fire non-Aerial, non-TI Good-Order-unit(s)/manned-and-functioning-weapon(s) {Heavy AA fire; E7.52}, placing Prep Fire or Gunflash counter(s) as required; both sides resolve attacks. Infantry/Cavalry may declare Opportunity Fire; place Bounding Fire counter(s) (A7.25). Leader (/MMC/CE-AFV, if a Starshell/IR has been fired in *no* previous Player Turn) may attempt to fire Starshell (E1.921). May destroy/malfunction/dismantle/reassemble SW/Gun(s) (A9.73; A9.8).

2.23A May (un)limber Gun(s) (C10.21; it and crew become TI if unlimbering).

2.3 END of PFPh:

2.31A May change CA of Gun(s) presently able to fire without using Intensive Fire (C3.22). May designate/cancel AA mode of weapon(s) that can/do(es) thusly change CA (E7.5).

3. MOVEMENT PHASE†

The MPh Sequence of Play is expressed separately in terms of THE *MPh and of each moving unit's (or stack's) MPh; i.e., each moving unit has a START, DURING and END to* ITS *MPh within the overall context of* THE *MPh—usually followed by the START of another unit's (or stack's) MPh. However, the MPh of all units that start* THE *MPh berserk must be completed before any non-berserk unit may start* ITS *MPh, and the MPh of all non-berserk units that start* THE *MPh on the ground (i.e., non-Aerial) must be completed before any Glider/Parachute may start* ITS *MPh.*

3.1 START of THE MPh:

3.11A May designate new mortar Spotter for one eliminated or not in Good Order (C9.3).

3.12D Leader(s)/MMC/CE-AFV may attempt to fire Starshell(s) (E1.91-.921).

3.13A Place all Gliders, blue-side up (i.e, in Aerial Locations), onboard in their ILH (E8.2).

3.2 START of ITS MPh:

3.21A Prepare to move any currently berserk unit/stack required to charge (A15.43); then go to Step 3.31A [EXC: if no such berserk unit can charge, go to Step 3.22A].

3.22A Prepare to move any Good-Order/Mobile ground unit/stack [EXC: pinned Infantry; A7.8] not marked with a Prep/Bounding Fire or TI counter (A4.1; D2.1). May drop possession of SW/Gun(s) (A4.43). Best leader may make Freedom of Movement dr if Scenario Defender (E1.21). Make Movement-(E1.53-.531)/Straying-(E1.53; G2.22; G3.21; G13.83) DR if necessary. Infantry may declare Double Time for two extra MF (A4.5; place CX counter), or Assault Movement (A4.61), Dash (A4.63), Sewer entry (B8.4) or Climbing (B11.41). Infantry/Cavalry may declare Human Wave (A13.62/A25.23/G18.61—Banzai Charge if Japanese Infantry; G1.5), or Swimming (E6), movement. Dare-Death Infantry may declare berserk status

(G18.6). Cavalry (or Wagon) may declare Gallop for 8 (or 4) extra MF unless Cavalry/Horse (or Wagon) is CX (A13.36 or D12.4). Remove vehicle's Motion counter if it will expend MP/MF. Check for Column-(E11.52)/Convoy-(E11.2)/Platoon-(D14.2) movement status. Onboard radioless AFV that will use non-Platoon movement takes NTC (D14.23) unless Recalled. Flail tank declares TB creation attempt in minefield hex it will enter (B28.7). Boat/Non-Aground-LC in Heavy Surf makes any required (un)Beaching DR (G13.442/G13.4423). Crew abandons or enters vehicle (D5.41-.42). Lastly, go to Step 3.32A [EXC: if no ground unit can/wishes-to declare/conduct any Step 3.32A action, go to Step 3.23A if an Aerial Glider/Parachute exists or to Step 3.5 otherwise].

3.23A Prepare to conduct Glider/Parachute movement; go to Step 3.37D [EXC: if no Aerial Glider exists, go to Step 3.34A].

3.3 DURING ITS MPh:

3.31A Berserk unit charges if so required (A15.43-.431; A15.45; G13.491); then go to Step 3.35D.

3.32A May move that non-TI Good-Order/Mobile (or must charge with that voluntarily berserk Dare-Death) ground unit/stack after making any required Sewer dr (B8.41) or Mechanical Reliability (D2.51 {Stall}), Bog Removal (D8.3; D12.211-.212) and/or Movement/Straying (E1.53-.531; G2.22; G3.21; G13.83) DR. May conduct Infantry OVR (A4.15-.152). Infantry may declare Double Time for one extra MF (A4.5; place CX counter), and/or make Manhandling DR (C10.3, E5.2; Pushing unit and Gun/Boat become TI—place Labor counter if unsuccessful). Infantry may Place (A23.3) or Set DC (A23.7; roll US#). Personnel (etc., for LC; G12.12) may mount/dismount horse (A13.31) or vehicle (D6.4-.5; D12.41; D15.41; G12.4-.45; G13.443). Personnel may attempt SW/Gun Recovery (A4.44) {Ski-use dr; E4.21} and/or drop possession of SW/Gun(s)/Prisoner(s) (A4.43; A20.53). May declare attempt to Clear rubble (B24.71), wire (B24.73), mines (B24.74), Set DC (B24.75), roadblock (B24.76), Path (G2.7), Panji Covered-hexside (G9.71), or non-Factory Debris (O1.5); unit becomes TI. May attempt to Clear Flame (B24.72; unit becomes TI—place Labor counter if unsuccessful). May hook up Gun (C10.11; it, Personnel and vehicle become TI). May unhook Gun (C10.12; it and Infantry become TI). May attempt to place SMOKE Grenades (A24.1; F.10) or use Smoke Dispenser (D13); resolve ensuing WP NMC (A24.31) and check for ensuing Flame (A24.32). Japanese Infantry squad/HS within 8 MF and in LOS of enemy AFV may attempt to create T-H Hero (G1.421 {DC Hero; G1.424}). Cavalry may declare Gallop (for 4 extra MF) unless Horse is CX (A13.36), and may declare Charge while ≥ 3 hexes from and in LOS of target (A13.6; resolve in target Location). Make Bog DR as required (D8.2-.23). Recalled vehicle must (attempt to) exit (D5.341; G14.232 [EXC: G14.33]). Vehicle may use Bounding First Fire (C5.3; C8.6; D3.3; D7.1; E7.51-.512; G12.5). Vehicle may declare Wreck Removal (D10.42), attempt ESB-(D2.5)/HD-Maneuver-(D4.22), and/or place or remove CE counter (D5.33). May conduct Armored Assault (D9.31). Wagon/Motorcycle resolves any required Wreck Check dr (D12.4/D15.46). Units using Impulse movement expend MF/MP in their Impulse before receiving First Fire. Check for "?" loss (A12.14-.15; A12.2; A12.33; A12.41-.42) and Column Disbandment (E11.531). Infantry resolves any required Lost dr (B8.41), Falling DR (B11.4) or Swimming TC/MC (E6.1/E6.21/E6.5). Place appropriate Climb counter for Infantry that successfully ascends or descends (B11.41). Resolve Panji MC (G9.41). May don/remove Skis (E4.2). Check for creation of Vehicle Dust (F11.74-.741). DD tank may drop screens (D16.11). May (un)Beach Boat/LC (E5.23/G12.3). LC might run Aground (G12.21; G13.446). Check for Swamping (G13.4222) and/or Heavy-Surf Swamping/Immobilization/(un)Beaching/Broaching (G13.44-.4423). Infantry/Cavalry Wading in Heavy Surf become CX (G13.447). Lastly, go to Step 3.35D.

3.33A Aerial Glider takes Evasive Action if necessary (E8.211); then go to Step 3.37D.

3.34A All Aerial Parachutes drift (E9.2); then go to Step 3.38D [EXC: if no Aerial Parachute exists, go to Step 3.5).

3.35D During Steps 3.31/3.32 resolve, vs moving ground unit/stack (only), each Residual FP (A8.22; A9.22), FFE (A24.31; C1.51-.53; C1.55-.56; C1.72; C1.9; G14.65-.661) and/or minefield (B28.41-.411; B28.42-.52; B28.531; G14.53) attack as it occurs. Leader(s) (/MMC/CE-AFV, if a Starshell/IR has been fired in no previous Player Turn) may attempt to fire Starshell(s) (E1.921). Check for Column-Disbandment-(E11.532)/trip-flare-activation-(G.8). Lastly, go to Step 3.36D.

3.36D During Steps 3.31/3.32, may conduct First-Fire-(A8.1)/Subsequent-First-Fire-(A8.3)/FPF-(A8.31) vs moving ground unit/stack {Snap Shot, A8.15; Fire Lane, A9.22; Thrown DC, A23.6; Reaction Fire, D7.2; Sighting TC and FB/DB Ground Support, E7.3-.4/G17.4-.42}. Place Residual FP (A8.2; A9.22; G11.82), First/Final/Intensive/No Fire or Gunflash counter(s) as required. Place MOL-Projector Smoke and check for any ensuing Flame (O10.44-.45). Japanese squad/HS in CC Reaction Fire position may attempt to create T-H Hero (G1.421). DEFENDER vehicle may attempt Motion-(D2.401)/Smoke-Dispenser-use-(D13.2). ATTACKER may

conduct Light AA fire (E7.51) vs attacking FB/DB, placing AA/Prep-/Bounding-Fire or Gunflash counter(s) as required (E7.5). Check for Column Disbandment (E11.532). Lastly, go to Step 3.41A.

3.37D May conduct Light AA First/Subsequent-First Fire vs Aerial Glider (E7.51-.512, E8.21-.211), placing AA/First-/Final-Fire/Gunflash counter(s) as required; then go to Step 3.33A (or to Step 3.42A if no Light AA fire occurred).

3.38D May conduct First/Subsequent-First Fire vs all Aerial Parachutes (Small-Arms/Light-AA only; E9.3-.33, E7.5-.512)), placing AA/First-/Final-Fire/Gunflash counter(s) as required; then go to Step 3.43A.

3.4 END of ITS MPh:

3.41A Non-Bypassing Good Order Infantry/Cavalry may Search (A12.152; G.8; G.8C; G1.63) {Casualties; A12.154}; becomes TI—Defensive-First/Subsequent-First/FPF allowed. Broken Infantry in Bypass enter that obstacle (A4.32). Sewer unit/stack makes emergence dr (B8.42). Unarmed unit(s) may attempt to Scrounge Small Arms (A20.552; G17.14). Place Motion counter on qualifying vehicle(s) (D2.4; F.11) or expend Stop MP. Place CC counter if necessary. Lastly, go to Step 3.21A.

3.42A Glider lands (E8.211 {Landing DR, E8.22; Crash dr, E8.23}); then go to Step 3.23A.

3.43A All non-German ⁵/₈" Parachutes move one hex; all Parachutes then land, and all ½" Parachutes are flipped over (E9.4; {NMC/NTC, E9.42}); then go to Step 3.5.

3.5 END of THE MPh:

3.51A Each vehicle unable to leave, and each Glider/Parachute that landed in, terrain Blaze Location is eliminated (B25.4; E8.232; E9.42). Resolve Wreck Removal (D10.42). Air-Dropped pre-1942 German MMC may attempt to locate arms canisters (E9.7).

3.52A Berserk unit(s) with no Known enemy in LOS return(s) to Good Order (A15.46).

3.53B Remove all Residual FP (A8.2; A9.22) and ½" SMOKE (A24.11 [EXC: G11.85]) counters.

4. DEFENSIVE FIRE PHASE†

4.1 START of DFPh:

4.11D May fire ordnance Dispersed-SMOKE-(C8.5)/MTR-IR-(E1.91; E1.93-.932). Resolve ensuing WP NMC. May fire MOL-Projector(s) (O10.2). Check for ensuing Flame(s) (A24.32; O10.44). Place Final/Intensive/No Fire or Gunflash counter(s) as required.

4.12D May attempt Radio Contact (C1.2; G.7) if necessary (C1.63; E12.77). If successful may (must, for FFE:C; C1.34) attempt (Sighting TC [E7.61] and) Battery Access (C1.21; G14.63); if successful may place AR (C1.3) and either SR (C1.3-.31) or Pre-Reg. FFE/IR (C1.731/E1.931), or must place rocket AR and FFE (C1.9) or remove or replace FFE:C (C1.34-.343; G14.671).

4.13D May (must, for Creeping Barrage recorded as "FFE:1-2"; E12.731) Correct/Convert or Cancel SR/FFE (C1.33-.337; C1.35-.4; E12.74; E12.771) [EXC: any such action of Creeping Barrage recorded as "FFE:1" is NA; rocket Correction is NA (C1.9)].

4.14D May place OBA Dispersed-SMOKE-(C1.71; E12.51)/IR-(E1.91; E1.93-.932), resolving ensuing WP NMC (C1.71; C3.76; G14.65) and checking for ensuing-Flame(s)-(A24.32). Then resolve HE FFE (C1.5; C1.52-.56; G14.65), checking for shellhole/Flame/rubble creation (B2.1/B6.331/B25.13/B24.11/G13.7), wire/roadblock/pillbox removal (B26-.52/B29.5/B30.92/G14.56), minefield/panji removal/reduction (B28.62/G9.72/G14.56), and sangar/trip-flare elimination (F8.41/G.8B). Check for Column Disbandment (E11.533) and Reverse Slopes (G14.66-.661).

4.2 DURING DFPh:

4.21D May designate Spotter(s) for MTR(s) that had no original Spotter (C9.3). May fire unit(s) not marked with First or Final Fire counter {Heavy AA fire; E7.52}, and/or any marked with First Fire counter (as Final Fire at adjacent/same-hex target; A8.4), placing AA/Final-/Intensive/-No-Fire or Gunflash counter(s) as required; both sides resolve such attacks. Leader(s) (/MMC/CE-AFV, if a Starshell/IR has been fired in no previous Player Turn) may attempt to fire Starshell(s) (E1.921). May conduct FB/DB Sighting TC (E7.3) and Ground Support (E7.4; G17.4-.42); ATTACKER may conduct Light AA fire (E7.51-.512), placing AA/Prep-/Bounding-Fire (E7.5) or Gunflash counter(s) as required. May attempt to Clear Flame(s) (B24.72-.721; unit becomes TI—place Labor counter if unsuccessful). Check for Column Disbandment (E11.533). May destroy/malfunction/dismantle/reassemble SW/Gun(s) (A9.73; A9.8).

4.22D May (un)limber Gun(s) (C10.21; it and crew become TI if unlimbering).

4.3 END of DFPh:

4.31D May change CA of Gun(s) presently able to fire without using Intensive Fire (C3.22). May designate/cancel AA mode of weapon(s) that can/do(es) thusly change CA (E7.5).

4.32D In daytime scenario, remove all First and Final Fire counters (A3.4; E1.8).

5. ADVANCING FIRE PHASE†

5.1 START of AFPh:

5.11B During Mild Breeze, place Drifting (i.e., gray) Dispersed SMOKE downwind of each Blaze, and of each white SMOKE, counter that has none (A24.61) [EXC: NA in cave; G11.851].

5.12A May fire ordnance Dispersed WP (C8.6); resolve ensuing NMC (A24.31) and check for ensuing Flame (A24.32).

5.13A During Gusts (B25.651), remove Dispersed SMOKE, then flip remaining SMOKE counters to Dispersed side.

5.2 DURING AFPh:

5.21A Place all Glider contents [EXC: vehicle/Gun and its PRC/crew] onboard (E8.4).

5.22A All unbroken ground (or sewer; B8.43) units/weapons not marked with Prep/Bounding/Intensive/No Fire or TI counter may fire, using halved FP for non-ordnance [EXC: DC; Non-Motion FT; Opportunity Fire (A7.25)]; qualified squad(s) may use Assault Fire (A7.36); ordnance uses TH Case(s) B/C [EXC: Case B NA for Opportunity Fire; C5.2]. May (un)limber Gun(s) (C10.21); it and crew become TI if unlimbering. Resolve Placed DC attack(s) (A23.4; C7.346).

5.23A Each berserk unit that eliminated all Known enemy units (at least one) in its Location with halved TPBF returns to Good Order (A15.46).

5.3 END of AFPh:

5.31B Resolve Blaze Spread (B25.6; B25.651) every Player Turn *after* initial appearance.

5.32B Resolve Flame-to-Blaze Spread for each unpinned Flame (B25.15-.151).

5.33B Remove all Prep Fire, Intensive Fire, No Fire and Bounding Fire counters. If night scenario, also remove all First Fire, Final Fire and Gun-flash counters (E1.8).

6. ROUT PHASE

ATTACKER first, then DEFENDER (A3.6).

6.1 START of RtPh:

6.11B Unit(s) may Voluntarily Break (A10.41). Place DM counter on each non-DM unit/stack that must rout (A10.62).

6.12B Disrupted unit(s) in/ADJACENT-to enemy Infantry/Cavalry Location (might) Surrender (A19.12) {Interrogation; E2.1}.

6.2 DURING RtPh:

6.21B Conduct all routs (A10.5-.52; A19.12; E1.54; G14.41); leader(s) may accompany routing unit(s) (A10.711). Routing unit(s) may don/remove Skis (E4.2). Broken Infantry in/ADJACENT-to Known enemy Infantry/Cavalry might Surrender (A20.21/A20.3) {Interrogation; E2.1}. Check for Failure-to-Rout elimination (A10.5; A20.21). Resolve Interdiction-(A10.53)/Panji-(G9.41) MC [EXC: if using Low Crawl], and check for trip-flare activation (G.8), as enemy unit/stack routs. Resolve, vs routing unit/stack only, each FFE-(C1.51-.53 {C1.71-.72; C1.9; E12.5; G14.65-.661})/minefield-(B28.41-.413) attack as it occurs. Check for Column Disbandment (E11.532).

6.3 END of RtPh:

6.31B Eliminate all Infantry unable to leave terrain Blaze Location(s) (B25.4).

7. ADVANCE PHASE

7.1 START of APh:

7.11A May Transfer SW/Gun(s)/Prisoner(s) (A4.431; A20.5) {Ski-use dr; E4.21}.

7.12A Japanese Infantry squad/HS ADJACENT to enemy AFV may attempt to create T-H Hero (G1.421).

7.13A Boat/Non-Aground-LC in Heavy Surf makes any required (un)Beaching DR (G13.442/G13.4423).

7.2 DURING APh:

7.21A Good Order Infantry not pinned or TI may advance (A4.7 {PAATC, A11.6; vs Difficult Terrain = CX/Panji-MC, A4.72/G9.41}). Climbing unit(s) may exchange Climb counter for CX counter if at proper level (B11.432). May don/remove Skis (E4.2). May place/remove CE counter(s) (D5.33). Sewer unit(s) may emerge (if allowed; B8.42) or advance into CC with adjacent sewer unit(s) (B8.44). Check for trip-flare activation (G.8).

7.22A Boat(s)/Amphibian(s)/Swimmer(s) might drift in Moderate/Heavy Current (B21.121/E5.23/E6.2); check for OCEAN drift in Heavy Surf (G13.444) [EXC to all: Pier; G13.734].

7.23D Boat(s)/Amphibian(s)/Swimmer(s) might drift in Heavy Current (B21.121/E5.23/E6.2) [EXC: Pier; G13.734].

7.24A May (un)Beach Boat(s) (E5.23). Boat/Non-Aground-LC in Heavy Surf makes any required (un)Beaching DR (G13.442/G13.4423).

7.25B During Steps 7.21-.24 resolve, vs advancing/drifting unit/stack (only), each FFE-(C1.51-.53 {C1.71-.72; C1.9; E12.5; G14.65-.661})/minefield-(B28.41-.412; G14.53) attack as it occurs. Check for Column Disbandment (E11.532).

7.26A All '/,'' Parachutes onboard are removed and replaced by their contents (E9.6).

8. CLOSE COMBAT PHASE

Perform all Steps listed under "... LOCATION's CCPh" in any one CC/Melee Location first, then in the next such Location, etc.

8.1 START of LOCATION's CCPh:

8.11B Place onboard beneath a "?" all hidden items, then reveal Strength Factors of all concealed units (eliminating Dummies) (A11.19).

8.12B Resolve Ambush if *advance* into CC (not Melee) was into woods/building/jungle/bamboo/kunai (A11.4; G.6) and/or by/vs "?" (automatic ATTACKER Ambush for Street Fighting; A11.8) {night Ambush dr; E1.77}.

8.13D Japanese Infantry squad/HS in same Location with enemy AFV may attempt to create T-H Hero (G1.421).

8.14B Check for Sequential CC if vehicle(s)/Ambush/Prisoner(s) involved (A11.3); Prisoner(s) of broken Guard(s) may declare escape attempt(s) (A20.55). Infantry may declare attempt to capture escorted Abandoned vehicle(s) (A21.2).

8.15B May (must, if non-Disrupted/non-Guard broken Infantry; A11.16) declare Withdrawal(s) from *Melee* (ATTACKER first; A11.2), dropping possession of any SW/Gun(s) that would prevent Withdrawal (A4.43).

8.16B Declare each SMC's solo status or pair it with another SMC or MMC (A11.14)—ATTACKER first (A11.12).

8.2 DURING LOCATION's CCPh:

8.21B Declare first/next sequential CC attack (A11.3-.34)—or, ATTACKER first (A11.12; G13.495), all simultaneous CC attacks if no sequential CC exists. Declare if Hand-to-Hand (G1.64; G18.62; J2.31; SSR RB11) and/or Capture attempt (A11.52; A20.22). Reveal (A12.31) all units declared to be making/directing a CC attack (A11.19).

8.22B '44-'45 German(s), or Japanese T-H Hero(es), may make ATMM dr (C13.7; G1.4231).

8.23B Japanese Personnel may attempt/commit Hara-Kiri (G1.641) vs CC Capture attempt.

8.24B Resolve that sequential CC attack, or all simultaneous CC attacks if no sequential CC exists. Successfully Withdrawing unit(s) enter(s) Accessible Location(s) (A11.21-.22); resolve, vs Withdrawing unit/stack (only), each FFE-(C1.51-.53 {C1.71-.72; C1.9; E12.5; G14.65-.661})/minefield-(B28.41-.412) attack as it occurs, and check for Column-Disbandment-(E11.533)/trip-flare-activation-(G.8)/Panji-MC-(G9.41). Berserk unit(s) that eliminated all Known enemy units (at least one) in Location return(s) to Good Order (A15.46). Lastly, go to Step 8.21B if further sequential CC can be declared.

8.25B May Interrogate new Prisoner(s) (E2.1; G1.621; G18.71).

8.3 END of LOCATION's CCPh:

8.31B Automatic capture of unescorted abandoned vehicle(s) (A11.7). Flip/remove CC, or retain/remove Melee, counter as appropriate. Dare-Death Infantry remain berserk only if in Melee (G18.6).

8.4 END of CCPh:

8.41B Declare and resolve (sequentially; ATTACKER first) all Aerial Combat (E7.22-.226).

8.42B Resolve all non-Flame Clearance attempts (B24.7; B28.7; G2.7; G9.71; O1.5); place Labor counter if unsuccessful (B24.8). Eliminate all Recovered tunnel entrances (B8.61).

8.43B Remove all TI [EXC: Ammo Replenishment (E10.3); Animal-Pack (G10.11)] and Pin counters. Flip each Stun counter to its +1 side (D5.34) [EXC: cumulative Stuns (G12.111; G14.33)]. Check for Ammo Replenishment (E10.3).

8.44A Place a "?" on his qualifying non-concealed, Good Order unit(s) or stack(s) (A12.12-.122; E1.32; E3.712; F11.601; G1.63; RB SSR CG15).

8.45B If night, remove all Starshells (E1.923) and IR (E1.933), and all Acquisition not Illuminated by Blaze/Flame (E1.74).

DEBRIEFING

A7.24 If the attacking unit is firing a SW, is that SW's FP halved?
A. Yes, unless the SW is a FT, DC or MOL, or is being fired as ordnance.

A10.21 Re the last sentence of this rule: would a unit subjected to a LLMC/LLTC still have its Morale Level raised (A25.221) by an unbroken Commissar (or Japanese leader) currently in its Location?
A. Yes.

A10.5 If a broken unit starts its RtPh in Open Ground in the LOS, but beyond the Normal Range, of a Known enemy unit that possesses a functioning SW or Gun, is that broken unit still forced to rout if it is within the Normal Range of that SW/Gun?
A. Yes, provided the unit possessing it is neither broken nor in Melee. For the Gun's Normal Range, see also A10.532.

A11.17 If a stealthy unit (regardless of type or nationality) loses Good Order status, is it still stealthy?
A. No (i.e., not until it is in Good Order again).

A12.11 May a concealed stack comprising a "?", MMG and MMC split into two concealed stacks, one containing the MMG and the other the MMC?
A. No—an unpossessed SW cannot gain/retain a Concealment counter.

A12.11 May a Dummy stack comprising three "?" be split into two stacks of two "?" each? If yes, what happens when they recombine into one stack?
A. Yes. One stack must lose one of its "?".

A12.14 If a concealed unit uses non-Assault Movement in Open Ground in the LOS of a Good Order enemy ground unit within 16 hexes, but LOS is drawn through a LOS Hindrance, is the moving unit's "?" lost?
A. Yes. In the next-to-last sentence of A12.14, change "prevents" to "does not prevent".

A12.152 & O6.1 If a building hex with a *RB* Cellar is Searched from ground level, is that *RB* Cellar Location considered Searched too?
A. Yes.

A15.3 According to this rule, a Finnish First-Line 6-4-8 that Battle Hardens becomes neither an 8-3-8 nor Fanatic—so what (if anything) happens to it?
A. It does become Fanatic.

A20.21 If during its RtPh a broken Infantry unit is ADJACENT to a Known, Good Order and armed enemy Infantry/Cavalry unit but for any reason is unable to rout away from it, does the broken unit surrender or is it eliminated for Failure to Rout? Assume that No Quarter is *not* in effect.
A. It surrenders.

A22.612 Is a MOL TK attempt negated if the Original colored dr of the TK DR is a "6"?
A. Yes—and the A22.6111 effects of the "6" dr apply too.

A23.4 & C7.346 If a CX unit Places/Throws a DC versus an AFV, does the +1 CX DRM apply to the DC's Position or TK DR?
A. To the Position DR only.

A24.2 Is the LOS between ground-level and 1st-level building Locations in a hex containing a +3 Smoke counter restricted by A24.2 so that only a +4 Smoke DRM applies?
A. No. Change all occurrences of "Smoke hex" in A24.2 and A24.8 to "Smoke Location".

A24.3 Does this rule's prohibition on pre-'44 use of WP by the British apply only to grenades or to all WP ammo?
A. Only to grenades.

A24.4 Does "Level 2" (as printed on the counter) Smoke placed at Level 0 rise to (i.e., up to but excluding) Level 2, or through Level 2 (i.e., up to but excluding Level 3)?
A. Up to but excluding Level 2.

B8.6 If a SSR lists ≥ one Fortified building Location by *hex* coordinate (as opposed to merely specifying the capability of Fortifying ≥ one building Location), may that Location's Fortified status be traded for a tunnel?
A. No.

B9.32 May a unit on a bridge claim Wall Advantage?
A. No.

B14.2 Assuming that orchards are in season (or are palm trees), would an LOS from 36CC1 to CC3 or vice-versa be Hindered by the CC2 orchard, as per the first sentence of B14.2—or, as per the second sentence of B14.2, would it be blocked by the orchard obstacle in CC2?
A. The orchard would be a LOS Hindrance along the Continuous Slope.

B20.43 If cavalry enters a deep stream, does its horse become CX too?
A. No.

B21.6 Is a frozen Water Obstacle treated as Open Ground *land*? If it is, may Fortifications be placed in it?
A. Yes. Yes, except for entrenchments, pillboxes and *hidden* mines.

B23.922 Are adjacent, unpinned, Good Order opposing squads inside and outside a Fortified building Location considered ADJACENT?
A. Yes, despite the fact that the outside unit could not normally advance into that building Location.

B28.1 How are hidden mines treated for solitaire play?
A. Use double the factors originally provided, but set up all mines onboard revealed.

B30.2 May a pillbox occupant use FPF against a moving enemy unit in an adjacent ground-level Location within the pillbox's CA even though those two units are not ADJACENT?
A. Yes—and the attack would be considered PBF (as would an attack from that adjacent Location versus the pillbox occupant). In addition, if that enemy unit starts the RtPh broken in that same hex, it would also be subject to DM and forced to rout (assuming the pillbox occupant is Known, armed and unbroken).

C1.22 If Radio Contact is involuntarily lost while the battery's SR is onboard, and Contact is *not* regained in the next PFPh/DFPh, what happens to the SR?
A. It remains onboard in its present hex until otherwise corrected or canceled.

C1.335 *Must* an Observer Correct or Cancel a SR if he has a LOS to its Blast Height but, disregarding SMOKE, not to a Known (to him) enemy unit in a non-Aerial Location in/adjacent-to that SR's hex?
A. No (C1.331; C1.336).

C3.73 If HE achieves a CH versus terrain that can be set-Ablaze/Rubbled, is the attack's doubled-FP IFT column used to determine if the Original IFT DR is a KIA for Rubble/Flame purposes?
A. No—the non-CH FP column is used.

C3.74 & A7.301 If Random Selection due to a CH on multiple units chooses > one of those units, but fewer units than the KIA# for that CH's FP and Final IFT DR, must Random Selection be used again among the non-CH units in order to bring the number of CH units up to the KIA's #?
A. No—the number of units chosen by the original Random Selection is the number the CH is resolved against.

C3.8 May a Gun that, as per a pertinent Vehicle/Ordnance Note, is allowed to make ≥ two TK DR per hit per also able to achieve Multiple Hits?
A. No, regardless of whether or not its TH DR was made versus an armored target.

C5.6 May a vehicular-mounted MG/ATR/light-MTR use Intensive Fire?
A. Yes, if it is MA. Such a weapon is considered a Gun (C2.1).

C8.31 & C13.24 May an ATR use the Infantry Target Type to attack Infantry using AP HE Equivalency? Could it thus achieve a CH?
A. Only if it is a 20L (i.e., 20mm) ATR.

C8.9 & D3.71 If a Gun with a circled B# attempting to fire Special Ammunition makes a TH DR that is > that ammo type's Depletion # and ≥ that B#, is the shot (as per C8.9) assumed to not have occurred, or (as per D3.71) is a Low Ammo counter placed on the Gun?
A. The shot is assumed to have occurred, *and* a Low Ammo counter is placed; i.e., such a shot counts for both Malfunction and Low Ammo purposes.

C10.111 If Infantry (i.e., not unloading Personnel) wish to unhook a Gun from a vehicle, must they first Recover the Gun?

A. Yes; however, a Gun (or dm SW counter) carried *in* the vehicle (e.g., a 76-107mm MTR; C10.1) can be unloaded only by a Passenger as per the last sentence of D6.5.

C11.2 May a Gun that is set up manned by a squad/HS/SMC be Emplaced? May a squad/HS/SMC manning an already-Emplaced Gun claim Emplacement TEM?
A. No. No for the squad, but yes otherwise.

D7.1 When a vehicle declares an OVR, may its DE-FENDER target attack it before the OVR is resolved? If yes, would that DEFENDER have to use Reaction Fire?
A. Yes—it would be Reaction Fire only if conducted *after* the OVR resolution (see the last sentence of D7.2).

E3.65 B14.3 says orchards are not Open Ground, while B14.4 says orchard movement costs are the same as for Open Ground; is an orchard considered Open Ground for purposes of mud MF/MP expenditures?
A. No—because E3.65 refers to "otherwise Open Ground *hexes*". Note, however, that mud effects would apply in an unpaved orchard road (and in Open Ground shellhole hexes as well).

G1.423 May a T-H Hero detonate a Set DC?
A. Only an A-T Set DC (G1.6121).

G1.5 Must a wounded Japanese leader make a Minimum Move if he lacks the MFs necessary to enter the first Location of the Banzai Charge he is part of?
A. Yes (but he would *not* be pinned as a result).

G1.632 Since B8.6 says a tunnel's "exit must be in a … brush or woods hex" and G1.632 says all tunnel rules apply in the normal manner, may a pillbox tunnel exit into a woods or brush hex if all woods are jungle and all brush is bamboo as per G.1?
A. Yes—and may also exit into kunai (since it is treated as brush).

G12.5 Since a LC cannot use Prep Fire unless it is Fast Aground, may it, if Beached, (un)load its Passenger(s) *and* use that same MP expenditure to conduct Bounding First Fire?
A. Yes—in fact any vehicle may (un)load and fire in this manner unless otherwise prohibited.

J2.31 Does the statement in this rule that units engaging in Hand-to-Hand must be stacked together mean that each side's units can attack or defend only as a stack?
A. No—they are stacked together only to indicate their use of Hand-to-Hand (see J2.3), and thus can still make individual CC attacks.

O.3 Why does intervening rubble that rises from the Crest level of a gully-rubble hex block LOS between units at that same (i.e., Crest) level but not LOS from that level INTO the gully?
A. It should block the latter LOS also. Delete ", but only to same-level LOS" in O.3.

O11.6234 As the Scenario Attacker, may the Russians use Cloaking for onboard as well as offboard units? How would the number of Cloaking counters be determined?
A. Yes. One per squad-equivalent in that side's at-start OB.

RB **SSR CG10** May a Retained field-phone/Off-board-Observer/Pre-Registered-Hex be moved to a new legal Location for the next CG scenario?
A. Yes.

Rules Errata:

A6.42: In line 1, add "full-level" after "every".

A10.41: After "Units", add "within both the LOS and Normal Range of an armed and unbroken Known—and/or ADJACENT to any unbroken—enemy unit".

A19.11: Add ", Commissars, Heroes, Unarmed and already-" after "-types".

A22.611: In line 11 delete "in FPF, or", and in lines 12-13 change "both … or" to "neither Subsequent First Fire nor FPF, nor in both Defensive First Fire and later in".

C1.4: In line 8 change "if" to "[EXC: unless". In line 9 change "; … equals" to ", the Extent of Error is limited to a maximum of ". In the last line add "]" after ")". In line 1 of the example, add "voluntarily" after "being".

C6.1-6.11: Change "A Gun" to "Ordnance", and "a Gun" to "ordnance".

D9.51: Delete "/IFT" in line 4.

D10.5: In line 15, delete "from a wreck".

G1.12 & G1.3: Add ", or 'breaks' due to a KIA result (A7.301)," after "Reduction)" in G1.12 and after "MC" in G1.3.

G1.13: Add "WP MC," after "landing,".

G4.1: At the end of the rule, add "AFV Riders are allowed in palm tree hexes."

G13.15: In line 3, change "14.251" to "14.261".

G13.445: Change "unit" in line 6 to "target".

German Vehicle Note 93: At the end of the next-to-last paragraph, add "A Goliath detonated by Defensive First Fire does *not* leave Residual FP."

German Vehicle Note O: After "it", add "can fire only while the AFV is BU". At the end of the Note add "(or one whose elevation advantage is > the AAMG's range to it). Otherwise it is treated as a normal AAMG".

Russian Vehicle Note 19: At the end of the first paragraph, add " and U.S. AP/APCR TK#s."

Russian Vehicle Note 20: The counter illustration should show the T-44 as being a small (+1) target. The actual counters are correct.

U.S. Vehicle Note 46: The illustration should show the LVT as CT, not OT. The actual counters are correct.

U.S. Vehicle Note I: Change "See" to "Each MG may be Removed as this given type (i.e., as a .50-cal. or MMG respectively). See also".

LC Rarity Factor Chart: The line for U.S. PTO use of the LCT(4) should show a RF of 1.5—not 1.4.

Page H120: Dates for the Lend-Lease M4A3(76)W should be "8/44-5/45".

Scenario Errata:

ASL 76: The French armored cars should *not* have AAMGs.

ASL 79: In SSR1, change "Hill 486" to "Hill 520". Regarding SSR 3, if the leader in building 40oD1 undergoes Heat of Battle, the result is always treated as Battle Hardening.

DASL 15: All U.S. units must enter in *one* Convoy and *one* Column.

ASL G8: In the Victory Conditions, change "have …total" to "currently Control one of those buildings and their Casualty VP total is ≥ triple that of the Axis side".

GEN R: The last sentence of SSR 4 reads "The 88L FlaK Gun must be set up adjacent to a building hex."

ASL T7: In the German setup instructions, change "on north" to "on/north-".

ASL T9: In the German setup instructions, change "5Q5" to "5Q6".

Counter Errata:

• **French HMG:** The back of counter "B" is incorrect.

• **French 60mm MTR:** The back of counter "A" is incorrect.

• **French ATR:** The back of counter "C" is incorrect.

• **French FT-17 75BS tankette:** The counter (as well as its Chapter H illustration) should *not* have a CMG.

• **French Peugeot 202 car:** Neither version (nor the Chapter H illustration) should have a Wreck depiction on the back.

IRON EAGLE
A New Airborne Unit for ASL
By Rex A. Martin

(E)8.6 *A-40T Krylia:* This experimental design was intended to land a Russian light tank as though it were a glider.[34] For the purpose of historical fancy, we assume that the project was carried to a successful culmination, Soviet ingenuity overcoming the laws of physics. The "Flying Tank" is subject to all normal rules for Gliders and AFVs except where specified otherwise below.
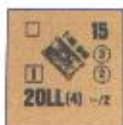
8.61 In any scenario (including DYO; cost: 42 BPV) on/after August 1942 which features a Russian Glider (E8.) or Paratroop Landing (E9.), the Russian player may add *one* A-40T Krylia to his OB. This Aerial unit enters play as a Russian T-60 M40 Tankette (complete with crew), with a "glider assembly" counter, blue-side up, placed on top of the AFV counter to represent its airborne status.

8.611 While airborne, the AFV forfeits all normal capabilities (i.e., no fire, movement, TCA change, etc.), its inherent crew must remain BU, and it may not be concealed.

8.612 Once safely landed, until the glider assembly has been removed (8.64), the T-60 may not fire, conduct Overruns, use VBM, nor move into any building, rubble, bridge, gully, stream, woods, brush, crag or orchard hex (including woods-roads and orchard-roads). Further, the COT of a hex is doubled if entered by the AFV before its glider assembly is removed. Other than these restrictions, all rules for vehicles apply normally.

8.62 All rules for *Avenue of Approach* (E8.2) apply to the A-40T. However, Light AA fire (E7.51) has no effect upon the Flying Tank, and hence cannot cause Evasive Action (the crews inside had no control of their path nor rate of descent in any case). Heavy AA fire (E7.52) can affect it as follows: an Original 2 To Hit DR eliminates the A-40T (no Wreck counter is placed, as a 6-ton tank dropping several hundred feet after its wooden wings were blown off would likely just make a deep hole); an Original 3 To Hit DR adds +1 to the Crash dr (E8.23); an Original 4 To Hit DR adds a +1 Landing colored drm (E8.22). Following resolution of all Defensive First Fire vs the A-40T, it must resolve its attempt to land in the designated ILH.

8.621 Landing is resolved as for all gliders. In addition to the usual drm, note that Heavy AA fire may have added one or more additional "+1" Landing colored drm. A landing in a minefield immediately subjects the AFV to any relevant minefield attack. A landing in an A-T ditch or graveyard hex, assuming the tank survives the Crash dr, results in immediate Immobilization (D5.5) of the AFV in the hex. Should the AFV land in a Wire Location, it suffers the usual Bog Check (B26.53). All Personnel, friendly or not, in a Location in which a Flying Tank lands suffer an immediate NMC. Once landed, flip the "glider assembly" counter from its blue-tinted side to its green-tinted side.

8.622 Upon landing, the Flying Tank must undergo a Crash dr. All drm noted in E8.23 are applicable, in addition to any inflicted by Heavy AA fire. (Note that, in contrast to 8.232, an A-40T may not land on a bridge, being eliminated as per 8.621 instead.)

8.623 An A-40T that crashes with a Final Crash dr of 7 is considered to have incapacitated its own crew; the AFV is treated as Abandoned (D5.4). Suffering a Final Crash dr of ≥ 8, the AFV is eliminated and replaced with the (non-burning) wreck of a T-60 M40 Tankette; CS (D5.6) is NA.

8.624 Should a Flying Tank *crash* in a wooden building hex, place a wooden Rubble counter in the ground-level Location and resolve Falling Rubble (B24.12) normally. Should it crash in a stone building hex, place a stone Rubble counter in the top-most non-rubbled Location of the building hex and make a dr; a subsequent dr of "6" rubbles the next lower level and also allows a dr for the next lower non-rubbled Location. [In effect, so long as the player rolls a "6" each time, he may roll to see if the AFV continues to plunge through to the next level down, until the ground-level is reach; resolve Falling Rubble normally.] A Flying Tank crashing in the same hex as a 1+3+5 (only) Pillbox, immediately eliminates that Fortification along with its contents (as per B30.92).

8.625 Should a Flying Tank *crash* such that the crossed-hexside terrain of the ILH is a roadblock, the roadblock is immediately eliminated; should the crossed-hexside of the ILH be a wall or hedge/bocage, a breach is automatically created (as per the last paragraph of British Vehicle Note 37 on page H58).

8.63 During the DFPh, the DEFENDER may fire any AT weapon still capable of Final Fire that has LOS to the landed AFV, resolving the To Hit and To Kill DR against the T-60 M40 as usual. During the ensuing CCPh, any Good Order Infantry may engage the T-60 M40 in CC by passage of a PAATC; failure of the PAATC simply disallows resolution of any CC during the current phase. Ambush (A11.4) of a just-landed Flying Tank is automatic.

8.64 Removal of the "glider assembly" is accomplished by any Good Order, Infantry MMC unit with the expenditure of four MF in its MPh in the same Location with the AFV. Immediately remove the "glider assembly" counter from the board. At this point, the T-60 M40 is free of all restrictions noted in E8.612.

34. Early ventures, with dubious results, encouraged the Soviet Air Force to continue seeking ways to land tanks in support of Russian paratroop drops. In early 1942, this led to a VVS assignment to Oleg Antonov to build a glider for this express purpose. Disdaining the conventional approach (as exemplified by the British Harmilcar glider for the Tetrarch tank), Antonov decided to use the tank itself as the fuselage, borne by a biplane wing and forked tail assembly connected to the vehicle by a detachable cradle. The design, designated the A-40T *Krylia* ("Flying") Tank, was based on a surplus T-60 M40 tank. Trials of the prototype were unsuccessful, however, even with the transmission in neutral, the tracked suspension made it impossible to tow at the high speeds necessary to get the Flying Tank to lift off. And so the project was abandoned in early 1943. However, if the simple expedient of attaching a self-ejecting undercarriage (similar to that used by the Western Allies for the larger gliders) had been instituted, in theory the contraption could have been taken aloft. One must wonder, however, what a glider-style landing of the A-40T *Krylia* would have been like.

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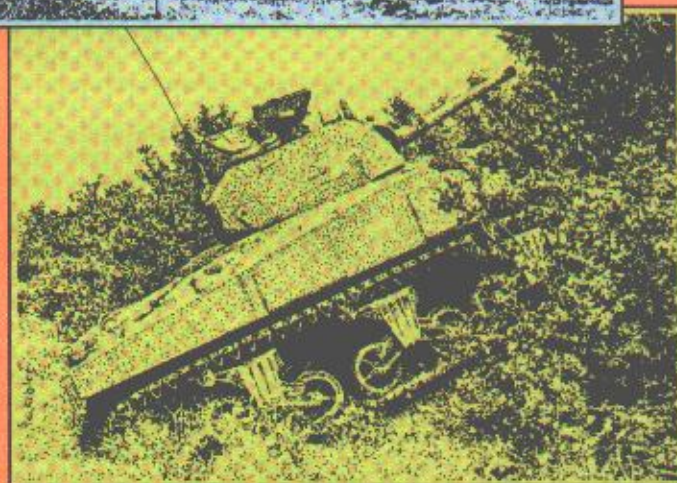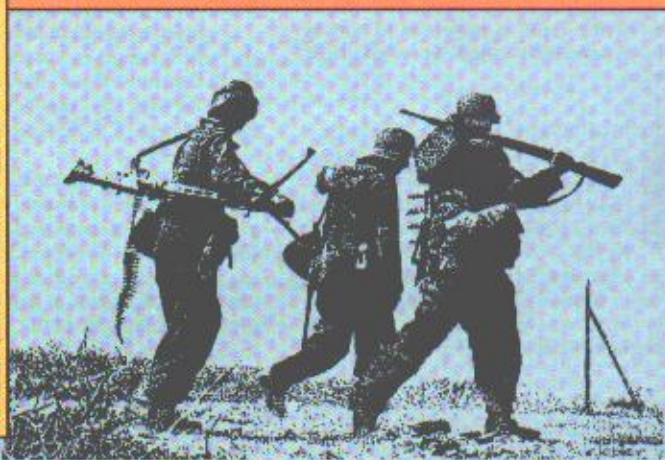
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