

GENERAL

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★ ★ The AVALON HILL GENERAL

The Game Players Magazine

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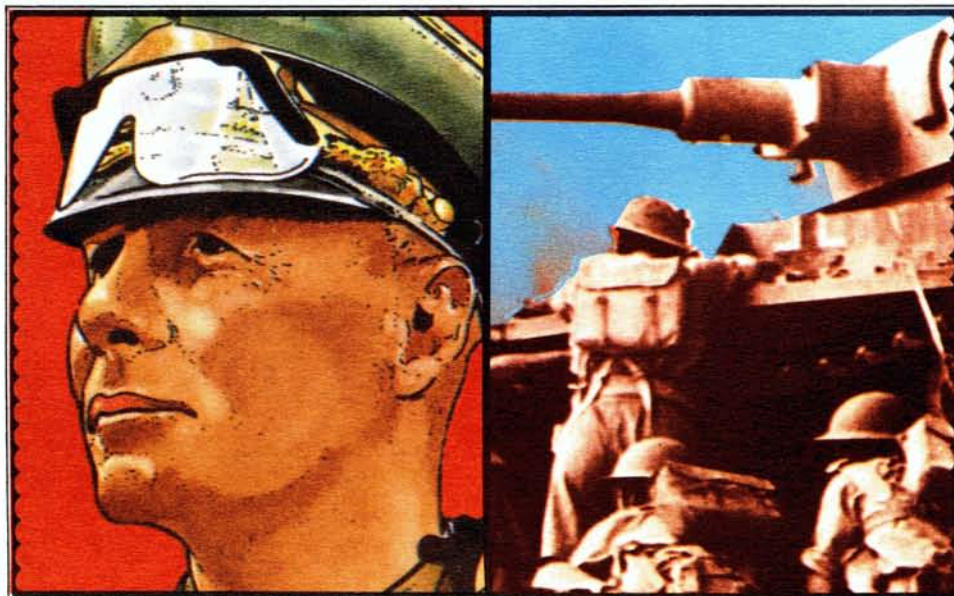
AH Philosophy Part 19

I'm curious. Do you readers ever grow tired of running roughshod over cardboard battlefields? When you do, do you pull out that ticket for the local ballpark, or flip on the TV to watch the latest playoffs? While I've never been fond of spectator sports (other than war), quite a few of my acquaintances are rabid fans of one professional team or another—as I suspect some of you are.

There is more than a bit of interest in big-time sports among the gamers that I know. While wargaming certainly dominates the time they spend on their hobby, surprisingly more wargamers play sports games than fool around with computer games or fantasy role-playing. More than 50% of our design staff are members of a 28-player local FOOTBALL STRATEGY League. And that includes

Bruce Shelley (NO Saints, a two-time NFL Division winner), three-time Superbowl Champion Don Greenwood (GB Packers), newcomer Craig Taylor (LA Rams) and the indomitable Tom Shaw (League Secretary). Wargamers make up approximately 80% of the Baltimore Rotisserie Baseball League that involves a number of AH staff members as well as some very knowledgeable local sportsaholics. ORIGINS conventions have long included competitions in FOOTBALL STRATEGY, WIN, PLACE & SHOW and SPEED CIRCUIT on the program. Without laboring the point further, suffice to say that I see considerable overlap in interest among historical and sports gamers.

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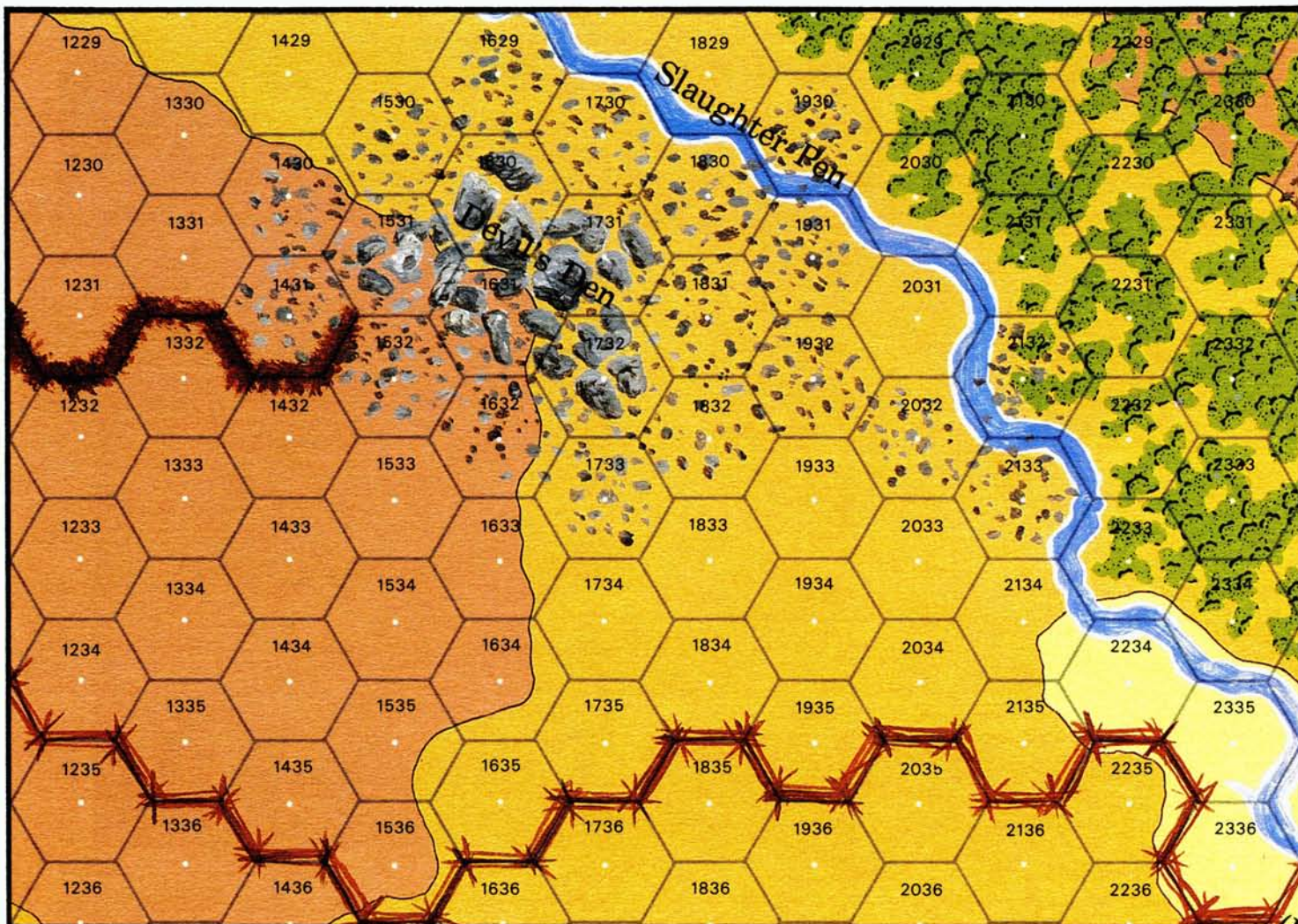
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GERMANY: THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

Play on the Southern Front

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Late on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg, Longstreet launched his delayed attack against the exposed Union Third Corps, the left flank of the embattled Army of the Potomac. The attack stepped off from Longstreet's right flank led by part of John Bell Hood's division—the fierce Texas Brigade and Law's Alabamans. The battlelines of these brigades were drawn toward a Union battery firing on them from Houck's Ridge, a partially wooded rocky eminence that would be known from this day on as **Devil's Den**. Beyond the ridge the Confederates hoped to find and decisively rout the Union Army's flank—but Ward's Brigade contested its capture for over an hour. Their valiant stand gave the Union commanders a chance to move new troops to a second position behind the

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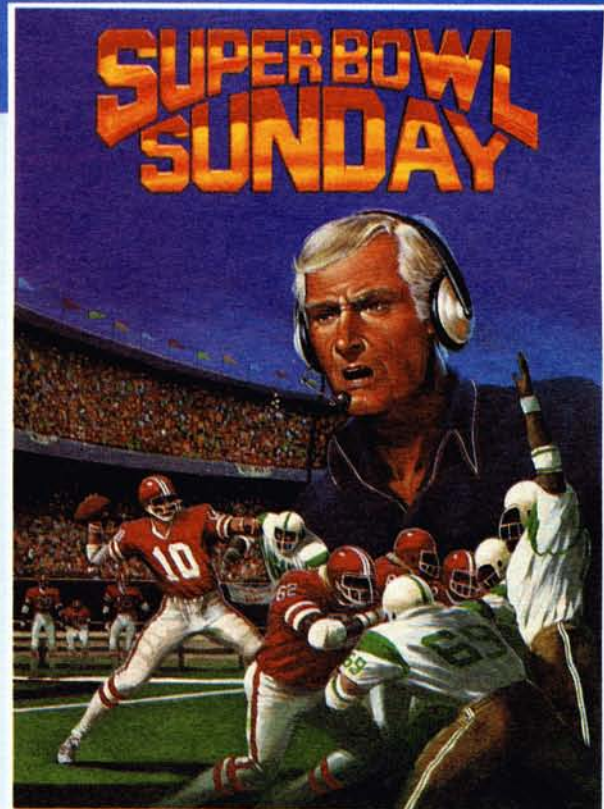


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		4 = OFF TACKLE BOTTOM		4 = BOTTOM OLB	MILOT RR=4 PR=3
		5 = QB SNEAK		5 = BACK 1	BOLAICH OR MAITLAND
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OVER BURNING SANDS

A Tour Through PANZERARMEE AFRIKA

By Bob Medrow

The North African campaigns of WWII have proven to be of great interest to both military scholars and wargamers. For the former, North Africa is seen as the training ground, first for the British and later for the Americans, upon which the hard realities of modern warfare were learned. To quote General Sir William Jackson from the preface of his excellent book, *The Battle for North Africa, 1940-43*:

In these operations, British and American servicemen gained battle experience; staffs learned their business; equipment was proved; and battle-winning tactics were evolved.

For the wargamer, for whom at least eight games have attempted to recreate the fighting between El Agheila and Alexandria, the appeal is probably somewhat different. Given the areas and forces involved, we can at least hope to see both the sweeping movement and the decisive result which were absent from much of the fighting in WWII, and are certainly not to be found in many of the games which model portions of that conflict.

Avalon Hill's *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* (hereafter *PAA*) is a worthy member of the family of North African campaign games. Having owned and played over a hundred different games during my more than 26 years in this hobby, I've spent a fair amount of time trying to decide just what it is that makes a game one to which a person will return again and again. I think a pair of key factors are the variety of situations that can appear in any given playing of the game, and the number of different things that a player can try in pursuit of victory. As with many games in which each player can expect to be on both the strategic offensive and the strategic defensive, *PAA* is quite rich with regard

to these factors. It is aided in this by the fact that being on the strategic defensive most definitely does not mean abandoning the tactical offensive.

While it may sound strange coming from someone who has been as involved with *SQUAD LEADER* as I have been, there's a lot to be said for a game which gives its players a reasonable amount of historical accuracy without requiring that one gain mastery of a 64-page rulebook before the fun can start. With *PAA*, not many playings are needed before the mechanics of the game are understood well enough for a player to concentrate upon the strategy. In the following pages, I hope to give you a few insights into how the game came to be what it now is. But first, let me introduce a play aid which I hope you will find as useful as my friends and I have.

Keeping Score

The vendors out at the ballpark tell you that you can't tell the players without a scorecard. Well, in *PAA*, you can't do a very accurate job of keeping track of just what's going on without a scorecard of sorts.

I received the original version of *PAA* at the time of its first printing, and it wasn't long before those of us playing it discovered that the character of the victory conditions, the existence of "Replacement Strength Points" (hereafter *RSPs*) and the ability of the Allied player to augment the strength of some of his units all interacted in a most interesting way. The victory conditions involve the ratio of one side's onboard "Strength Points" (hereafter *SPs*) to that of the other's. However, no unit of a particular nationality and type is ever completely eliminated until the total *SPs* of such units destroyed exceeds the number of *RSPs* which appear during the course of

the game. Up to that point, units lost are merely located in a "cadre" box from which they can be resurrected by spending *RSPs*, of the appropriate nationality and type, equal to the *SP* value of the unit. In addition, the Allied player has the option of adding *RSPs* to existing units so as to increase their strength.

After various false starts, the record sheet (see accompanying "RSP Chart") has evolved. For replacement and augmentation purposes, each country's forces are either infantry or armor. Thus, there are a total of six boxes shown. When a unit is destroyed in combat, boxes equal in number to the strength of the unit are crossed out, beginning with the bottom row, and working from right to left. If, for example, Allied infantry losses were to equal 16 *SPs* at some point in the game, all four boxes in the bottom row, all ten boxes in the next row above, and two boxes at the right of the third row up would have been crossed off.

You'll note that five of the six boxes are divided into two parts. For example, of the 25 Italian armor boxes, the first five which would be crossed out are separated from the remaining twenty. The number of boxes below and/or to the right of the interior dividing line represents the number of *SP* losses of that nationality and type which can be taken before the game ends. Those factors marked off above the line show the amount, in that category, which reduce the total factors below its maximum possible value. To continue with the example of the Italian armor, the total *SPs* of such units which either begin the game onboard or enter play later as reinforcements is 20. But only five *RSPs* are received during the game to replace losses.

Things aren't quite that simple for the Allies,

of the units for which there existed the greatest surplus of RSPs. Not surprisingly, Italian infantry played an important part in such blocks. Because of their lower speed and strength, the typical Italian infantry unit would have missed out on a lot of chances to be destroyed during the advance. Coupled with the largest individual RSP total of any Axis unit type, this commonly saw them entering the latter stages of the game with a number of RSPs available. And so it came about that, humming "Lili Marlene", the *Deutsches Afrika Korps* marched back to El Agheila, secure in the knowledge that their brave allies held the road behind them. Concerning the track routes, their limit of five hexes per turn for truck movement means that no advance is going to move that way very quickly. Wherever a track runs close enough to the road for flanking movement to be a threat, keeping a German stack of infantry units falling back along such a track provided adequate security.

The above is not intended to mean that an Axis victory was, in any sense, automatic and it did, in any case, suppose that the Axis player would adopt a most unRommel-like attitude toward the game. However, with normal luck and reasonable attention to what was going on, marginal victory could be had much more often than one would wish to see in any game.

Overruns

To begin with, a brief history lesson. In the early days of wargames, there was no such thing as *overrun*, and this fact shaped play to a considerable extent in a number of classic Avalon Hill games. Who, among you old *STALINGRAD* players, didn't come to think of the Russian 2-3-6 units as one of the strongest elements of the Russian force? Because of their low strength they were easily rebuilt, and the strongest stack of German panzers could do no more than destroy them. In what had been, historically, very fluid situations, the game-world ability of a weak unit to halt the advance of a vastly greater enemy in a totally predictable way produced some very strange results.

And so, in tactical and operational level games, we've come to expect the appearance of some game mechanism whereby feeble opposition can be swept away during movement. Thus, the existence of an "Overrun" rule in a North African game is exactly the sort of thing we should expect to see, simply because of the scale of the game. However, the importance of the overrun is greatly magnified here by the extraordinarily high movement rates and the ability of overrunning units to, possibly, make more than one such attack per turn.

In *PAA*, the easiest method of preventing an overrun is to stack enough in the hex so that the "Attack Superiority" necessary for an overrun cannot be attained. Since, for most of the game, the maximum strength that can be massed in a hex is twelve SP, a stack of five SPs or more is safe from an overrun. However, if you are falling back and wish to delay the enemy, doing so at the cost of five or more SPs per turn as a result of normal combat may be a bit much.

Depending upon the number and strength of potential overrunning stacks, there are alternatives—having to do with the "Zone of Control" (hereafter ZOC) rules. Specifically, referring to Figure 1, rule 9.22 says that the stack of Italians cannot overrun either the Poles or the Australians, so long as both exert ZOCs into the hex the Italians occupy. However, a pair of units can halt an advance only if the advancing force either begins in the hex it occupies in Figure 1 or can be made to enter that hex. Otherwise, movement as shown in Figure 2 would commonly allow a pair of overruns. This becomes impossible only when supply and/or terrain considerations and/or movement costs prevent an advancing enemy stack from moving in this fashion.

Examples of Overrun and Defense:

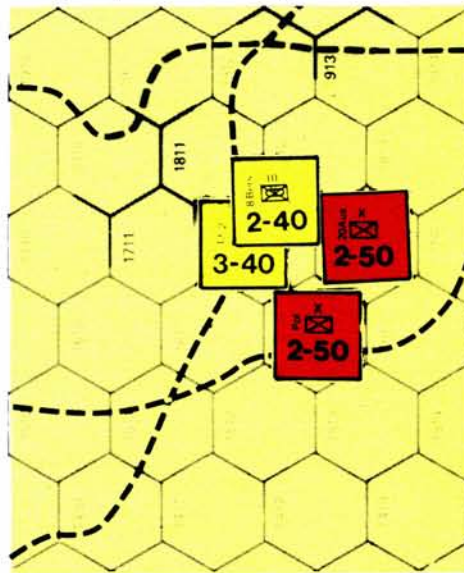


Figure 1

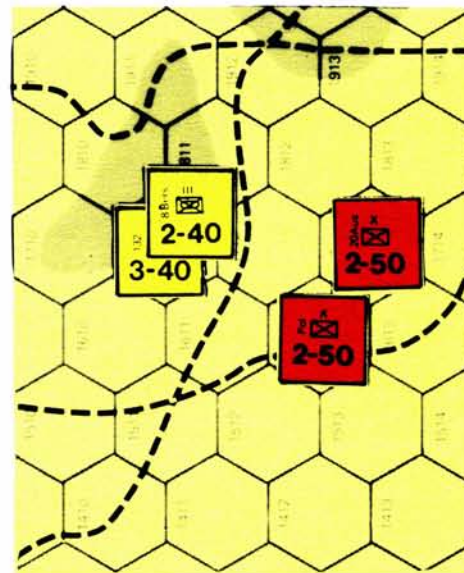


Figure 2

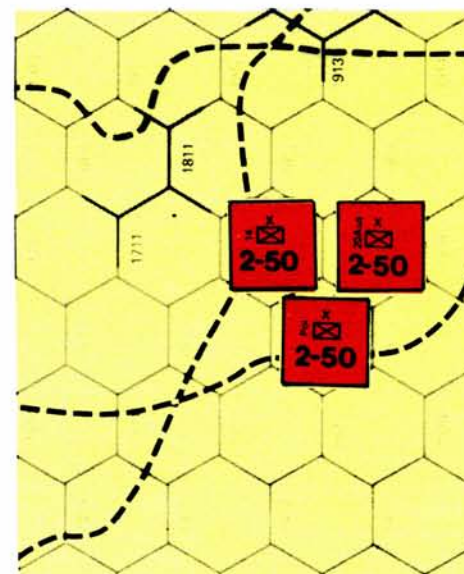


Figure 3

At least one advancing stack can be forced to occupy the hex that the Italians occupy in Figure 1 by adding a third unit to the blocking force, as shown in Figure 3. This triangular block will keep any one stack from overrunning more than one hex. Adding a fourth unit will generally limit any two advancing forces to a total of two overruns. An important thought to bear in mind is that, in the situation just described, it is the ability of a unit to exert a ZOC, rather than the strength of that unit, that counts.

Other Factors

The Seventies saw a number of games in which Command Control rules played an important part. This is hardly surprising, in a historical sense, since the ability to control forces with great precision has proven to be an uncommon thing. Limiting a player's ability to maneuver all of his forces as he wishes has been seen by many designers as a means of limiting the effect of the player's more usual, god-like, eye-in-the-sky knowledge of the situation. However, such efforts are often not well-received by players, who quite often feel that they should be able to control their forces. The rules originally found in *PAA* were particularly disagreeable in that their effect was to make some hexes more vulnerable than others. Since hex numbers were used in determining which hexes would be out of control, the high vulnerable hexes had absolutely nothing to do with any historical considerations.

Finally, the Victory Conditions contained a most unusual result. If both parties to the conflict simply sat around their respective Main bases, the Axis player would win a Marginal Victory. If there were no combat, the final Axis strength of 89 SPs is over one-half the Allies final total of 142 SPs. While this is hardly likely, it is also completely ahistorical, since the relative force commitments are hardly such as to justify giving the Axis a victory if nobody gets hurt.

The Present Game

To those of us who spent a considerable amount of time with the original *PAA*, it was apparent that the game needed some help. However, in acquiring games originally published by others, The Avalon Hill Game Company is hardly interested in the prospect of then having to redesign the game. After all, a game that is badly flawed is hardly an attractive acquisition. So, it follows that there will be normally a limit to the changes made—subtle ones intended to correct the mistakes made by the initial developers.

Kevin Zucker, overseeing the project for Avalon Hill, cleaned up a major problem by reducing, on the average, the number of Allied hexes which would be out of Command Control in any single turn. At the same time, he also eliminated the problem of some hex columns being more hazardous than others. However, what he left us with is still hard on aged eyes, such as mine, in that you must roll a die for each hex and then compare the resulting numbers on the Chart (12.1) with the last digit of the hex in which the unit is located. Since the net effect is to provide a one-in-six chance that any one hex will be out of Command Control, there's a quicker way.

Ten years ago while working in the Cleveland area one summer, I played several games with a guy named Mike who maintained that his skill with the dice was such that, out of consideration for others, he never handled them. Instead, he used a clear drinking glass, the inside bottom of which was curved upward slightly. With a die in the glass, the player needing to make a roll placed his hand over the top, then turned the glass over, and then immediately turned it back again. The result was as wild a die roll as you'd ever want. It's also one that won't wipe out ten stacks of units on the mapboard. In connection with Command Control, the effect of

the rule can be obtained by "rolling" a die once for each stack and considering the hex out of Command Control if a "1" (or any other pre-selected value) comes up.

Both because of its position and its function as a port, Tobruk was always valuable, in a game sense, to both sides. However, historically, there was another factor that I thought worth including in the revised version of *PA4*. While I do not play roleplaying games as such, I have long been conscious of the fact that many wargamers do identify—at least to some extent—with the forces they command. As an example, coming from the Chicago area, I lived in Missouri for fifteen years before being allowed to play the Confederate side in any Civil War game. In *PA4* neither player fills the role of "Supreme Commander". Historically, commanders on both sides were subject to higher headquarters and the control of Tobruk was of no small matter there. Churchill, in particular, attached great importance to it and had little use for commanders who were not in wholehearted agreement with him on the matter. Thus, if you control Tobruk for more than half the Player Turns of the game, the level of victory shifts one column in your favor. Consider this to be part of the reality of command.

This type of rule appeals to me in that it is not uncommon for both players to have to weigh the relative advantages and disadvantages of trying to hold on to Tobruk for just another turn. As far as I can tell, it helps motivate somewhat more aggressive play on the part of both players. This, in turn, helps create more of the climate in which the actual campaign was fought, offering the chance for both greater gain and greater loss.

The "Reaction" rule is optional, but recommended. As with the Tobruk rule, it was intended to provide a greater potential for both gain and loss. Hopefully, it will provide a larger role for the German armor on defense. The nature of the combat system and the Combat Results Table are such that it is dangerous to have small units in combat, so that using them in this way may be either profitable or costly.

Realistically, reserves ought to play a role at the operational level. Historical accounts of battle are filled with instances in which the ability to supply reinforcements to a conflict held the key to victory. Finally, if the defender is not already stacked to the maximum in the hex, the availability of reinforcements makes it that much harder to decide what amount of force is required in order to attack, and what the dangers of a counterattack will be.

The Italian Rule

Let's get one thing straight at the start. It's likely that most of you reading this know the popular idea of the military reputation acquired by the Italians as a result of their participation in WWII. Whether he ever said it or not, Rommel's reported comment to the effect that a people's ability to wage war is hardly a measure of their worth is certainly true. In fact, one might go so far as to say that a failure to show a great eagerness to conquer a new Roman Empire for *El Duce* was a mark of considerable intelligence. Such considerations aside, many Italian units fought well, particularly when well-trained, well-equipped and well-led. When these conditions were not met they generally did what poorly motivated troops have traditionally done—they either surrendered or ran away.

The bottom line of all this is that this optional, but most highly recommended, rule is not intended as an insult to the Italian forces that served in North Africa. It is, however, intended to reflect the reality of what has most often happened to the forces of any nation when its government has bungled and placed them in a bad situation sliding downhill on its way to worse. By the time the effects of this rule are going to be in full swing, the Italian situation will be very bad indeed. Everything in East Africa

has long since been overrun, and the Allied advance in North Africa is getting closer and closer to Italy itself.

Two ideas are to be found in these rules. One is that the effects are gradual but, once a certain point is reached, that things will go downhill in a hurry. The second is the concept of "stiffening" troops who are about at the end of their rope with troops of better quality. The rules will not keep the Italian force from playing a vital role in Axis plans. Hopefully, however, they will keep them from playing a totally unrealistic role.

As you can see from the rules, there are three stages to the Italian decay. The first stage is reached when ten or more Italian infantry units have been lost in combat. This does not mean permanently lost, so that this stage is reached as soon as ten boxes have been checked in the Italian infantry block on the scorecard. At this point, RSPs (even if not already available) will suffice to bring these units back. However, almost half of the total RSPs have been or will be required which ought, I think, to have a sobering effect upon the troops. Note that mention is also made of a game-long supply restriction on the ability of Italian infantry to attack. Given the structural command problems of these units, this reflects my feeling that they had little ability to carry out a hasty attack.

When losses have reached the 20 SP level, the Italian infantry units add to the Axis woes by becoming less reliable on defense. Particularly if they have been used as cannon fodder, losses at this level commonly exceed the RSPs already received and, in any event, the pipeline is about to run dry. Thus, permanent loss of formations is just around the corner. The ZOC loss reflects the fact that the Overrun rules make the ability to cast a ZOC into a hex a major factor in halting overruns (as described above). If, in the retreat, the Axis forces must leave behind a blocking force, one composed of unsupported Italian infantry is much easier to overrun and may even vanish as the result of surrender once losses become this high among their ranks. Blocking forces, under these conditions, must include other, less easily replaced units or, at least, have such units adjacent. The possibility of surrender, with subsequent Allied advance and the possibility of unexpected attack, puts any such supporting units at risk. Of course, the prospects of the hex becoming vacant as a result of surrender can be reduced by stacking infantry units together, but that increases the rate at which they'll be lost, leading to . . .

Step three sees formations permanently lost, and reflects what I see as the historical (and eminently reasonable) unwillingness of most folk to die in a lost cause. Collectively, these changes in the original rules build upon the strengths of the original system without altering the things that made it, from the first, a popular and enjoyable game.

The Map

I wonder what your reaction to the nature of the game's map mounting was. In my case, I thought it was an improvement, provided that you could get the darn thing to lay flat. With this map, and subsequent ones that are die-cut, I've found that they can be tamed quite effectively by opening them up and leaving them open for a day or two with lots of heavy stuff stacked on top. After that, even if I leave one folded up for a year, it's quite docile when next opened. Oh, a corner might stick up a bit, but it's no worse than I've experienced many a time with mounted maps of the old style.

Concerning the map itself, there are some things worth mention. The coastal road passes through the point at which hexes 1633, 1634 and 1534 all meet. It is considered to pass from 1633 to 1634. Since the coastal road gets a lot of traffic, you might wish to do what I've done in order to cut down on the endless hex counting (no small thing when some units have a movement rate of 60). Beginning at El

Agheila (hex 0702), I've placed a "dry transfer" asterisk along the coastal highway every five hexes (in 0906, 1406, 1906, 2109, 2213, 2318, 2020, 1925, 1729, 1532, 1536, 1440, 1244 and 1249). The alternative routes which exist at two locations between Bengasi and Derna are the same length as the coastal segments, so it doesn't matter what route one follows. On these stretches, asterisks go in hexes 2009 and 2213 (again); the two bypasses around Tobruk don't work out as neatly, since each adds one hex to the total. Dry transfer letters, numbers and symbols are frequently particularly neat ways of doing things to maps.

One final modification has to do with the escarpment hexsides. Because the symbols are generally located quite a little bit to either side of the hexside, it is quite common to be forced to move units to find out whether or not there's one there. They can be made more visible by using one of those markers employed to highlight material in textbooks; simply draw a line along the escarpment hexside. While they come in a variety of colors, yellow is the obvious choice.

Conclusion

For years, *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* was a favorite among gamers looking for a fast-moving, exciting challenge. Despite some problems, it was a perennial at tournaments. The Avalon Hill Game Company is to be congratulated on keeping this fine game on the market—and even improving it.



SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed: 119

Total Responses: 420

Rank	Title	Pub	Rank Times		
			Last	On	Freq.
			Time	List	Ratio
1.	Squad Leader	AH	3	26	3.6
2.	Hitler's War	AH	8	4	3.2
3.	PG Guderian	AH	2	3	3.2
4.	B-17	AH	5	9	3.1
5.	Third Reich	AH	4	26	3.0
6.	G.I.	AH	7	16	2.8
7.	Up Front	AH	10	8	2.2
8.	Russian Campaign	AH	1	26	1.9
9.	Civilization	AH	—	1	1.6
10.	Cross of Iron	AH	—	1	1.5
11.	Ambush	VG	9	5	1.4
12.	Bulge '81	AH	17	6	1.3
13.	PanzerBlitz	AH	—	1	1.3
14.	Diplomacy	AH	12	3	1.2
15.	Dune	AH	—	1	1.2
16.	Longest Day	AH	—	1	1.1
17.	War & Peace	AH	6	4	1.1
18.	Panzer Leader	AH	20	2	1.0
19.	Stalingrad	AH	—	1	1.0
20.	WS&IM	AH	14	11	1.0

Perhaps I spoke hastily in analyzing the last installment of this regular listing of the most played games in our current line; *SQUAD LEADER* and *G.I.* display still their strength, while *COI* returns. Surprisingly, both *PG GUDERIAN* and *HITLER'S WAR* remain highly visible, encouraging us in our hopes to reprint more "classic" games whose copyrights have passed to The Avalon Hill Game Company. Given the RBG ratings for *HITLER'S WAR* reported in this issue, it appears obvious that the readership approves of our efforts thus far. An inordinate number of titles dropped from the listing, while an equal number rotated back into it. The artificial limitation of listing only 20 games is at work here, I think. There seem to be about a dozen titles that slip on and off, and often a single vote determines whether one of these games is currently found herein or not.



TO THE BORDERLINE

Opening Strategies for PANZERARMEE AFRIKA

By Rex A. Martin

Since *AFRIKA KORPS* first rolled off the presses in 1964, the desert war has exercised a fascination for gamers unmatched by any other venue. Perhaps it is the “pure” nature of armored warfare there, or perhaps the lack of non-combatants cluttering up the proceedings, that makes World War II in this wasteland so intriguing to us. Certainly the personalities and brilliance of the commanders—O’Connor, Rommel, Montgomery—play a part. For most wargamers, the desert war still seems an epic struggle against both foe and climate conducted by small, elite forces in a gentlemanly manner not found elsewhere in a world at war. And the stakes were nothing less than an empire. Thus, we witness numerous games on the subject on our closet shelves—with one or two new ones added every year. But when looking for something to play with friends, I return to what remains the best simulation of the war in North Africa available—*PANZER-ARMEE AFRIKA*.

Shortly after its appearance under the aegis of another company, players of *PAA* found that the game had unexpected depths of strategy. With simple but realistic and logical rules, and with that all-important “feel” of the sweep of the campaign due to the large movement values, the play is fast and furious. Strategy is determined by the speed of advance and retreat, and dominated by the terrain and by logistics. Even as was the actual warfare. The Avalon Hill Game Company, recognizing a success, merely incorporated necessary errata when they issued their version. The strategies remain as complex and intriguing as ever.

The first five turns of *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* set the tone for the remainder of the game. The Axis player must expand as far as possible before the weight of Allied reinforcements start to tell, looking to secure Tobruk and Bardia and solidify a tenuous supply line. The Allied player, on the other hand, seeks to blunt the Axis thrust with scant reserves and in the face of several severe handicaps. Depending on the success that the opposing players enjoy, the game may be a hard-fought contest of skill or a short, decisive campaign with a foregone conclusion. For both players, the border of Libya and Egypt is the marker of success.

April 1941

It is often instructive when planning strategy in a game such as *PAA* to look at the worst that can happen in any given situation. This is most true for the Allied player, since he labors under the added burden of uncertainty regarding which of his units will be able to move and fight on each successive turn. For those benighted few unfamiliar with the game, the Allied player must at the beginning of each British player turn roll for *Command Control*. A chart translates the die roll into hex coordinates; Allied units in corresponding hexes can neither move nor initiate combat. Needless-to-say, this makes a well-planned fighting withdrawal or pursuit of a defeated foe rather tough to calculate. In essence, it means that the Allied player must think fast, always adapting to the fluid situation as he is forced to sacrifice units that cannot keep pace due

to the fall of the die. And it means that he must plan to spread the threat of paralysis among his best combat units.

Although the Allies get to move first—a unique occurrence in that the Commonwealth forces are very firmly on the defensive for the first period of the game—there remains the possibility of disaster striking. If the initial Command Control die rolls are a “1”, the only two Allied forces west of Tobruk (2SG and 20Aus) are “frozen” and at the mercy of the anticipated Axis explosion from El Agheila. Since the Allied player cannot voluntarily destroy his supply depots on the first turn (unlike succeeding turns), the situation rapidly becomes critical. Take a look at Illustration #1. It projects major Axis gains should the Allied player not move. As such, it helps crystalize some of the key elements for the Allied player to consider when plotting his first turn move to defensive positions.

The lead elements of the Afrika Korps overrun 2SG, blowing open the front and opening the coast road. They then proceed to overrun the Allied dumps in 1406 and 2111. (And since there is a 66% chance of capturing them intact, as opposed to only 33% on following turns, the Allied player is looking at the range of Axis operations being extended deep into his territory.) Finally the Germans move to hex 2215, where the 104th (4-60) halts while the 1/5 armor (3-60) proceeds to 2016. Meanwhile the German truck carries a supply counter to 2213, where the dump is established while the truck returns to hex 1506 on its way back to transport more supplies.

that if a die roll can wreck your chances of some dramatic victory, it will occur (there's a corollary to "Murphy's Law" that says something like that I think). While a nice, straight line of tripled units along a hexgrain sure looks marvelous, it's pure disaster when you need to react to the latest out-flanking maneuver or overrun. So always spread your units around; usually a refused flank works nicely in PAA.

Notice too the number of units that occupy crossroads. The road net in the game is important, not so much for movement but for tracing supply lines; study it carefully. This is quite important for the Axis, who must expand quickly in the first phase. Even an isolated unit prevents supply from being traced through its hex and the six adjacent hexes. This means that there is a lengthy detour if the isolated Allied unit happens to be between the depot and the front. The Axis player must often detach forces to deal with these pockets simply to open up his options for movement and supply. Should the tide of war roll back to the area of these bypassed Allied units, they can—upon resupply even turns after—serve as advanced spearheads to insure that German defensive lines cannot incorporate the crossroads. By this stage of the game, he usually can't be distracted as you harry him. I have even purposely left stacks at key points to discomfit the Axis player (such as two 2-50s if I can afford them at Mechili when I retreat on the second turn).

A word or two on the methods of defeating overruns can also be said here. Obviously the best method is simply to place so much strength in a hex that any overrun is impossible—seven SPs mean that sufficient attack superiority can never be gained. However, it will be a few turns before the Allies can even contemplate such "overrun-proofing" of every hex in a line. So alternate methods to make overruns unpalatable must be found. Clustering units serves nicely. By placing several counters adjacent to each other, the attack will be slowed due to the ten Movement Point cost and perhaps ended completely after the first unit is destroyed since supply is "calculated from the instant before the overrun". By overlapping the ZOCs in this manner, unless the gap is widened by other units no single thrust can carry through a three-unit deep line; the overrun attack on the third unit would be unsupplied and hence impossible. Unfortunately, this is "counter-intensive" and at this stage is also simply impossible for the Allies.

The best method I have found is to place a solid line of units in the front row, leave the adjacent hexes empty, and then place a second line of units on every other hex (see Illustration #3). Any penetration of the first line means that an attack on the second line is impossible unless the two adjacent friendly units to the overrun hex have already been neutralized in previous overruns. As the game progresses for the Allies, this second line can be strengthened to the point where an immediate counterattack to any break is imminent. By concentrating on such blitzing units, the Allies could draw the Axis into a war of attrition—one the Allied player is sure to win.

Once the Allied forces have moved, it is time for the Axis to do their worst. Let's look at the turn from the other side now.

First turn for the Axis player is a time for flexing his muscle. Enjoy it. At the moment you are lord of the desert; in six or seven turns you may be fighting for your life. Much of this first salvo is simply reaction to the Allied movement and defenses. Obviously your forces will want to overrun any unguarded depots. Too, there may be some British forces left behind; you'll do well to overwhelm them, so removing the roadblocks they represent. I suggest using the Italian infantry for this donkey work and putting your large forces to better use. Obvious too is the fact that you must press the Allies, harrying them along and destroying units in

the process. Unless the enemy has drawn so far back that I can't reach him, or my own supply situation limits my advance, I like to attack at least a couple of Allied units with sure-fire attacks regardless of any position he may take up in Libya. This keeps the pressure on him to continue his retreat and balances out his arriving reinforcements. This is not to say, however, that one overlooks the danger from counterattacks or that one does not take advantage of an opportunity, merely that the Axis should plan to destroy two or more Allied units each turn *at a minimum*. Ideally, these attacks should also establish a threat on the next turn.

For example, given the first turn Allied defense positioned above, the Axis forces could attack two units with a fair chance of killing both and cracking the thin Allied line. First, overrun the depots and garrison those captured with Italian infantry. If the depot in 1511 is taken, the German units and a spare Italian infantry unit attack the British 2-50 in 1616. (Alternatively, if the depot hasn't been captured, the German truck could carry the Axis depot to hex 0910 to provide supply for this attack.) Meanwhile, Italian forces move to hexes 1814 and 1715 to attack the Allied force in 1815; bring in sufficient troops to gain a "2" in Attack Superiority on the CRT. Screen the coastal flank with a couple of spare Italian infantry units to avoid any unpleasant surprises; any Allied commander who pushes his head into this trap with German units past his flank deserves to see his forces isolated.

Perhaps the safest attack in this case is to simply press the Allies back, attempting to capture the depot in 2111. First you must overrun the unit in 2110. It should then be relatively easy to mount an attack on the two units in that hex with a "6" in attack superiority, insuring that there will be no nasty counterattack. Of course, in the process you will tie up enough forces that you are in effect conceding the Allies the chance to hold onto Mechili and the rough terrain for another turn, thus delaying your advance. By simply shortening their line, the Allies win a tactical victory. This is not what you want. To be victorious, Axis players must be as bold as Rommel.

During the first turn, and all subsequent turns for that matter, the positioning of the supply depots coming up from El Agheila is most important. Much depends on which Allied depots are captured intact, so move your truck and supply counter last. To lay out your supply line, select a point ahead of the captured British depots to make your terminus if the Allies have begun a precipitous retreat. On the other hand, if the Allies look to make a fight of it and establish a defense line in front of Tobruk, simply hold your supplies on the truck ready to be delivered through a hole in the line after an overrun. The mere threat of this can unbalance the enemy defensive line and provide you with an opportunity to strike deep.

As the Axis player, don't be cocky on this first turn, even though you may hold all the trumps. Your combat force only amounts to some 20 factors (facing 24 Allied, assuming they have lost none). Don't look for the game winning breakthrough yet. You want to outmaneuver the enemy, bleeding him a bit and keep him moving back. Keep this in mind and your opening salvo won't be a dud.

May 1941

The Allied player can now, having held Mechili for the turn (and possibly hex 2111), destroy the depot(s) and withdraw on Tobruk. Assuming that the Axis player has attacked your line somewhere, your withdrawal may be somewhat constrained. But you must disengage. Now is not the time to fight back; save your strength. The reinforcements that just arrived in Alexandria will be withdrawn at the end of your turn, so you can't count on them to plug any holes. Unfortunately, your opponent has gained seven combat points, while you've probably lost a

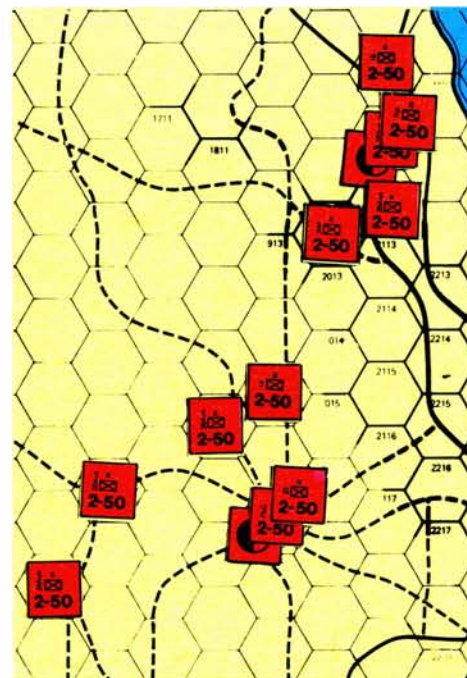


Illustration #2

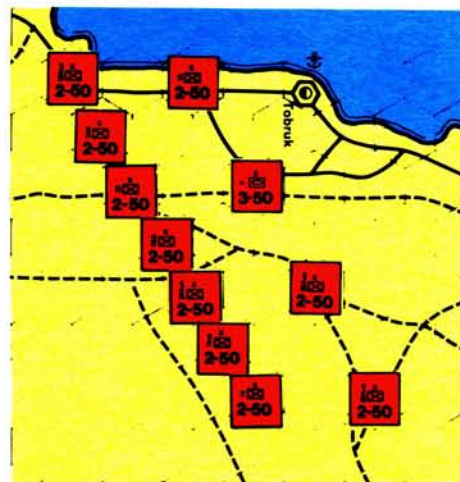
considerable portion of your beginning force. May 1941 is, I believe, a most dangerous turn for the Allied player. To state the objective, your task is to now hold a line just in front of Tobruk for the moment.

Depending on what he captured in the previous turn, the Axis player may well be in the best situation with regard to supplies that he will ever be during the game, allowing him the luxury of a "Maximum Attack". If you've managed to destroy both British depots mentioned above, this will hamper him somewhat, since he will be forced to establish a depot in order to attack or even to move the Italians much beyond Derna or Mechili. Note that a depot which has moved cannot be used for Attack Supply or Maximum Attack Supply. Your best chance in this second turn may come if he has outrun his supply line and is more concerned in emplacing a couple of depots to mount an operation on Tobruk. This indicates how important it is to hold those two depots closest to Tobruk on the first turn.

There are several possible lines that can be established to protect Tobruk for this turn. The one I use depends upon the forces I have available. Due to the supply situation, one can discount a serious thrust past Tobruk. All you need do is defend a short stretch south of Gazala.

Sounds easy? Not so. Assuming that the nasty German has taken a depot at Mechili or 2111, he

Illustration #3



can trace supply from it right up to your doorstep and so concentrate against a single point on your line. Thus, you must look to make the overruns difficult, if not impossible. Simplest way (if not particularly elegant) to do this is to pack in your remaining counters in a heavy line, with the southern flank thinly held and trailing off. Look to Illustration #4. Assuming that Mechili's depot has been blown up during your withdrawal, it is doubtful that Axis will be able to trace supply to units attacking the lone 2-50s at the crossroads. A single 2-50 in Tobruk and Bardia insures that the Germans aren't going to sneak past and seize a base in this manner. Therefore, he must batter straight ahead, through your line. The unfortunate truth with this defensive line is that there is a chance that the Axis could eliminate four to six units—an unacceptable attrition.

I favor a somewhat more elastic defense, one that still discourages overruns. Illustration #3 displays one such placement, as does Illustration #5. Most importantly, only a couple of front line units are placed at risk. One of these, or a similar defense (refer to Mr. Medrow's excellent article at the beginning of this issue) serves best in this instance. Your line will be dented, but not broken. On the next turn, another retreat will take you behind the fortress.

Faced with one of these elastic defense lines, there is little that the Axis Player can do—even assuming he has the supplies to mount an attack. Again, the best that he can hope for, given that his opponent is not a total fool, will be the destruction of two or three enemy units. However, should the Allied Player retreat precipitously, your opportunity has come. A move up to contact, in the process making one or two safe attacks, can harry him along. Always keep the "weather eye" open for a chance to dash forward and pick off any stragglers. Quite simply, if the Allies stand firm, your German forces will not be in any position to make great gains this turn. Therefore, in order to do something constructive this turn, I'd suggest a full-scale assault all along the line.

There are several advantages to playing a cautious move this turn. First, at this point, you can afford the attrition. Even low odds attacks (in the nature of +1 or +2 on the CRT) can bring you some kills; throw in your Italian infantry for good measure and absorb any counterattacks with these easily rebuilt units. Remember, you've an edge in SPs at this point. With some judicious attacks, you should be able to maintain this edge over the next two or three turns—enough to take you to the border in fine shape to plan your future moves on Alexandria. However, squandering your best units by rashly plunging past the enemy front line, thus risking isolation, is a foolish move. I would even look askance at any seeming chance to overrun a unit and capture Tobruk; I would tend to think that the Allied player was merely baiting a trap. Patience will out; Tobruk will fall. And you can easily move up a depot by truck to make at least some assaults.

Second, you probably need a turn to get your supply situation settled anyway. After the charge across the desert, a secure and efficient supply line—or even two if you can manage to trace two termini to the next nearest depot—brings an attack on Tobruk in the next turn. Look to set these no more than eight movement points from the edge of the fortress; plan on the necessity of using Maximum Attack Supply to overwhelm the fort's inherent defensive benefit. I like to establish a depot in 2020 or 1921; 1722 if you've the ability to emplace a second depot here. Until able to double the values of your largest stack assaulting Tobruk, forget any attack on it. If there is no Axis depot at Mechili, drop one off there—even if it means grounding a few Italian units for a turn or two so that you've a spare truck. If, as rarely happens you can afford to do so, drop spare depots at crossroads along your path of victory. These will be invaluable when

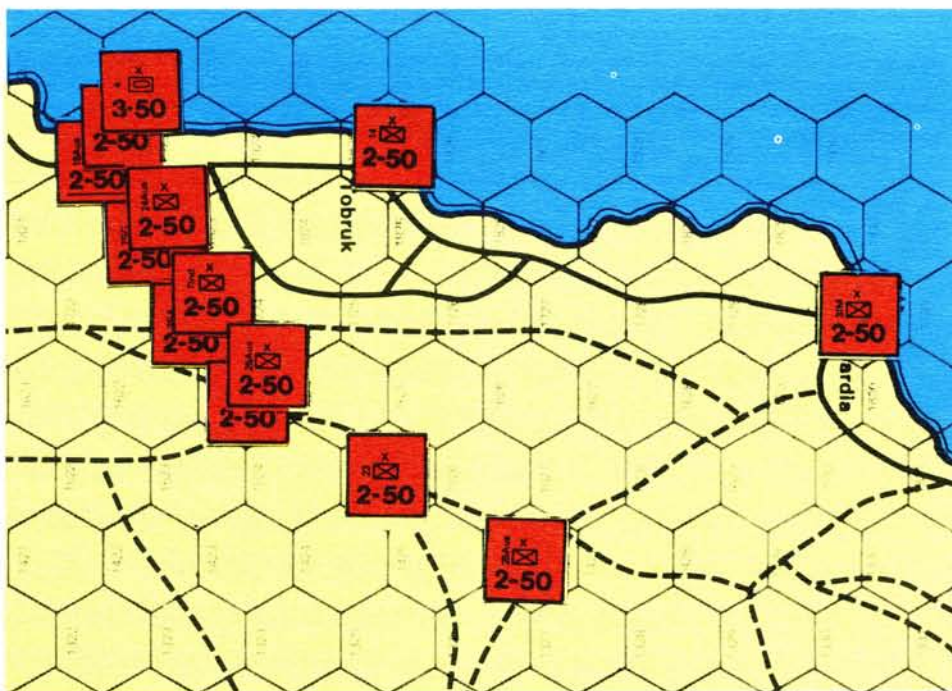


Illustration #4

retreating, and it is never too early to start preparing for the Allied riposte.

Third, if there are bypassed and isolated Allied units, now is the time to deal with them. You don't want to have them at your back when the Allied wave surges back. Such "slack" turns are perfect for removing these obstructions at the out-of-the-way crossroads. You never want to allow the Allied player to reach and resupply them simply because you forgot to maintain a ring around them. Take your time and do it right; clean up any loose ends from the race to Tobruk during this and/or the next turn.

So, the Axis May turn is one of housecleaning, establishing depots for future operations, and—perhaps—a frontal assault looking to kill off a few Allied infantry units to bring ever more pressure to bear on your opponent. Obviously rarely will one be able to do all of this; but then, that's what makes the race fascinating.

June 1941

The third game turn lets the Allied player see some light at the end of the tunnel. The situation should be fairly clear cut—either the Tobruk line has fallen apart or it hasn't; either you can stand here another turn or you can't. Much of what you do this turn is dependent on the Axis turn just finished. Chances are the enemy has merely annoyed you a bit, is busy establishing himself for an assault to isolate or capture Tobruk, and a couple of your lesser infantry have rolled over playing dead. If so, it is important to keep in mind that the German player will be now planning how to take Tobruk as quickly and cheaply as possible. Obviously, if you can draw out the inevitable fall and make it expensive for him in terms of both troops and supplies, the Allies have won a victory—of sorts.

There are two schools of thought on which serves as the better defensive position: a line along the ridge hexesides with Tobruk anchoring one end and hex 1431 the other; or a line from Tobruk extending south to control the track network. However, regarding the first defensive line, there are some serious concerns that should be voiced. The ridge line appears at first glance to be quite a strong position. However, all the Axis player need do is hit the flanks and everything in the center position will be isolated. Too, it proves quite easy for the enemy to pass south of the ridge and position him-

self athwart your lines back to Alexandria; one or two German units will usually suffice. Personally, I favor the latter defensive position for the Allies.

By placing four SPs in Tobruk, a powerful stack in 1825, and a line of units southward to 1225 (or further), the Axis player is faced with the possibility of being surrounded in turn if he envelops the fortress. This forces him to first push back your line before assaulting Tobruk. By placing a sacrifice in hex 1824, you may even buy another turn since he must clear that hex to be able to mount any significant attack on Tobruk. (Not until the fourth turn can three German 4-60s stack together which, doubled under Maximum Attack Supply, could break in from 1924.) Look to Illustration #6.

The positioning of the remaining infantry cuts any chance of a successful overrun gaining a tactical advantage. Tobruk is held just strongly enough to discourage any immediate attacks. Supply units may be dumped off in any convenient hex, even in Sidi Barrani if your front line supplies are assured. This may not be the case, since the attrition in Allied depots have been large with their destruction each time you pull back; but Tobruk itself can often provide supply for many of your units in these positions. Note that experienced players of *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* never place a depot in Tobruk; the risk that it will be captured by the Axis is not worth the redundancy.

As the German player, your sole concern must be the timely capture of Tobruk. It is perfectly possible that an optimum Allied defense can keep Tobruk out of your grasp until Turn 7 or even Turn 8. While your forces may probe beyond the fortress, until it falls your supply situation will not allow you to progress much beyond the border. Given either defensive position, either along the Tobruk-Bardia ridge or south from Tobruk, your mission is to isolate Tobruk this turn so that you can attack it next turn. Realistically speaking, this is going to demand a gamble on your part, only the first you must take if the Axis is to have any chance to win the game.

Looking to the ridgeline defense first, plant your forces before Tobruk to insure no untoward surprise sorties against your supply lines. Hex 1727 is particularly vulnerable. Simultaneously, an assault on hex 1825 or 1824 (if occupied) could be mounted to bleed the garrison you will face the next turn. If 1727 is taken, the forces in and adjacent to Tobruk will roll up into a defensive hedgehog. Should forces

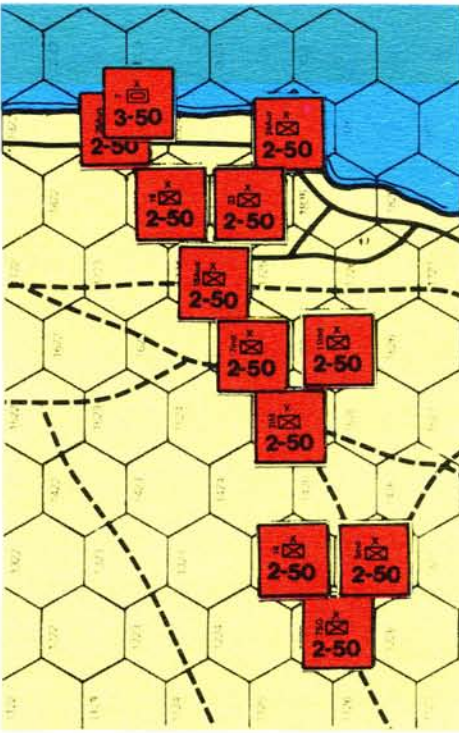


Illustration #5

also be available and you're willing to gamble, an attack on the Bardia flank could bring a victorious end to the game. Do not forget that Italian infantry attacking across a ridge still attack at a strength of one, even if only generally supplied. Employ your Italians in all attacks across the ridges. All other forces, due to the escarpment effects, must be in Maximum Attack Supply just to make a normal attack.

Dealing with the other possible defense is a bit more tricky. I use two strikes—one to secure my "startlines" for the next-turn attack on the fortress and one to disrupt any spoiling counterattack that the enemy may be contemplating. If the Allied player has placed units in hex 1924 or 1824, first order of business is to clear these start-lines. If not already emplaced, get the depots covering these hexes positioned. There is no disguising your coming attack on Tobruk, so don't try to be subtle or clever about it. Just be professional.

Now, to be practical, you must isolate Tobruk before any attack. This does not mean that the units in and adjacent to it will be out of supply; since Tobruk serves as a supply source, the enemy will still be able to react. However, you can insure that he cannot reinforce the fortress before the next turn assault. Chances are that the position in 1825 will be unassailable; look to open a hole just south of that. Other units pouring through the gap could threaten Bardia or any depots exposed by the offensive. This disruption is crucial. The more threats you can pose, the more disjointed will be his response. Isolating the southern end of his line by throwing light German armor into the crossroads at 1628 and/or 1428 is a potent problem for him. Detail at least one unit to cut the coast road. General rule of thumb is to keep your options open, distracting the enemy with multiple threats. It is quite impossible to set down here every possibility for the readers. Simply keep in mind the usefulness of being opportunistic.

July 1941

Now the Allies must evaluate their chances of holding Tobruk. It is perfectly feasible that the German assault is not yet in place to take the fortress, or that a spoiling attack could disrupt their chances of success. (I would caution against any

attack out of Tobruk, no matter how tempting; why give him the "Gem of Libya" through default?) Your decision depends on the events of the previous turn. Do you reinforce? Do you counterattack? Or do you follow my conservative advice and fall back to the Bardia position?

I think that the British must accept the hard fact that Tobruk will fall. Since this is true, it must be remembered that any units put into the fortress will be eliminated in the final assault. Obviously, if willing to reinforce Tobruk and put seven SP into it, the German player may be forced to commit the bulk of his forces (although the three 4-60s now in play, if doubled through Maximum Attack Supply, offset much of what is needed). The judgement to reinforce comes down to a simple matter of how much you can afford to lose. I am perfectly willing to send in one of the armored units, forcing the enemy to commit 36+ SPs to assault the fortress, if this disrupts his planning. Meanwhile, the smoke of burning depots hangs in the scorching air over the city.

Some writers have recommended that Tobruk be given up with only a whimper to mark its loss. They suggest that the turn before it becomes obvious that Tobruk will fall, the Allies should evacuate as much as possible, leaving a sole 2-50 infantry there. "There is no point in losing a lot of troops if you know it is going to fall." The port facilities of Tobruk make this feasible (and, heavens, we don't want to leave any rules unused). By transferring the best unit to Bardia or Alexandria, in their theory, you've accomplished the same—namely, tying down Axis units and buying time—as if the British stayed around to die. Don't you believe it! For our purposes, the *minimum* forces that should defend Tobruk are two 2-50s.

Another positive (at least for the Allies) response to the Axis June turn is to mount a limited counter-attack, aiming at either regaining one of the hexes around Tobruk or disrupting his supply for the attack. By seizing one of the hexes around the fortress, you may forestall any assault in the next turn. From only one hex, it is very difficult for the Axis to attack effectively. This method of delaying the inevitable can be continued; of course, this sacrifices two or three 2-50s each turn. If you think it worth the effort and blood, do it.

Of more finesse would be an attack against his supply line. If you have the supplies to do so, an attack against his entire line, or an overrun against a key hex, that allows British forces into his rear is guaranteed to draw some attention. A single surviving Allied unit in 1823 will forestall any supply to the Tobruk front. In one memorable game, the Germans took Tobruk just as the Allies swept around to the south—isolating the bulk of the Afrika Korps. Should your opponent be unwise enough to actually give you the chance to kill a depot, his attack will probably be stalled for several turns. Look to where your opponent has positioned his Italian infantry; your best opportunity is there.

The difficulty with both the above daydreams is that they require supplies and openings the Allies rarely have available. I am more than content to simply continue the game of withdrawal. In the fourth turn, assuming that the Axis is marching with the rather quick pace I've set for them in my mind, the Allies fall back to the Bardia line. With minor adjustments, this will form the basis for the Border line. Conceding the fact that Tobruk cannot be held, but forcing the enemy to commit major forces, the wily fox (that's you) retreats his forces to a Bardia-1431 line, with light forces scattered to the south to guard against an outflanking move. The reader should by now be well aware that such extended lines are vulnerable, so make your placement of units with some care. Much depends on what troops you've still available.

For the German player, this is the turn in which you should assault Tobruk. If the fortress has been isolated and you've several hexes adjacent to it, try

to take it in one all-out blow. Otherwise, your plans have obviously been upset by an Allied counter-attack. Now you've a choice. Accept the Allied opening of the attrition and strike at their forces outside the fortress, which should be deeply entangled with yours. Assuming that you've the supplies, strike at every exposed unit of theirs which offers a chance for a kill. Bleeding the Allied forces for a turn is as effective as taking Tobruk. And, on the next turn the battered Allies should withdraw to lick their wounds—leaving you to take Tobruk undisturbed.

Cracking Tobruk is no great task, *if* your supply is in place to provide Maximum Attack Supply to the 4-60s and *if* the German 3-60s and Italian mechanized units are available to plug into the other two start-line hexes. By putting some 33-38 SPs against the fortress, it should fall on the first turn. This means, of course, that the forward line will be more than a bit thin, based upon the Italian infantry and the German 3rd and 33rd. The risk of an Allied counterattack against this thin screen must be accepted if you hope to avoid spending several turns reducing Tobruk. At the very worst, say if the Germans can only mount a narrow attack on the fort, strive to obtain a +4 Attack Superiority on the CRT. This assures that the attrition will at least go your way.

Finally, a word of warning to the German players reading this. Some Allied players like to mount a threat to your position from within the fortress itself. They will usually keep the maximum garrison and a depot in place as the rest of their forces pull back to the border. The depot is there for the sole purpose of expending it in a Maximum Attack Supply to keep you off balance. However, do not be overly concerned at this development. Should your enemy attempt to attack out from the fortress, remember that any surviving Axis units that counterattack *ignore terrain effects and supply*. If any of your units survive the initial assault, it is perfectly possible that the counterattack might take Tobruk.

Looking at the Allied position as August 1941 opens, I now must assume that Tobruk has fallen to the Axis. If otherwise in your game, count yourself fortunate and bear in mind that your position steadily improves henceforth. By feeding your incoming reinforcements into the line, it is just pos-

Illustration #6

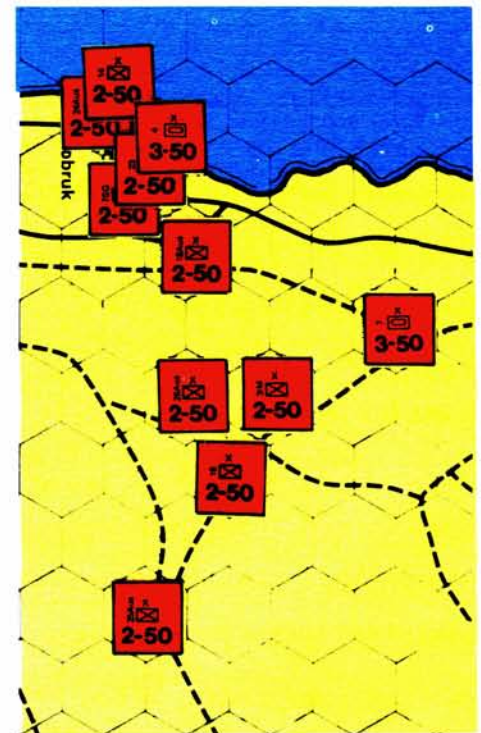




Illustration #7

sible that you can stem the Axis tide before it oozes into Egypt. However, if like me, you have now lost Tobruk and the Axis player is planning how to best gobble up Bardia and smash through your final position before racing for Qattara, then it's time to prepare . . .

The Border Line

As Kip Allen once pointed out, the Libyan-Egyptian border must be the site of at least a holding action. There is a lovely ridge line that is perfect for defense (see Illustration #7). It can be outflanked by the enemy, so some care must be exercised, but that risk should be taken. Most accomplished players agree with Kip that holding at the border is a better strategy than an immediate fallback to the east. The biggest mistake an Allied player of *PANZERARMEE AFRIKA* can make is in jumping to the conclusion that the Allies cannot win the war here and so fleeing in panic too far back in an attempt to anchor their line at the Qattara. The Axis will be able to quite readily press through the narrow section of the wasteland, drive to the sea and so cut off the bulk of the Allied forces. Once back near Alexandria, there is little room for mistake in the Allied position. I, for one, prefer a cushion to absorb my lesser stupidities.

Holding at the border ridge line also gives the Allies the chance to inflict some significant casualties on the enemy, particularly if you've some sort of mobile armored reserve behind the lines. The supply situation for the Allies is much better at this point than that for the Axis (who are still tied to El Agheila). It is even possible to launch a limited counterattack from the border positions. The German infantry is the last thing that the Axis can afford to lose or replace; it's worth sacrificing an Allied unit or such to kill off one or more of the most potent striking forces the enemy has. It is here, at the border line, that the Axis player most often errs after having everything his way for the opening rounds of the game. And, it is here, over the course of the next six turns or so, that the game will be won or lost.

For the German player, the situation is even easier to evaluate. As Tobruk is taken, Bardia should fall. By the eleventh turn, you must have smashed through at the border if you've any plans of winning the game. Remember that you can outflank the enemy with some ease; make use of the fact that you can send the German units out of supply to do so. Once you've driven the Allied forces away from the border ridge, pause there until you've at least three supply units able to proceed with you toward Alexandria. It is an unfortunate fact that this gives the enemy a chance to build up. The wise Axis player will concede this and prepare for that one last battle that takes him to the Nile and victory. But . . . that is for another time.



CONTEST #125

Having just taken Tobruk, your Axis forces are prepared to invade Egypt. However, the Allied forces have set their defense as shown on the illustration below. Worse, you are short of Italian infantry (having lost most of them in the rapid advance) and supplies. Luckily the captured supply depot in Tobruk is part of your supply line or your forces would be seriously overextended. It is once again your turn. Can you crack the Allied border defense using only the Axis forces shown?

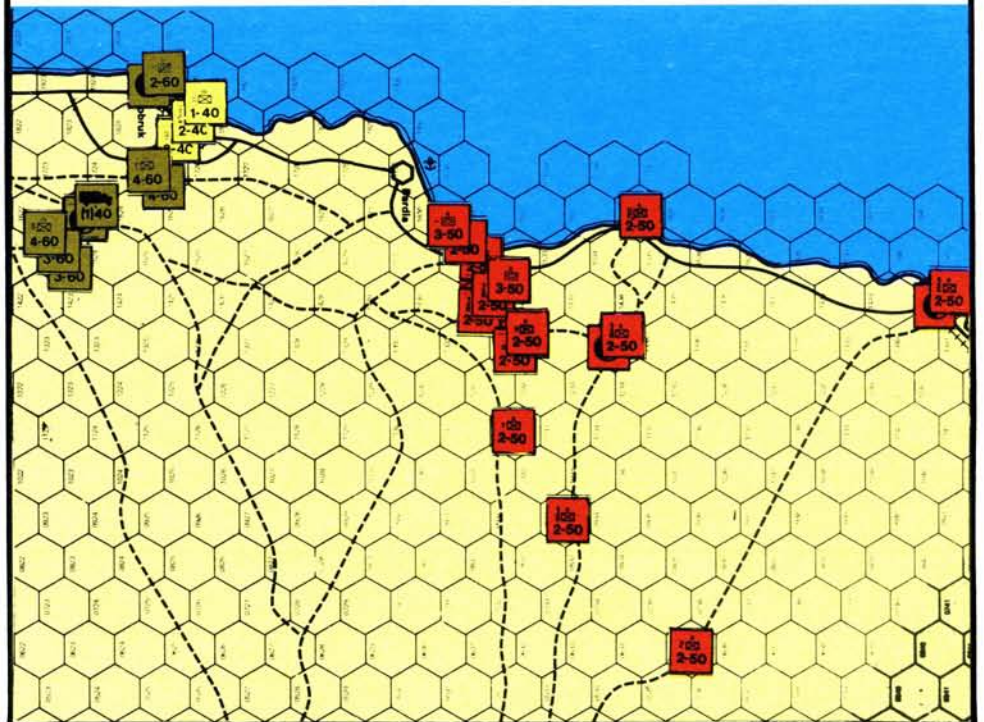
For those readers wishing to re-create the situation, the following is a complete positional list of all units to be considered in the contest:

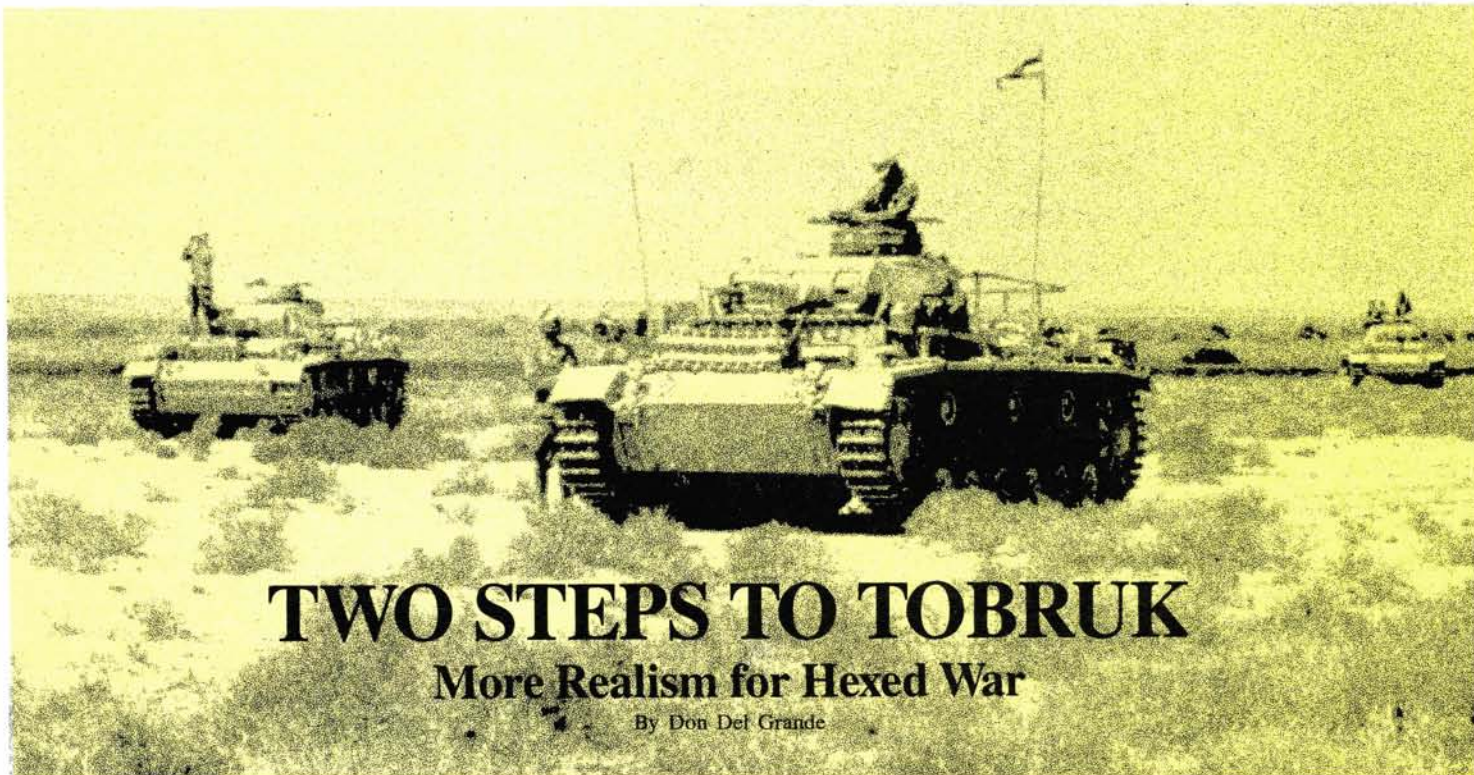
Axis: 104th Inf (4-60)—1523
 1/5 Armor (3-60)—1523
 2/5 Armor (3-60)—1523
 Truck & Depot—1623
 155th Inf (4-60)—1725
 115th Inf (4-60)—1725
 3rd Arm Inf (2-60)—Tobruk
 Captured Depot—Tobruk
 132nd Armor (3-40)—1825
 8th Bers (2-40)—1825
 27th Inf (1-40)—1825

Allied: 7th Armor (3-50)—1531
 7 Ind Inf (2-50)—1531
 22g Inf (2-50)—1531
 4th Armor (3-50)—1431
 20 Aus Inf (2-50)—1431
 26 Aus inf (2-50)—1431
 16th Inf (2-50)—1332
 23rd Inf (2-50)—1332
 14th Inf (2-50)—1132
 18 Aus Inf (2-50)—0933
 Pol Inf (2-50)—0635
 7SG Inf (2-50)—1634
 25 Aus & Depot—1334
 24 Aus & Depot—1440

On the insert, or any reasonable facsimile, simply list the final position of any attacks that each Axis unit must make to best destroy the Allied defensive position. This is defined as neutralization of the most Allied units. In specifying attacks, the depot supplying such must be indicated. In the event of a number of correct answers, those solutions in which an Axis combat unit penetrates the furthest into Egypt (in terms of straight-line hexes from the nearest border hexside) will be awarded the prize. In all cases, the potential solutions will be adjudged with possible Allied responses in mind—given the vagaries of the Command Control die roll. No optional rules are in play.

Ten winning entries will receive merchandise credits from The Avalon Hill Game Company. To be valid, an entry must be received prior to the mailing of the next issue and include a numerical rating for the issue as a whole, as well as listing the three best articles. The solution to Contest #125 will appear in Vol. 22, No. 2 and the list of winners in Vol. 22, No. 3 of *The GENERAL*.





TWO STEPS TO TOBRUK

More Realism for Hexed War

By Don Del Grande

Here's the situation: You're in the middle of a rousing game of *TOBRUK*. You're the German player in the "Duel of the Best" firefight. There's a Grant tank in range that's just begging to be destroyed. Now, the question: Do you use ordinary armor-piercing ammunition or risk wasting some of your scarce APCR ammo for a better chance of destruction? For that matter, is there actually a better chance of destroying (or for that matter, hitting) the tank with APCR?

STEP 1: CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

Let's take a look at the subject. The factors that are important to this situation are:

- 1) Is the HPN lower with AP ammo or APCR?
- 2) What facing (front, flank, or rear) does the target show?
- 3) What is the probability for each type of hit?

Answering the first one is as easy as glancing at the HPT. Table 1 shows that chances of hitting a target with AP and APCR ammunition at ranges from 1 to 15 hexes (the chances are expressed as percentages). Looking at Table 1 shows that only at three ranges less than 16 hexes is APCR better;

there is one range (ten hexes) where AP is actually better than APCR!

Determining the facing is as easy as spotting the relative positions of the units on the mapboard at that moment.

Once these first two questions are answered, the two factors are applied to Tables 2 and 3, where the chances for each type of hit for both types of ammunition are calculated. For example, the distance is six hexes with a front aspect; the probability of a K-kill with AP ammunition is 2.6%, but with APCR ammunition, the probability is 9.4%. The probability for just hitting the tank is 5.5% greater with APCR. (Note: Tables 2 and 3 have the first table computed into them.) However, consider this—suppose that you have a tank with only one turn worth of APCR. Should it be used now? At ten hexes with a flank aspect, APCR only has a

5.7% advantage over AP ammunition, making AP a wise bet in this situation.

Taking these three tables into consideration, other tables may be constructed (however, it *is* time-consuming to make a table for each tank against every tank it could possibly face) so that the next time you have a choice of ammunition, think it over for a while. You could be making a mistake!

STEP 2: THE ZIG-ZAG

Standing in a tank somewhere in Libya, you should be able to notice that all weapons fire in more-or-less straight lines. This is also the same as broadsides in the Atlantic and machine guns high over France. But in *TOBRUK* (and both *WS&IM* and *RICHTOFEN'S WAR*), the line-of-fire is usually drawn with zig-zag lines to go through hexes. I admit that zig-zag lines are a practical game mecha-

TABLE 1
CHANCES OF HITTING

Range (Hexes)	AP Ammo	APCR Ammo
1	100.0	100.0
2	100.0	100.0
3	97.2	100.0
4	97.2	97.2
5	97.2	97.2
6	91.7	97.2
7	97.7	91.7
8	91.7	91.7
9	83.3	83.3
10	83.3	83.3
11	72.2	72.2
12	58.3	58.3
13	41.7	41.7
14	41.7	41.7
15	27.8	41.7

TABLE 2
PZ-IIIj FIRING AT GRANT
AP AMMO

TYPE OF HIT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
FRONT FACING															
K	12.1	10.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2	0.8
M	15.3	15.3	13.5	13.5	13.5	12.7	12.7	12.7	11.6	11.6	10.0	8.1	5.8	5.8	3.9
F75	1.4	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2	0.8
C2	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2	0.8
FLANK FACING															
K	40.8	40.8	39.6	37.8	37.8	35.7	35.7	35.7	32.4	32.4	28.1	22.7	16.2	16.2	10.8
M	11.1	11.1	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.2	10.2	10.2	9.2	9.2	8.0	6.5	4.6	4.6	3.1
F37	0.9	0.9	0.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
F75	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.1	5.1	4.7	4.7	4.0	3.3	2.3	2.3	1.6
C2	10.2	10.2	9.9	9.0	9.0	8.5	8.5	8.5	7.7	7.7	6.7	5.4	3.9	3.9	2.6
REAR FACING															
K	43.6	43.6	42.3	38.8	38.8	36.6	36.6	36.6	33.2	33.2	28.8	23.2	16.6	16.6	11.1
M	51.0	51.0	49.5	49.5	49.5	46.7	46.7	46.7	42.5	42.5	36.8	29.7	21.3	21.3	14.2
F37	1.8	1.8	1.8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
C2	4.7	4.7	4.5	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2	0.8

**TABLE 3
PZ-111j FIRING AT GRANT
APCR AMMO**

TYPE OF HIT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
FRONT FACING															
K	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.4	9.4	9.4	8.9	8.9	8.1	7.0	7.0	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.8
M	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.3	16.3	16.3	15.3	15.3	14.0	12.1	12.1	8.1	5.8	5.8	5.8
F75	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6
C1	11.2	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.1	4.7	4.0	4.0	—	—	—	—
C2	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.0	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2
FLANK FACING															
K	52.8	52.8	52.8	51.3	51.3	51.3	48.4	48.4	44.0	38.1	38.1	30.0	21.4	21.4	21.4
M	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.5	13.5	13.5	12.7	12.7	11.6	10.0	10.0	8.1	5.8	5.8	5.8
F75	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.1	4.7	4.0	4.0	3.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
F37	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.6	0.6	0.6
C1	19.4	19.4	19.4	18.9	18.9	18.9	17.8	17.8	16.2	14.0	14.0	11.3	8.1	8.1	8.1
C2	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.1	4.7	4.0	4.0	3.3	1.8	1.8	1.8
REAR FACING															
K	52.9	52.9	52.9	51.4	51.4	51.4	48.5	48.5	44.1	38.2	38.2	30.9	20.9	20.9	20.9
M	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.5	13.5	13.5	12.7	12.7	11.6	10.0	10.0	8.1	5.8	5.8	5.8
F37	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.2	1.2	1.2
C2	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.2	8.2	8.2	7.7	7.7	7.0	6.1	6.1	4.9	3.5	3.5	3.5

nism (especially for movement, which I have no objections against), but they are highly unrealistic and may give the defender an undue advantage in all these games.

The solution is simple; find an easy way to figure out the direct distance between two points (or hexes). There are only two ways that I'm aware of—use a ruler; or solve by mathematics. Using a ruler is handy, but it could be troublesome and messy if the ruler happens to slip. Arguments abound; witness any miniatures game. Using mathematics is a bit troublesome, but easy, inexpensive, and there's no chance of a ruler messing up the game.

Table 4 converts two "hex-line" distances to solve for the "direct distance". First, find one line from the firing hex. Second, find a line from the target hex that intersects the first line in such a way that the two lines form a 120-degree angle. Third, using the first line between the firing hex and the intersection as the "horizontal distance" and the second line between the target hex and the intersection as the "diagonal line", check this table to find the direct distance. For example: With a horizontal distance of eight and a diagonal distance of ten, the distance used is eighteen. However, the

actual distance is sixteen, and in *TOBRUK* this represents a big difference.

Please note that the horizontal and diagonal distances could be exchanged, since the two lines are really both simple measurements. The table could be extended as far as possible, using the formula $S = \text{the square root of } H^2 + HD + D^2$ (where S is the actual direct distance, H is the horizontal distance, and D is the diagonal distance).

In *RICHTHOFEN'S WAR*, the height differential can be calculated this way. The true distance is $D = \text{the square root of } S^2 + E^2$ (where D is the total distance, S is the direct distance in hexes as found in Table 4, and E is the height difference of the two planes in 50 meter steps.) For example, a Sopwith Camel is three hexes from a Fokker Triplane 150 meters above it. The distance is actually four hexes away, *not five as stated in the rules*.

So the zig-zag lines have been straightened out for more accurate distances and to snatch away the defender's advantage of the lengthened distances. These two steps can be applied to many tactical games. This is another situation where we players develop the strategies and let the tanks (ships or planes or squads) do all of the heavy stuff . . .



**TABLE 4
DIRECT DISTANCES
DIAGONAL DISTANCES (HEXES)**

HORIZ. DIST.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2	3	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
3	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
4	5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	14	15	16	17
5	6	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
6	7	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
7	8	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	19
8	9	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20
9	10	10	11	12	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21
10	11	11	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22
11	12	12	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	23
12	13	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	24
13	14	14	15	16	17	18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	25
14	15	15	16	17	18	19	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	26
15	16	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27

AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	44	2598YOV	1
2.	B. Dobson	19	2368RJR	2
3.	D. Burdick	43	2188GGN	3
4.	B. Sinigaglio	29	2150GHT	5
5.	P. Siragusa	38	2150EHK	4
6.	J. Beard	33	2120HIJ	6
7.	E. Mineman	14	2097DFP	9
8.	F. Preissle	41	2089LNX	7
9.	D. Garbutt	42	2072GIN	10
10.	J. Krueze	38	2063GGL	8
11.	H. Newby	9	2033DHI	13
12.	P. Landry	18	2032HHM	12
13.	D. Barker	9	2014GHN	11
14.	P. Gartman	9	2007HGJ	23
15.	S. Sutton	11	1997EHM	20
16.	M. Sincavage	33	1993EEJ	14
17.	D. Munsell	39	1970HHM	16
18.	B. Remsburg	27	1964GIP	17
19.	F. Freeman	18	1964EFG	18
20.	J. Cormier	3	1957CEF	19
21.	W. Scott	41	1955LIU	15
22.	G. Charbonneau	7	1937HGJ	21
23.	P. Flory	20	1922DGJ	22
24.	R. Beyma	19	1910DDF	29
25.	R. Leach	45	1906LLS	24
26.	F. Reese	23	1896HDF	26
27.	L. Kelly	37	1889WWZ	27
28.	T. Oleson	53	1876XZZ	25
29.	M. Simonitch	14	1874DEH	28
30.	B. Schoose	9	1871GIM	30
31.	M. Rogers	4	1855CEH	31
32.	C. Wannall	20	1852HLP	32
33.	N. Cromartie	29	1838GHO	34
34.	R. Berger	5	1833CDE	35
35.	J. Sunde	19	1830KKS	36
36.	B. Downing	33	1830FHL	37
37.	P. DeVolpi	10	1828DED	38
38.	D. Greenwood	44	1821GFI	39
39.	W. Ownbey	13	1821CEI	41
40.	B. Salvatore	11	1816GKO	—
41.	R. Shurdut	10	1815DEJ	40
42.	F. Ornstein	27	1813GHM	33
43.	J. Anderson	1	1809DDF	—
44.	J. Martin	2	1807DFI	42
45.	R. Phelps	25	1806HJQ	43
46.	B. Sutton	12	1806DFE	44
47.	D. Kopp	3	1801GIN	45
48.	P. Ford	9	1797GCP	46
49.	M. Miller	30	1795GHO	48
50.	E. O'Connor	2	1792EFL	49

MEET THE 50 . . .

Mr. Marvin Miller is 45, married and father of three, holds a BS in electrical engineering and is Vice-President of Keller Mfg. in Corydon, Indiana.

Favorite Game: PANZERBLITZ
 AREA Rated Games: PB, PL
 AREA W-L Record: 31-3-2
 Gaming Time/Week: 3 hrs.
 Hobbies: Computers, Canoeing
 Pet Peeve: The difficulty of getting games with high-ranking AREA opponents.
 % Time PBM: 100%
 Play Preference: PBM

Mr. Miller writes,
 "The thrill of good competition is what got me started in wargames. It is definitely possible to play to win and to play for fun at the same time. However, I strongly recommend getting complete agreements on rules, stock reports, techniques, and so forth before starting the game. It prevents misunderstandings and delayed games. I have enjoyed my AREA friends and their games very much. Nowhere else will you find such reliable, dedicated, and competitive gamers."

A SPREADING POOL OF TREACHERY

More Errata and Options for DOWN WITH THE KING

By Glenn Rahman

Most of the errata below amounts to minor but useful fine-tuning, nods to realism and adjustments meant to quicken the pace of play. Those items of special significance are marked **IMPORTANT**.

2.1.1. Raise the Status of the RC Jane to "5".

2.1.2. The female characters (56-66) should be described:

- 56—Marquise Margaret (4,s2)
- 61—Marquise Victoria (4,s3)
- 62—Countess Elizabeth (3,s4)
- 63—Countess Ruth (3,s4)
- 64—Baroness Mary (2,s5)
- 65—Baroness Melanie (2,s5)
- 66—Lady Deborah (1,s6)

2.2.2. IMPORTANT—There are twenty-four Opportunity Counters.

- Any Activity—2
- Intrigue—5
- Gain One IP—4
- Duel—1
- Favor—2
- Scandal—4
- Free Counsel—2 (see 12.3.9)
- Gout—1

2.4. The term "King/Queen" should read "Prince Consort/Queen Consort".

3.1. Should read "Form a deck with cards 11-44 and 56-66. Shuffle these twenty-nine cards and deal one to each player. That is the player's 'player character' (hereafter referred to as PC). PCs are placed in front of the respective player."

3.1.1. Add "In a two-player game a PC for each player is selected as above, but using only cards 11-24 and 56-66. In a two-player game all female player characters are Countesses with a status of '3' each."

7.9. Should read "The Monarch's Support goes up by 10 for each problem that is resolved. The Monarch's Support goes down by 10 for each problem that goes unresolved each turn. Each turn there are no unresolved Political Problems and the Crown Events result is "Court Ball" or "Intrigue", the Monarch's Support goes up by 10. The Record Sheet is adjusted accordingly."

7.10.4. Should read "The Ambassador to a country at war with Fandonia is expelled and returns to Fandonia. He loses his office and the office ceases to exist until war with the country in question ends."

7.10.6. Should read "If a Minister is in a foreign country when a war starts with that country, the Minister is expelled and returns to Fandonia."

8.4.2. Replace "Army Support" with "Peasant Support".

9.2. The term "King/Queen" should read "Prince Consort/Queen Consort".

12.3.9. Free Counsel. A player may make a free counsel in the Counsel phase of his player turn, on any current Crown Event or Political Problem.

13.4.1. We are increasing the number of possible female character titles from two to five. The new titles are Baroness, Countess, and Marquise. The female titles correspond to the male as follows: Lady/Sir, Baroness/Knight, Countess/Earl, Marquise/Lord, Duchess/Duke. Female titles are acquired in the same way as male titles and at the same cost. They enhance Status to the same degree.

13.4.3. Change the previous errata of this rule (found in Vol. 19, No. 1) to read: add, "If a Monarch's Counselor is imprisoned, banished or goes into hiding, the Monarch's Counselor Event Card is discarded. A female character may never be a Monarch's Counselor. A Monarch's Counselor card gives the character holding it a Status increase of +2."

13.4.3. Delete the fourth sentence, which refers to Henchmen.

13.4.7. Delete the third sentence.

13.4.15. Delete the phrase "or an 'Informer' card" from the last sentence.

13.4.16. The parenthetical phrase in the fifth sentence should read "including the hosting player if his PC attends". Between the last and the second to last sentence insert: "If the PC is getting married, the player rolls twice, once for his PC and once for his PC's spouse".

14.2.7. The second sentence should read "Illegal cards are DOWN WITH THE KING, Assassination, and Foreign Support".

14.5.2. Add at the end, "Foreign Support cards are illegal".

14.5.3. Delete the phrase "a Henchman or" from the second sentence. Add at the end of the rule "The card increases a character's Status by +2".

14.5.6. Delete the third sentence.

14.5.7. IMPORTANT—Delete the part of the rule that follows: "(See 12.3.3, 13.4.12, and 14.2)". The card may not be used as an Assassination, Treachery, Informer, Escape or Alibi card and it is not illegal.

14.5.11. Delete the last sentence; the Treachery card is not illegal.

14.5.12. Delete "and negate a seduction," from the first sentence.

15.2. In the first sentence, after "(See 8.4.4.)", add "or draws a Free Counsel counter."

15.3. Delete the entire rule.

15.6. Add at the end of the sentence "or draws a Free Counsel counter".

15.8. At the end of the first sentence add "add IP". Delete the last sentence of the rule.

17.2.2. Delete the rule.

17.2.4. Should read "A henchman may be used to court the favor of a FARC, but the FARC may still become a NRC as a result of the Royal Favor Table".

18.4.4. Change the phrase "adds on (+1)" to "subtracts on (-1)".

18.10. The Term "King/Queen" should read "Prince Consort/Queen Consort".

24.7. Should read "A NC cannot hide. If a FARC in hiding becomes a NC, he immediately comes out of hiding and takes the consequences".

32.2. See 7.9. above.

33.2.4. Should read "Counseling is allowed during a crisis, but subtract one (-1) from all Counseling dice rolls".

33.4 Add, "When the government is in crisis, all Support cards are at their maximum Usurpation value".

35.8. Should read "During his Player Turn, a player can buy PPs with IPs at the rate of One PP for Two IPs. A player may buy as many PPs as he can afford. This is not an activity".

36.6. Before the last sentence in the rule, add "(See 36.14)".

36.9. Before the last sentence in the rule, add "(See 36.14)".

36.10.6. Add "The player receives a bonus of Ten PP and Ten IP".

36.14. IMPORTANT—Add "Should the player with the FARC Monarch wish he may, at the beginning the next Office Phase, dissolve the government. If the government is dissolved, all Office Holders are discharged. The player may fill up three offices with any Office Holder character (FAC, EAC, or NC) without any IP cost. After he has filled (or declined to fill) three offices, the Office Phase is resolved and all the remaining offices are filled normally".

38. OPTIONAL RULE, "Sweet Charity"—Delete this option.

38. OPTIONAL RULE, "Funerals"—In result #5, change "One IP" to "One PP".

38. OPTIONAL RULE, "Romantic Intrigue" (Errata, Vol. 19, No. 1)—In the third complete paragraph in the last column, delete the phrase "and 'Informer' Event cards." in the fourth line.

GAME TABLES, "Court Ball Table"— 5 and 6 should read:

5—Ill-mannered. -1 (cumulative, but modifier may not be less than -2).

6—Snubbed. Lose One PP.

GAME TABLES, "Political Problems Table"—If a Minister is responsible for solving a Political Problem, he has *no modification adjustment* for the Problem Solving die roll. For example, under this change the Minister of the Treasury cannot modify the die when attempting to solve a Banking Crisis. Strike out the name of the affected Ministers from all "Can be modified" lists.

GAME TABLES, "Political Problems Table"—Make the Minister of Trade responsible for solving an "Economic Crisis". Make the Minister of the Treasury responsible for solving a "Natural Disaster". Exchange "Banking Crisis" and "Economic Crisis" on the table, so that "Economic Crisis" comes first and "Banking Crisis" second.

GAME TABLES, "Foreign War Table"—should read:

- 2—War with Epalin
- 3—War with Sandarkan
- 4—War with Cronos
- 5—War with Epalin and Cronos
- 6—War with the City States and Sandarkan
- 7—War with the Pirates
- 8—War with the City States
- 9—War with Epalin
- 10—War with Sandarkan
- 11—War with Cronos
- 12—War with Epalin and Cronos

The change evens out the chance of war with each country. If a war with Pirates occurs, the Political Problem of "Pirates" is created and the "war" is handled in the normal manner by the Minister of the Navy. The table eliminates wars with Besyzan. Consider Besyzan a weak, obscure country unable

to fight wars. Hence, an ambassador may not be expelled from Besyzan, and it always remains open to receive fugitives and banished men.

PRESTIGE TABLES, "Gambling Table"—changes these results on the table to:

- 4—Cheated. Lose Three IP & Fight a Duel.
- 5—Cheat. Gain Two IP & Fight a Duel.
- 6—Break Even. Gain One IP.

The Fugitive Character in DOWN WITH THE KING

The Hiding and Extradition rules in *DOWN WITH THE KING* (sections 24. and 25. of the rulebook) are simple and serviceable. Even so, they do not admittedly—represent a realistic simulation of two rather complex acts that involve intricate legalistic maneuvers, not to mention a number of options and allies that an international fugitive might use to defend his tenuous freedom.

Under the revisions offered here, the playing of an Extradition card shall no longer cause the automatic apprehension of a fugitive. The role of certain Office Holders, such as the Ambassadors and the Sheriff, shall be expanded. The existence of local constabularies shall be acknowledged and a distinction drawn between a character who is openly living abroad and one who is actually hiding in a foreign country.

The revised rules sections follow:

20. ABROAD

20.8. A Wrongdoer abroad may at his player's choice be *living* abroad or *hiding* there. If hiding, the fugitive is subject to the restrictions of 24.2. If living abroad, a PC is limited to only one activity per turn, unless an Extra Activity card or counter is used. Beyond this, a Wrongdoer living abroad is treated like any ordinary character in a foreign country. He may travel normally between foreign countries. If, however, he visits Fandonia or a foreign country where he is subject to a Manhunt (see 25.8), he is immediately subject to the justice of Fandonia (see 25.10).

24. HIDING

24.11 A Wrongdoer hiding within Fandonia is automatically subject to the process of Manhunt. At the beginning of a player turn, the player rolls two dice for each FAC fugitive hiding within Fandonia. A dice sum of 10, 11 or 12 causes the capture of the fugitive (see 25.10). The dice roll may be modified. Before the roll, the player with a FAC Sheriff may declare that he is obstructing the hunt, causing the subtraction of two from the dice sum. Likewise, the players may play any number of Informer Event cards, each of which adds +2 to the Manhunt dice roll.

24.12 A Wrongdoer hiding in a foreign country may also be subject to a Manhunt. See 25.5.

25. EXTRADITION

25.1 A Wrongdoer, other than a banished character, may be subjected to the Extradition procedure if he is living or hiding in a foreign country. A character in hiding within Fandonia is never subject to "extradition".

25.2 Any player playing an Extradition card as an activity may force a living-abroad EAC back to Fandonia for justice (see 25.10). If the card is played against such a character, he is Extradited without the chance to go into hiding. However, should the Ambassador to the country in question be someone's FAC, the

PRESTIGE TABLES, "Sporting Table"—should read:

- 2—Damage Property. Accused of Wrongdoing.
- 3—Accused of Cheating. Lose Two PP. Fight a Duel.
- 4—Accuse someone of Cheating. Fight a Duel.
- 5—Poor Sportsmanship. Lose Five PP.
- 6—Bad Loser. Laughed at. Lose Two PP.

controlling player may veto the Extradition and no Extradition occurs.

25.3 If a player plays an Extradition card together with an Intrigue card/counter, a FAC Ambassador may not obstruct the fugitive's Extradition. Neither may the living-abroad character choose that moment to go into hiding to escape his fate.

25.4 If an Extradition counsel is accepted by the Monarch, the Extradition proceeds as if the terms of 25.3 were met.

25.5 If a Wrongdoer is hiding in a foreign country (as opposed to *living* there openly), the playing of an Extradition card against him does not automatically return him to Fandonia for justice. It may however initiate a Manhunt against him—unless the Ambassador to the country in question is the FAC of the player who announces he is vetoing the Extradition, in which case no Manhunt is commenced.

25.6 If an attempt to Extradite a fugitive *hiding* abroad is initiated by the simultaneous playing of an Extradition card and an Intrigue card/counter, a Manhunt is commenced and the Ambassador may not obstruct it in any way.

25.7 If a Monarch accepts an Extradition counsel, a Manhunt for a specified fugitive hiding abroad is commenced as if the terms of rule 25.6 were met.

25.8 A Manhunt abroad is conducted like a Manhunt in Fandonia except that the player with a FAC Ambassador to the country in question may declare he is modifying the Manhunt dice roll before it is made, to the degree of +1 or -1. Informer Event cards have their normal effect.

25.9 A character hiding abroad may play an Escape card to move from one country to another. This is permitted even if a Manhunt is in progress for the fugitive within the foreign country where he currently resides. An escaping fugitive may not escape to Fandonia or to a foreign country in which he is already Manhunted (from previous visit). Doing so immediately returns him to Fandonia for justice (see 25.10). A character ceases to be Manhunted in all countries the moment that he ceases to be a Wrongdoer.

25.10 A captured fugitive must go to a hearing, interrogation, trial or execution (depending on what fate had faced him at the moment in the past when he originally became a fugitive).

25.11 If a character abroad becomes a Wrongdoer against the laws of the foreign country, he is returned to Fandonia for justice. If he hides to avoid foreign arrest, he is immediately subject to a foreign Manhunt (see 25.8).

25.12 A fugitive in a country at war with Fandonia may not be Extradited or Manhunted during the duration of the war.

7—Graceful Loser.

8—Skillful Hunter. Gain Three PP.

9—Winner. Gain Ten PP.

10—Sportsman. Gain Ten PP.

11—Champion. Gain Fifteen PP.

12—Master Hunter. Gain Twenty PP.

PRESTIGE TABLES, "Business Speculation Table"—should include these changes:

- 3—Bankruptcy. Lose Half PP & IP. -1
- 4—Creditors Seize Property. Lose Ten PP & Half IP. -1
- 5—Heavy Losses. Lose Five PP & Five IP. -1
- 6—Poor Investment. Lose Two IP. -1
- 7—No Profit. Gain Three IP. 0

COUNSELING TABLES, "Foreign War"—Counsel #1 should read "Discharge the Minister of the Army. If the Monarch accepts the counsel, the Minister is discharged".

GAME TABLES, "Counseling Results Table" should read:

- 2 — Monarch is Displeased. Lose Office & Five PP.
- 3-4 — Monarch is Displeased. Lose Office.
- 5-7 — Monarch is Pleased. Gain One PP & One IP.
- 8-9 — Monarch is Pleased, counsel is accepted. Gain Two PP & Two IP.
- 10-12 — Monarch's Pleasure knows no bounds, counsel is accepted. Counseling character is increased in title. Gain Three PP & Three IP.

If granted a title, the title is the next highest title which the character has yet to achieve. If the character is already a Duke, he is instead given three more IP (Three IP).



WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO THIRD REICH

It was inevitable that The Avalon Hill Game Company produce a "wargamer's guide" to the most popular grand strategic game of all time—*THIRD REICH*. After two years of effort, two master players (Marcus Watney and Larry Bucher) have produced the finest guide yet published.

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Released to acclaim at ORIGINS '85, the *WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO THIRD REICH* is now available for order by mail direct from The Avalon Hill Game company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Cost is \$5.00. Please add usual 10% for shipping and handling—20% for Canadian orders and 30% for overseas. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

HEAVY WEAPONS FOR TRIREMES

Arms Race in the Mediterranean, 300 BC

By Ralph Slesinski

Those who have played *TRIREME* and read the lead article in the April 1981 issue of *Scientific American* have been presented with a delightful challenge. The article, entitled "Ancient Oared Warships" (Foley and Soedel), is fascinating reading, loaded with archeological information on the evolution of early battle vessels. The inspiration for the variant rules below, however, lies in the authors' examination of the trend toward larger, slower ships after the time of Alexander the Great.

To summarize briefly, the authors postulate that war galleys became heavier and slower after 300 BC due to the introduction of heavy catapults onboard. They hold that ship-to-ship catapult fire was particularly effective when used in the defensive mode against oncoming ships which intended to ram. Such attacking ships presented attractive targets, for their course and speed were fairly steady could be anticipated. Therefore, the popular ramming tactics of the Greeks gave way to the infantry-style boarding tactics perfected by the Romans. Warships no longer needed to be light and fast, but heavier and stable to improve catapult fire and to hold more marines for the hand-to-hand combat (now intended to eliminate the enemy's "fire-power").

Typically, a battle between a light, ram-fitted trireme and a cataphract octares carrying heavy catapults would have occurred in this manner during the transition: the trireme, being much more maneuverable) jockeyed around the octares until, being in position, it goes to full-speed to ram broadside. On the octares, the catapult crews have been watching the activities of the trireme and its commander has been making his mental calculations. They bring the catapult(s) to bear on the onrushing trireme and wait for it to commit itself to the ram course. Once certain of the course of the trireme, the commander barks his orders and the crew looses the missiles which are between the ships and fall among the trireme's top portside rowers. One crashes through to the bottom row. The starboard rowers continue pulling for a few more strokes, but are then ordered to hold until the portside crews can recover. Meanwhile the octare moved to close with the trireme. Should the smaller ship's crew not be able to return to a normal stroke, the octares' marines will overwhelm her, wreaking havoc among the lightly armed oarsmen.

The authors give as the basis for this scenario the existence of a ship-board catapult constructed by Archimedes (287-212 BC) which could hurl stones weighing 78.5 kilos and darts some 5.5 meters long. They further note that Julius Caesar wrote of iron-tipped darts extant since 500 BC which were capable of penetrating a foot of solid oak. And, most to the point, in 332 BC Alexander mounted catapults on ships during his siege of Tyre. These catapults used the superior elastic force of sinew ropes for the first time. To learn more on the effectiveness of these weapons, I'd urge anyone interested to check out this article.

I've always been rather disappointed in *TRIREME*'s system for catapult fire. It functions as an arm of the boarding battle, and has no inherent ship-killing capacity at all (except where flame missiles are used). What a revelation to find a strong argument for the existence of devastating heavy artillery onboard the warships of antiquity. I will stress that the authors believed oncoming ships presented better targets. This point is essential to the variant rules

that follow. Here, then, is my adaptation for heavy catapult fire in *TRIREME*.

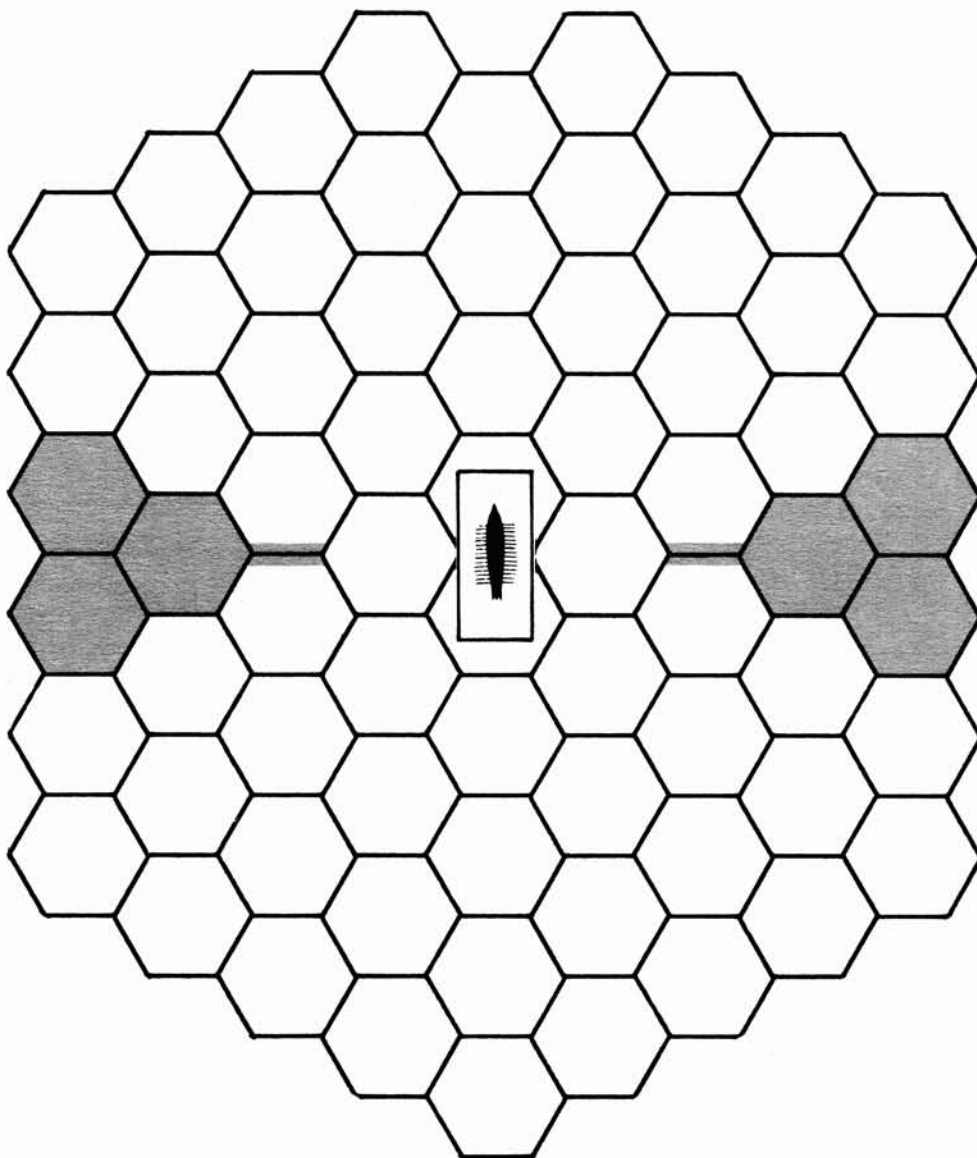
Recommended Use: Heavy catapult fire is best used with the Fleet Game's simpler rules. I leave it to more detail-hungry players to design similar rules for the Ship Game. The following apply to the Fleet Game *only*.

Historical Use: The heavy catapult (hereafter *HC*) may not be used prior to 332 BC. This is the first firm date for their usage (and allows the weapon to be employed in the second Salamis scenario).

Cargo Point Cost: HCs cost three (3) cargo points each. This makes them rather expensive and unwieldy for triremes to carry.

When HCs Fire: Catapults may fire during the owning player's turn or at *any point* during the enemy

player's turn. (Thus, they have the pre-emptive effect envisioned by Foley and Soedel, making the strategy much more intriguing.) They may not, however, fire more than once in a *complete* Game Turn. That is, if a weapon fires during the owning player turn, it may not do so during the subsequent enemy player turn. Mark those weapons unfired (still loaded) with any appropriate counter for ready reference. This helps insure that HCs will not be used to cripple enemy ships during the owning player's turn but will be held at the ready to defend against ramming vessels when their effectiveness is greatest. To further impede the offensive use of HCs, I have made provisions for their use on the *Effects of Fire Table*. Keep track of when catapults have fired on the ship logs. Note that HCs may be used even against cataphract ships, as the large bolts will pierce any deck.



Fields of Fire Bow and Stern fields are indicated by dashed line; overlap area (i.e., able to be struck from either) is indicated by shaded region. Note that no ship in adjacent hex nor further than four hexes may be fired upon.

Effects of Fire

Range
Attitude of
Target

4 hexes

2-3 hexes

Ram ¹	On a roll of 5 or 6, target is reduced to Cruising Speed ³ . Roll for Critical Hit.	On roll of 4-6, target is reduced to Cruising Speed. Target is crippled for one complete turn. ⁴
Non-Ram ²	Same as above on roll of 6.	Same as above on roll of 5 or 6.
Ram at Bow/Stern	No effect.	Same as above on roll of 6.

1. A target is in a "ram attitude" when its keel is aligned with a ship and it is in a row of hexes which passes through any hex occupied by that ship. These effects apply to all ram attitudes *except* bow and stern (i.e., when the hex row occupied passes the length of the ship to be rammed).

2. All other positions.

3. Obviously, if the target has already exceeded its cruising speed, the target ship must halt movement.

4. The target is crippled for one complete game turn. It may then proceed normally, barring results of subsequent attacks. Roll for recovery may not be made as a result of HC fire. All special equipment is lost (tossed overboard), including any HCs.

Resolution of Fire: Should it be the enemy player's turn, all defensive fire against his ships must be announced at the same time before any are resolved. This accumulation of fire applies to only one point in the target ship's movement, however. The moving ship may be attacked in each hex it enters, but only by one of the designated firing catapults; obviously, some catapults may end up being unable to fire should the target sink or end movement. The range at which the target is fired upon is determined at the moment of firing. Offensive fire must be resolved at the end of all movement in the attacker's turn. All possible fire must be completed before any grappling or ramming attacks are resolved.

Fields of Fire: There are two fields of fire. These cover the stern and bow, and may strike enemy ships in the fields as indicated in the accompanying diagram. Catapults may be mounted in either the stern or bow, and range is calculated from the appropriate hex. Note that there are two areas where the fields of fire for stern and bow overlap on each side. Though these hexes are "non-ram attitude" hexes, they do afford a defender better fire opportunities.

There are two ranges (as shown in the *Effects of Fire Chart*)—four-hex range and the 2-3 hex range. The HC is a long-range weapon; there is *no* fire into adjacent hexes. If a target is partially or totally obscured by other ships or land masses, it may not be fired upon. A ship may never fire upon an enemy ship to which it is grappled.

With these proposed simple rules as a start, a player of *TRIEME* can get a feel for what Foley and Soedel envision as ancient combat on the seas. I would here suggest that HCs not be used in any scenarios where artillery engines are called for, or that they be used in place or—and not in addition to—those machines. If, after a few games, it appears that the addition of HCs weights the scenario too heavily in favor of the "host with the most", reduce that side's boarding factors accordingly.

Ancient buffs may go wild with these rules, and wish to develop "artillery duel" scenarios or assaults on fortified cities (as Alexander employed it). One could even develop rules for different types of "shot". The possibilities are endless. The use of HCs requires a little extra bookkeeping (but not enough to be troublesome). I hope that this variant has stimulated some thought on one of the finest tactical naval games around. You may well put away that copy of *WS&IM*.



A TRIP TO THE SQUAD LEADER OPEN

As the sun rose over Charlotte on a Saturday morning, players began to break out their boards and rattle their dice. It was the morning of the 4th Annual **SQUAD LEADER** Open. Players had come from near and far to test their mettle against some of the nation's best. Players had flown in from as far north as New York and as far west as Texas. They had driven in from Ohio, Florida, Tennessee, New Jersey, Maryland, South Carolina. And some had even come from North Carolina. They wanted to match their abilities on the cardboard battlefield against tough competition for over \$200.00 in cash prizes.

The first round of competition began at about 0900, and the last shot echoed at 1230. The players broke for mess (an outstanding roast beef buffet laid on in the hotel dining room). The second round began after lunch and lasted until 1730. Players who finished early made full use of the hotel swimming pool for some much-needed R&R. The third round of competition began after supper and lasted into the night. For those players eliminated and wanting some diversion, the hotel offered a band and dancing with lots of friendly Southern belles.

Sunday morning began with chow (another excellent buffet). The fourth round began at 0900 with only three undefeated players still active. At the end of that round, there was only one undefeated player remaining—Bill Conner. The tournament wasn't over, however. Bill still had to fight off one more challenger. Bill successfully defended his undefeated string of tactical victories in that final round and ended up with a perfect score of 5-0. Three other players were tied at 4-1 for the second through fourth places; the final standings were determined based upon Solkof Tie Breaker Points.

Some of the highlights of the tense competition include Bill Conner's devastating single-turn victory over Don Munsell in the first round, and the unique third-round draw between Doug Johnson and Ed Fritz. The latter scenario was so close that it came down to a contested building and a desperate close assault; the close combat failed to kill anyone leaving both players' troops locked in melee and the winning building contested by both. The last three scenarios had been specially designed for the competition, so were new to all players. Inevitably, there were many cries that they were not evenly-balanced (by the losers on both sides); but after the dust had settled, the results seemed to prove our playtest results—the scenarios were indeed balanced.

At the end of five rounds of competition, every bit as tough as any at ORIGINS, the standings were as follows:

1st	Bill (Sgt) Conner	Ohio
2nd	Bob Weissbard	New York
3rd	Bill Thomson	Florida
4th	John Harrison	North Carolina
5th	Mike Mihalik	Texas

Our congratulations to all. They earned it.

The 5th Annual **SQUAD LEADER** Open will be held at Charlotte NC again next year by the United States Wargaming Federation. We are interested in your input as to the dates, facilities and structure for the event. Please help us to serve your needs. Contact D.R. Munsell, 6101 McBride Street, Charlotte, NC 28215.

Critical Hit Table

Die Roll

- 1-2 Ship in confusion. Target ship still retains full boarding strength, but can only move one hex next turn, either directly forward or directly back.
- 3 Steersman hit. If target ship is moving, it swings to port on a die roll of 1-2, starboard on a die roll of 4-6, and proceeds to the limit of its remaining movement. If it should strike another ship, treat as a collision. If the target is not moving, no effect.
- 4 One-third of boarding strength eliminated (round down).
- 5-6 HC on target (nearest to firer if more than one) eliminated. If equidistant, choice is firing player's.

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GUNSLINGER BY MAIL

(Aim-6 days, Range-1500 miles, hmm . . .)

By Jim Marvin

I couldn't believe my ears. Was that my wife saying, "Now that one looks like it might be fun." Be still, my trembling hand. Buy it, before she changes her mind. Finally, a game she'll try. (And, presumably lose!) When we got home, I couldn't wait to play my (our?) new game. I read the box with great anticipation.

"Split second . . . gunplay."

" . . . decisions . . . as bullets start to fly."

"From two to seven players . . ."

Uh oh. Seven players? Oh well, we already had two. Let's learn the game and we'll worry about more players later.

And learn we did. She learned to shoot, and I learned to die. The lesson was becoming a little too redundant to suit my taste. After a little thought, it became apparent that more players were a must. At least if she had more people to shoot at, I might stand a better chance of survival.

First order of business, local opponents. At the time I had none. Next, The *GENERAL*. Nothing local there, either. Wait a minute! What's this?

"20 yr. old wants pbm only for GSL . . ."

GUNSLINGER by mail. The answer to my dreams. The letter was in the mail that day along with my urgent plea, "Send me your system and we'll get started."

About two weeks passed when the St. Paul post-mark finally showed up in the mail. I read with great anticipation.

"Thank you for your reply to my ad . . ." (Yeh, yeh. Forget the formalities, SAVE me!)

" . . . GLS will be a little hard to play by mail." (I figured that. C'mon, already.)

"I don't have a pbm system for GLS . . ." (WHAT, NO SYSTEM?)

" . . . I do have a way to generate dice rolls using the stock market." (DICE? WHAT DICE? I'm doomed.)

One last shot, design the system myself.

I was surprised at how easily *GUNSLINGER* adapted to pbm. Of course, I certainly didn't lack for motivation. All the time this was taking place, my *GUNSLINGER* characters continued to contract fatal cases of lead poisoning. The following system resulted.

1.0 Abbreviations. The following is a list of standard abbreviations used in the system and this article.

AOE — Announced or Executed—Unless specified by AOE, all conditions for action execution change (3.3.1) must have been executed *prior* to his segment to be a valid condition for change.

C — Character—C1-character1, C2-character2, etc.

DT — Defensive Track—Used with OT (below) in determining card draws (4.3).

OT — Offensive Track—See DT above.

2.0 Mailings. The best system for mailing dates (to keep the game moving right along) is to pick a day of the week and send your turns on the same day each week. Since the system is si-move and si-resolution, only one mailing is required per turn.

For those who cannot depend on the same day each week (such as international games perhaps), the players can agree in advance to list a "next mailing date" with each turn (a la *WS&JM*) and the next turn would be mailed on the latter of the two dates.

One last warning, the pbm system follows the ff sequence of play EXACTLY. This is especially im-

portant to remember in a multi-character, si-move game such as *GUNSLINGER*. All standard rules as published by The Avalon Hill Game Company will be in effect unless specifically altered or amended in this text.

3.0 The Turn Record Sheet (see Page 23) is used to record your turn. It is filled out as explained in this section.

3.1 C#—Enter the character number and name in this space.

3.2 Seg. refers to the segment that an action card is intended to be revealed. On the top line of the appropriate segment, enter the number and name of the action card to be revealed. (The first action will always be revealed on Segment 0.) Whether or not it is *actually* revealed on that segment may be changed by game conditions.

Example: On Segment 0, a character reveals Card #1, Advance. This Action takes two segments to complete. Therefore, his next card, let's say #8, Load, would be listed on Segment 2. However, on Segment 1, this character receives three delay points. Now, his Advance will be *executed* on Segment 5, and all other actions this turn are cancelled.

3.3 Execution is used to define exactly how a character intends to execute a particular action.

In our example above, our character revealed Card #1, Advance on Segment 0. In the execution column, he would specify ahead left, ahead right, or ahead straight.

3.3.1 The two lines in each segment below the action card are used for listing possible conditions for changing the execution listed on the top line. Unless otherwise specified, the condition for change must have *already been executed any time this turn*.

3.3.2 In the execution column, below the original execution, list the new execution if the conditions are met.

Example: On Segment 2, C2 reveals Card #5, cock/aim/shoot, and lists the execution as "Aim at C1". On the next list he lists "If C1 has shot" as the condition and "shoot" as the new execution. On Segment 1, C1 revealed the same card with an execution of "shoot". In this example, C2 *would* AIM since the condition to shoot has not been met on the segment the action was revealed. C1 will not actually shoot until Segment 3. If, instead, C2 had listed "If C1 has AOE a shot" for his condition, then his action would be "shoot" since at this point C1 has *announced* that he will shoot. This would fulfill the necessary condition for changing C2's original execution. Remember, the sequence of play is VERY important in determining if a condition for changing an execution exists.

3.4 Defensive Tracks (DT)—After filling in the actions for a turn, players enter a DT for each character on the DT line under Segment 4. DTs consist of the letters A-J. There are no restrictions on their use. Letters may be used more than once and in any order the player desires. The DT will be used with the OT to determine the card draws.

3.5 Offensive Tracks (OT)—Each player now enters an OT for each of his opponent's characters in the "Offensive Tracks" box. Be sure to fill in the character number for each OT. OTs consist of the numbers 1-10. As with DTs, there are no restrictions on their use.

IMPORTANT: When a player receives his opponent's turn, the first thing he should do is to enter

the OTs for each character on the Turn Record Sheets. Always double check for accuracy. In this manner, each character's OT and DT will be together for ready reference.

4.0 Turn Resolution Sheet (see Page 22)

4.1 Enter character number and name on top line.

4.2 The first box will show the resolution of the turn for the listed character.

4.2.1 "Segment" here refers to the segment an action was *executed*. (Not the segment it was revealed as on the Turn Record Sheet.)

4.2.2 "No." is the action card number executed.

4.2.3 "Execution" is the actual execution of the action after any conditions for change, etc. have been considered.

4.3 Card Draws—To determine the card to be drawn, cross-reference the appropriate OT number and DT letter on the card draw chart. This will yield the card number "drawn".

4.3.1 Card Draw Chart

4.3.2 Enter the OT number and DT letter in the appropriate columns in the Card Draws section. First digits for the first card, second digits for the second card, etc.

Note: If a character needs to draw more than ten cards in a turn, return to the beginning of the tracks and drop the first letter of the DT. This means, the 11th card would use the first number of OT and the second letter of the DT, the 12th card would be the second number of the OT and the third letter of DT, etc. This prevents re-drawing cards in the same turn.

4.3.3 Enter the card number drawn in the No. column.

4.3.4 Finally, enter the effect of the card draw (for example: "Leg hit, 3 delay")

A few words here on the order or card draws. For any actions considered simultaneous, such as more than one character shooting on the segment, begin with the lower numbered character and resolve all actions *completely* before going to the next lower numbered character.

Example: On the same segment, C1 and C4 shoot at each other. C1 shoots "first" and scores a hit. C4 draws a total of six cards to resolve damage. Now C4 draws for his shot. Since he has already drawn six cards this turn, his shot will be resolved with his seventh card. If he scores a hit, C1 will resolve the damage beginning with his second card, since his first card was used to shoot.

Card(s) for serious wounds are always drawn at the beginning of the turn, before resolution.

[One final note on the Card Draw Chart. Each result card was rated in nine categories from least severe to most severe. Then, one card from each category was placed in each column and each row. Also, a malfunction card was placed in each column and row. It was necessary to alter the number of cards to conform to the chart and keep each row and column equal in terms of severity and possibility of malfunction.]

4.4 Delay

4.4.1 On the top delay line, enter the total delay points a character received this turn. Do not include any delay points he began the turn with.

Fear No Opponent

Writing advertising copy, like any form of word-crafting, is an art—one perfected through patience and practice. Few in this industry are as adept at it as Tom Shaw, Vice President of Public Relations for The Avalon Hill Game Company and long-time hobby personality. It is an old adage that if you can get the customer laughing, you are halfway to the sale. Following are two examples of Tom's work which particularly tickled my fancy (and I am notorious for having no sense of humor) and that we felt should be preserved for posterity in these pages. So, for all of you who have complained about the dryness of this rag, enjoy.

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"Harold," she whispered softly, "I never knew what a winner you were!"

It was late at night and soft jazz music filled the air. Everyone had just left the smoke-filled dining room where the potted palms were wilting slowly.

"Harold," she said, "you saved my party!" A tear of gratitude walled up in her left light blue eye.

"It was really the *DIPLOMACY* game," Harold answered modestly.

"Yes," she said. "It's really loads more fun than cards, much more social than charades. Actually, I've never had such a splendid time."

"Indeed," Harold agreed. "I love you, Gloria, but I know at a party you are two left feet when it comes to dancing. So naturally, being considerate of



you, I brought the *DIPLOMACY* game to your party."

"And you," she sighed, "won."

"And I," she said triumphantly, "came in second."

"Well," Harold mused as he lit a cigarette with his Eaton crested lighter, "when 4 to 7 people vie for territorial expansion with an eye toward total conquest of Europe while preventing opponents from

doing so in a devilishly clever manner . . . really puts their all into the challenge."

"Goodness, but you're right," she breathed heavily, "and how those marvelously devious friends of yours thoroughly exploited the innocent nature of the other players . . . why, Smedley got so perturbed he almost blurted out a rather colorful word!"

Buoyed by the euphoria of the super evening, Harold at last made the promise Gloria had been waiting for all along, "Monday morning, first thing, darling . . . I'll revisit the Game Emporium in quest of more Avalon Hill games. Because—to play an Avalon Hill game is an exhilarating challenge; to give one, a subtle compliment."

"Or, use the coupon below," answered Gloria breathlessly . . .



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PLAYING THE ANGLES

Target Aspect Problems in TOBRUK

By Lorrin Bird



While *TOBRUK* tends to be one of the most detailed games on the North African Theater of WWII, the approach used to define and evaluate hits on the front and side of vehicles is somewhat simplistic. In this article, the method used in *TOBRUK* is analyzed and a system that increases the detail with a minimum of extra play time is put forth.

To many players of *TOBRUK*, one of the biggest problems of the game (besides hoping that one's wrist will stand up to the 1001 die rolls) has to do with the ease with which players can claim flank shots on the sides of enemy tanks.

Tanks are basically designed with an eye towards defeating hits on the frontal armor, and the side armor is usually much thinner since sound tactics will allow the enemy few side shots, and a vehicle with equal front and side armor would probably weigh too much to move. Based on this design approach, winning tactics usually center around the positioning of guns and tanks so that the enemy will be caught in a crossfire, and the vulnerable flank armor can be hit. Figure #1 shows a sample set-up of anti-tank guns, which are aimed at one flank attacking head-on, while the other flank position takes the attackers in the side. This is also known as an "interlocking field", since both flanks have the ability to support each other, and if one flank falls the other group can defend both sectors.

That these tactics work very well in *TOBRUK* can be seen by checking out a few of the damage charts of the most heavily armored beasts. The mighty Grant, which is the scourge of Gazala (whenever the British were unconfused enough to use it correctly), has little to fear frontally from a PzKw III beyond eleven hexes (and even then it takes an APCR round). Taken in the side, the Grant is humbled to the point where it is fair game for the 50mm short at 16 hexes, and even the 75mm short can pick up kills at 16 hexes (if a miracle occurs and it scores a hit beyond nine hexes).

Going over to the German side, the Mark III Special was the best panzer at Gazala, totally immune frontally to anything any British tank could fire at it. Caught in the side, one might as well have been in a PzKw I since the 30mm side armor stopped nothing except a few anti-tank rifle blasts.

Given the weakness of most tanks to side hits (Matildas and Valentines are exceptions, but notice how *slow* they are), players of *TOBRUK* quickly come to relish the chance to blow away the enemy's best tanks with hits on their thin flank armor. And side hits are pretty easy to obtain in the game. Many times your tanks will just start to close-in for the lethal duel at close range, when a shot taken by the

enemy at distant range, and at a weird angle, will send those hopes up in smoke (along with your best tanks).

Analyzed a little, one sees a bit of a problem with the definition of "side shot" in the game. Looked at from a target prospective, shots taken from inside the side shot quadrant appear to have a far better chance of hitting the side armor than the front. So far, so good. But look at the *large* angle that is involved when shots are just inside the side arc.

If the firing weapon is just inside the side quadrant, those hits are striking the side armor at an angle of about sixty degrees from the perpendicular (see Figure #2). The question now is whether it is correct in assuming that armor hit at a perpendicular reacts the same to shot as one hit at an angle of sixty degrees. The PzKw IIIj has 30mm of side hull armor, and if a round hits head-on (at the perpendicular) the armor to be penetrated is 30mm. But if a shot hits at an angle, the armor to be penetrated increases due to the slope of the plate, as shown in Figure #3.

Taking the most elemental approach to the problem of determining how angle of hit affects armor *effective thickness* (the penetration required to overcome the added thickness due to slope or angle), one can use the trigonometric $1/\text{Cosine}$

formula. This approach assumes that when a round hits at an angle, the effective thickness is simply the distance that the shell must pierce to reach the other side of the plate. Working out the math, one finds that for the following angle of hit, the increase in basic thickness due to slope is:

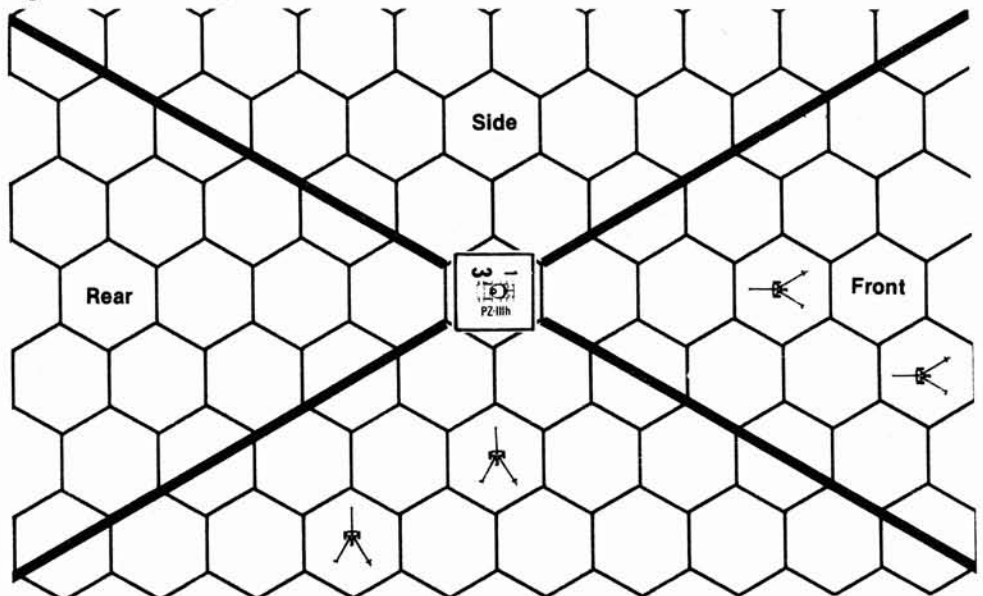
Hit Angle	Cosine	1/Cosine	% Increase
30	0.86	1.16	16%
45	0.71	1.41	41%
60	0.50	2.00	100%

Note: Angle is measured from the perpendicular.

Based on the simple $1/\text{Cosine}$ approach, we find that an armor piercing round striking armor at 60° from perpendicular is resisted by *twice* the effective thickness of a round that hits head-on. Hitting at 45° increases the armor resistance to 41.1% of the plate thickness, and all of the sudden we notice that those side shots are not all the same, one of the basic assumptions used in the design of *TOBRUK* (all shots taken within the side quadrant hit the same armor).

That such a simple assumption was used in the design of *TOBRUK* really is understandable, since the large number of die rolls and procedures made an in-depth study of shot angle mechanics too much

Figure #1: Definition of Target Aspect



of a burden. In addition, the existing mechanisms for resolving angled shots required a multitude of steps that would reduce playability to near zero, more than eliminating any player benefits gained from the additional detail. From a realistic standpoint, however, the fact remains that side shots in *TOBRUK* are very easy to obtain, and treating all side hits equally despite angle variations makes kills too common.

That the effect of angle was appreciated by tankers is well known, and the Germans taught their panzer crews to approach the enemy at an angle to maximize angled hits (which increase the effective thickness that resists penetration). Tiger crews, due to 80mm thick side armor, became famous for their use of angled attacks where the side armor became virtually impenetrable (80mm hit at an angle of 45° reacts like 112mm).

Because angled hits are an actual factor in determining whether a tank survives, or succumbs to, a flank hit, they should be included in any game that attempts to present a realistic picture of armored warfare.

Using the standard definition of a flank shot in the game, the areas where angles should be taken into account can be identified. Figure #4 shows a sketch of the areas where shots taken at the side armor will hit appreciably thicker plates than the basic thickness. Within the shaded area, which covers from the beginning of the side shot area to thirty degrees from the perpendicular, the effective thickness will vary from 16% to 100% thicker than the plate thickness due to angle. This means that a 30mm plate (the side armor on the PzKw III tanks, and a little less than what covers the Grant flank) will vary in effectiveness from 35 to 60mm of armor; many guns cannot penetrate 60mm of armor at close range (2pdr, 37mm, 50mm short, and 75mm short among others).

Although this in itself is a very wide variation, and hitting 35mm often means a kill where 60mm results in a small dent and a broken shell, using one value for the entire area would be better than using one value for the whole side shot regime. Besides, there is also a 10-50% chance that most side shots will hit the front (notice that the front can be seen from within the shaded areas), a fact which has been ignored since things would really become wild (and involved). In view of the need to balance detail and playability, let's just assume that no shots taken within the side shot area hit the front (and that no front area shots hit the side, which is often possible), and that using one average value for the shaded area is reasonable.

Taking things easy, averaging 16% and 100%, we obtain a value of 58% for the increase in side armor thickness due to angled shots from within the shaded area. The average increase for side shots from outside the shaded area will be ignored, since it is only 8%. Assuming an increase of 58% (shall we use 60%, for simplicity) is not bad, even though the average will far exceed the minimum number of 16% that helped make the average. While it will distort the shots taken at 30° from perpendicular, it will more closely model the difficulties involved when hits are taken from just outside the frontal arc. Which is the problem that originally started this investigation.

Running back over our typical side armor values, we see that:

Side Armor Basic Thickness	Thickness When Hit From Oblique*	Typical Tank
30mm	48mm	PzKw III, Honey
38mm	61mm	Grant
50mm	80mm	Valentine
70mm	112mm	Matilda

Note: * "Oblique shots" are what we shall call shots taken from within the shaded area. The "Oblique" thickness is based on a multiplier of 1.6 (60% increase within the shaded area). While a 60% increase isn't great when you're dealing with relatively small numbers (Tiger IIs carried 95mm of side armor), the very tiny penetration capabilities of the guns make things very important.

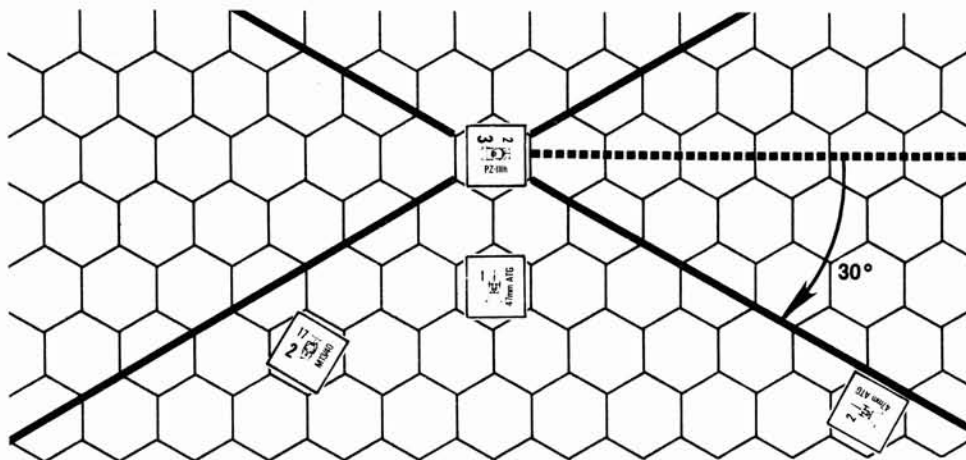


Figure #2: The Side Shot Definition allows a wide range of shot angles.

So, where 30mm is easy pickin's for the 2pdr and 37mm guns carried by the Crusader and Honey, 48mm becomes a very close range issue for the 2pdr; and Honey tanks may not survive the sightseeing tour they have to take to get within penetration range. Grants, for their part, can brazenly beat off 50mm short hits on the side armor as long as they land at an oblique angle. Players should find that this little addition helps to recreate the frustration of the PzKw III tankers when they came up against Grants, since side penetrations against the British "monster" will require perfect positioning in order to avoid oblique hits (i.e., ricochets).

But before we get too excited, remember that the data in *TOBRUK* is based on range numbers, not millimeters of armor or penetration. Knowing that oblique shots increase the armor thickness by 60% does not help us modify the charts. Fortunately, however, a means was found to convert increased armor thickness into a reduction in weapon effective range. While the process is a bit convoluted, a little study will prove it to be relatively straightforward. Players who are not too ambitious can glance over the formulation steps, and directly apply the procedures.

A study of armor penetration data for most of the weapons used at the time of the Gazala battles revealed that, on the average, the guns lost about 6-9mm of penetration with a 250 meter increase in range:

Weapon	Penetration Range In Meters			Average Decrease Per 250 meters
	250 meters	500 meters	750 meters	
50mm short	55mm	47mm	42mm	(8 + 5)/2 = 6.5mm
2pdr	58mm	52mm	41mm	(6 + 11)/2 = 8.5mm
37mm	54mm	46mm	38mm	(8 + 8)/2 = 8.0mm
75mm (Grant)	78mm	72mm	66mm	(6 + 6)/2 = 6.0mm
88mm Flak	143mm	135mm	127mm	(8 + 8)/2 = 8.0mm

Taking an average for the five cases, we obtain a rough value of 7mm of armor penetration lost for every 250 meters of range, or 6.3mm for every 225 meters (three hexes in *TOBRUK*, at 75 meters per hex). Rounding off to the nearest whole integer and using the definition of a hex (equals 75 meters), we finally obtain a decrease of 2mm in penetration for each hex in range.

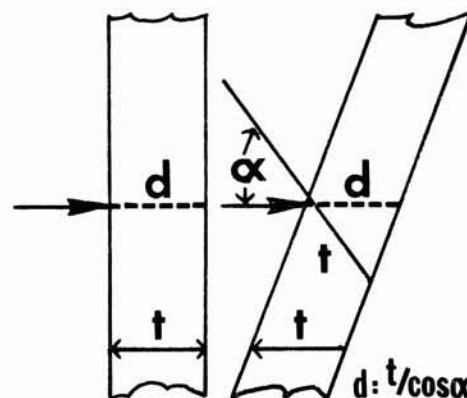
We now know that a relationship exists between armor penetration decreases and range (2mm per hex), and with a little ingenuity, can use this to convert increases in armor thickness into decreased weapon effectiveness distances for use on the damage charts.

For instance, at an oblique angle, the shot that previously managed to penetrate (penetration equaled armor) 30mm of armor head-on will see 48mm. In effect, now the shot will have to be taken at nine less hexes to penetrate (the increase in 18mm of armor requires a range decrease of nine hexes to make up the 18mm, at 2mm per hex). This becomes our key formula—that for every two millimeters increase in armor due to an oblique hit, the range needed for a particular type of damage decreases by one hex.

Using this chart, and all of the preceding logic, is quite a bit simpler than the reasoning process itself. With APCR shells, the 50mm long gun can K/C2 the side upper hull of a Valentine at 16 hexes, and reaps a C1(P4) result out to 19 hexes. If hit at oblique angle, the Oblique Damage Chart says to decrease the damage ranges by 15 hexes.

Although the 50mm long can damage the Valentine side upper hull out to 19 hexes with APCR if it hits head-on (no increase in effective thickness due to angle), at an oblique things change drastically.

Figure #3: Distance to be penetrated increases with Hit Angle.



OBLIQUE DAMAGE EFFECTS CHART—SIDE SHOTS ONLY

Tank	Basic Side Thickness	Armor Increase For:	
		Oblique Hit*	Oblique Damage Range Decreases
Grant	38mm	23mm	11 hexes
Honey	25mm	15mm	7 hexes
Crusader	14mm	8mm	4 hexes
Valentine	50mm	30mm	15 hexes
Matilda	75mm	45mm	22 hexes
PzKw III, IV	30mm	18mm	9 hexes
Marder	30mm	18mm	9 hexes
M 13/40	26mm	16mm	8 hexes
Semovente	26mm	16mm	8 hexes

Note: *Based on a 60% armor increase if hit at an angle.

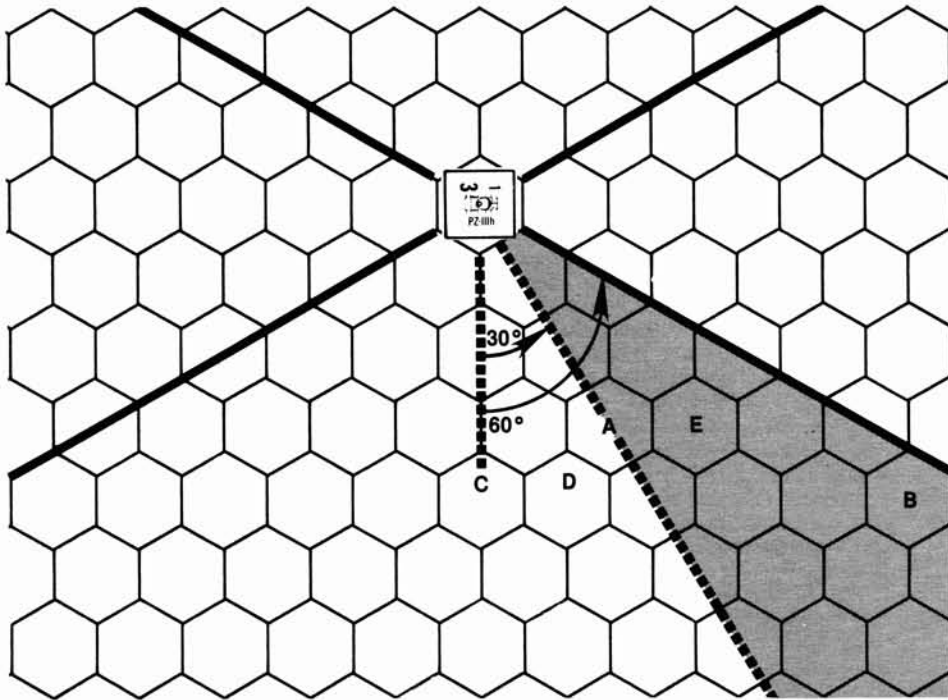
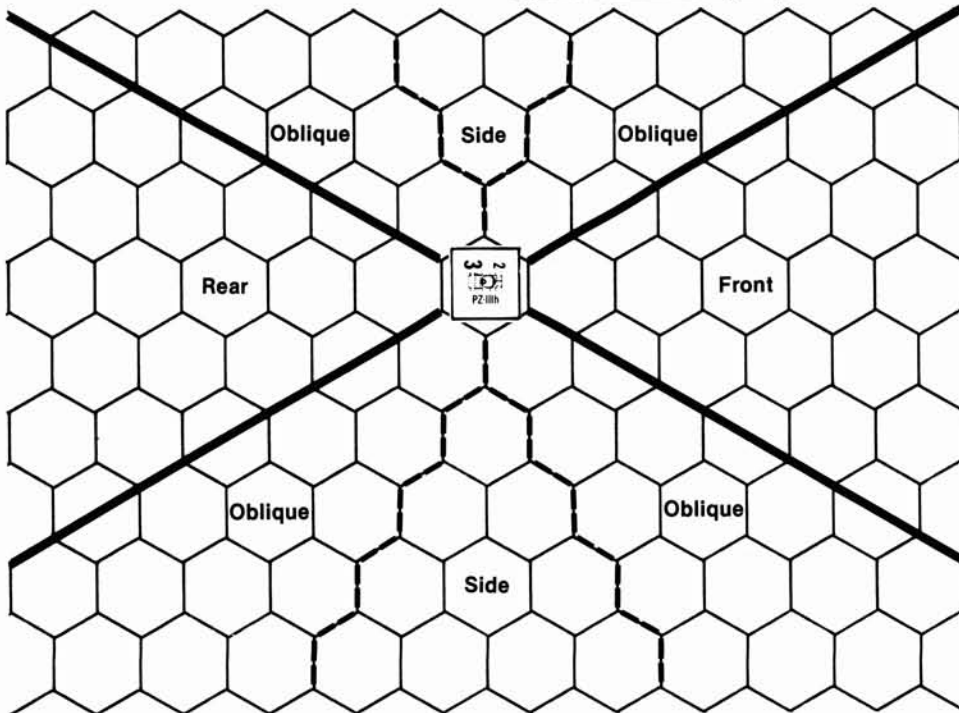


Figure #4: Shots taken from within the shaded area hit at angles of 30-60 degrees.

Figure #5: Definition of Oblique Angles



The K/C2 result only becomes valid at a one-hex range on oblique hits, and C1(P4) damage is restricted to four hexes, due to the increase in effective armor thickness that an oblique hit produces. Even if you don't fully understand the logic and math (and I hope you do) the results make sense; you have to fire closer to armor in order to penetrate if it is hit at an angle (as opposed to head-on).

Despite the relative brevity of this article, it is obvious that quite a bit has been covered, much of which is theoretical. Efforts have been made to keep things "down to earth", but many of the ideas are slightly abstract. As with all theoretical "do-dads", the proof of the pudding lies in the results and the end product agrees with common sense. Armor hit at an angle resists penetration more than the basic plate thickness, so you have to be closer to get the same effect (since penetration decreases with range, it increases with shorter ranges).

Getting away from the theory, play out this method of analyzing oblique shots (see Figure #5 for the formal definition) and see what a tremendous difference it makes. Grants that previously could be "plugged" by the 50mm short at 16 hexes (with side hull hits) now have to be within five hexes to die with an oblique hit. The damage range for PzKw III side hits goes from 19 to ten hexes on 2pdr hits, when they strike at oblique angles.

The last problem that arises has to do with K/Cx results. Since there is no range listed, one has a difficult time subtracting the Oblique Damage Chart range modifier. This is not insurmountable (if it was, I wouldn't have brought it up) since a K/Cx result refers to the full range of the weapon. For the 37mm gun, the maximum range is 27 hexes in order to hit anything, and this can be added to your charts with a minimum of effort (write in the maximum hit range, 29 hexes for really long-range weapons, right on the damage tables so it will be handy).

So if the 37mm guns scores an oblique hit on the side of a PzKw III, the max range of 29 minus the Oblique Damage modifier of nine hexes yields a "K" range of 20 hexes. While this is a little bit incorrect, for playability purposes it will suffice (one can decrease the "K" range for 2pdr, 57mm and other weapons under 76.2mm, German included) to a maximum of seven hexes, if accuracy is desired (and of course, it is).

Although this method is appropriate in a great many ways, being based almost in total on various assumptions and shortcuts (like doing away with the chance of "side hits" striking the frontal armor), it presents a nice balance of accuracy and playable features. While hair-splitting detail is fine, and accuracy is to be valued, unless streamlining assumptions are used one could spend hours determining the damage caused by one hit (let alone the 20-30 hits that might occur in game).

As is true for all games, while you can thrive for accuracy, certainty will always prove just out of reach. The best one can do is to produce a reasonably sound model or system, and hope that the players enjoy it. We hope that this article helps you to better understand and enjoy that old warhorse, TOBRUK.

Mr. Bird in his past article, "State of the Art TOBRUK" (Vol. 18, No. 2) espoused greater realism for this most realistic game. Perfecting and quantifying some of the concepts introduced in that article led him to this evaluation of oblique hits and their effect on the vehicles found in TOBRUK. Used in conjunction with Mr. Del Grande's article in this issue, Lorrin's variant brings TOBRUK ever closer to being "miniatures in cardboard".



MARRIED TO A GAMER

Things My Mother Never Told Me

By Geraldine Brennan

Some few months ago, Geraldine Brennan—a lovely and intelligent lady—wrote an article on wargamers' wives for the amateur British publication her husband edits (obtainable by writing 38A Fairthorne Road, London SE7 7RL, Great Britain). I invited her to expand upon her views. I think the readers will find the following food for thought.

Gaming. It's clean—although both players and crockery may stay unwashed for the whole of a three-day weekend session. It's quiet—give or take the odd bout of blaspheming. It's cheaper than an evening spent drinking—in the long run. And in spite of the disturbing side-effects, which include bloodshot eyes, nervous twitches and “gamer's ass” from 13 hours sitting poised on a hard chair playing *CIVILIZATION*, it doesn't seriously damage the player's health. In other words, it is good, clean, cheap fun. For the gamer.

But the consequences for friends, family and household pets can be severe. I've spent the past six years with a gamer underfoot. We seldom spend long romantic weekends together, although nobody seems to play games at Christmas—which is the only time I feel like it. Presumably all possible opponents are at their firesides making up for a year's worth of neglect to their nearest and dearest.

We have few mutual friends—the ones who don't mind us using them as a post box and answering service when we haven't managed to speak to each other all week. (“If Glyn rings, tell him I'll be back when he's finished invading Poland.”) If we ever have any children they'll be like Elizabeth Bennett in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*—a stranger to one of their parents. Their father will wash his hands of them if they don't play games—and I'll wash mine of them if they do.

But, the most irritating point of all is that we never seem to eat our few shared meals at the dining table because it has always got games spread on it. Unless, of course, it is the deadline week for the postal games magazine Glyn edits; then it's covered in empty beer cans and screwed-up bits of paper. There is no place in my home safe from the insidious spread—closets are slowly filled with “collector's items”, the current favorites crowd out the books on our shelves, and I'd rather not discuss what's under my bed.

I sometimes try valiantly to account for Glyn's strange behavior to outsiders. “Oh, so you're a gaming widow”, they chaff merrily, tickled with the notion that my husband pushes little cardboard counters around for days at a time—just as heartier souls play golf and cricket while their faithful wives sit on the sidelines, wash out the kit and pour out the tea. For me, it's not that simple though.

“The Hobby”, as devotees refer to it in a reverential whisper, is a way of life, not just a sport. Glyn's recent editorship of *Cut & Thrust* has brought the odder fringes of the gaming world (and that means *really* odd) to my attention. We get lots of very strange phone calls. I am seriously thinking of getting an answering machine and programming it to say, “Glyn Roberts has reached another level. Please leave a message.”

He sometimes disappears for a few days for a gaming session held in another part of the country, and returns home with a Vitamin C deficiency and glazed expression. It takes weeks to de-program and restore him to polite society. These “mini-cons” are usually for a small circle of game devotees and held at one of their homes. This is the main form of group gaming activity in Britain and I have seen

several of these at uncomfortably close quarters. The signals if there's one at our house are fairly easy to detect for me by now. I trip over a large crate of beer, a large turkey partially devoured and six people of assorted sizes—all apparently dead—when I open the living room door. I keep a bag ready-packed for these occasions so that I can make a quick exit somewhere (anywhere will do!) for the duration. Even the flat downstairs will serve. The neighbors play games (*what* a piece of luck!) and are usually happy to swap homes with me. And guess who gets stuck with the cleaning afterward.

But the worse has yet to happen. As a strong member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Great Britain, I find the cardboard warmongering that goes on under our roof somewhat embarrassing. I dread the day that some of my pacifist friends drop by to find Glyn playing *Nuclear Escalation* in the living room, gleefully firing off cruise missiles before supper.

You'll have by now noticed that in our home the gamer is the man and the onlooker (with varying degrees of tolerance) is the woman of the house. I am open to correction, but—at least in the UK—there doesn't seem to be a single serious woman games player. By “serious”, I mean a lady who buys her own games and actually plays them for her own enjoyment. The only women gamers I've ever met admitted that they started and continued playing by tagging along with men. Last year I toddled along to Games Day (the UK equivalent to ORIGINS) which I thought had all the excitement of a dull sale of work. A glance round the hall confirmed the impressions I'd built up from my survey of the strange creatures who have made their way up my stairs—90% of the people there were men and all of the other 10% looked as bored as I was.

Since I first wrote a piece about this phenomenon for *Cut & Thrust*, one or two “serious” women gamers have been drawn to my attention. The nine-year-old daughter of a friend always beats Glyn at *MYSTIC WOOD* as well, so there are indications that things may be changing. But the current generation of adult women don't want to “play with the boys”. Given the choice between a few hours of *SQUAD LEADER* or a night in the sewers, any lady I know would run for the nearest drain. There's a lot of money to be made by the manufacturer who finally changes our attitude.

Now I'm not knocking it without trying it. I well remember my first evening's gaming because it is the only occasion in my life that has reduced me to genuine tears of boredom. And that comes from a woman who as a cub reporter had to attend the Wokingham Town Council Silver Jubilee Tree Planting Committee, the Yately Town Council Planning Committee, the Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee and, while working as a cinema usherette during a journalists' strike, once sat through eleven showings of *Piranha*.

There was once a games master at our home with an infuriating air of arcane superiority and six male disciples ranged about him. There was another woman in the room waiting to give her husband a lift home. Nothing would induce her to play, so she knitted doggedly through the long evening. She finished off a jumper and almost knitted a whole Balaclava helmet while we played—horrors!—*RuneQuest*. I thought about asking her to teach me to knit, but she ran out of wool before we were allowed to go home. My character in the game was called “Angharad Frostfeatures”, but she didn't do

anything for five hours. I never had any contact with her after that one session, but I think she was eventually eaten by a bear. I was curiously unmoved by the news.

Since then, the years and geographical distance from the scene of Angharad's short and ineffectual career have brought serenity. I've played a number of games with and even beaten Glyn in some of them. I'm now able to think rationally about exactly what puts me, and other women, off *The Hobby*.

At first, it doesn't seem like a male-dominated activity. Glyn doesn't need to psyche himself up with macho chants before taking on his adversaries. Perhaps he would if he played fantasy role-playing games in full costume. I once asked the readers of *Cut & Thrust* why women's RPG costumes are so sexist. One correspondent (he of the arcane superiority) enlightened me as follows: “The standard fantasy female figure is overdeveloped and underdressed . . . because the artists and designers are males who've never made it out of their adolescence.” Indeed! But the same writer assures me that women only look like that on the box the game comes in—they aren't expected to perform like that in play. “Chain-mail bikini and strategically sited ribbons are out; full plate armor is in.”

So, in fantasy as in reality, women have to look the way men think they should to encourage play, but all the rules of the game are men's. To succeed, women characters have to equip and acquit themselves like men. Whoever said games provide an escape from real life. You need only look at Britain's Prime Minister. And all the characters are chasing the same inherently male objectives—money, power, brute physical force, victory in combat. For men, the attraction in gaming can be said to be escapist only because they can now succeed where they have failed in real-life male objectives. Women find fantasy worlds created by men rather dispiritingly like real life.

Or perhaps it's not what you play, but how you play it? I've never tried playing games with a group of women, but I have played *Consulting Detective* in a mixed group. As in college seminars, and almost every mixed business meeting I've ever been in, the men (none of them apparently aggressive) used the occasion to dominate discussion. Frequently a woman came up with a strategy for solving the case that was put down or ignored by the men, who later adopted it and passed it off as their own. You can see why men take gaming so seriously—it's all good practice for dominating the next meeting they go to. For women, egotistical behavior like this is just more of what we already have to put up with all day.

Many women are deterred also by the physical requirements of dedicated gaming. I don't mean that you need a lot of muscle to shake the dice and shuffle the cards, but you do need plenty of endurance. You can be in and out of a squash court in under an hour or a cinema in under three, but if you start a war-game you can expect to spend all day and most of the night on it. The only activities I can sustain for more than a few hours—unless I'm being paid for them—are reading and sleeping. When playing games I feel that I can't go to the lavatory in case I miss something. And a lot of gamers don't believe in stopping for meals. That makes feeding gamers difficult. Glyn nearly always gets a turkey roasted because there are no crumbs, no spillage, you can prepare it in advance and nobody has to spend time fiddling around with it while it's cook-

ing. A turkey can last out even *CIVILIZATION* with seven players with plenty of leftovers. Personally, I think an intravenous drip would be even easier . . .

Glyn puts my aversion to wargaming down to guilt and childhood conditioning. He reckons that boys are brought up to enjoy competitive leisure for its own sake (all those ball games in the park with Daddy) while little girls are expected to be socially useful even when playing. It all starts when little Shelob helps Mummy in the kitchen while little Gollum plays with his toy soldiers. (With this kind of source material for naming children, perhaps it's just as well we haven't got any.) Then, 20 or 30 years later, Ms. Shelob can't sit at a table pretending to be someone else and exercising rat-like cunning long before she starts feeling guilty. Two hours is my limit before I feel the need for an improving book.

I've been accused of being staid and old-fashioned in my attitudes by Glyn's correspondent (arcane knowledge again, I suppose). "Someone is reading all those Mills and Boon novels and watching all those soap operas", he writes. Yes, but presumably not at the expense of the rest of their and their family's private lives—unless they are even odder than Glyn. Actually, I think the average soap opera offers all the glamor and vicarious excitement of a good game, with plenty of advantages over *The Hobby*. You can participate in the action for an hour or less in any position you like as long as you can see the television screen. Sometimes there are even commercial breaks so you won't get bored. And—best of all—you can drop the habit for six months and still know what's happening inside ten minutes when you take it up again.

And it's better than real life, isn't it?



GSL PBM . . . Cont'd from Page 21

4.4.2 On the bottom line, enter the delay he will begin the next turn with after removing one-half of his total.

4.5 Endurance.

4.5.1 On the top endurance line, enter the number of endurance boxes crossed off on this turn.

4.5.2 On the bottom endurance line, enter the total endurance boxes a character has remaining.

4.6 Location—Enter the hex a character occupies and the hex he faces in the proper hexes for the beginning and ending of the turn.

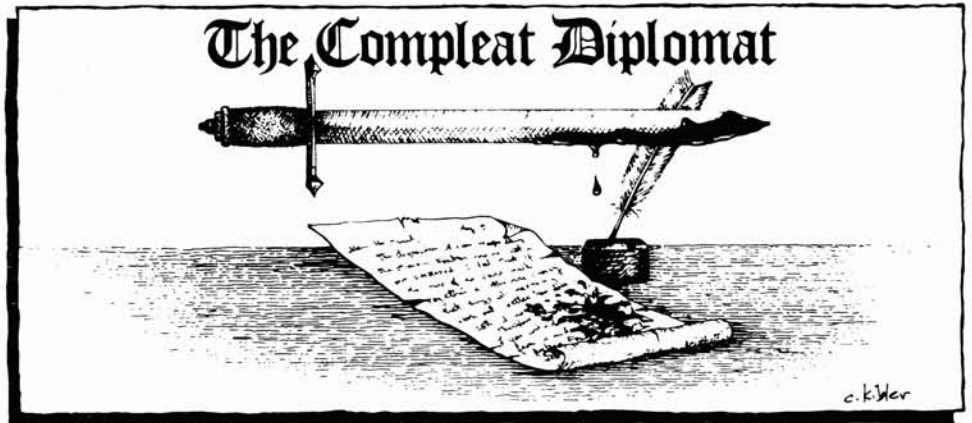
4.6.1 If the character is prone, enter a "P" after his location.

4.6.2 If a character occupies the 2nd floor of a hex, enter a "2" after his location.

4.6.3 If a character occupies a roof, enter an "R" after his location.

With the above, rather simple rules, any number of players can enjoy the action of *GUNSLINGER*. I would recommend one of the simpler showdowns to begin the pbm experience. The one utilized in the Series Replay (Vol. 19, No. 3 of *THE GENERAL*) is excellent for this purpose—little terrain, close range, quick resolution, varied character abilities and strategies. You might even find that you prefer *GSL* by mail; no need to see the look of shock on your opponent as you strike him down with a 1500-mile shot.

I would like to thank those who playtested, debugged and made many suggestions to improve and simplify the final pbm system. Many thanks to Greg Dahl, Jim Becker and, of course, my wife Nancy. I will be more than happy to answer any questions on the use of this system when accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. Address questions to: Jim Marvin, 3040 Aloma Ave. D-6, Winter Park FL 32792.



Russia's Two-Front Problem

By Rod Walker

Beginning *DIPLOMACY* players often ask about the fact that Russia commences the game with four units, whereas the other Great Powers begin with only three each. The question almost always takes some form of, "Why does Russia have such a big advantage?" Certainly a 33% bonus in starting strength does seem like a significant advantage, but is it really? The fact is, the "advantage" is compensation for what would otherwise be a great weakness: Russia's two-front problem. In this issue's column, I'd like to examine the weaknesses and strengths conferred on Russia by virtue of having two fronts.

Let's look at some relevant statistics. Of 1909 completed postal games, Russia has won 251—a considerable show of strength, considering that her nearest competitor for top slot, England, has won only 173! But, at the other end of the scale, we find that Russia has been eliminated more often (855 times) than any other Great Power except Germany (886) and Austria (1032). Furthermore, England (650) and France (603) were eliminated more than 200 fewer times than Russia—a significant gap. In fact, if you add wins and shared wins (draws) together, Russia's huge advantage melts away. Now you've 513 for Russia, as against 570 for England, 551 for France, and 483 (a close fourth) for Turkey. When you strip away the enormous advantage in wins, Russia becomes a quite mediocre Power: she draws more often than Austria or Italy; she survives less often than any Great Power; she is eliminated less often than Austria or Germany. In other words, except for winning percentage, Russia surpasses only one other Power, Austria. Seen in this perspective, that "extra" opening unit is not so much an advantage as an equalizer.

Russia's problem can be best seen by conceptualizing Russia's initial situation as having two fronts: *North* (facing England and Germany) and *South* (facing Austria and Turkey). Each of Russia's fleets is oriented toward only one front, and can't intervene in the other. Therefore, the greatest number of units Russia can devote to one front is three, and in that respect she is actually no more powerful at the start than any other power.

Since each fleet is irrevocably committed to only one front, Russia's two-front problem is to determine, at the game's outset, which front her armies will be committed on. Russia has many first-year strategies and tactics open to her. These can be lumped into four main categories and involve her two most obvious potential initial gains. These two gains are:

SWEDEN; Russia is completely at Germany's mercy here. If Germany orders F Kie-Den in Spring '01 and follows this with F Den-Swe in Fall '01, Russia will not get Sweden . . . period. And Germany is guaranteed a gain, for Denmark or Sweden, regard-

less of the result. This makes the diplomacy for the northern front particularly sensitive.

RUMANIA: Russia has an easier time here, but the gain is still by no means guaranteed. If Austria and Turkey are both hostile, they can get Rumania no matter what Russia does (A Bud-Ser, A Vie-Bud, A Con-Bul, F Ank-Bla, A Smy-Arm). Even if Russia makes a maximum defensive effort—F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Sev, A war-Ukr—the allies simply order the army in Armenia to Sevastopol with support from the Black Sea, and order the army from Budapest to Rumania with support from Bulgaria and Serbia. Rumania must fall, and perhaps Sevastopol as well. I know that Russia has options, such as F sev-Bla or A war-Gal, but these may provoke hostility where it didn't exist before and, in any case, might not secure the gain of Rumania anyway. A failure in Russian diplomacy here makes the situation perilous.

Russia's four opening options, then, are:

AGGRESSIVE SOUTH. Send both armies south while negotiating an alliance with either Austria or Turkey and neutrality with both England and Germany. This is called putting all your eggs in one basket.

AGGRESSIVE NORTH. Send both armies north while negotiating an alliance with either England or Germany, and neutrality with Austria and Turkey (with promises of alliances with one of them for 1902 and beyond).

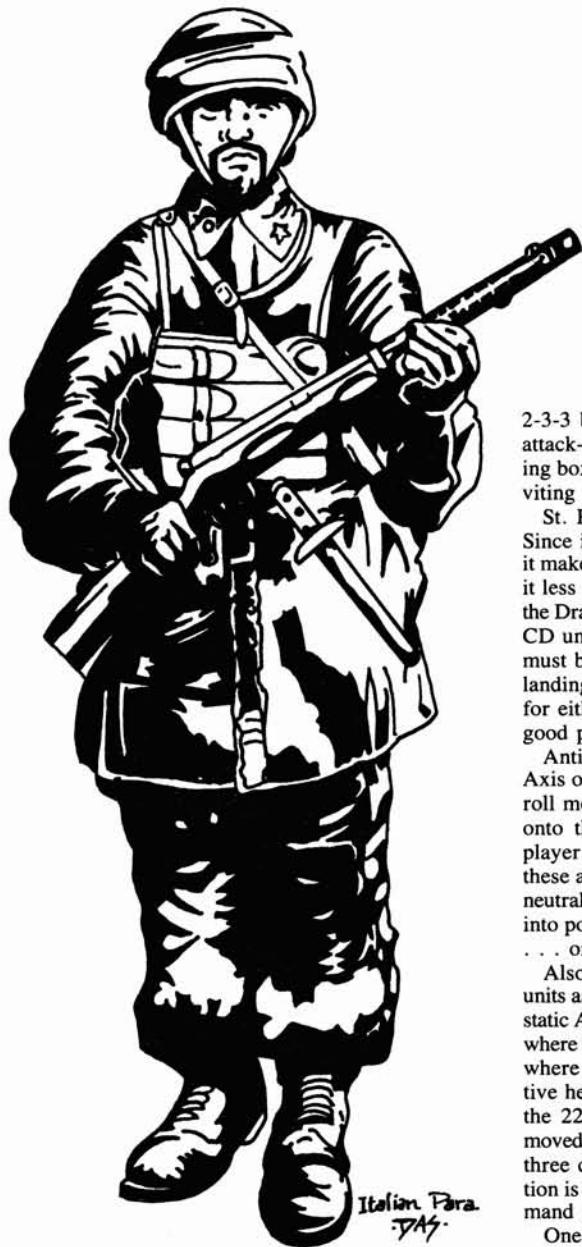
AGGRESSIVE BOTH. Send an army to each front and negotiate alliances with Austria or Turkey and with Germany or England.

NEUTRAL BOTH. Send the fleets to pick up the "obvious gains", but do nothing aggressive with the armies. They could be kept in Moscow and Warsaw, or shift one to the Ukraine.

Russia's problem in the beginning is that if she makes a wrong choice, she is very likely to be pounded severely on one front or the other. That alone is a great setback. Furthermore, a good many players, especially those fairly new to the game, may mistake Russia's four units for formidable strength. Getting pounded on one front or the other may be quite an emotional shock for them, and they might even lose interest or control in their game plan at that point. This factor contributes to Russia's poor survival rate in the postal statistics. Even if you are not of that faint-hearted sort, as a Russian player you need to recognize your potentially weak position and the need for astute diplomacy and the right choices.

In the next two columns, I'm going to continue with the topic of Russia's intriguing duality.





DROP ZONE—MALTA

A Look at the Small Scenario

By Steven R. Gore

2-3-3 beach defense companies. Be sure the five attack-strength units are in range of the port landing boxes. This will make Valletta Beach a less inviting target to the Axis player.

St. Paul's Bay Beach must be covered as well. Since it is out of the range of the CD on Valletta it makes an inviting target for sea assault. To make it less so, place a three AS coastal defense unit in the Dragonara and Madalena Batteries, and a weaker CD unit in Spinola Battery. The range of the CD must be at least eight hexes so they can hit every landing box. Of course, the Axis player may not go for either beach, but if he does you are now in a good position to deal with the assault.

Anti-aircraft guns should be placed on or near Axis objective hexes. This will add to the drift die roll modifier, thereby making an airborne assault onto these hexes quite difficult. A brazen Axis player may still attempt a direct vertical assault on these areas but your AA, if still effective (he can't neutralize *all* of it), will cause the Axis units to drift into potentially dangerous Drift Combat situations . . . or even out to sea.

Also to be remembered, is the use of light AA units as "ranged artillery". If possible, do not place static AA units (those with "O" movement) in hexes where the line of fire is blocked. Place them in hexes where they can support units defending the objective hexes. The two companies of the 3RMA and the 225 AA company can be held in limbo and moved according to the dictates of battle. Place these three companies in areas where initial air protection is light, such as the Northern or Western Command Area.

One final point, be sure to place the AA units within range of each other to reduce the chance of neutralization from Axis air attack.

The Allied combat units (i.e., the infantry) are at the mercy of the organization chart. They should be placed in such a way as to add to the drift DRM as well as gain the doubling effect for terrain, and protect airfields and ports.

A last word on the set up. You have ten decoy counters. Use them to mask your AA units and to maximize the drift DRM.

AFTER THE LANDING— WHAT THEN?

Once the air assaulting units have landed, you have one free turn to attack them while they are dispersed and immobile. Try to eliminate the German battalions, as they count heavily toward victory points and 50 points lost by German units will cause an early German withdrawal from the game. If you cannot mass enough units for a feasible attack, then try to keep the Axis units from forming into stronger stacks.

Keep in mind that the Axis player has *two* more air drops. Keep the objective hexes defended until well after the last air drop. Then, strip those areas and send the units to where the action is. Don't worry about loading the objectives up too heavily, as your units will be needed elsewhere. And the Axis cannot land directly on the cities, so a 4-4-4 infantry and a HQ will suffice there.

Now, referring to the Crete tactical briefing, a "killer pack" should be formed. Do not use more than one strong infantry unit in this pack, as they are more valuable on the defense and for counter-attack purposes. Give the pack some ranged artillery support with one of the mobile AA units or one of the Royal Artillery companies. The heavy armor should be used if possible as they are useless on defense. However, the three attack factors and the -1 DRM they give add punch to any assault on a pocket of paratroopers. Now add the two fortress companies (1-2-2) and you are ready for action. Get your pack out and away from the main area of battle and keep it moving. Use it to harass loose air assaulting units and add to drift if you have AA. Use it to attack beachheads, or at least menace them and thus force the Axis player to keep units on the beachhead. Actually, once the pack is formed its uses are innumerable. When you form your pack, make it large enough to be of consequence in the game and not a mere nuisance which can be overlooked by your opponent.

It may be tempting to set your units in a rigid defense line, holding to cities and rough terrain. This is fine, but you must be careful and not strip the areas behind your line of their defenses. Remember those nasty Axis air drops. He can tie your units up in your line and then drop behind you, and put you in a very bad spot. It is better if you do not become locked into a rigid defense posture early, but to remain fluid so you are better able to cope with new developments as they arise. After the last air assault and the first sea assault, you can begin to form a more permanent defense. Even then, you must retain a certain amount of fluidity to keep from being surrounded and from being ground up by constant Axis attack.

VIEW FROM THE AIR

So many factors can come into play during the game that no firm strategy can be given for the Axis effort. There are, however, a few things the Axis player should bear in mind. Since he must decide where to land his assault convoy before the beginning of the game, we will look at this point first.

Valletta Beach should not be the choice. For one thing, it will be too heavily defended by the coastal defense units while the CD from around Berzebbugia can hit it as well. Even if the Axis player is fortunate enough to get units ashore the beachhead will be difficult to expand, if not impossible to hold open for the follow up convoys. St. Paul's Bay is a fair choice, but not a great one. With a CD of its own, and the distance from the objectives, it is a less favorable place to land than others. Forget about Northern Beach as it is too far away from the objectives. You will be working on an impossible timetable. Western Beach is the most viable beach to assault. It has no CD to bother you, and once ashore, Luga Airfield and Berzebbugia can be attacked in two or three turns. Go for it.

Now, let us look at the initial drop zone for the Axis air assault units. The area closest to the objective hexes is not always the best choice. The Axis player must land his units *safely*, even if they must

In 1978 The Avalon Hill Game Company gave the gaming public a "freebie" in the box of *AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE*. Let us look at that tiny off-spring: *INVASION OF MALTA—1942*.

Operazione C3 never occurred in the Spring of 1942 as everyone expected. If it had, and you were the commander of the Allied troops on Malta, where would you have stationed your troops to insure that island's safety? If you were the Axis High Command, where would you have sent your assault convoys or dropped your para-battalions? *INVASION OF MALTA* lets us consider those very questions. Let us look at it from both viewpoints.

MOUNTING THE DEFENSE

First that of the Allies. Their situation is sticky at best. The Allied player has very few combat units at his disposal to deal with the Axis units once they have "gone to ground". The AA units are not of great use in tight situations and the coastal defense units are useless on inland targets. Given the situation, the Allied player must have one aim in mind. That is to maximize the effectiveness of the units at hand.

Coastal defense units must be placed with great care since once placed, they cannot be moved. Keep in mind that the Axis objectives of Valletta and Birzebbugia can be assaulted directly from Valletta Beach. Cover this beach with the CD units and your

land far from the objectives. This is due to two things. First, it will do no good if the air assaulting units land spread apart from each other widely, posing easy targets for the Allied units. Second, the large number of German battalions landing on the first turn poses a curious dilemma. If these units are destroyed by drift combat, float out to sea, or are eliminated by the Allies while they are immobile after landing, the Axis player then will have to be extremely careful or run the risk of early German withdrawal—leaving the Italians up the proverbial creek. The best area to land is where the AA cover is expected to be light, and the AA will be easier to neutralize with the bombers. The second air assault wave should come into the same area to bolster the forces already on the ground. The third air drop is free. It can be used to prepare the assault beach if turn six is the time of arrival. Or it can be used to aid the sea assaulting units as they arrive; or simply to add weight to the forces already landed. Use it to best advantage for your particular strategy.

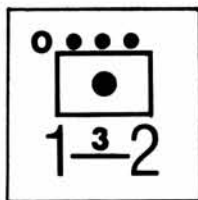
Once the initial air assault has landed, these units should strike out for the nearest airfield. The early capture of an airfield will allow the Spezia units to enter and they will prove to be useful as the Axis player begins his thrust towards the objectives.

The units of the second air assault may be used to help secure an airfield, but they would be better utilized by striking at a port hex and clearing the port box of CD. By striking at a port, these units will surely draw Allied units away from the fight around the airfield. This will assure the capture of the airfield. The port is essential to victory and to sustain the Axis units at full strength after Turn 12. Also, by striking at a port, the Allied player may decide to abandon the airfield completely to defend the port. Force him to face these type of tough decisions. That will keep more of the Axis units intact for other battles at other objectives.

When deciding on which port to attack, keep the following in mind. Remember the time factor. You must have a friendly port on or before Turn 12. With this in mind, choose the port which can be attacked at the earliest time with the sea assaulting units. Also, which port can be cleared of CD aimed at its landing box. To say here which specific port to go for would be of no use to the reader. It all depends on where the Allied player has set up. By remembering the above, you can make a rational decision given the situation in any game.

One final point. The Axis player should not become too dependent on the German airborne units. Remember that they *must* withdraw on or before Turn 15. Don't get them in a position where they are unable to leave, and do not place them where their departure will weaken an important attack or defense line at a crucial moment.

Now that we have looked at Malta, it should be stated that the things discussed are in no way the only way to play the game. The reader must make his own judgement, use as much as he wishes or discard it entirely. But, sit down with the game sometime for a couple of hours. It is a rare little gem, an interesting situation with a proven system that can be played in a reasonable amount of time. You may well discover that golden key that unlocks victory.



AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 2

The Avalon Hill Game Company's sports line has been kept rather low-profile over the past few years. With the demise of *ALL-STAR REPLAY*, the hard-core sports buffs lost their egress into the doings of AH's sports department. And our marketing people have recently been devoting their energies to promoting the sports games more to the toy trade than to the game hobbyists. This has been recently reversed.

While the largest game merchant in America sells our sports games "by the ton", I think that a great majority of them are sold to what we term the "hard-core sports buffs". I use the term hard-core because what appears to sell best are the statistically-oriented Statis-Pro products—in particular the baseball, football and basketball titles. Their appeal is similar to that of wargames—they are basically two-player games, they draw from the "real life" world, and they embody the hard research which is at the core of simulation game design.

I pestered Tom Shaw, our resident expert in the sports game line, into composing the chart accompanying this column. On it I asked him to give his judgement of each sports game in several categories—and asked him to rate each "High" (XXX), "Medium" (XX) and "Low" (X). Thus, the solitaire and face-to-face playability of each game, the impact of strategy and luck on the play, and the realism of each game should give the readers some idea of the appeal each has. Those categories where no entry is given for a particular title merely shows that that aspect has no relevance to the game in question. Take a moment to look over the list.

For wargamers, the sports games fall into definite categories, depending upon the approach the players have to the hobby. If the player stresses historical simulation and veracity, games such as *PAYDIRT*, *SUPERSTAR BASEBALL*, *BOWL BOUND*, *TITLE BOUT* and the statistics-heavy "Statis-Pro" series are for him. For the playability buffs—those who don't really care all that much for statistical realism and are simply looking for a good game—try *FOOTBALL STRATEGY*, its sister *BASEBALL STRATEGY*, the classic *SPEED CIRCUIT*, *REGATTA* and *WIN, PLACE, & SHOW*. Somewhere in the middle lies the gamer who desires authenticity but doesn't want to be bogged down in a morass of tedious detail; he should try *PRO TENNIS*, *PRO GOLF*, *PENNANT RACE* or *USAC AUTO RACING*. And finally, there's the game for everyone—*SLAPSHOT*—the proverbial "beer and pretzels" game, a quick-playing card game requiring wits and a happy meld of luck and decision-making.

It is not just coincidental that the better selling sports games in our line have one common thread—their solitaire suitability. I suspect that in sports games, more so than any other facet of this hobby, the statistical approach (as opposed to the puzzle approach) to solitaire gaming works to good effect. A glance over the sports game list brings a number of ideas to the fore for solitaire players: pitting the great teams of the past against each other in *STATIS-PRO BASEBALL* or *STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL*, tackling the great courses in *PRO GOLF*, planning a winning season strategy in *PENNANT RACE* or being ringside for the match of the century in *TITLE BOUT*.

Another great advantage to the sports games The Avalon Hill Game Company produces is their timeliness. A number of these games that depend so upon statistics are updated regularly. For instance, updated player cards are available every April for *STATIS-PRO BASEBALL* and every September for *STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL* and every October for *STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL* which cover the "stats" for the previous season. A set of recent Hall of Fame inductees has just been released for *SUPERSTAR BASEBALL*. New boxer cards for *TITLE BOUT*, golfer cards for *PRO GOLF*, player cards for *PRO TENNIS*, Indy qualifiers for *USAC AUTO RACING* are produced annually for a modest cost. Buyers of these games can "re-live" recent glories as well as past ones.

All of these factors go into making the sports field as popular as the battlefield for gamers. There is, I think, an underlying desire to rise to a challenge in all of us. I suspect that is why the role of the "underdog" is so popular in wargaming (if you win, you can pat yourself on the back; if you lose, you can shrug it off). Sports games, unlike any other category of gaming than war, caters to this facet of our competitive psyche. And, while it may be difficult to "identify" with a Rommel or a Napoleon, many folk closely relate to a particular team; that's what, after all, has made professional sports a big-time industry in this country over the past two decades. The rise and fall of fortunes in some of the simulated seasons I've witnessed in *PENNANT RACE* and *FOOTBALL STRATEGY* are as engrossing as any activity in the hobby—especially for the player experiencing them.

So, if you happen to be a wargamer that's looking for new conquests, Avalon Hill sports games might be just the right diversion. Be forewarned, the roar of the crowd can be as addictive as the roar of the battlefield.



Title	Solitaire	Head-to-Head	Strategy	Luck	Statistical Realism
STATIS-PRO BASEBALL	XXX	XX	XX	X	XXX
STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL	XX	XX	XX	X	XXX
PENNANT RACE	XXX	X	XX	X	XXX
PAYDIRT	X	XX	XX	X	XXX
STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL	XXX	XX	X	X	XXX
FOOTBALL STRATEGY	X	XXX	XXX	X	—
SUPERSTAR BASEBALL	XXX	XX	X	X	XXX
PRO GOLF	XXX	X	—	—	XXX
SPEED CIRCUIT	—	XXX	XXX	X	—
PRO TENNIS	XXX	X	X	X	XXX
TITLE BOUT	XXX	XX	X	XX	XXX
BOWL BOUND	X	XX	XX	X	XXX
BASEBALL STRATEGY	X	XXX	XXX	X	—
WIN, PLACE & SHOW	—	XXX	XXX	XX	—
SLAPSHOT	—	XXX	XXX	X	—
REGATTA	—	XXX	XXX	X	—
USAC AUTO RACING	XX	XX	X	XX	XXX
BASKETBALL STRATEGY	X	XXX	XXX	—	—
DECATHLON	XXX	X	XX	X	XXX

THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY REVISITED

An Alternate British Opening Deployment in *WAR AT SEA*

By David Hablanian

It has been mentioned in recent issues of *The GENERAL* that the proliferation of new games has caused a decline in the overall level of play of these games. This is understandable, as the average complexity level has surely increased, and it is difficult to analyze many current games to the depth the "classics" enjoyed. *WAR AT SEA*, however, should not succumb to poor play due to complexity or difficulty of analysis, but Allied play in the two Series Replays to date (Vol. 13 No. 4 and Vol. 17 No. 1) has been decidedly poor. There is no need for it to be so! Much can be learned from those two replays, as often the best way to gain expertise in a game is through repeated mistakes being discovered the hard way. It is this article's attempt to not only present an alternate first turn Allied setup from previous articles, but also to discuss several points that were only loosely dealt with previously.

It should be mentioned that *WAR AT SEA* has many similarities to Backgammon. Both games are fast-playing, highly luck-dependent and a pleasure to those who enjoy probability calculations. They can also be fun without detailed analysis or expert play. Indeed, a "novice" can defeat an "expert" in any given game. However, seemingly minor tactical changes can change outcomes significantly, and the player who masters these subtle moves will win far more often than the novice (still, no guarantees due to the high luck element).

OPENING DEPLOYMENT

With these thoughts in mind the suggested British first turn deployment is shown in Table 1. It is a melding of the "feel" type strategy advocated by Alan Moon and the more analytic style of a Richard Hamblen. Before dealing in some detail with possible Axis reactions, a few basic points will be mentioned.

The strategy of the Mediterranean deployment was dealt with ably in the Vol. 17, No. 1 Replay and need not be discussed in detail here specifically. The differences between this deployment and the Hamblen (or Greenwood) deployment are tactical ones, namely in facing the Germans. The problem with having *Rodney*, *Nelson*, and *Eagle* alone in the North Sea is that the battleships can only fire at two German ships, and in turn the German can concentrate all his fire on those on two ships. The chance of a German defeat here is not as large as it could be; although the British can certainly sink two German ships with good salvoes, he will stand to lose one and often both of his strongest ships. More importantly, the Germans would be foolish to venture into the North Sea or the South Atlantic; their choice is simply made much too easy for them.

With three capital ships in each zone and some additional support, the British cannot only concentrate heavy fire on more German ships, but the German in turn *must* spread (thin out) his fire over more English ships if he hopes to win the zone. The chances of the British having a capital ship in the second round (and thus the chances of a German disaster) is *greatly* increased over the previous method. True, this leaves the other areas weaker, but this is justified as discussed later. Now the German has a much more difficult choice and may second guess himself later. This can thus contribute to the British player's psychological advantages.

Two more points must be reinforced. The British *must* outnumber the Italians in the Mediterranean to have a chance strategically, as pointed out by Don Greenwood in the most recent replay. An extra cruiser on top of his suggested setup is included just in case the RAF cannot disable or sink one more battleship than the German landbased air (LBA). It also provides an additional screen for the *Ark Royal* if the British fail to win the zone. Note that the *Ark Royal*, not an 0-1-6 carrier, is in the Mediterranean due to its superior airpower (one of those subtle differences mentioned in the introduction).

Finally, only one battlecruiser is placed in each of the German-opposed zones so that no more than one of them can be sunk on Turn 1. They are very important, as they have a strong chance to reach the Barents, reinforce the Mediterranean or pursue retreating German ships on future turns.

THE AXIS REACTION

The number of Axis reactions is myriad, but basically there are four different Italian moves and five German ones. Some of these are definitely better than others, but it is difficult to choose a "best" move. They will all be discussed in some detail. Table 2 contains a summary of the separate zones using the "Fuzzy Wuzzy" formula by Richard Hamblen (Vol. 13, No. 3), a method of comparing the value of ships to win a given battle (battle points) or cause damage to enemy ships (killing points). Those of you familiar with probability calculation should be able to easily obtain any other probabilities listed. If not, consult Vol. 13, No. 6 (pages 27/28 by Craig Ramson) which has all the relevant calculations already done for you.

THE ITALIAN CHOICES

OPTION 1—The most straightforward. The entire Italian Navy comes into the Mediterranean to tangle with the British. The Italian Navy, especially with its 4-6-6 battleships, is very strong and has at least a 40% chance of winning the zone. With airpower included, he is outnumbered only 100 to 92 in battle points. Even if he should lose, the Italian can cause significant damage to the British Med fleet (disabled British ships must go to Malta, which has only a 2 point repair capacity). The 4-3-5 battleships are brittle though, as they are 16% more easily sunk than their British counterparts.

In this battle the British should have each of his air factors attack an Italian battleship, and on the surface his battleships should fire at the Italian battleships and the cruisers at the Italian cruisers. If the British have an extra battleship, try to sink a 4-6-6 by placing eight shots against it. The British should win the zone more often than not, but don't underestimate the Italian Navy.

OPTION 2—The entire Italian Navy sits in port. This is clearly not a wise choice as he must come out and fight eventually; by not engaging the British he allows them the mobility to return to England at turn's end or reinforce the Mediterranean. His only consolation is that one of his LBA can attack the *Ark Royal*.

OPTION 3/4—Here the Italian cruisers go to the South Atlantic, and this tactic will be treated under

the possible German responses as the Germans must join them to make this feasible. The Italian battleships can either do battle with the British (Option 3) or remain in port (Option 4). Although their killing power is not seriously impaired without the CA's, their battle winning power is greatly reduced. Still, the battleships should come out and fight in order to sink or tie down as many British ships as possible. If not, the British are free to return to the Atlantic and lock in any disabled Germans from the South Atlantic battle in the neutral port. If the Italian battleships stayed in port, the British could withdraw everything from the Mediterranean and create three powerful forces in the Atlantic/North Sea (depending on how many Axis ships are in the neutral port). The Axis then faces a surface disaster or losing several POC per turn by sitting in the neutral port.

THE GERMAN CHOICES

OPTION 5—NORTH ATLANTIC. A 2-2-5 is left in the Barents and the rest of the Navy tries for the North Atlantic. Probability dictates that there is only a 4/9 chance of both pocket battleships arriving. Then the planes of *Courageous* attack *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. These attacks have a 30% probability of disabling, and an equal chance of scoring hits on one of the ships. Hitting or disabling both is only a 11% chance, but would be an extreme inconvenience to the German player.

The British allocation of fire should depend on how successful his air attacks were along with the German speed rolls. Basically he has a major choice between firing at all the enemy's faster ships in order to save the *Courageous* or to try to sink the German's weaker ships. Strategically, it is better to completely destroy a few of the German lighter ships than just damaging *Scharnhorst* and/or *Gneisenau*. There are too many possible results to deal with in detail, but a few general rules are:

- (1) If one of the 3-5-7's is heavily damaged (more than two damage points), concentrate four, or even eight, shots in an attempt to sink it for good.
- (2) If the entire German force is present, fire each of the three battleships at the pocket battleships and cruiser respectively. The cruiser takes on the remaining German cruiser.
- (3) If *Scharnhorst* and/or *Gneisenau* is disabled by the *Courageous*, fire four shots at the other 3-5-7 and four each at the cruisers. (The 1-1-7 fires at a pocket battleship.) This will give a strong chance of saving the carrier and a decent chance of winning the zone.
- (4) Note that if a 2-2-5 and 3-5-7 are not available, the upper hand has shifted to the British. He fires his battleships at the 3-5-7, 2-2-5 and 1-2-7, the cruiser taking on the other 1-2-7. The German return volleys will by no means be guaranteed to dispatch all the British heavies. The probability of this happening (a British win) is at least 20%. Note that the killing points are very close.

Table 1: British Opening Deployment

Area	Ship	Strength
Mediterranean	Queen Elizabeth	4-4-4
	Revenge	4-4-3
	Resolution	4-4-3
	Royal Oak	4-4-3
	Royal Sovereign	4-4-3
	Ramillies	4-4-3
	Exeter	1-1-7
	Kent	1-1-7
	Sussex	1-1-7
	Devonshire	1-1-7
	Ark Royal	0-2-7 (3)
	LBA	(3)
North Sea	Rodney	5-5-3
	Nelson	5-5-3
	Repulse	3-3-6
	Norfolk	1-1-7
	Suffolk	1-1-7
	Glorious	0-1-6 (2)
North Atlantic	Barham	4-4-4
	Warspite	4-4-4
	Hood	4-4-7
	Cumberland	1-1-7
South Atlantic	Courageous	0-1-6 (2)
	Valiant	4-4-4
	Malaya	4-4-4
	Rownon	3-3-6
	Dorsetshire	1-1-7
	Eagle	1-2-4 (1)

OPTION 6—NORTH SEA. A 1-2-7 is sent to the Barents; the rest is guaranteed to make the North Sea. The English navy here is more powerful for this reason with the 5-5-3's and two cruisers. Almost the same comments deal with this situation as with Option 5. The British should normally fire each of his capital ships at the 2-2-5s, with the cruisers either firing at the 1-2-7 or a 3-5-7 if one of them were sent home. Although the German outnumber the British in battle points 73-59, he is *outnumbered* in *killing* points 51 to 42 1/2.

OPTION 7—SOUTH ATLANTIC I. A 2-2-5 is sent to the Barents and the rest to the South Atlantic. This battle is very similar to the North Atlantic option. The Germans barely outnumber the British in both battle and killing points. Here the British heavies (4-4-4s) should each fire at a 3-5-7 if the *Eagle's* air is unsuccessful. The *Repulse* fires at the 2-2-5 and the cruiser and *Eagle* at the 1-2-7s. The German is living very dangerously now. His ships may be sent to the dreaded neutral port. There is a very real threat of not winning the zone, and any ships sent to the neutral port have the choice of sitting in port and losing POC or being crushed in the South Atlantic by superior British forces on Turn 2.

OPTION 8—The same as Option 7 except that the Italian cruisers join the Germans in the South Atlantic. This will give an overwhelming superiority in battle points to the Axis, and the British should thus try to sink the weaker German ships and forget winning the zone. The British will probably lose most of their force, but they will take some Germans with them, perhaps trapping some in the neutral port, and enjoy a huge edge in battle winning points in the Mediterranean as discussed earlier.

A typical battle result would have three of four British ships along with one or two German ships sunk. It is likely that the German fleet will be split between the neutral port and Germany. This is a precarious position for the German player to be in as it forces him to either stay in the neutral port and lose POC until the *Tirpitz* and U-boats arrive or venture forth and fight on Turn 2. Either way the German must unite his fleet, or the British convoys are far more likely to succeed in reaching Russia. This

option can lead to some unusual situations and plenty of action.

OPTION 9—The German navy grabs the free POC of the Barents and Baltic and leaves the British fleet alone. This is certainly a viable strategy as it preserves the German fleet. But it also relies heavily on the poor Italians. The British can shift most of his South Atlantic ships to the North Sea and Barents on future turns until the U-boats come in strength. If the British can take the Italians out, the Axis will be *behind* on POC early in the game, an unusual occurrence.

CONCERNING TURNS 2-8

GENERAL POINTS—As far as POC is concerned, the Axis will gain +5 on Turn 2 if they win both the Mediterranean and any battle with the Germans over the British. Most likely they will be +2. If the German fleet avoids or loses a battle, it could even be Allies +1. The most probable reaction to expect is for the Italians to come out fighting with everything, and the Germans to make their move into the North Atlantic, South Atlantic with the Italians, or North Sea. Regardless, in future turns the Allies must continually give the Mediterranean their best shot (at least never let the Axis control it for four consecutive turns). Replace the *Ark Royal* with the *Formidable* on Turn 2 if an Italian battleship has been sunk. If he (the Axis) can't dominate the Mediterranean, the Italian navy is subject to dispersion on Turn 8, a very important fact. Also, remember the two 4-6-6s the Italians will receive on Turns 6 and 7. Additional heavy ships may be needed to defeat them.

The North Sea is also extremely important; both surface threats and U-boats should be guarded against constantly. In fact, due to their immense importance, the U-boat threat (and also convoys) will be treated separately below.

U-BOATS—One can tell a good German player in *WAR AT SEA* simply by the way he uses his U-boats (and a good Allied player by the way he attempts to negate them). U-boats are extremely important, especially when the Allies use the Mediterranean strategy. The following points are ones the Allied player should be aware of, in order of importance:

- (1) The North Sea should have the maximum amount of antisubmarine warfare the Allied player can spare. This will usually mean two carriers as well as all the ships already there to stop a German surface excursion (try from Turn 4 on to keep at least five capital ships there). When the Italian cruisers are gone, abandon the South Atlantic in order to get maximum protection in the North Sea. If the U-boats can break the British control here, the British will be unable to guard all three areas adequately

and may have to abandon the Mediterranean. Study the ASW versus U-boat table in Craig Ransom's article.

- (2) Always keep the convoys in the North Atlantic as well guarded against U-boat attack (and surface attack as well) as possible. The U-boats should not be able to shoot at your convoys at will.
- (3) Once enough Italian battleships have been sunk, only the land-based air will be required against them for air power. But, if the British player is weak in antisubmarine warfare, the U-boats can mass in the Mediterranean, perhaps disable one or more British capital ships and win the zone. Watch out for this in the South Atlantic if the Mediterranean was not Allied controlled on the previous turn.
- (4) If too many areas are left with little ASW strength, the U-boats can deny the British more than one POC per turn.
- (5) The U-boats cannot be prevented from denying the Allies 1 POC a turn during the midgame. There is nothing that can be done to prevent this. Hope that he will commit them piecemeal or against a large antisubmarine warfare stack. This is where they can be dealt with most effectively.

CONVOYS—The most recent Series Replays did not progress far enough for convoys to play a major role, but they are very important to the Mediterranean strategy. If the Allies do very well in the Mediterranean, they can bring the convoys into England for one POC/per convoy and not expose themselves to the German LBA. If the Allies are behind though, they may need more than this three POC gain to win. This requires getting two, or sometimes all three, convoys safely to Russia.

If the German navy is still intact, the British must be careful when they enter the Barents. The British player normally should try to blockade the Germans by controlling the Barents and North Sea simultaneously and then move the convoys to the Barents. This strategy is often not possible when using the Mediterranean strategy. It is suggested that the British not attempt to rush the convoys to Russia as soon as they are available, but save them until the final turns, even if it means having a convoy stay in the North Atlantic for more than one turn.

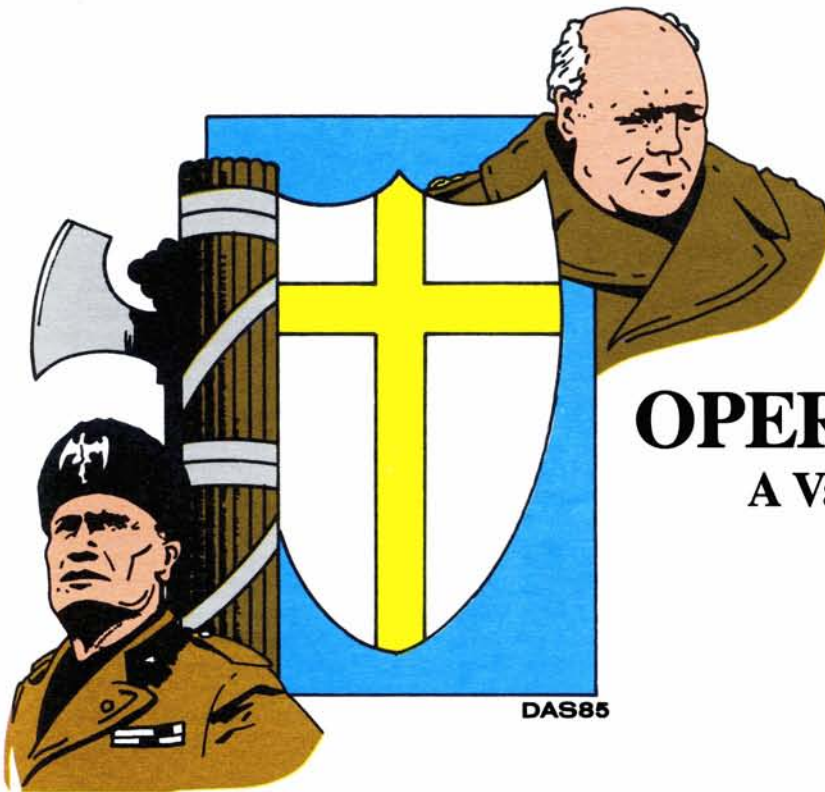
The reasoning behind this strategy is that it allows more time for the British player to determine whether his game plan is succeeding. It also allows more time for the Americans to enter the game. And it discourages the Germans from preying on weaker zones in the mid-game for fear of losing important ships. The convoys provide additional ASW strength in dealing with the U-boat menace. The British player must preserve his 4-5-6 battleships as they carry the burden of escorting his convoy to Russia.

Table 2: Turn 1 Battle/Killing Point Summary

Area	British Killing Points	British Battle Points	Axis Killing Points	Axis Battle Points
North Atlantic	44	49	36 (41)	57 (70)
North Sea	51	59	42½	73
South Atlantic (German only)	41½	56	40 (45)	61 (74)
South Atlantic (German/Italian)	41½	56	48 (53)	89 (102)
Mediterranean (Full Italian)	80	100	66	92
Mediterranean (without Cruisers)	80	100	58	64

It is assumed that the German player does not utilize his three U-boats. He is likely to lose two in any zone, and perhaps even all three. If they survive, they should fire at a British carrier. Since the German player should usually win the zone in Turn 1 anyway, it is best not to use them. The parentheses above indicate the values if *both* pocket battleships make the indicated zone. If neither does, subtract 5 KP and 13 BP from the totals presented.





OPERATION COMPASS

A Variant for AFRIKA KORPS

By Arnold Blumberg

On a moonless night (11 June 1940), the British 11th Hussars crossed from British Egypt into Italian Cyrenacia. The regiment reached the wire, tore gaps in it at a number of different points and headed west to reconnoiter the enemy's forward positions. Throughout that night, the Hussars ambushed unsuspecting Italian trucks travelling along deserted desert tracks unaware that a state of war had been declared by Mussolini. Again on the 12th elements of the Hussars went through the wire southwest of Fort Capuzzo and headed north toward Sidi Azeiz. There they were met by repeated salvos from fifteen enemy field-guns—causing the British armored cars to beat a hasty retreat. On the next day the Hussars entered abandoned Sidi Omar. Flushed with "victory", they preceded on to Fort Maddalena where the commander exhibited more bravado than common sense by charging the fort's main gate. Machinegun fire from the fort and strafing by Italian fighters drove the unit from the area.

The war in the Western desert, which was to grow from these first skirmishes, had begun.

In spite of the fact that they had over 225000 men in Libya, in June 1940 the Italian command was ill-prepared for war with Britain. Many of the units under Marshal Rodolfo Graziani were under-strength or short of equipment; others had yet to complete their training. In view of this, Graziani undertook no offensive operations for the first three months of the war—which was extremely fortunate for the British who had only 60000 men under Sir Archibald Wavell to defend the entire British Empire in the Middle East.

In early September 1940, after months spent amassing supplies and training troops, Graziani launched his grand offensive to seize Egypt. The Italian 10th Army, composed of seven divisions and escorted by a considerable air force and numerous light tanks broke across the border. But they halted after a patient advance of only sixty miles. Graziani's explanation was that he had to pause to allow his supplies to be brought up—a not unreasonable excuse since most of the Italian formations had little motorized transport available. The Italians established a series of fortified camps in an arc stretching some forty miles from Sidi Barrani.

The assumption was that Graziani would recommence the advance as soon as all units were resupplied. But winter passed, and still he showed no signs of doing so. Late in November Wavell gave Major General Sir Richard O'Connor the authorization to undertake a "five-day raid" to disrupt communications of the stalled Italian command.

To implement his orders, O'Connor was given command of the 7th Armored Division and an *ad hoc* infantry brigade labelled "Selby Force". O'Connor planned to take advantage of surprise and mobility to gain local superiority and so destroy isolated Italian formations before reinforcements could arrive. In this he was aided by the fact that a gap of nearly twenty miles between two of the fortified camps existed. After establishing forward supply dumps near the jump-off point, O'Connor brought his men to the front in a series of night marches, meanwhile using his light armor so aggressively so as to prevent the Italian recon units from discerning these movements. Early on the morning of 9 December, the Western Desert Force fired the opening rounds in the most spectacular offensive World War II was to witness.

By thrusting through the twenty-mile gap and attacking the Italians from all sides, British units managed to overwhelm three camps within 24 hours. Meanwhile the 7th Armored screened the operation from Italian counterattacks. Although many Italian formations resisted the offensive stoutly, the suddenness and audacity wrought confusion among the Italian command and brought a sense of victory to the British. In three days, O'Connor took nearly 40000 enemy prisoners and tons of supplies. The Italians began a retreat back to the border. Although Wavell soon deprived the British general of the 4th Indian Division for operations into Italian East Africa, O'Connor received permission to press on to Bardia and Tobruk and was given the depleted 6th Australian Division to carry the attack out.

Graziani, hardly a fool, pointed out that the Italian forces under his command had sufficient strength to hold Tobruk, but not Bardia as well. Mussolini however demanded that he defend both at all costs. O'Connor invested Bardia on 16 December and a

fierce battle opened. On 3 January Australian troops finally entered the fortress; by the 5th the battle was over and O'Connor reorganized to press on to Tobruk. Defended by an inadequate and demoralized garrison, Tobruk managed to hold out for only some two weeks. In an audacious plan, O'Connor ordered the 6th Australian Division to push along the coast road while the 7th Armored crossed the desert south of Jebel Achdar. Both formations encountered stiff resistance in isolated incidents, but there was no longer any cohesive Italian defense of Cyrenaica. On 5 February the leading elements of the 7th Armored reached the coast road near Beda Fomm, only a few hours ahead of the Italians retreating down the highway before the Australians.

For two days the battles around Beda Fomm raged, a series of sharp actions fought between small, isolated and confused formations. In the end, the Italians had no fight left. Some 25000 prisoners were taken by British troops, as well as a considerable amount of equipment. The offensive had succeeded far beyond anyone's wildest expectations. In two months the Western Desert Force under O'Connor had advanced over 400 miles, taken over 130000 prisoners, destroyed the enemy army utterly (some ten divisions and many small independent formations), and buoyed British spirits. With the clearing of Cyrenaica, O'Connor wanted to press on with an advance into Tripolitania, held by only five demoralized and disorganized enemy divisions. He was confident that the fall of Tripoli would open the way for the British to regain domination in the Mediterranean.

Wavell too had hoped to be able to continue the advance to Tripoli and so drive the Italians completely from North Africa. But the British government had other problems to solve, namely the situation in Greece. The Greeks had repulsed the initial Italian invasion of their country, but there were growing indications that German forces would move in to aid Mussolini overrun Greece. Churchill ordered Wavell to halt the advance into Libya and to send all available troops to bolster their Greek allies at once. Wavell was well aware that he could not possibly hope to send enough men to stop a full-scale German invasion. But he also realized that he

had to do everything possible to fulfill the orders of his government. So he rushed the veterans of his Western Desert Force across the Mediterranean to Greece, leaving only one infantry division and one untrained armored brigade at El Aghelia to defend O'Connor's conquests. A month later Rommel was ordered to Tunis with the fledgling Afrika Korps.

The following *AFRIKA KORPS* variant recreates this triumph of British arms, certainly the only unqualified success of the British before the entry of America into the war against the Axis. This scenario, "Operation Compass", covers the period of the offensive in twelve turns. For those who've wondered about the background to the situation in *AFRIKA KORPS* I think it will prove of interest. And certainly, somewhere some enterprising soul will think of linking this variant and the game of *AFRIKA KORPS*.

The Variant Rules

Operation Compass is a variant based on The Avalon Hill Game Company's operational level *AFRIKA KORPS*. The original mapboard and game system are used in the variant. The vast majority of the rules for *AFRIKA KORPS* are employed; those modified or not utilized are noted below. New game counters, which represent the British and Axis forces involved, are provided on the insert of this issue.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY:

Mutual Air/Naval Phase

British Player Turn

- British reinforcements are brought into play
- Movement of all British ground units desired
- Resolution of combat initiated as result of this movement
- British withdrawals are made from units in play

Axis Player Turn

- Axis reinforcements are brought into play
- Movement of all Axis ground units desired
- Resolution of combat initiated as result of this movement

Return of air and naval units to base

Mark off one *complete* Game Turn

I. Mutual Air/Naval Phase

1. Prior to the start of a game turn both players may place any or all of their naval and/or air units on any mapboard hex that their movement rate allows them to reach. The British player must place his air and naval counters first, followed by placement of all Axis air units.

2. All combat due to air or naval placement is resolved during this Mutual Air/Naval Phase.

3. No Italian air units may be moved nor conduct any air operations during the first Mutual Air/Naval Phase only.

4. Air Operations:

a. Bombers may conduct bombing raids on enemy occupied hexes. A die roll of one (using a single die) results in the loss of one enemy combat unit in the target hex. The owner of the units on the target hex chooses which unit is to be eliminated. (Note: Units that are backprinted with reduced combat strengths are not totally eliminated, but instead are simply flipped over to the weakened state; such counters include Italian and British infantry divisions, German and British armored units and the British naval units.) Supply units and the leader units may not be bombed.

b. Fighters may be used to interdict enemy units on land or coastal hexes. Only enemy land units (including non-combat) may be interdicted. For each friendly fighter unit interdicting a hex containing enemy units one die is rolled for *each* air unit. If a "6" is rolled, one movement point is deducted

from all enemy units in the hex on the *next* Movement Phase. This deduction affects enemy units only in the immediately following Movement Phase and does not reduce movement on any subsequent Movement Phase. Effects of multiple interdictions are cumulative.

c. Fighters may instead perform CAP operations on hexes containing friendly land or naval units. If enemy bombers should move into the hex, the friendly fighters will attack the enemy bombers. Each fighter on CAP fires once at the bombers. A die result of "1-3" destroys a bomber unit if fired at by British Hurricanes or German Me 110s; a result of "1-2" destroys the bomber if fired at by any other type of fighter. Bombers do not fire back at fighters and therefore cannot inflict losses on fighters unless the fighters are on a hex being bombed by enemy bombers (i.e., not in the air). Any enemy bombers that are not destroyed by the CAP fighters, and that do not voluntarily abort their mission, may proceed to bomb the target hex as described above. If enemy bombers arrive over a hex containing friendly CAP in company with enemy fighters, fighter-vs-fighter combat (as described in d. below) first takes place and, assuming that friendly fighters remain, the fighter-vs-bomber combat then follows. Only after both forms of air-to-air combat have been resolved does bombing take place.

d. Fighter-vs-fighter combat occurs whenever enemy fighters find themselves in the same hex (i.e., during CAP, escorting friendly bombers, or by simply seeking out enemy fighters, or interdiction). In these situations, all combat is simultaneous; no losses are removed until all the fighter units in the combat hex have fired. Combat is resolved between opposing fighters during an indeterminate number of rounds, until one side's fighters are completely eliminated or one side voluntarily breaks off the combat by taking his fighter units out of the combat hex. A player may voluntarily break off the combat by removing his surviving fighters at the *conclusion* of any round and returning them to base (see below). When enemy fighters, for whatever reason, are removed from the combat hex, remaining friendly fighters and bombers may proceed to carry out any mission against that target hex which originally brought them to that hex. British Hurricanes and all German fighters eliminate opposing fighters with a die roll of "1-3"; all other fighters eliminate opposing fighters with a die roll of "1-2".

Example: During the Mutual Air/Naval Phase, three Italian CR42 fighter units and two SM79 bombers move to bomb a hex containing a British armored brigade which has two British Hurricanes on CAP. First step is for each opposing fighter unit, the CR42s and Hurricanes, to attack each other. For illustration, the Italian fighters make rolls of "3", "3" and "6" while the British fighters make rolls of "2" and "4"; one Italian CR42 counter is removed. While the option to continue fighter-to-fighter combat is open, the Italian player decides to cut his losses and aborts the fighter escort, returning these counters immediately to friendly air bases. He decides to continue with his bombers, so the British Hurricanes may now attack the enemy planes still remaining. Each Italian bomber that survives this single fighter attack may then make one die roll in their attempt to bomb the armored unit. A bombing die roll of "6" by either would cause the British counter to be flipped to its reduced strength side; if both hit the British counter would be eliminated totally. All combat is now concluded. Regardless of results, both Hurricanes and SM79s remain in the hex until the end of the game turn, when all are returned to friendly air bases.

e. Any air operation described above may be voluntarily aborted at any point of the Air/Naval

Phase. Simply return the aircraft involved to base (see below).

f. All air units must commence the Mutual Air/Naval Phase at its friendly home base or in any hex containing a named town (which acts as an air-base). Examples of named hexes include El Adem, Mersa Matruh, Tobruk and so forth.

g. In order for any air operation to take place, the air units that are to perform the operation must start the Mutual Air/Naval Phase within five hexes, clear of enemy zones of control, of a friendly supply unit. The supply unit is never consumed for air operations; and the same supply unit that supports an air operation may also sustain regular land combat that turn.

h. Friendly air units may transfer from one friendly air base to another if the new base is within remaining range at the conclusion of the game turn. A friendly air base is defined as one occupied or last occupied by friendly land combat units.

i. Air units are automatically eliminated if the base they occupy is also occupied or passed through by enemy land combat units. Air units are automatically eliminated if all friendly units in the base are eliminated and enemy combat units enter the hex.

j. Air units/bases exert no zone of control; enemy units may freely move adjacent to them or enter their hex and then continue their move.

k. Air operations may not be carried out unless the air units involved have the range to reach a friendly air base. Should they be unable to reach a friendly base following a mission (if for instance, their base is overrun by enemy units during the turn and no other friendly base can be reached), simply eliminate the air units involved.

l. No more than three air units of any type may occupy a friendly air base at the start or conclusion of the Mutual Air/Naval Phase. Eliminate surplus units should overstacking occur. There are no stacking restrictions for air units not on the ground.

m. Air units are only returned to base (friendly named town) at the conclusion of the *entire* game turn. In other words, they will fly during the Mutual Air/Naval Phase at the beginning of each turn and be returned to base (unless aborted) at the conclusion of the Axis Game Turn.

5. Naval Operations:

a. The British Player controls two ships in the variant: HMS *Terror* and HMS *Alphis*. These counters may move any number of coastal hexes (defined as any hex containing both land and sea) on the map during the Air/Naval Phase of each game turn. These naval units start each Air/Naval Phase at the British Home Base and must end that game turn at the same location. Naval units return to base at the end of the game turn.

b. Naval units may bombard enemy units so long as those enemy units occupy a coastal hex. Each naval unit may make two such die rolls if the side of the counter bearing the numeral "2" is showing; only one if the counter bears a "1". A die roll of "1" or "2" will eliminate one enemy unit in the target hex (defender's choice of which unit to be removed). Note that units hit by naval fire will not be completely eliminated if the unit has a reverse reduced strength side.

c. Naval units which occupy enemy hexes containing ports prevent the landing of supply units into that port hex for that turn. However, naval units may not occupy the enemy's Home Base for any reason.

d. Naval units may be bombed by enemy air units and have friendly CAP air units placed over them. Note that movement interdiction serves no purpose since these units have unlimited movement in any case.

e. Naval units do *not* need friendly supply units to operate.

f. Once destroyed, naval units are not brought back into the game. Once the British Home Base is occupied by enemy land units, all remaining naval units are removed from play for the rest of the game.

g. British naval units are two-step counters and therefore require two hits to eliminate.

h. Naval units alone in a hex do not control that hex for victory purposes.

i. Coastal Artillery are Axis units placed in port hexes as per the setup requirements. These units may not be moved out of their setup hex once the game starts. Coastal artillery may fire at British naval units if those units enter their hex during the Mutual Air/Naval Phase. All coastal artillery firing is preformed during this phase only. A die roll of "1" scores a hit on enemy naval units. A coastal artillery unit may only fire once per phase. Coastal artillery may not fire on enemy land or air units. In order to fire, the unit must be within five hexes of a friendly supply counter, free of enemy zones of control.

j. Coastal artillery units are automatically eliminated if the hex occupied is entered by enemy land combat units. They may also be eliminated by air bombardment and naval fire. The *San Giorgio* naval unit at Tobruk cannot be moved during the game and acts as a coastal artillery unit as outlined in the rules for those units above. The *San Giorgio* naval unit is a one step unit and is removed after one hit is inflicted upon it.

II. Stacking

Stacking limits are the same as in the rules for *AFRIKA KORPS*, with the following additions:

1. No more than three friendly air units may occupy the same air base at the beginning of the game turn. Eliminate immediately any excess.

2. For stacking purposes, coastal artillery units, naval units, supply units, air units, and fortress combat units do not count toward the normal limit of only three friendly units on a single hex.

III. **O'Connor Leader Unit** acts in the same way as the *Rommel* leader in the original game.

IV. Ports

The basic *AFRIKA KORPS* rules for Ports are used in this variant with the following modifications:

1. No port in the game may be used to transfer any combat unit; only supply units may be sea transported.

2. In addition to the Port of Tobruk, the Ports of Benghazi and Sollum may be used to receive supply units coming into the game for the first time and to transfer them to other ports or the friendly Home Base (and vice versa).

3. No reinforcements may ever be landed at a port. Sole exception to this is that the Axis player may bring the Babina Armored Division, in whole or in part, on at Benghazi. Note that once entered at the port, the unit cannot be later sea transported.

4. No port may receive or transfer supply units into or out of it if an enemy naval unit occupies the port hex during that game turn.

V. Breakdown Counters

Certain units in the variant, when sustaining losses, are not entirely eliminated from play, but are replaced by other counters (hereafter referred to as *breakdown* counters) which represent the units at reduced strength or component elements.

1. Italian *Infantry Divisional Units*, when suffer-

ing loss due to air or naval attacks solely, are simply flipped over and continue in play at a reduced strength. The next loss by these breakdown units results in elimination.

2. Likewise, British armor regiments and German armor battalions, when incurring losses, are flipped over and continue in play until that unit suffers another loss, which removes it from play. Unlike the Italian Infantry Divisions, these units are replaced by their breakdown counterparts whenever any loss is incurred (i.e., due to air/naval bombardment and to satisfy the results of Exchanges).

Example of Breakdown Counters:



3. Certain formations may be voluntarily broken down into their component parts. These units include all British armored brigades and infantry divisions, the German armor regiment, and the Italian armor divisions. Such a unit may breakdown into its component parts at any time during their movement portion of the game turn (place all elements in the location of the original); and they may reform into the brigade, regimental, or divisional size unit whenever all the original components that make up the higher formation are again stacked with each other. If a higher formation is broken down or rebuilt after it or any of its parts have already moved, the unit(s) have a movement rate equal to the printed movement rate on the slowest moving component minus the number of movement points any of these elements may have used in order to reach the hex. (Example: 7th Armored Brigade is currently split into its three component regiments, each of which may move seven hexes each turn. Two of the regiments, the 1RTR and 8th Hussars are already stacked but the 3rd Hussars must move three hexes in order to reach the hex and form brigade with them. When the moving regiment stacks with the other two, it will have expended three movement points. This brigade may then move, that turn, a total of four hexes. The reverse works in a similar manner, with brigade movement prior to breakdown deducted from any planned movement of the components.) Should any element of the unit be eliminated from play, the parent counter may never be resurrected again.

Example of Component Elements:



4. Such units may also be broken down into their component elements and only those counters eliminated to satisfy combat results (in the case of Exchanges for instance). This must be done immediately after the combat is resolved and before proceeding with further play.

VI. Supply

The British player receives supply units each turn as per the *AFRIKA KORPS* rules. The Axis player receives supply units using the *AK* Axis Supply Table. For the three turns of the month of December 1940, refer to the July 1941-November 1941 column on the table. For the remainder of the variant game, the March 1941-June 1941 column is used.

VII. Fortified Camps

Included in the Axis counter mix, there are a number of markers to be placed on designated hexes dur-

ing set-up. These represent fortified camps built by the Italians prior to the December 1940 British attack.

1. Italian or German units that are in a fortified camp (i.e., in a hex with a camp marker placed over the units) may add one combat strength point to their total defensive strength when attacked by enemy land combat units. This additional one combat point cannot be eliminated in place of a friendly combat unit when a hex containing the camp marker is bombarded by air or enemy naval units.

2. Italian and German units under a fortified camp marker are not required to retreat due to a "D BACK" result when attacked solely by enemy infantry, motorized infantry, or recon type combat units.

3. The Axis player may not voluntarily remove a camp marker. Camp markers are removed from play only when the hex is vacant of Axis units at the conclusion of any player-turn. Camps may never be rebuilt during the course of play.

4. Certain towns on the mapboard are also considered fortified. Units occupying the hex containing Tobruk, Bardia or Benghazi are doubled in defense.

VIII. Special Unit Movement

British and German armored units, recon units, and the British Long Range Desert Group unit need not stop upon entering an enemy zone of control. These units may move from one enemy ZOC directly into another at the cost of two movement points in addition to any other cost to enter the hex. These units may enter as many different enemy ZOCs as their movement allowance permits in a single movement phase.

IX. Special Combat Rules

1. Whenever British and German armored units suffer a "D ELIM" or a "A ELIM" combat result against a hex containing only enemy infantry or motorized infantry, they instead must only eliminate counters whose combined strength points equal or exceed those of the opposing enemy's infantry types. (Note: If an "A ELIM" result occurred when armored units were attacking an infantry type unit which was doubled on defense, the armored units would have to lose twice the defending unit's printed defense strength.)

2. When British infantry type units combine with British armored units to attack the same enemy occupied hex in a combined arms assault, the odds column on the Combat Results Table is shifted one column to the right. The armor and infantry need not be stacked in the same hex when attacking.

3. When the British 7th Royal Tank Regiment (the Matilda, or "I" tanks) attack enemy units, the column on the Combat Results Table is shifted one column to the right. (Note: All column shifts are cumulative. Should the 7th Royal Tank Regiment and a British infantry unit attack an enemy unit, the odds column would be shifted two columns to the right.)

4. Any attacking unit that clears its target hex of enemy units due to any combat result, may immediately enter that hex at a cost of one movement point (from those unused during the movement phase; players should record remaining movement for each unit that enters an enemy ZOC). This unit, after advancing, may attack any other unit that is in an adjacent hex. This may be repeated as many times as the player wishes, so long as he has movement points to pay for the advance into the vacated hexes.

Continued on Page 42, Column 1

VARIANT SET-UP

ITALIANS:

H41	I40	H39	J40	M40	
J37	K33	H32	I33	J27	
B14			G25		
H1	N9	W3		G4	M7
H15	O35				

Air units may be placed on any named town hex(s) west of Sidi Barrani inclusive:
 Air units—(3) CR32, (3) CR42, (1) SM81, (4) SM79

BRITISH:

any hex(es) between I43 and M43 (inclusive), east and/or north of the Escarpment											
J62	I48										

Air units may be placed on any named town hex(s) east of Matruh inclusive: Air units—(1) Hurricane, (1) Gladiator, (2) Blenheim, (1) Bombay, (1) Wellington.

BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS/ WITHDRAWALS

Enter Dec I	Withdraw Dec II	Withdraw Jan I		Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan III	Enter Feb I	
Withdraw Feb I	Withdraw Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter March I		(Exception—7 Indian Bde is not to be removed)
Note: All British reinforcements enter at Home Base.												

AXIS REINFORCEMENTS

											Note: All Axis reinforcements enter at Home Base, with the possible exception of Babina Div (see rule IV.3 above).		
Enter Dec II		Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Jan I	Enter Feb I	Enter Feb I	Enter Feb I	Enter Feb I	Enter Feb I			
Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb II	Enter Feb III	Enter Feb III	Enter Feb III	Enter Feb III	Enter Feb III	Enter Mar I	Enter Mar I	Enter Mar II	Enter Mar II

TURN RECORD TRACK

DEC I 1940	DEC II	DEC III	JAN I 1941	JAN II	JAN III	FEB I	FEB II	FEB III	MAR I	MAR II	MAR III
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EGYPT

Playing The Land of the Pharaohs in CIVILIZATION

By Steve Llewellyn

For many people, ancient Egypt is a baffling phenomenon. Certainly it is impressive, with its mighty monuments, its three thousand years of history, and its reputation for vast learning and skills. On the other hand, a culture of now deserved monuments, of aloof statues, of a flat and static art and of gaping monuments never seems to pulse with good red blood. We feel no kinship to the austere King Khafre (whose features are supposed to be those of the sphinx) in the Cairo Museum or to Queen Hatsheput masquerading as Osiris in the Metropolitan Museum. The story of ancient Egypt seems more like a fable than like human history.

When seven people sit down around a large table and start to unfold a *CIVILIZATION* mapboard, there is usually a scramble to edge into the corner by front of Egypt. And that scramble is even more hectic if less than seven are playing and Egypt is in the game. But why? What is the attraction of the mysterious land of the pharaohs? Is it the beauty of the Nile? The mystical allure of the pyramids? Or does Egypt have a real advantage in game terms in the simulation that spans nearly 8000 years of growth and advancement?

I think, as many do, that Egypt has a very definite advantage in *CIVILIZATION*. And, I think it is an advantage that Egypt can take to a win more than 50% of the time, unless the other players are aware of Egypt's advantages and are prepared to counter them.

As a culture, Egypt spans nearly 3000 years as a power in the Eastern Mediterranean, a singular period of cultural history matched only by the pre-Columbian Indians, India, China and Japan in length; and only by Japan and China in terms of dynamic development.

As the world's first united country, Egypt began to draw together somewhere around 3100 BC. Until that time Egypt was divided into two peoples—Upper and Lower Egypt. But, united under one king at the start of the old Kingdom, the Egyptians began 30 dynasties of pharaohs.

Egypt's history is usually divided into three periods: the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom. The Old Kingdom dates from about 2700 BC to 2200 BC (turns four and five) and it was then that the Great Pyramids were built. The Middle Kingdom marked Egypt's expansion in political and economic and military strength, from 2000 BC to 1800 BC (turn six). And the New Kingdom, 1600 BC to 1100 BC (turns seven, eight and nine) saw Egypt reach its zenith and acquire most of its lands in Asia. Thus, this covers the bulk of the Early and Late Bronze Ages in *CIVILIZATION*. After that, Egypt slowly declined in power. Although the pharaohs stayed on the throne until 400 BC, Egypt would never dominate the Mediterranean again.

Egypt's accomplishments in "world culture" are many, including the beginning of medicine, a vast bureaucracy, keeping of histories and records, birth of literature, and mathematics was developed to compute taxes, survey land, measure weights and distances, and calculate time. Irrigation was started under the first pharaohs and became an exact science. Architecture and art flourished to record the Egyptian gods, and build the pyramids which are still a marvel today. The art of ancient Egypt would later inspire the Greeks.

Egypt was dominated by its powerful rulers—Thutmose IV, who cleared the sand away from the

Sphinx 1100 years after it was made; King Djoser, whose vizier, Imhotep, built the first two pyramids; Ramses II, the "Great", who sired 100 children and built the two massive temples at the cliff at Abu Simbel in his 67-year reign; the enchanting Nefertiti whose name means "the Beautiful One is Come". And of course, Cleopatra.

But Egypt was invaded, as its power waned, by almost everyone. Around 950 BC a Libyan seized power. Then the Nubians became involved in 730 BC, the Assyrians in 663 BC, the Persians in 525 BC, Alexander the Great in 332 BC; and finally the Romans came in 50 BC. The invasions don't end there, although the game does. In 642 AD the Eastern Roman Empire was driven out of Egypt by Moslem Arabs. The Arabs stayed for nine centuries and they, in turn, were replaced by Turks, very briefly the French under Napoleon and then the British. Egypt's independence was not regained until the 20th Century.

When discussing the fall of Egypt, *CIVILIZATION* players would do well to bear all this in mind. For centuries Egypt's rich copper deposits gave it a supply of ore vital to war and allowed her to dominate her neighbors. But by 1100 BC iron weapons were making the bronze swords obsolete. And Egypt had very little iron. The Assyrians used iron to conquer the Nile. Keep that in mind when you are comparing that *Metalworking* card with, say, *Astronomy* or *Architecture*.

THE LAND

Nature favored Egypt. The early civilizations of Mesopotamia stood on an open plain, and they spent much of their vitality in defending themselves from one another. Palestine, further west, was largely unprotected, prey to invaders. In Egypt, it was different. Desert barriers girded the Valley of the Nile and discouraged invasion; the people lived in relative security.

Ain't that the truth! Take a quick look at the colors around the edge of the board that delineate where the various countries may start. Italy, Illyria, Thrace, Asia, Assyria and Babylon are all packed like sardines along the upper edge and Crete has got to get off that bloody island before it can even begin to play (of course, then Crete runs into almost everyone). Only Africa is not packed in tight; but its got its own problems—poor agricultural land, only four city sites and the awesome Italians just a Sicily away.

But Egypt! There is nobody nearby. Africa is technically adjacent but it first got there through the desert. For Africa to threaten Egypt, it has to make a concentrated effort which we will discuss later. And Babylon, to Egypt's right, is miles away.

So Egypt should not have any problems with its neighbors initially. What about city sites? Ah, it's enough to gladden any vizier's heart. There are six city sites along the Nile alone. There are three more in nearby Palestine and one more in Lybia if you want to fight Africa for it. That makes ten (which is more than any one country can build and maintain).

Note particularly the two sites in Palestine. With cities built on those two sites closest Egypt, a sort of ancient "Maginot Line" can be formed against the invading hordes from the north. Also note that Egypt must be careful how it builds those Nile cities since the sites are also on the prime agricul-

ture land. The sites with five and four population limits should not get cities until Egypt acquires the *Agriculture* card.

Also note that the three population-point city site at the narrow point between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea should not be built until all potential movement past that point is completed. Otherwise, the city could cause a massive traffic jam. Shipping in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean can only partially alleviate this problem. But, all these are only very minor flies in the ointment. Egypt is city-rich.

Let's look at the first four turns of the game. It is at this point, if the Egyptian is not very careful, that he could get into trouble. In Illustration #1, red shows the moves of Turn 1; green, Turn 2; blue, Turn 3; and grey shows Turn 4. The numbers represent the number of population tokens. As you can see, by the end of the fourth turn Egypt has two cities and four population tokens, the minimum necessary to support those cities. The people are positioned on the outer edge of the Egyptian empire while the cities are deep in the hinterland, safe from attack, out of the way and taking up only six population-points of arable land. The interior is open for easy movement and the key city sites in Palestine are already occupied.

An alternative to this plan is to not build the cities on Turn 4. According to the "Archeological Succession Table" (AST), that means Egypt will not advance a square. But the advantage lies in that Egypt will be awash in people. (I'm assuming that no one is foolish enough to put more than two population tokens in one area except to build a city.) Population expansion in *CIVILIZATION* works exponentially: one, two, four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two, *ad infinitum* (well, almost). Now Egypt would have sixteen population tokens at the end of Turn 4 if it does not build those two cities. That means on the fifth turn it will have thirty-two counters to work with. That could allow the construction of four cities, with eight tokens left over to support them.

As a comparison, let's look at the first four turns of two other countries: Italy, which I believe to be one of the three strongest in the game (along with Egypt and Babylon), and Africa (which is one of the weaker powers).

Italy has a very distinct advantage over Egypt in the first four turns of the game; this lies not on the board but on the AST. Italy need not build two cities on Turn 4 as Egypt does. According to the AST, Italy does not have to build those two cities to enter the Early Bronze Age until the fifth turn. That gives Italy sixteen population tokens compared to Egypt's two cities and four population tokens.

Note that in Illustration #2, Italy must race down both coasts of the Aegean Sea to reach the city sites on the Eastern coast opposite Italy's "heel". Italy now occupies, after four turns, four city sites. And it has easy access to four more: two on Sicily, one on Sardinia and one on Corfu in the Aegean. More than eight cities will make him too obvious the game leader and may decrease his trade card draw. (Since nations with the lowest number of cities draw first; note that using AH's new expanded trade cards will change this somewhat.) In fact, maintaining just eight cities may do that.

But Italy doesn't have everything its way. If Illyria is in the game, that dash down the Aegean coast may be cut off or blocked. Illyria can move from its agricultural heartland, marked by the five

population-point area, to the two population-point area just north of the city sites. And any Illyrian player should definitely do that.

Illyria's presence also means that Italy will be restricted for land. Italy will be forced to double up some areas to maintain the number of people necessary to support the cities. Doubling up more than two tokens per area means Italy will not be able to build its people at its maximum rate if it is needed.

The alternative is to go overseas. Now, I do not recommend to anyone committing people to build ships at this point in the game. (Unless playing Crete, of course.) It's a waste of potential. As soon as Italy builds its two cities it will have a treasury that can be used for building ships to capture Sicily and Sardinia. Certainly, later in the game, having too many people can be a problem. But not yet. Man is still a novelty in the world.

Illyria isn't Italy's only competition. As soon as Italy starts to cross the seas (at least without a navigation card), it runs into—among others the African player. Despite that, Italy really doesn't need any special civilization cards. Things look very good for the Italian development.

Africa has a problem—lack of land. Just look at the obvious African area and its limitations. First of all, three of the four city sites are located on three point-population areas. So if Africa builds on those sites, he is cutting his own throat. This is a country that desperately needs agriculture even more so than Egypt. This is the first bone of contention since there are a limited number of each Civilization card.

Speaking of Egypt, if you're the African don't look at the lush green of the Nile longingly. I can state unequivocally that if it is in the game, Egypt

will always be played. If you want the Nile you'll have a heck of a fight for it. So, I'm going to break the discussion about Africa into two parts: on fighting Egypt and on not fighting Egypt.

First let's talk about not fighting Egypt. You're a peaceful player and you plan to win through cunning rather than brute force. You have five turns, to spread out and position yourself for city building. I recommend building at the eastern-most city site in modern Libya and at the one population-point site first. Even so you'll lose one population token off the possible maximum from excess population unless you manage to build one of those two cities on Turn 4.

Two cities and 17 tokens. Doesn't look so bad? Well, maybe not right now. But what do you do next? If you build on the other two city sites, you'll be using up six of your 17 population points. That leaves you with 11 and eight are needed for city support alone. There is just no more room. The only other place to go is Sicily; usually by Turn 5 Italy will be going there too.

You might consider using people to build a ship and whisk over to Sicily on Turn 4. You'll still have enough people to build your cities even if you do this. But such a move will threaten Italy—and Italy's powerful. Of course, if Illyria is not in the game, the Italian player may be easier to talk to reasonably. On top of all this, Sicily has a volcano on it. What a place to fight over!

While I personally prefer seizing Sicily on Turn 4 when playing Africa, it still has only two cities and 13 tokens on Turn 5. You really must judge Italy's character. (The change from 17 to 13 comes from the expenditure of population for a ship.) Look

at Illustration #3.

But even with Sicily, Africa is restricted. (I'm assuming Italy is in the game; otherwise Africa has an excellent chance of winning.) Building on all five city sites leaves only 16 population-points in Africa's areas. Africa needs *Agriculture* to ease tight land restrictions. With it, Africa can build 12-token cities in the hinterland and internalize its economy. Otherwise, it has to go headhunting for city sites. And headhunting always creates enemies.

Africa adopting a strategy of attacking Egypt immediately is one of the few ways to stop Egypt winning the game. It also doesn't hurt Africa that much. By sending hordes of Africans against the lands of the Nile, the African can still still build two cities on Turn 5 and might pry a big agriculture area out of Egypt (or even a city site). Remember that Egypt is trying to build two cities by the end of Turn 4. To do that, Egypt will have to leave itself with only four tokens in play. If you kill only one of those in combat, one city will collapse and Egypt will be hung up a turn or more on the AST.

Just the threat of doing that may cause the Egyptians to cough up something beneficial to the African. Remember, he doesn't need his cities until Turn 5 so he'll have, theoretically, 20 tokens to throw at the Nile. Of course, not all can reach to the Nile because of the desert. But enough can make it across the sands to threaten the country. And he could bargain with other countries to act as their tool against Egypt. Africa can be fun to play (but hard to win with).

THE EMERGING CULTURE

The nucleus of CIVILIZATION is the acquiring of the proper Civilization cards. Note, I emphasize *proper*. There are lots of cards available, but the indiscriminant buyer will find himself constricted by not having the appropriate skills (such as *Agriculture* and *Astronomy*) or not having enough total points to enter the numbered boxes in the final moves of the game.

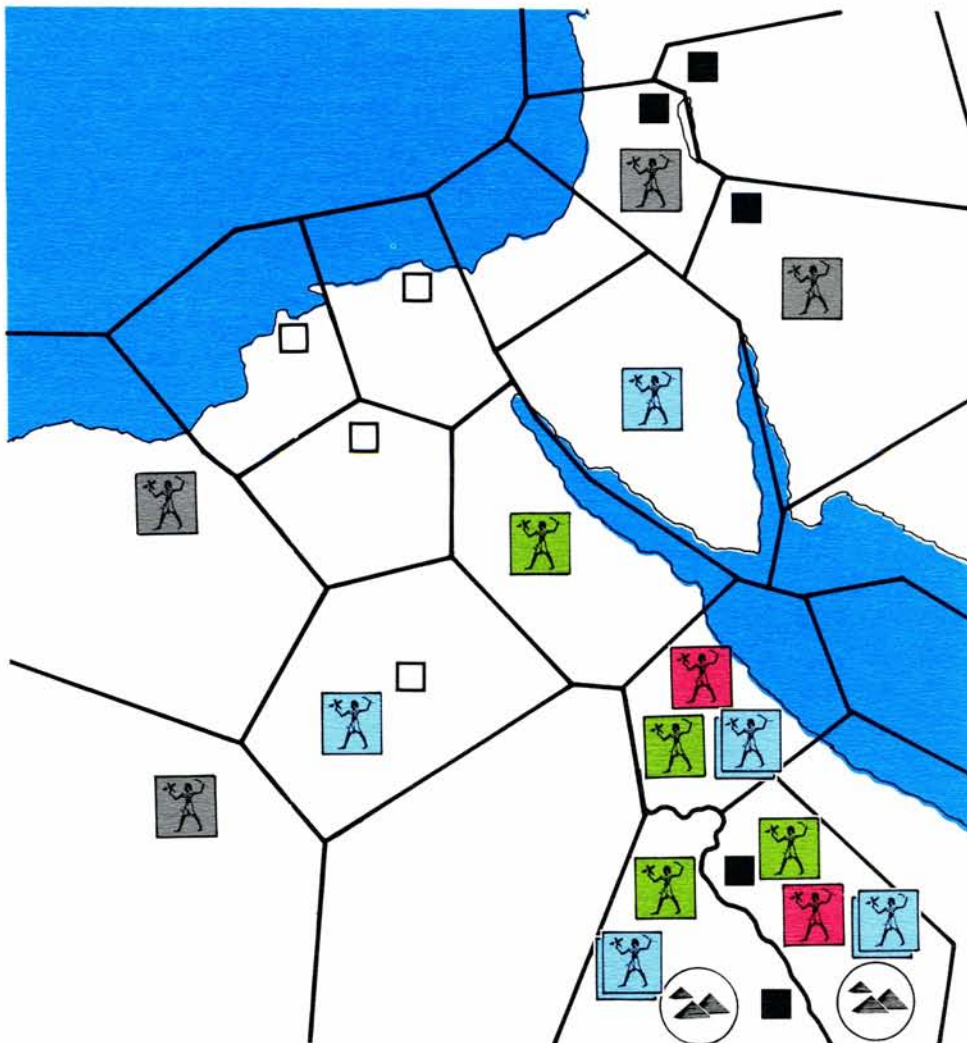
The first decision to make is whether to purchase *Mysticism*. While the card has a low value (30) it also has two colors (and two bonuses toward future purchases) in one card. A player needs three colors to get out of the Early Bronze Age. It is a valuable card to all players. Even though there are only four *Mysticism* cards in the seven player game, Egypt should get one if it wants because of its last position on the AST. Personally, I always try to grab one, but it's not a disaster if I don't.

Several cards, however, are crucial for Egyptian development. *Agriculture* is extremely highly recommended. The card represents a number of things (discovering the plow, improved planting, hybrid seed and, most importantly for Egypt, obviously irrigation). The effect is to increase the allowed population level of each area by one. With it, Egypt can safely build cities on those four and five population-point areas. All those population-point areas west of the Nile will become twos and threes and you'll have no trouble feeding the city dwellers.

Another important card is *Engineering*. *Engineering* decreases the damage that occurs during a flood; for Egypt that can be crucial. It is an obvious buy for the country dominated by the cyclical waters of the Nile. While I have played Egypt and not received a flood, I consider that to be unique. *Engineering* reduces flood damage from 17 to seven, likely saving a city or two. Protect those 20 tokens worth of city points on the flood plain.

Another card designed to ameliorate some of the disasters facing you (and you can bet Egypt will be prime target for many), *Medicine* is a high point card and reduces the effects of the plague, which can kill up to 16 population tokens. In addition, it is a Science card which allows the use of that 20 point bonus on later purchases.

Illustration #1: Egypt



Another good card to have is *Metalworking*. Egypt is such a gem to play that you never know when some foolish opponent is going to become uncivilized and try to physically take the sacred Nile from you. A *Metalworking* advantage makes military conquest of Egypt much more formidable. The card allows you to force an opponent to remove the first token in combat, regardless of who has more. Unfortunately, Egypt can't get *Metalworking* in time to cover the dangerous period of the first four turns.

There are some cards you don't need and one is *Astronomy*. Egypt shouldn't be messing around crossing great expanses of water. All efforts should be spent maintaining the Nile empire running smoothly. Overseas expansion gains no advantage for Egypt. It's far too well equipped to need to leave. Indeed, you may be spending your time fending off those trying to land from the sea, much too busy to worry about beachheads elsewhere.

My recommendations for the Civilization cards for Egypt are as follows: *Philosophy* (240), *Democracy* (200), *Law* (170), *Literacy* (110), *Engineering* (140), *Medicine* (140), *Coinage* (110), *Metalworking* (80), *Agriculture* (110), *Drama & Poetry* (60) and *Mysticism* (30). This list is in reverse order of purchase. It gives a point total of 1390 (90 more than you need to enter the last box).

The order of purchase is very important. Obviously, *Mysticism* should be first since it is limited in numbers and has two colors, an advantage in entering the Late Bronze Age. The next card should be *Agriculture* if possible to make the three colors and ease population restrictions in the western desert where you may be fighting Africa. (Remember, however, *Agriculture* does not help population limits in combat.) But, if you can't raise the 110 points for agriculture, *Metalworking* is an excellent substitute. Five salt plus some treasury will give you *Metalworking*; *Agriculture* would require six salt plus some spare cash.

To enter the Early Iron Age requires seven civilization cards. These cards should be the above three and *Drama & Poetry* (which is cheap and gives a nice literacy bonus), *Coinage* (it costs only 90 because of the mysticism bonus), then *Engineering* (which would only cost 80 with bonuses), and finally, *Medicine* (which would also cost 80).

Coinage is a very useful, and under-rated, card for everyone on the board because it allows such a flexible monetary policy at taxation time. While building and burning boats and purchasing gold bullion can free up the necessary two tokens per city, these efforts are clumsy and wasteful and can mess up your policy of population expansion. *Coinage* can give you that extra money by taxing cities at the rate of three tokens per city if you are planning a major card purchase; or it can save your tokens for population expansion (or your bacon if you don't have the population counters needed) by taxing at one per city.

Now Egypt enters the Early Iron Age on the AST on Turn 10 along with Asia, Assyria and Babylon. What are the chances of entering this stage exactly on that turn? You could theoretically have six cities on Turn 8 (assuming you build two on Turn 4). That means you will be trading high gain cards like salt, grain, cloth, and bronze. With good trading you should be able to make a purchase of a card every other turn. (This may be a bit conservative, as four cloth alone gives 80 points.) But some turns you just won't be able to get what you want. And there are always the unexpected disasters.

To enter the Late Iron Age costs 1000 points. Those first seven cards I named are worth 670 points, so you need another 330. That's rough in only three turns. That seventh card to get into the Early Iron Age probably cleaned you out in terms of trading cards, so you are starting from scratch. *Literacy*, *Law*, and *Democracy* will net 480 points. Skipping *Literacy* will give you 370; but *Literacy*

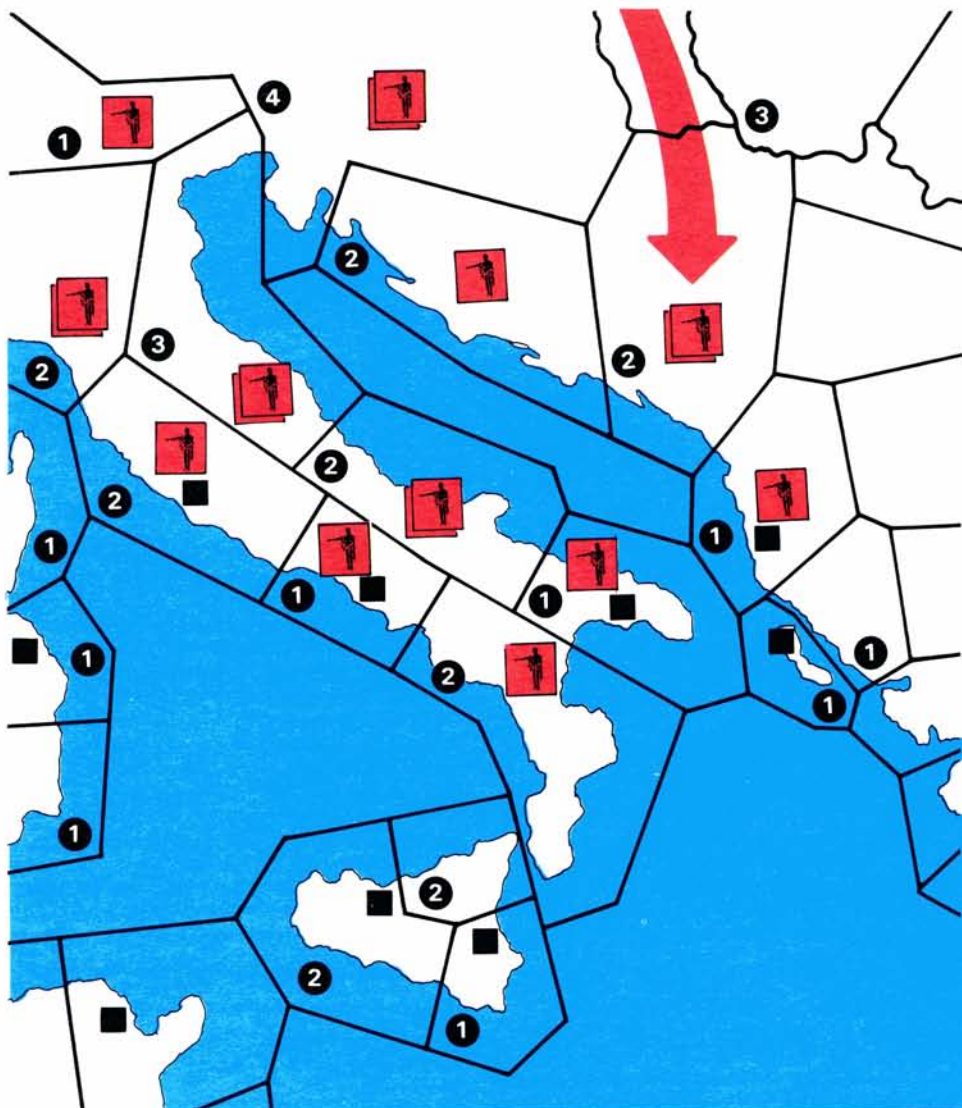


Illustration #2: Italy

gives you a 25 point bonus towards the other two and skipping it will cost you an extra 50 eventually.

But that still leaves the other two. According to Mick Uhl's suggested rules in *The GENERAL* (Vol 19, No. 4) *Law* must be bought a full turn before *Democracy* or *Philosophy*. (The idea of anyone raising 410 points to buy *Law* and *Philosophy* in one turn regularly is not one to cause much worry.) In reality, you are probably looking at three more turns to get those next two cards. That means another turn delay.

For those readers adding these delays and noticing Africa's advantage on the AST, you must be thinking Egypt will always end up four squares behind. Well, maybe, but many things can happen in the middle seven turns of the game and calamities will be playing havoc with the smartest pharaohs and emperors. So the above are only guidelines.

The final card is *Philosophy*—a massive 240 points. But don't be discouraged because there are lots of bonuses: 25 for *Literacy* and 80 for all your sciences. That brings *Philosophy* down to a reasonable 135 points (or five cloth with some spare change).

Egypt does have one advantage of the AST in that selection of Civilization cards is in reverse AST order. That means you get first shot at the important *Mysticism* cards and anything else that may be in short supply. Very nice.

Discussing trade cards is rather subjective and everyone has their own favorites. Mine is *salt*. I always seem to be rolling in the stuff while everyone else is whining over bronze. One word of cau-

tion about one card—grain—because everyone I play with, seems to horde the stuff to ward off famines. I'd like to see a rule that says you have to eat your grain (return it to the deck) in conjunction with using the *Pottery* card to stave off famine. Otherwise, there is a *Civil War* almost every turn.

There is also an order in taking trading cards. The country with the lowest number of cities picks first. Any ties are settled by the AST. And Egypt is at the bottom of the AST. So, I recommend staying in the middle of the pack in terms of cities (meaning five to seven cities in the middle to the last part of the game). Sometimes calamities will give you first pick whether you planned to have the smallest number of cities or not. But only the novice player builds cities at every opportunity.

THE PEOPLE

Moving last, as the Egyptian player does, gives him the advantage of being able to throw in enough troops to defend a city or cause a fight and reduce an enemy below the total he needs to build a key city. It also means that he has a lot of tokens in the stock or treasury section where they can be used more flexibly.

But I like to have a fair number of people on the board. I like a good, old-fashioned military campaign to put across a point that just doesn't stick through diplomacy. As Egypt one often finds himself fighting Babylon in the Middle East and Africa in the west. Prepare, until you've your cities at the "choke point" built, for a series of sharp wars.

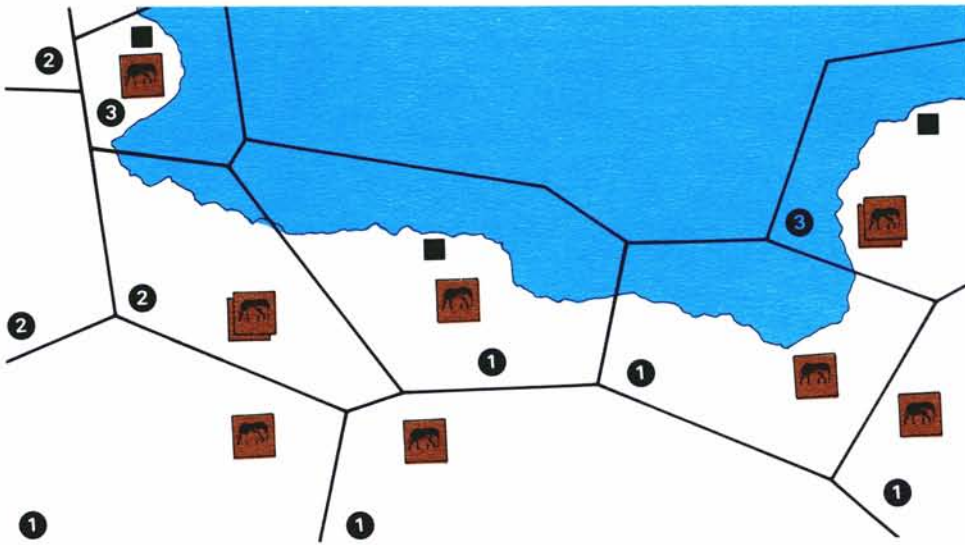


Illustration #3: Africa

Calamities, even when played on you by someone else, are an offensive tool. An epidemic on Egypt kills 16 points (only 11 with *Medicine*) but allows you to allocate 25 more losses (no more than 10 per individual) on other players. Always ding your neighbors. Always! Because they are who you are, or will be, competing with. The only exception is if the poor nerd already has two calamities that turn. No one can be hit with more than two.

For Egypt that means hitting Africa as your main target. Babylon is next on the list. And don't forget whoever is winning the game if it isn't you. Of course, after a while Africa and Babylon will start to pout and not trade with you anymore. There are

four other players for you to trade with. But try not to isolate yourself by hitting them too often. As in any multiplayer game, you need a few friends.

I always trade with anyone who will trade with me no matter how badly I've backstabbed them. Trading is too valuable a tool in set-building. The trick is not to take the first trade that comes along. Let your enemies make a few trades with someone else. It's amazing how people will unload an epidemic on the first pigeon that comes along to avoid getting stuck with it themselves. And if you already have the misfortune to receive two calamities already, trade away with your new found immunity. Have fun while you can.

CONCLUSION

Egypt is not invulnerable. In *CIVILIZATION*, no matter how powerful the player is, natural calamities and war can derail his train. Floods without *Engineering*, civil wars, earthquakes and iconoclasm and heresy can really set you back. But not in terms of moving you back on the AST. The real danger is two of these calamities hitting in one turn followed up by an invasion by one of your "friendly" neighbors. Invasions are often overlooked in *CIVILIZATION*. But a careful (to prevent taxation problems) invasion carried out with determination for three or four turns could knock Egypt completely out of the game. (At least until the next civil war.) Africa is the obvious threat. But theoretically it could come from anywhere on the board if that player has astronomy to cross Mediterranean.

More often it will require two invading players to put away the Egyptians. Jumping out to lead the game in the middle stages may precipitate just such an alliance against Egypt. There is, however, always the great resurrection available through the civil war. Then Egypt can wreak its terrible revenge on her tormentors.

In any case, the details from the fowling scene taken from the wall painting of Amenemheb's tomb in Thebes (c. 1450 BC) are destined to play a prime role in about 3000 years of eastern Mediterranean history in the game of *CIVILIZATION*. Look it up and see what I mean.

Both quotations in this article come from John A. Wilson (Professor of Egyptology, University of Chicago) and are found in the Introduction to *Ancient Egypt, Great Ages of Man* (Time-Life Books, New York, 1965).



Compass . . . Cont'd from Page 37

An attacker that moves into a vacated enemy hex, after combat, need not attack any enemy units that this move may bring adjacent.

X. Replacements

Due to the short length of the campaign and the demands of other threaters, neither player receives any replacements. The sole increases in strength lie in reinforcements.

XI. Reinforcement/Withdrawal Chart

Throughout, the variant units are brought in as reinforcements for each side; for the British player, some units are withdrawn during play. For a listing, see the Reinforcement/Withdrawal Chart.

- All reinforcements enter the game at the friendly Home Base, except as noted above for the Babina Armored Division (see rule IV.3).
- British units that must withdraw are simply removed from play unless under siege or surrounded by enemy ZOC. If this is the case, another friendly unit not under siege or surrounded and of the same strength and unit type is removed instead.
- If the unit to be removed has been eliminated from play before the time for its withdrawal, another friendly unit in play of equal type and strength must be removed.
- If the unit to be withdrawn has been eliminated from play, and no other friendly unit of the same strength and type can be removed in its stead, a number of victory points equal to the combat strength of the unit to be withdrawn must be deducted from the British player's total victory points at the end of the game.

5. Reinforcements enter play at start of a player turn, and withdrawals are taken at the end of the player turn.

XII. Game Length

Operation Compass has 12 game turns, divided into three game turns for every month. Each game turn commences with the Mutual Air/Naval Phase; the British player moves and conducts combat first during each turn. Axis movement and combat follows; return of air and naval units to base concludes the game turn.

XIII. Mapboard

Certain units are initially placed on mapboard hexes that do not have names on the *AFRIKA KORPS* board. The following are the hex locations for these places named in the variant:

Name	Hex Location
Maktila	I 41
Nibeiva	J 40
Tummars	I 40
Sofafi	M 40
Buq Buq	J 37
Brace	G 4
Soluch	M 7
Sceledidma	N 9

XIV. Victory Conditions

The variant is won by the player who accumulates more victory points than his opponent. Certain named hexes (towns) yield victory points when controlled by a player. A victory-point hex is controlled by a player for victory point purposes when friendly land combat units occupy (or were the last to occupy) the hex at the conclusion of the final game turn. At the start of the variant, certain victory hexes

are controlled by the players. The Axis player, at the start, controls his Home Base, Benghazi, Derna, Tobruk, Bardia, and Sollum. The British player, at start, controls his Home Base and Mersa Matruh. A listing of the hexes and their victory point worth follows:

Name	Victory Points
Axis Home Base	10
Benghazi	10
Tobruk	15
Derna	5
Sollum	5
Bardia	10
British Home Base	10
Mersa Matruh	5

The level of victory a player achieves over his opponent depends on how many more victory points he controls than his opponent at the end of the game. The victor is the player with the most victory points. By amassing 15+ VP more than the opponent, a player can claim a strategic victory; by holding 30+ VP more, a player can claim a decisive victory. (Note: The British player loses victory points equal to the combat strength of any unit that he must withdraw from the game and is unable to do so because those units have previously been eliminated if he cannot withdraw a unit that is of the same type and same combat strength.)

Counters and the chart for Air Unit Movement Ranges may be found on the insert of this issue. Note that Axis units are yellow; Allied blue. Appropriate counters are backprinted.



GERMANY: THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

Play on the Southern Front

By Nicky Palmer

Axis strategy has a conventional pattern which most players will have tried, since it is roughly the historical one. In 1939, knock out Poland, Denmark and the Low Countries. In 1940, France, Yugoslavia, Norway and maybe Greece, with a North African drive stopping short of taking Suez but keeping the UK player busy. In 1941, attack the USSR and try to knock her out before the Spring 1942 reinforcements. In 1942-1945, try to hold out! Variations on the strategy appear in many articles: delaying one attack for a season, invading Russia a little earlier, and so on.

This simplistic plan worked so often in the early days of *THIRD REICH* primarily because Russian players tended to play into Axis hands by disputing every kilometer until the Red Army fell apart. In these "scientific" days, however, it is just not good enough. Britain, if competently played, will both hold the home country and Suez, retaining enough BRPs to keep Russia alive by Lend-Lease. When America comes to the rescue, the tide will turn, and 1945 will see Germany on the brink of defeat.

Faced with stiffening Allied resistance in their games, Axis players have streamlined the campaign to concentrate on essentials. Greece, and even Yugoslavia, are often ignored—why should Germany, at least, waste time and BRPs in the Balkans when every season that the assault on Russia is delayed will be one more hard nail in the coffin?

In this streamlined campaign, the main Axis effort goes toward knocking out France at the earliest possible moment. The precise date of the fall of France is likely to be decisive for the fate of the USSR. To prevent a swift French collapse followed by a successful Barbarossa, the Allies must counter with a full-blooded British commitment to France, including repeated counteroffensives. The end may come with Paris taken over the river and German garrisons stacked to the skies on the bridgehead; but, if the British are prepared to run down their bank balance, it should be possible to delay the German conquest long enough to give Russia a fighting chance of staying alive without having to flee to the edge of the board. This type of game is a tough, drawn-out slugfest with both sides hurling in every resource to win the European battle. By contrast, the Mediterranean Front becomes denuded of activity. With no threat to Suez, and the Italian Army fully committed to the main struggle, there is not really much to fight about. North Africa becomes a southern Switzerland, where people go to rest from the hazards of war.

There is a lot to be said for this Axis approach, but it requires an Italian player willing to act as "junior sidekick" throughout the game. With no Balkan adventure and no African campaign, his chances of prospering in the war are not very good, and he will have a boring couple of weekends acting as a "jumped-up" minor ally providing cannon-fodder for the German's battles. What Italy will be pressing for is something akin to Watney's Italian Empire [see the *3R Wargamer's Guide*—a 100-BRP nation armed to the teeth to help sweep the British out of North Africa. There is, however, another much more even-handed plan than either which gives Italy a more interesting role to fulfill and the Axis an even better chance of joint victory. This is the "Mediterranean Strategy".

In Fall 1939, Germany disposes of Poland, and possibly Denmark and/or Holland (on balance, I prefer to take extra builds and an attrition in the West than take out these neutrals). Italy declares war on the Western Allies, but adopts a defensive posture. Marcus Watney analyzes the major considerations of any such defense, the exact shape of which will depend on the Allied set-up; note, however, that Italy is not trying to threaten Yugoslavia for the present. There are two substantial changes to be aware of: Italy lends her airwings to Germany, SR'ing them to Budapest and Plovdiv, while three Italian fleets base in Venice with two German panzers SR'd to the spot. The other fleet is held in Taranto with the 2-5 Italian armor. Five or six units are placed in Libya to prevent an early collapse in the African colonies.

Germany builds as many offensive units, especially the armored, as is consistent with defending the Western Front against a possible Allied double move. To guard the Rhine, some infantry and replacements will be needed, but there should be room for several armored builds if Denmark and the Netherlands are still unviolated. Some panzers go to the Rumanian-Yugoslav border; any necessary to protect Italy and/or Germany further can be placed in the Nurnberg-Berchtesgaden area. The Allies can now take a double move if they wish, but against the swarm of armor in Venice and southern Germany, any major assault is likely to be a very costly affair. More probably, the Allied players will be content with a single move and an amassing of strength.

In Winter, Italy declares war on Yugoslavia and Turkey! Surrounded by mounds of tanks and fleets of aircraft, Yugoslavia is a one-turn pushover; but, useful progress must also be made against Turkey. The three Axis armored units waiting on board ship are not going to frighten the Turks, but they will cause the Allies considerable dislocation as French fleets are moved to Beirut and British fleets to Port said. Provided the British and French agree to intercept any Italian attempt to land in Turkey (Rule 22.3), the Turks need not defend their beaches and can mass their army around the Dardanelles. The French are sure to be delighted at an opportunity to use their fleets so effectively. For the German player, getting across the Straits is a real headache and will require the use of paratroops; but the rewards are high. Played correctly, the end of the turn should see the Germans firmly established on the east bank only a few hexes from Ankara. Another attrition in the West leaves plenty of points for the Axis player(s) to build units, reinforcing their lines behind the Belgian buffer as well as beefing up their strength in Turkey and even SRing a panzer to Libya, if a fleet is available.

Now, can the Allies do anything? Well, yes, they can be pushing ahead in North Africa, reducing the Axis to a perimeter around Tripoli or Tobruk. They may be able to set back the Axis timetable by some sort of counterinvasion in Turkey, and at any rate can certainly intervene in Turkey by overland SR. An intervention gains Turkey's 30 BRPs for the 1940 YSS, allowing another ASW unit to be built (long-term BRP advantages are small as Ankara is unlikely to hold throughout 1940).

Meanwhile, Germany enters the YSS short the usual 35-40 BRPs for Western European neutrals—

but holding Yugoslavia offsets that somewhat. Moreover, the forces already built should be larger than usual since only one (southern) offensive has been paid for. The Allies will surely hold Luxembourg and be inching into Germany and Italy, but major progress is unlikely to be made unless they take the drastic step of violating Low Countries neutrality, which will require greater Axis commitment to the defense but in the long run will benefit the Axis BRP balance.

The year 1940 sees the Axis swing into top gear against the Allies on three fronts. More troops and aircraft are funneled into North Africa, ensuring that the toehold on that continent is held; the Western attrition steadily grows in intensity as more infantry reaches the scene. But the major effort is normally in Turkey until—around mid-year—Ankara falls and the Turkish troops disappear. The Allies can delay this by pouring massive forces into the battle, but this will weaken either North Africa or France to the point that an Axis breakthrough becomes possible. With interior land lines between Turkey and the West, the Axis partners can shift their main effort much more rapidly than the Allies.

The Allied problem is that a three-front war cannot be sustained against the massive German armor. In the usual narrow fronts in France and North Africa, the unit limitations are not usually apparent; but with the six-hex Turkish front added, there are not enough powerful Allied units to go around. If the British denude the homeland to man the fronts, further pressure can be exerted by moving the paratroops to Wilhelmshaven and building the remaining German fleets, forcing a defensive set up on the lines described by Marcus Watney ("A Green and Pleasant Land", *3R Wargamer's Guide*). There is no requirement that France must fall before Germany can invade Great Britain!

Something has to give, and it will usually be Turkey first, swallowed in time for Thanksgiving. The Allies will then pull back to the eastern mountains; but their basic problem remains, aggravated by the loss of the Turks: the Allies must give ground either in North Africa, or in the Middle East, or in France. The Western neutrals should now be ripe for the picking, and Norway should be taken if still unoccupied by the British. Meanwhile, a pincer presses in towards Suez.

Gradually, one or the other Mediterranean front is likely to crumble, and mid-1941 should see the Allied effort concentrated on the defense of Paris, with Germany in Suez and astride the Lend-Lease route in Persia. If the Allies concentrate on the Mediterranean instead, Paris will fall sooner—giving the Mediterranean to the Axis in any case as the French contingent goes the way of the Turks. As soon as the pincer closes in the Middle east, the Axis can transfer troops to the eastern borders. Towards the end of 1941, an amended *Barbarossa* should at last be able to get under way.

"Horrors! A two-front war!" shriek a chorus of readers at this point: most of us have tried an early German attack on Russia and become convinced that a two-front war is the worst kind of suicide. Given the above strategy, it is indeed very unlikely that Russia will be knocked out of the war (though Paris should fall before the Americans can intervene). If the timetable is held up, it may even be worth not



attacking Russia at all, instead picking up Sweden and Greece and perhaps even trying an invasion of Britain, gambling on unsuccessful intervention by the Royal Navy. In a multi-player game, the prospect of delaying Russia's entry by negotiation makes this line particularly alluring. But there is, in any case, a fundamental difference from the usual two-front war: *the West is bankrupt*. To keep the three fronts going all this time, the British must have scraped the bottom of the barrel, and the fall of Suez should send them plunging into the red. They will not have been able to afford aid to Russia earlier; now, even if they could, one route is closed and the other can be made unattractive. With the capture of North Africa and the Middle East, defense of the Mediterranean becomes easier than with Montgomery still rampaging unchecked in Egypt and Libya. Without Allied aid, Soviet prospects in the game are not satisfactory, and a deal yielding a joint Axis-Soviet strategic victory may be in the cards.

However, for aggressive Axis players there is a more attractive alternative yet—*another* three-front war! As soon as the Allies are pushed out of Turkey, forces can be diverted to the Soviet border. Just three or four panzer units should be enough to give the pre-1942 USSR a very severe headache. A glance at most published Soviet defenses will show that they do not have the six to eight armor and infantry units needed to hold the Caucasus Front against a thrust from Turkey. Airwings based in Ankara and Samsoun give a two-way staging option to the Axis: east into the border area or north into Rumania. Italian fleets in Istanbul threaten landings in the north Caucasus or Crimea, further straining the Soviet defense.

Faced with this new pincer, the Russians have only one defense—they must retreat farther than usual to stay out of the German grasp until Spring 1942. By postponing the attack until Turkey is penetrated, the Axis players are likely to find they can gain vast swathes of territory virtually unopposed, and with quite limited offensive forces committed. Even just six Axis armored units on the main

front are enough to threaten a major envelopment of the Red Army if it tries to hold both fronts. But an advance past Moscow coupled with a bankrupt Britain and a conquered Mediterranean add up to a decisive Axis victory.

Before this happens, there is ample room for variation in Allied defenses which force a flexible response from the Axis. Early Murmansk convoys to Russia should speed the collapse of the Western Front, but make an attack on the USSR imperative—a well-supplied Russia in 1943 is a very dangerous opponent. Allied withdrawal from the Med (on the grounds that the cost of defending the Suez is too high) will improve the chances of Paris staying free until the Americans arrive, but at the price of allowing a powerful two-pronged assault on Russia (and the closure of the Lend-Lease route) at a relatively early stage, making a Soviet surrender a real possibility. A British occupation of Norway will increase the chance of US aid to Russia in 1943-1945, but will stretch British resources yet further (a *fourth* front!) and is readily countered by an attack through Sweden at an appropriate moment.

Probably the best Allied response is to ignore problems in the Middle East, hole up between the Qattara Depression and the Gulf of Aqaba, and instead launch an all-out assault on the Italian mainland itself. As usual in *THIRD REICH*, attack is once again the best form of defense. Because of this danger, any Axis players facing skillful Allies may prefer to keep Italy neutral until Turkey has been defeated and the eastern prong of the pincer against Suez has been deployed . . . probably in late 1940. With Italy neutral in 1939, the two airwings will be missed (placing one in Rhodes is a pleasingly provocative gesture), but the lack of any threat to invade Turkey by sea is no real loss so long as French fleets are in the game.

While all these options will give considerable variety to the course of games played with the Mediterranean strategy, the Axis should be able to remain on top. If one of the anti-Western minor ally variants (Spain, or the Irish Rising) is drawn, the power of the strategy is increased. Obviously, draw-

ing the Turkish variant should make the Axis players choose a different line. Even with such help, though, the game will be extremely risky in 1939-1940 and the strategy should only be engaged by a German player willing to lavish great care on every move. A serious Allied breakthrough in the West is fatal to the timetable; an Allied conquest of North Africa is equally disastrous as it destroys the Suez pincer. But, with careful play, neither of these calamities need come about, and the rest of the game should be plain sailing.

Only the preoccupation with the possible *Soviet* attack on Turkey has made players ignore its value to the Axis for so long; certainly no other country can offer the key to one major power's bankruptcy while outflanking another and gaining 30 BRPs per year for the victor. The analysis, incidentally, highlights what practical experience confirms: the Turkish minor ally variant, which gives most of the benefits without the need to invade, is likely to lead to a decisive Axis victory.

A final quirk—the Mediterranean strategy gives France her best chance to survive. Under the revised victory conditions, she is all but guaranteed a marginal victory by surviving Winter 1940 and may even survive Summer 1941 to attain a tactical victory. It may, therefore, be possible to make a deal with her: the German guarantees no major assault on France for the first three turns, France agrees not to make her forces available to defend Turkey or the Middle East. The neutrality of the French fleet is particularly useful, and is absolutely guaranteed to infuriate the British player . . . which in turn gives the Axis a better chance of taking Paris in 1941 without fanatical UK opposition.

Thus, the Mediterranean strategy.

Note: Credit for the basic idea of the Mediterranean strategy is due the superb Basel 3R player Hans Funschilling. Thanks.

The WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO THIRD REICH referred to by Mr. Palmer is available from The Avalon Hill Game Company for \$5.00 (plus usual shipping and handling).



To the Editor:

Well, so the news is out. After several years of time, and large sums of money invested, I am told that *SQUAD LEADER* was based on a flawed foundation. This is news to me, as I have found it entertaining and enjoyable. Be that as it may, it took all this time and three expansions before they figured this out!?! Either Avalon Hill's in-house genius (Don Greenwood) is an idiot, or he thinks we, the gamers, are. In his article (Vol. 21, No. 5) he mentions the demise of our hobby's Golden Age, brought about by a glut of game releases. Anyone with half a brain can see that it was not just the game releases that brought about the End of the Era, but the commercialized greed that swept most of the game companies in existence then. Most, but not all—not Avalon Hill—at least not until now.

If, as Mr. Greenwood states, *SQUAD LEADER* was flawed, the least Avalon Hill can do is to supply all those gamers that have purchased all the *SQUAD LEADER* merchandise with free copies of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*, as it was admitted to be their fault. Unfortunately, the evil greed bug has bitten the bastion of adventure gaming, and not only do we have to swallow the insult that we could not tell it was a faulty design, but we must pay for it literally with large sums of money for the new system.

If, as Mr. Greenwood states, that "if *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* fails, we will probably not see another wargame with such lavish trappings pass this way again for a long time", all I can say is maybe it would be for the best because if this type of hoax is permitted to go unpunished by the gaming public, then God help all of us players and enthusiasts for we will show ourselves to be fools and knaves. Thank you for your time. As I do not expect this letter to see print, I can only hope that if Mr. Greenwood sees this, he may take it to heart.

Richard Sajecski
Buffalo, New York

*Although I doubt that General Motors would feel obliged to give you a new Chevrolet every year when the new models come out, that annual event hardly means that last year's model was "flawed". Rather, the passage of another year has enabled their engineers to improve on last year's model I suspect. The parallel holds true in games too. You admit that *SQUAD LEADER* was "entertaining and enjoyable", so what's your beef? Did you not receive value for your money spent? How many other games have you purchased which you enjoyed as much or played as often? Are we now to be branded a corporate monster because we have tried to improve on a previous model? Or are we expected to make a living continuing to sell 1975 Chevies?*

Mr. Greenwood has indeed seen your letter and it truly saddens him that your reaction is one which will probably be shared by others. No doubt nothing I can say here will change your mind, so let's leave it to those who do give ASL a try to convince you of the error of your ways—or ours.

★★★★★

Gentlemen:

After reading the articles on *HITLER'S WAR* in the latest *GENERAL*, I felt compelled to throw in my two cents. Mike Palmer and Mick Uhl offer very limited views of the game's strategies. And Mr. Palmer's diagram (running an army through a hex that should contain a seven strength point fort) greatly detracts from the validity of his strategic observations.

However, his section on optional rules is very insightful and I agree with it wholeheartedly. Bombers are too powerful and subs too weak. I wholly concur that conventional bombing has no historic base for causing the submission of a nation. Britain and the Blitz and the Dresden raids more than prove it. Neither side would have surrendered because of terror bombing. Contrarily, they gritted their teeth and plowed on. Also, his submarine rule makes excellent sense. A key hex to the English ports should enhance the subs effectiveness. While reducing devastation repair to only two points might help bomber equalization, it changes a great deal of the production strategy in the game.

As an avid player of your version of *HITLER'S WAR*, I would like to request that you take into serious consideration his suggested changes. I be-

Letters to the Editor ...

lieve they would reflect history more realistically and truly enhance the game (which I already find excellent, but not perfect). In closing, I would like to add that James Meldrum's options are excellent also. Perhaps these could be incorporated as random events in the next edition?

Dusty Koellhoffer
Richardson, Texas

★★★★★

Dear Rex:

I have received the contributor copy which you sent me for my *CONQUISTADOR* variant. I thank you very much. Enclosed is errata which I have prepared on my "Fur Traders and Buccaneers" article (Vol. 21, No. 5). I hope you can print it before long for the benefit of interested *CON* gamers.

16.6.4 A Buccaneer assists combat against the units of other players. When fighting Naval Combat, the die result is modified by +1 to favor the side using the Buccaneer leader which is currently leading Buccaneer ships (or taking part in a mixed—Buccaneer and regular—expedition). If both sides are using Buccaneer leaders, the net effects cancel out. A Buccaneer leader attacking any Port (player or non-player owned) via Naval Invasion, or defending a Port with Buccaneer or mixed units modifies the combat die roll favorably by "1". Buccaneer leaders have no effect upon ordinary Land Combat. Only one Buccaneer leader may be effectively used in a single force.

16.6.5 A Buccaneer leader leading Buccaneer units in the looting of non-player settlements or the Spanish Galleon Fleet adds one (+1) to the Spanish City Loot Table and Spanish Galleon Treasure Table die rolls. (See 27.10 and 27.11.)

16.6.6 Buccaneer leaders scored astonishing coups against the forces of Spain historically. To simulate this, one (+1) is added to the Spanish Land Attack table and Spanish naval Attack Table die rolls whenever a Buccaneer leader, leading a Buccaneer or mixed force, must defend against a non-player land or sea attack. (See 27.5.5 and 28.11.4.)

16.6.9 Only a friendly Buccaneer ship may carry a friendly Buccaneer leader. A captured Buccaneer leader must accompany moving enemy soldiers or ships as the capturing player wishes.

23.3.3 Correction Godske Lindenow is available on Turns 2 and 3. The entry/exit counters on the counter are correct.

27.10.3 A single player may not loot the same Spanish/Portuguese settlement more than once per game.

29.6 A Slave unit is considered a Colonist for Naval Attrition purposes. If an expedition contains both Colonists and Slave units, the player may eliminate whichever he chooses.

29.7.2 Expeditions beginning in "Guinea" and travelling to any hex north of row 2100 must calculate one additional Bound into the printed map distance.

29.7.3 Expeditions beginning in "Guinea" and traveling to any hex between rows 2100 and 2800 (inclusive) on the Atlantic Coast are assumed to have moved the printed distance.

29.7.3 This rule should be renumbered "27.7.4". Also, all Pacific Coast hexes should be considered to be "south of hex row 2800".

27.11.4a The Spanish naval attack table was omitted. It should read:

Die Roll: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
CRT Column: 3-1 2-1 1-1 1-1 1-1 1-2 1-3

27.10.5 To further clarify, a settlement may be looted, the gold loaded aboard the expedition, and the expedition may move to another settlement and attempt to capture it, and so forth.

Glenn Rahman
Minneapolis, Minnesota

★★★★★

Dear Rex:

As you know, but most readers do not, I made recent unsuccessful efforts to instigate a newsletter devoted to *THIRD REICH*. That project foundered for lack of a US-based editor with the time and facilities to publish it. But in the process I discovered—or rather re-discovered—the *Buzzard's Breath*. It is my avowed purpose here to tout that letter to all 3R addicts.

I sent for a sample copy of this 'zine several years ago. It consisted largely of abbreviated hex locations/unit identifications/combat results for the games in progress. I found I could not make much sense of these shorthand descriptions without setting up the pieces on the mapboard (for which I lacked the time) and I consequently did not subscribe. This drawback still exists, but today *Buzzard's Breath* also contains many pages of letters and mini-articles on the game. To a large degree it is already serving as the informal forum which I sought to establish. I subscribed immediately upon seeing a current copy, and expect to be a semi-regular contributor. I would highly recommend it to all devotees of 3R.

True, *Buzzard's Breath* is not solely devoted to 3R, but probably 60%-70% of its contents concern that game. It also carries other multi-player games, notably Avalon Hill's *SOTN* and *W&P*. The editor has informed me that, while he can easily accommodate additional subscribers, he cannot so easily take on additional players in the games he moderates. If you wish to play in one of the 'zine's postal games, you may have to wait some time for an opening.

Buzzard's Breath appears every six weeks. Your readers can obtain additional information (or a sample issue for \$.50) from the editor: Mark Matushak, 74 Commonwealth Avenue #8, Boston, MA 02116. I think they'll find it rewarding.

Larry Bucher
Lahore, Pakistan

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

First, in reference to David Cashell's letter (Vol. 21, No. 5), I thought I might provide some feedback for him—and also correct one rule interpretation error.

It is true that *BULGE '81* was designed to reflect the slim possibility of a significant German win. This can be modified in a number of ways. For instance, use only Optional Rules that favor the Germans (SS Panzer Commitment, Operation Grief, Operation Stoesser and German FFP); don't use Armored Attack Restriction, Last Minute Demolition, German Corps Integrity nor Corp Congestion. Second, try the alternate plans, particularly Plan Martin. Third, and best of all, play a match as described on page 9 of *THE GENERAL* (Vol. 21, No. 3). This last is the ideal method of play balance. Both players are judged on their abilities to handle the same situation.

There was a serious rule misinterpretation in Mr. Cahell's letter. Nebelwerfers always move at a road movement rate of one-quarter regardless of ZOC. Only German infantry (14.1.1.1) move at the reduced rates. All other units move at one-quarter road movement rate (14.1.1.2). Nebelwerfers are artillery class units. delete the historical note of 14.1.1.1 (all rule references are to the Second Edition). The few Nebelwerfers referred to in the paranthetical phase of 14.1.1.1 have already been penalized with a lower movement factor of two.

In reference to Mr. Boyce's letter in the same issue, there is a scenario in the works that begins on about the 23AM turn and covers the Allied response. Ty Bomba engineered the scenario and it will eventually make its way to you for possible inclusion in *THE GENERAL*.

Bruno Sinigaglio
Lacey, Washington

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

Origins, with its return to its Baltimore birthplace this summer, will celebrate its 10th anniversary. For one who attended that first convention, the memories of that July 1975 weekend are still fresh. It seems like only yesterday that I was roaming the glass-enclosed Student Union building at JHU with an uninterested wife and a twelve-day-old baby. While my wife tried to endure the heat, I was running all around, checking out the "goodies". Although that first Origins was quite modest in comparison with today's frantic conventions, it was a wargamer's "dream come true" back then.

Realizing just how much wargaming has changed in ten short years makes one wonder what the future holds for our hobby. Just how much will it change in the next decade? Will computer games then be the only games around? Will complicated simulations with 20-plus pages of rules be displaced by easily learned introductory-type games? Will the hobby still be around in 1995, or will everyone have turned to solitaire "games"? When Origins returns to Baltimore ten years from now (in celebration of its twentieth anniversary surely), people like I will still be trying to answer these questions and still be evaluating the overall success of this pastime, I suppose. But for me (and many others I'm sure), there will be one sure yardstick used for the growth or decline of our hobby—that twelve-day-old child I mentioned earlier.

Michael, who will be ten years old this July, has "discovered" wargaming and likes it very much. Even my six-year-old Tommy has inherited and strives to play *TACTICS*. The involvement of Michael and Tommy, along with other young gamers, in wargaming ten years from now will be the ultimate gauge in deciding whether or not our hobby will survive. Let's hope that the hobby and industry will make room for all the Michaels and Tommys. I hope to attend this year's Origins . . . and I guess it's not too early to take the boys.

Fred Sassin
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

★★★★★

Dear Sir:

Asia! Asia!! Oh, no. I simply cannot let Mr. Ferens' article on *CIVILIZATION* ("Quo Vadis?" in Vol. 21, No. 5) pass without some comment.

In the article he selects Asia as the number one country to play on the board based on the effects of the AST and space for expansion. I was stunned! Asia is a hideous country to play. And if Assyria is in the game, I would place Asia absolutely, unequivocally last! It's cramped; so much so that I think it should be renamed "Sardinea". It's AST advantages are trivial. Mr. Ferens is correct in his analysis of the importance of room for expansion. But Asia crushed against the Black sea by Assyria and Babylon. Thrace and Illyria squeeze it from the other side if the Asians should go overseas. Even if some kind of spindly Asian empire is put together, it is stretched tenuously down the Black Sea in a desperate race for the Asia Minor city sites. No country is so open to invasion.

My own order of preference is as follows: the might of Egypt (who's afraid of a little flooding?), a tie between Italy and Babylon, then Crete (which Mr. Ferens places last!), Assyria, Illyria, Africa, Asia and Thrace. Remember, this is for a seven-player game. And, if Assyria is in the game, swap the positions of Thrace and Asia!

In an unrelated comment about the past issue, I was impressed by the bravery of Mr. Martin in placing a *MAGIC REALM* and a *RAIL BARON* article in the same issue. No doubt you'll get lots of complaints about wasting space that could have been used for wargames. Personally, I like to see such articles occasionally.

Indeed, I liked the *MAGIC REALM* article so much I almost got out my copy of the game. But sanity prevailed. Any word on a new rulebook for *MR*? I've never seen a game with such potential, and I've never seen a worse set of rules.

Steve Llewellyn
Fredericton, New Brunswick

I am informed that the new rulebook for MAGIC REALM should be finished by the end of the summer and offered for sale in the autumn of this year. Richard Hamblen has spared no effort at making it as unambiguous and straightforward as possible. This should make MR once again one of the premier fantasy games on the market.

THE QUESTION BOX

PANZERARMEE AFRIKA

8.65 Do units eliminated get to counterattack?
A. In case you had any doubts, a defending force either eliminated or so reduced that it has an enhanced strength less than that of the attacker still gets to roll on the "Zero" column, just as do (9.7) units eliminated by an overrun.

10.5 May supply units out of Command Control be used to create Maximum Attack Supply?
A. No.

10.8 What happens to a captured supply unit when the capturing player has all of his supply units in play?

A. It is eliminated instead. Of course, the capturing player could have destroyed one of his own supply units during his Attack Supply Segment in order to replace the soon to be captured enemy supply unit.

10.92 May German units which begin their turn in general supply continue to move once they have moved outside the 20 MP supply range?
A. Yes.

12.0 May Allied units which are out of command control move?
A. No.

13.2 May units move into a fort controlled hex if they are unable to attack with at least 0 superiority? If so, must they attack or are they considered to have made an ineffectual attack?

A. Such units may move into the controlled hex and are considered to have made an ineffectual attack.

14.3 Can you elaborate a bit on "augmentation"?

A. Note that when a unit is augmented, the original brigade is removed from play. If both the RSPs are available and the augmentation ceiling allows it, a unit can be augmented by two SPs in a single turn. In addition, again supposing that both the RSPs are available and the augmentation ceiling allows it, units can be augmented in the turn in which they arrive. This is true even if the unit is arriving from the Cadre Box. Finally, units out of Command Control may be augmented.

14.3 If an augmented unit is destroyed in combat or overrun, may the augmented unit be rebuilt immediately to its augmented strength?

A. No; the original strength unit must be rebuilt first and the augmentation procedure repeated in its entirety for the unit to regain its former strength.

17.14 May the Axis player claim control of Tobruk with a truck unit in order to allow his reinforcements to land here?

A. No, only a combat unit may fulfill the requirements.

WAR AT SEA

5.7 German and Italian ships control the South Atlantic on turn 1. To what ports can they return?

A. The Neutral port only, although the German ships would have the option to attempt to refuel with oilers at sea.

2.4 & 6.7 If Italian cruisers are in the North Atlantic at the end of turn 7, where do they return to?

A. They are eliminated for a lack of a port to return to. If there at the end of turn 6, they would return to France, where they would be interned and likewise removed from play due to France becoming an inactive port at the start of turn 7.

6.4 If a ship in the Neutral port fails a speed roll and elects to stay in the Neutral port rather than a port bordering the second sea area, does it lose a POC?
A. Yes.

THIRD REICH

29.5 Britain sails two interceptable missions from Portsmouth. May Germany choose to intercept them both in the Portsmouth hex, treating it as one naval battle?

A. Yes—in fact Germany may not choose otherwise if she intercepts in the base hex. The missions do not become separate until they enter separate hexes; similarly, two missions directed at the same target hex must be treated as one if intercepted in that hex.

29.5 Two fleets on separate missions cross paths. May they both be intercepted as one at the crossing point?

A. If there is only one common hex where the mission cross paths, the defender may only intercept separately. One interception of one mission could be made in that crossing hex, the other elsewhere. If the missions have more than one hex in common, the defender may intercept both missions in any common hex and must treat it as one battle if he does.

29.52 Could Italian fleets based in the Med intercept British fleets based at Gibraltar performing missions in the Atlantic by intercepting them in the base hex?

A. No—and this would apply equally to similar situations in Kiel and Istanbul. Fleets based in a two-front port may be intercepted in their base hex only by enemy fleets based on the front through which they will move to perform their mission.

as impressed with the functional, but colorful, graphics for *HITLER'S WAR* as we were. And the ratings for *Completeness of Rules* slipped from its originally high rating. However, in comparison with those for *THIRD REICH*, the ratings are satisfying.

The following, updated ratings for *HITLER'S WAR* will show on the ongoing RBG henceforth.

Overall Value: 2.59
Components: 3.27
Map: 3.59
Counters: 3.38
Player's Aids: 2.77
Complexity: 3.95
Completeness of Rules: 3.68
Playability: 2.13
Excitement Level: 2.26
Play Balance: 3.27
Authenticity: 4.25
Game Length
Shortest: 1 hr., 23 mins.
Longest: 3 hrs., 37 mins.
Year: 1984
Sample Base: 63

AH RBG RATING CHARTS

The following games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly. Readers are reminded that the Game Length categories are measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus, a rating of "18" equates to three hours).

WARGAME RBG

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness of Rules	Playability	Authenticity	Shortest	Longest	Year	Sample Base
1. GI	2.02	1.93	10	3.01	3.38	1.88	12.84	35.33	1982	264
2. COI	2.06	1.95	9	3.29	3.13	1.99	11.61	29.27	1978	532
3. JR	2.21	2.67	10	3.81	3.40	2.73	25.94	69.24	1981	273
4. COD	2.23	1.97	10	3.12	3.08	1.85	12.15	30.20	1980	224
5. TRC	2.29	2.53	4	2.52	2.12	3.11	17.44	37.74	1976	540
6. SL	2.31	2.09	8	3.48	2.87	2.45	10.17	27.90	1977	680
7. UF	2.42	2.26	4	2.57	1.31	2.84	4.84	13.05	1983	58
8. B-17	2.51	2.62	3	2.52	1.86	2.21	3.30	11.50	1983	87
9. WS&IM	2.53	3.04	6	2.93	2.67	2.39	7.01	34.90	1975	464
10. HW	2.59	3.27	4	3.68	2.13	4.25	8.27	21.73	1984	63
11. W&P	2.61	2.76	5	3.46	2.93	3.04	13.04	57.19	1980	374
12. BB*RI	2.67	2.46	4	2.53	2.94	2.91	19.62	35.09	1981	277
13. TLD	2.68	1.95	8	3.72	3.54	2.04	24.44	170.68	1980	119
14. VITP	2.72	2.86	2	2.89	2.22	4.52	16.96	22.36	1977	420
15. CAE	2.85	3.01	4	2.32	2.89	2.52	25.14	32.57	1976	252
16. SON	2.92	3.03	10	3.72	4.09	1.92	29.50	81.78	1981	123
17. SOA	2.97	2.79	3	2.73	2.41	3.88	18.22	22.57	1981	232
18. FE	3.00	2.72	7	3.21	3.21	3.00	21.17	49.05	1980	345
19. FRED	3.00	3.41	4	2.93	2.58	2.75	12.25	24.67	1983	58
20. SUB	3.08	2.64	8	3.13	3.08	2.74	9.41	26.15	1978	281
21. CON	3.12	3.64	7	3.08	2.52	3.52	25.8	49.1	1983	73
22. MD	3.13	3.51	3	2.80	2.21	3.44	14.75	20.74	1964	395
23. AZ	3.17	2.72	7	3.18	3.86	2.68	18.63	63.40	1978	292
24. PL	3.19	2.94	7	3.31	3.13	3.50	9.49	25.80	1974	479
25. 1776	3.21	2.97	7	3.09	3.03	3.10	10.16	45.09	1974	373
26. FT	3.23	3.12	10	3.22	3.67	3.16	24.51	57.39	1981	196
27. PB	3.35	3.08	6	3.73	2.90	3.94	10.35	23.07	1970	448
28. BIS	3.45	2.96	6	3.43	3.25	3.06	12.41	26.35	1979	248
29. AAOC	3.52	2.95	5	3.02	3.26	3.07	15.52	26.53	1978	239
30. FITW	3.53	3.14	4	3.17	2.94	3.72	16.14	30.01	1981	100
31. CL	3.54	3.35	5	3.15	3.33	3.79	12.53	25.53	1975	136
32. DL	3.61	4.02	7	3.85	3.22	3.29	6.66	19.94	1981	120
33. GOA	3.66	3.37	5	3.67	3.79	2.98	18.68	60.06	1981	297
34. WAS	3.71	3.67	1	2.48	2.37	5.98	9.09	12.71	1976	396
35. GE	3.72	3.12	6	4.64	4.41	2.84	13.25	57.13	1977	248
36. AF	3.74	4.16	7	3.98	3.34	3.35	5.61	16.02	1980	192
37. AIW	3.74	3.05	8	2.92	3.52	3.06	8.69	25.36	1977	308
38. LRT	3.75	3.60	4	3.53	3.39	2.96	13.04	17.00	1982	56
39. TR	3.80	3.76	3	3.33	3.60	3.70	9.51	25.79	1980	72
40. WAT	3.83	4.17	2	2.95	2.64	5.00	17.08	23.13	1962	296
41. NP	3.87	3.29	3	3.27	2.56	4.89	9.69	14.40	1978	159
42. AK	3.92	4.38	2	3.30	2.48	5.09	14.49	19.13	1964	492
43. AL	4.03	4.05	5	3.69	3.18	3.57	12.34	17.93	1974	217
44. TB	4.06	3.53	7	3.48	4.47	2.50	11.28	32.50	1975	304
45. RW	4.14	3.14	5	3.32	2.91	3.98	4.22	21.15	1973	311
46. JU	4.17	3.20	6	3.61	3.83	3.22	16.01	36.66	1974	193
47. PAA	4.17	4.24	5	3.79	3.99	3.70	15.51	25.24	1981	144
48. DD	4.22	4.07	2	3.04	2.88	4.64	17.54	26.25	1977	367
49. CH	4.39	3.80	4	3.35	3.52	4.67	14.76	24.96	1961	140
50. STAL	4.39	4.29	2	2.88	2.75	5.83	20.57	28.85	1963	320
51. LW	4.45	3.75	5	3.77	3.79	4.79	13.36	34.14	1971	372
52. FR	4.79	3.49	4	3.47	3.75	4.06	16.27	26.95	1972	244
53. BL	4.73	4.16	7	3.65	3.77	5.27	20.43	41.44	1965	336
54. TAC	5.62	5.25	1	2.79	3.23	6.34	11.70	19.29	1961	285

HITLER'S WAR

The Strategic War in Europe, 1939-1945

\$16.00

HITLER'S WAR if the judgement of our readership is to be granted the respect it deserves, is the perfect alternative to *THIRD REICH*. A quick playing, exciting simulation of the Second World War in Europe, it moves into the tenth slot on our list. Obviously there was a desire among buyers for a game of moderate complexity on the subject, one that could be concluded in a pleasant afternoon; the sales of *HITLER'S WAR* also continue strong, making it both a financial as well as a critical success.

Looking at the strengths of the design, Mick Uhl is to be complemented on his efforts to produce a game of extreme playability (third on the RBG), full of tense situations (look to *Excitement* rating) which give all three players an equal chance for victory (*Play Balance*). Of course, at this extreme scale, authenticity suffers; but the "trade-off" seems to have worked. The fact that the basic scenario can be played in less than 90 minutes encourages novices to try the game, and introduces them to the challenge of this hobby of ours very well.

A interesting exercise is the comparison of these ratings with those found in Vol. 21, No. 5 (in which not enough responded to make the sampling valid), and to those for *THIRD REICH* (found in Vol. 20, No. 1). It would appear that the readership were not

COMING UP
NEXT
TIME



Our look at multi-player games (Vol. 21, No. 5) brought mixed reviews from the readership. As usual, there were the loud outcries at the articles on *RAIL BARON* and *MAGIC REALM*; and, again as usual, there was the praise for our printing anything on these intriguing games. When the flurry of words had settled, the issue garnered a 4.05 overall evaluation. Not unexpectedly, the articles on the featured game—*HITLER'S WAR*—headed the list of voting on individual articles. However, the normally staid "AH Philosophy" obviously sparked a great deal of interest. A random sampling of two hundred responses (in which three points are awarded for a "first" selection, two points for a "second" and one for a "third"), gave the following results for the articles:

A WESTERNER'S VIEW	322
HITLER'S ALTERNATIVES	150
QUO VADIS?	128
AH PHILOSOPHY	110
WHICH WAY THE WITCH KING	99
FUR TRADERS AND BUCCANEERS	84
THE LUCK OF THE DRAW	75
DESIGN ANALYSIS	68
SQUAD LEADER CLINIC	61
MOVIN' ON	39
TOURNAMENT ORIGINS	34
THE COMPLEAT DIPLOMAT	30

Italy seems to be developing into a hotbed of wargaming activity. Shortly after receiving a copy of the Modena-published *WAR*, still another amateur gaming publication from that country arrived in our offices—this time the *Notiziario Torneo Masters*. Unlike the artificial boom of some years ago, wargaming in Italy now witnesses a consistent influx of dedicated newcomers and ever expanding activities by the veterans. The "Torneo Masters" themselves number some 130 members spread throughout the country, sponsor a national convention, and stress pbm gaming and ratings (aka the AREA). Their publication is available to members, and proves to be impressive. The recent issue brings an article introducing *SQUAD LEADER*, variant rules for *FLAT TOP* and—Good Heavens!—a review of *THE GENERAL*. Interesting to note in the recent issue, over 66% of the games played by the readership of *Notiziario* are Avalon Hill titles. And our games occupy eight of the top ten slots in the regular feature *I Piu' Giocati* (a sort of Italian "So That's What You've Been Playing"). Those interested in the doings of the Torneo Masters may contact Mr. Paolo Selva (Secretary, via Val d'Ossola 14, 00141 Roma, Italy).

The latest issue of *HEROES* (Vol. 1, No. 5) once again has something of interest to fantasy boardgamers tucked away in its colorful pages. Besides the usual crop of solid articles on *RUNE-QUEST*, *JAMES BOND*, *POWERS & PERILS* and *LORDS OF CREATION*, there are a couple of articles by the designer on that most unique game, *WIZARDS*. The first is an insightful look at strategy and tactics; the second, a revealing article on the concepts and inspirations behind the design. Individual copies of issues of *HEROES* are available for \$3.00 direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company.

The fifth *Northeast Gaming Association* Playoff finals were completed in late May of this year in an unprecedented three-team meet, according to the tournament organizer Jeff Cornet. The NGA Playoffs pit teams of players from various wargaming clubs in the northeastern United States

Infiltrator's Report

against each other in selected two-player games during a rotational tournament. Points are awarded for victories and draws. Those clubs with the best scores advance to the finals; this year three such teams—those of the Shelton Middle School Fantasy Wargamers, the Mid-Hudson Valley Game Club, and the Central Connecticut Wargamers—met to decide the title. Among the six games used in the competition were our own perennial favorites *SQUAD LEADER* and *VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC*. Unlikely as it seems, the Shelton Middle School swept the meet convincingly. However, Mr. Cornett noted that the four team members were all "ringers"—previous players from the all-star teams of the Connecticut Game Club and the Stamford Wargamers (all finalists in previous NGAPs). The sixth annual NGAP will commence in the fall with new administrators. Those clubs interested in forming teams and competing should contact Mr. Walt Kunz, c/o Jeff Cornett, 11 Robert Frost Drive, Shelton, CT 06484.

Not surprisingly, Tom Oleson has emerged as the second AREA postal tournament champion with a convincing win over Al Downing in the *ANZIO* finals. He is eager to defend his championship against all comers. Interested challengers wishing to compete with Tom in a postal game for the AREA title in a two-game concurrent match should forward their challenges to Don Greenwood. Challengers must be verified members of the AREA. All challengers are placed on a "ladder" with the highest ranking challenger given first crack at the champion.

The Texas War Department comprises a group of eclectic wargamers in the Dallas area. Their monthly 'zine, *Command Post*, carries one or two short articles of interest to the broader hobby (recent issues have carried a new *UP FRONT* scenario, a report on "real world wargaming", and trivia questions). *Command Post* also carries news of conventions, meetings, tournaments, "Opponents Wanted" ads, items for sales—all intended for gamers in the Dallas metro region. Residents of the area may wish to contact the editor, Mr. David Smith (5038 Boca Raton, Garland, TX 75043), for more information.

Bill Salvatore reports that the *VITP* Swiss-style tournament at ORIGINS '85 drew some 41 competitors. Players bid for sides by offering POC handicaps (the average game was played with a one or two POC handicap in favor of the Americans). Despite some difficulties in constraining the players to time limits, Bill found that the tournament ran smoothly and all involved seem pleased with the chance to play multiple games of *VITP* without the threat of immediate elimination. When the dust and shells had settled, D. Targonski had taken first place while G. Young and D. Miller had tied for second place.

Back in Vol. 19, No. 2 of *THE GENERAL*, the winners of Contest #106 were announced. Long-time readers may remember that winners of this *SL*-based contest were, along with the usual merchandise certificate, assured that their names would appear on counters in the upcoming *G.I.*

Unfortunately, production deadlines allowed us to get only three names into the counter mix, those of Ussher, Eskey and Barr. Now, the impending release of *ASL* and its gamettes provides us the opportunity to fulfill our promise. Three more names appropriate to the nationalities of *BEYOND VALOR* will appear on leader counters of that module. That of Mr. Pils! will appear in the German counter-mix; those of Sadowski and Budreau in the partisan one. The remaining four names will appear in the desert module when released next year.

Only ten readers managed to duplicate our offensive in answer to Contest #123. The many who relied on a passive defense, and the few who chose to make an attack elsewhere, learned to their chagrin that Berlin is more vulnerable than they may have expected—a lesson to be kept firmly in mind by would-be world conquerors in this game. Our ten winners, each of whom will receive a merchandise certificate from The Avalon Hill Game Company, are: Charles Braun, Burlington, IA; Al Caesar, Rosemont, PA; Mark Clark, Holbrook, AZ; Jorn Eriksen, Tasstrup, Denmark; Don Del Grande, Greenbrae, CA; James Holtz, Kent, WA; Douglas James, Asheville, NC; Tim Taylor, Columbia Station, OH; Michael Tullius, Rosemead, CA; Norman Zinkham, Calgary, ALTA.

Contest #124 was nothing more than a test of the readership's knowledge of the rules of this intriguing new game—and of their ability to discover how to reach a goal after being told it was possible. For, despite appearances, the Israelis do indeed have a "lock" on victory in the Desert Duel situation presented. So, how's it done? Well . . .

With the third Israeli sequence chit drawn, the following actions are completed—

Impulse #1: RFL 10 (the SL) moves to hex Q5 where he activates RFL 26 and carries him along to hex P5 and then hex P6.

Impulse #2: SMG 13 moves to hex AA1, hex Z1, hex Y1 and ends movement in hex X1.

Impulse #3: SMG 9, who is suppressed and able to expend only three MP, moves to hex P4, hex O5 and ends in hex N5.

All are still standing, and all are perfectly safe since the enemy cannot possibly fire upon them without a sequence chit in play. On the last Israeli sequence chit, the following actions are taken to insure the win—

Impulse #1: SMG 9 moves to hex N6 and then into N7, going through the window to contest control of the building.

Impulse #2: SMG 13 moves to hex W2, climbing up a level and through the window to contest control of the building.

Impulse #3: RFL 10, first expending a point to activate RFL 26, moves to hex Q7 and thence into hex R7, attacking the enemy PST 20 from the rear (a guaranteed win for the Israeli).

Meanwhile, using his activation to great effect, RFL 26 moves into hex Q6, attacking the prone SMG 10 in close action from the rear (another automatic result). With this, the Israelis are able to claim control of this building.

The readers are reminded that at the point of the beginning of the contest, the victory point count stood 16-22 in favor of the Syrians. Now, however, by neutralizing two Syrian controlled buildings and capturing one (at the same time killing two enemy troopers), the Israeli player has amassed 20 VP while the Syrian only has 16 VP. All of which serves to prove that, in *FIREPOWER*, the game's not over until that last sequence chit has been played.

PANZERKRIEG \$18.00
Armored Warfare in the Ukraine, 1941-1944

INSTRUCTIONS:

Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate space to the right (1 equating "excellent"; 5, "average"; 9, "terrible"). **EXCEPTION:** Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes necessary to play the game, in ten-minute increments. (Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of *FRANCE 1940*, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 19, No. 4. Sub-categories are indicated by italics. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for **Complexity** and **Year of Publishing** have been provided; do not rate these categories.

- 1. Overall Value _____
- 2. Components _____
- 2a. *Mapboard* _____
- 2b. *Counters* _____
- 2c. *Player's Aids* _____
- 3. Complexity 5
- 3a. *Complexity* _____
- 4. Completeness of Rules _____
- 5. Playability _____
- 5a. *Excitement Level* _____
- 5b. *Play Balance* _____
- 6. Authenticity _____
- 7. Game Length _____
- 7a. *Basic/Shortest* _____
- 7b. *Advanced/Longest* _____
- 8. Year of Publication 1983

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WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are seemingly always in vogue these days. Whether the subject is books on the Best Seller List, television's Nielsen ratings, or even games, the public never seems to tire of seeing how their individual favorites stack up numerically against the competition. Our preoccupation with this national pastime is almost akin to rooting the home team on to victory every Sunday. So to further cater to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity) we unveil The *GENERAL's* version of the gamer's TOP TEN.

We won't ask you to objectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or less) games which you've spent the most time with *since* you received your last issue of The *GENERAL*. With this we can generate a consensus list of what's being bought. The degree of correlation between the Best Selling Lists and the Most Played List should prove interesting.

Feel free to list any game regardless of manufacturer. There will be a built-in bias to the survey because you all play our games to some extent but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other magazines with a special interest-based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's discretion.

The games I've spent the most time playing during the past two months are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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50¢

1. Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on this form or a facsimile and must be accompanied by a 50¢ token fee. No refunds. Payment may be made in uncancelled U.S. postage stamps.
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3. Insert copy on lines provided (25 words maximum) and print name, address, and phone number on the appropriate lines.
4. Please PRINT. If your ad is illegible, it will not be printed.
5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed within our limited space, we request that you use official state and game abbreviations. Don't list your entire collection, list only those you are most interested in locating opponents for.

Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Alexander—AL, Alpha Omega—AO, Amobea Wars—AW, Anzio—AZ, Arab-Israeli Wars—AIW, Assault On Crete—AOC, Bismarck—BIS, Blitzkrieg—BL, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Caesar Alesia—CAE, Caesar's Legions—CL, Chancellorsville—CH, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, Conquistador—CON, Cross Of Iron—COL, Crescendo Of Doom—COD, Dauntless—DL, D-Day—DD, Diplomacy—DIP, Down With The King—DWTK, Dragonhunt—DH, Firepower—FP, Flat Top—FT, Fortress Europa—FE, France 40—FR, Frederick the Great—FRED, Freedom in the Galaxy—FITG, Fury In The West—FITW, Gettysburg—GE, G.I.: Anvil of Victory—GI, Gladiator—GL, Guns Of August—GOA, Gunslinger—GSL, Hitler's War—HW, Jutland—JU, Kingmaker—KM, Legend of Robin Hood—LRH, The Longest Day—TLD, Little Round Top—LRT, Luftwaffe—LW, Machiavelli—MA, Magic Realm—MR, Midway—MD, Napoleon—NP, Napoleon at Bay—NAB, Naval War—NW, Origins—OR, Outdoor Survival—OS, PanzerArmee Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, PanzerGruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Rail Baron—RB, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Squad Leader—SL, Stalingrad—STAL, Starship Troopers—SST, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Struggle of Nations—SON, Submarine—SUB, Tactics II—TAC, Third Reich—3R, Titan—TT, Tobruk—TB, Trireme—TR, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wizard's Quest—WQ, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

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CONTEST 125

Axis Units Position Attacks Odds Depot

Issue as a whole . . . (Rate from 1 to 10, with 1 equating excellent, 10 equating terrible)
Best 3 Articles

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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The GENERAL



A Lifetime of Gaming Pleasure from The **GENERAL** ★ AVALON HILL

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Judging by responses to regular surveys of the readership—conducted in a continuous effort to bring them what they want—the many “extras” found within the pages of The **GENERAL** are as important as the articles. For the past year, *The Victory Insider* has brought our readers similar high-quality and informative articles on the products of Victory Games as a bonus insert. Many issues have Series Replays, move-by-move recreations of one of AH's games by expert players with neutral commentary on their efforts by the designer or developer. New product announcements, game strategy contests, historical background pieces, discount coupons, information on conventions and other doings within the wargaming hobby world—all are found in these pages; and all have but one intention: to increase the pleasure for those who play AH's fine line of games.

So, if you know of someone who hopes to make wargaming a hobby that they will enjoy for the rest of their life—all the challenge and color of the fascinating hobby of wargaming—you can't go wrong by giving them a subscription of The **GENERAL**. Even if that person happens to be yourself! And you can't beat the price: a two-year subscription represents a 50% saving over the newsstand cover price. (Ah . . . but if you are not quite convinced that this is for you, try ordering a sample issue—only \$3.00. We're sure that one look is all you'll need to understand the pride we take in The **GENERAL**. Individual copies may be ordered direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company at the address below.)

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The GENERAL

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2-3-4 Bologna	2-3-4 Pavia	2-3-4 Sabratia	2-3-4 Catania	2-2-4 Brescia	2-2-4 Sirte	2-2-4 Savona	2-2-4 Trento	2-2-4 Crema	2-2-4 Bismara	2-2-4 28 OCT	2-2-4 JAN	2-2-4 23 MAR	1-1-4 LY PANA
0-1-2 Mecchili	0-1-2 Fi. Mud	1-1-2 Sirte	1-1-2 Benghaz	0-1-2 Tobrak	0-1-2 Tobrak	0-1-2 Seuch	1-1-2 Tobrak	0-1-2 Bardia	0-1-2 Bardia	1-0-0 Bardia	1-0-0 Tobrak	1-0-0 Benghaz	TURN
0-1-5	0-1-5	0-1-5	0-1-5	1-1-5 (-)	1-1-5 (-)	0-1-2 Scoladima	0-1-5 Scoladima	0-0-14 Rommel	0-0-4	0-0-4	0-0-4	0-0-4	0-0-4
0-0-6	0-0-6	1	FI ME 110	FI ME 110	B1 JU 87	B1 JU 87	B1 JU 88	FI CR 32	FI CR 32	FI CR 32	FI CR 42	FI CR 42	FI CR 42
FI CR 42	FI CR 42	FI CR 42	FI CR 42	FI CR 42	B1 SM 81	B1 SM 79	B1 SM 79	B1 SM 79	B1 SM 79	B1 SM 79	B1 SM 79	B1 SM 79	
6-6-7 7	2-2-7 RTR	2-2-7 RTR	2-2-7 3 HUS	6-6-7 4	2-2-7 2 RTR	2-2-7 2 RTR	2-2-7 7 HUS	4-4-7 1	2-2-7 5 RTR	1-1-7 3 RTR	1-1-7 4 HUS	3-3-7 SUP GP	2-2-7 9 RIDE
1-1-7 9 KRRC	1-1-12 LOG	8-8-4 7 RTR	3-3-7 7 SUP GP	1-1-7 1 KRRC	2-2-7 2 RIDE	2-2-12 11 HUS	3-3-6	2-2-6 3 CSS	1-1-6 1 DLYT	4-4-6	2-2-6	2-2-6	6-6-6
2-2-6 19	2-2-6 17	2-2-6 16	1-1-7 6 CAV	2-2-6 22 GUS	2-2-6 16 BDE	1-1-6 4	1-1-6 CARP	0-1-14 INCE	1-1-6 7	2-2-4 7 RTR	6-6-6	2-2-6 18(7)	2-2-6 20
2-2-6 24	0-0-12 9 Connor	0-0-6	0-0-6	0-0-6	0-0-4	0-0-4	2	2	HURR	HURR	HURR	HURR	HURR
BLAD	BLEN	BLEN	BLEN	BLEN	BLEN	WELL	WELL	BOMBAY					
(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)								

AIR UNIT MOVEMENT RANGES

BRITISH		AXIS	
Name	Range in Hexes	Name	Range in Hexes
Hurricane (F)	40	CR 42 (F)	30
Gladiator (F)	30	CR 32 (F)	60
Blenheim (B)	80	Me. 110 (F)	80
Bombay (B)	100	SM 79 (B)	90
Wellington (B)	90	SM 81 (B)	70
		JU 88 (B)	30
		Ju 87 (B)	100

Note: (F) stands for Fighter air units, while (B) stands for Bomber air unit. The ranges given above are an air unit's round trip capacity.

A.R.E.A. RATING SERVICE

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- A—an excellent player
- B—a good player
- C—an average player
- D—a novice in my first year of gaming
- E—a beginner

I realize that my rating may change according to how well I fare against others. For now, please send me complete details and membership card—here's my \$6.00

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

VICTORY #8

INSIDER

GERMANS REDS and the NLF

Dear Victory Insider Readership,

Getting right to the point, this is the last issue of the VICTORY INSIDER. Due to the prohibitive cost of producing a magazine with no subscription or retail sales income, I have decided to cease its publication. Short of a major letter-writing campaign for its resurrection as a separate newsletter, this decision is final.

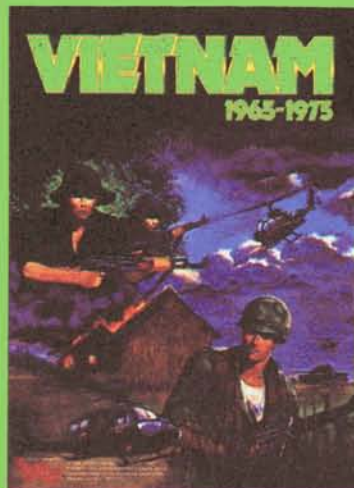
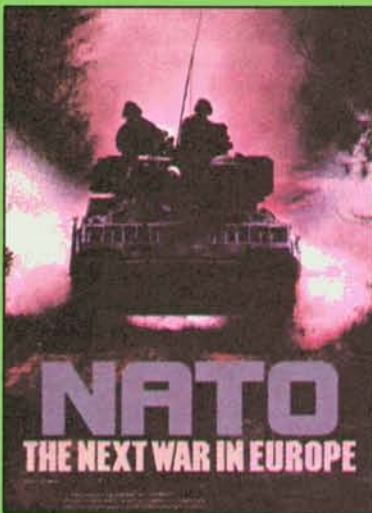
Victory Games is, first and foremost, a game publishing company, and it can ill afford to allow its talents (figuratively and literally) to be siphoned off in this manner. I would like to pay special thanks to Bill Peschel for his hard work as the managing editor of the INSIDER. Without Bill's efforts, the INSIDER would not have existed. Lastly, I would like to thank all the writers and the readership of the INSIDER for their support in this effort.

As the head of Victory Games, I am sometimes forced to make such unhappy and unpopular decisions as this. Thank you again for your past support.

Sincerely,



*Mark Herman
Executive Editor*





Thrilling

TALES OF VICTORY

Cutting To The Core

How do you learn to play a new game system? This question is among the first that a rules editor asks himself when he begins work on a new project. Sometimes it may appear that we come up with some strange answers, but we do try.

Back in the good old days of move-shoot rules, all a game company really had to tell you was how to "traverse the hexfield" and how to "resolve a fire attack," sprinkle a couple of options and exceptions (usually dealing with artillery) throughout, and tell you how many enemy pieces to blow up in order to win. Then, those rascally game designers started to get fancy, putting in dubious rules sections as supply, command, line of sight (oh, lordy, those are the worst!), and so forth. All of a sudden, players had to be told how supply affects movement, how combat affects supply, how command affects a unit moving out of supply into combat, how an out of command unit draws a line of sight through a quicksand hex (at night) during movement to an enemy unit that is in command but out of supply . . . it started to get a little complicated.

Even a simple game nowadays has far more interaction among game mechanics than the old move-shoot variety, and consequently the player is expected to absorb an awesome array of rules and nuances before he moves his stack of semi-armored units into a roadless forest hex that is beyond divisional communication range. A large part of the editorial task (in conjunction with the graphics department and the game designer) is to arrange the enormous amount of material provided by the designer in some logical order that allows you to learn the game quickly and provide an easy reference system for finding information buried in the rules booklet.

In tireless pursuit of a nifty solution to these perennial problems, Victory Games has been experimenting (as you may have noticed) with numerous rules and indexing formats, even going so far as to desert the hallowed section/case/sub-case decimal system in many instances. Some of our experiments have been less successful than others, but to the best of our knowledge, we have yet to hash up a game beyond the point of playability.

Whatever strange way we come up with for organizing the rules, the purpose is always to provide a "core." Normally, somewhere near the beginning of a Victory game rules booklet, you will find a paragraph or two explaining how the rules are organized as much as possible around the Sequence of Play, because the very specific order in which a multitude of actions take place forms the core of the game. *Gulf Strike's* full-blown six-page Sequence of Play is a touchstone, so that players have a specific chapter in the rules to which they can refer for clarification or direction on virtually every aspect of the game.

Different game designs require different approaches, depending on the designer's emphasis. We will continue to mess around with rules formats, attempting to suit the instructions to the design as much as possible. We would appreciate your help in evaluating our success in this

endeavor, by sending in your Feedback Cards with any comments you might like to make on the rules (or anything else).

Sixth Fleet

There seems to be a tad of confusion over our new release, *Sixth Fleet*. Let it be understood that this Victory game, designed by Joe Balkoski, has nothing whatsoever to do with an older game of the same title, published long ago by another company (and no longer available). *Sixth Fleet* is an all-new, action-packed, beautifully produced, and totally original game, now available from your local dealer.

Report From Mobtown

The Origins convention is the summer resort for wargamers. In addition to the tournaments, seminars, demonstrations and marathon gaming going on, the companies use the con to announce their new releases and reveal what's coming over the next year. Based on past experience, Victory does not advertise or discuss its new products until the design is finished and in the printing process. This past Origins in Baltimore (nee Mobtown in honor of its Civil War activities), Victory revealed the next two games in its line.

Pacific War brings back the monster game in this mammoth simulation of the struggle against Japan, in a way that will delight both gamers who like the hefty games, and those with an interest in the period but who shy away from the game's large size. While the numbers are there for a monster game (2,300 playing pieces, two mapsheets, 20 scenarios and a 50 to 200-hour campaign game), the rules are organized to make the game easy to learn. Three of the scenarios (Savo Island, Pearl Harbor, and Wake Island) can be played within 30 minutes of opening the box. More than half of the 20 scenarios can be played on one mapsheet. The counters cover individual captial ships, amphibious groups, air squadrons and division/battalion land units.

Moving eastward into the mountains of northern Virginia, *Mosby's Raiders* will premiere as the first solitaire game on the Civil War. You are John W. Mosby, the extraordinary Confederate guerrilla leader, and you must raid behind Union lines in northern Virginia and Maryland. Using a solitaire system different from our *Ambush!* game, Mosby leads his men in a variety of popular guerrilla actions, including burning bridges, blowing up depots, kidnapping Union generals, fighting off the ambushing bluebellies, and scouting for Robert E. Lee.

Successful raids award Notoriety points which allows you to build up a larger army next turn, which leads to more successful raids, more Notoriety points, and so on. But fame has a price: as Mosby becomes popular, more Union troops are drawn to the area. It becomes harder to penetrate the lines, and individual Union units are stronger. Mosby

continued on page 11

The Victory Insider

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Managing Editor: William E. Peschel

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The Victory Insider is devoted to publishing articles about the products of Victory Games, Inc.

Send editorial and general mail to William E. Peschel, The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Subscriptions to *The General* are \$12.00 for one year, \$18.00 for two years. Address changes must be submitted at least 6 weeks in advance to guarantee proper delivery. Paid advertising is not accepted.

The Victory Insider is written largely by the gaming public. Articles should be typewritten, double-spaced, and written in English. Your address should be at the top of the title page. There is no limit to word length. Rejected articles will be returned if submitted with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The New Red Dawn

Russian Strategy in NATO

By Derek Croxton



The Soviet player in *NATO* is presented with the burden of attack. The main decision confronting him is whether to attack on a broad front or with a single thrust. I favor the single thrust for three reasons. The NATO player can probably meet and parry several diverse attacks. The only way to knock him off balance is with one decisive breakthrough. It will also be more difficult to reinforce a single, wide front than several small breakthroughs. Rather than just calling on local reserves, NATO will have to bring in units from far away. This will be even more difficult on turns two and three, since NATO units are ineligible for strategic road movement then.

Finally, attrition should severely cut down on the Soviet player's ability to break through towards the end of the game. Since NATO units generally have more steps per combat point, they tend to wear down at a slower rate. Through combat and airstrikes, the powerful Soviet armies will be reduced to a fraction of their initial strength. Furthermore, NATO's losses will be largely made up for by the steady stream of reinforcements coming in. Breaking through should be done while the breaking's good.

Four armies should spearhead the attack: from north to south, they are the Eighth Guards (8G), First Guards Tank (1GT), Second Guards Tank (2GT), and Third Shock (3S). This means that the entire 2GT army has to be moved into position by rail. So much the better; no one wants to send their biggest army marching across the plains of Schleswig-Holstein in the face of a large enemy airforce. Besides, attacking across the Weser is usually a dead end anyway. The four main armies should form a line roughly between Frankfurt and Minden.

The 1GT and 2GT should definitely get Offensive Support, the other going to either remaining army. (Don't forget that entrained Headquarters cannot provide Offensive Support, so get the HQ into position the turn before you need it.) Refrain from putting on any Offensive Support before the first attack. There is no sense telegraphing your move any more than you have to. As the attack progresses, the 8G and 3S armies will probably have to stop advancing and peel off to guard the flanks. This will leave the two biggest armies, the First and Second Guards Tank, to attack the Ruhr cities.

Of course, the other theatres cannot be ignored. A vigorous campaign outside the main thrust is necessary for victory. This begins in the North.

The Northern Front

As astute readers, you may have noticed that moving the 2GT south leaves the entire northern section of the Soviet line unattended. By no means will it stay this way. Outside Berlin at the beginning of the game is the Twentieth Guards. The natural tactic is to have it attack West Berlin, but this is a waste of one of the best Soviet Armies. It can get to the northern frontier in about one turn, and the weak PM army can kill Berlin using a flank attack. Then the PM army can be sent elsewhere, probably north.

There is something very special about Schleswig-Holstein: there is very little covering terrain. Therefore, armies will spend their time hopping from city to forest, trying to avoid enemy airpower. In regard to

attacking Hamburg, don't. It will more than likely rip up the attacking armies. Instead, stay in position just outside the city (in terrain) and wait for the NATO units to be withdrawn. If the main attack goes well, NATO cannot afford to leave two good units behind. But if weak units are left in Hamburg, attack them. The entire strategy for the northern sweep is: move into good terrain, look menacing, wait for NATO to withdraw, advance, attack, and do it again. Pushing the NATO line far enough back in the center should ensure that his line will be pulling back constantly to shorten itself. The northern Soviet armies exist solely to capture cities and tie up NATO units away from the main front.

The other main theatre is in Barvaria. Most of the units earmarked for this are the trash of the Soviet army: Boleslav, Olomouc and SM. They are cursed with their slowness (many can be outraced by NATO foot units), and yet are in the largest theatre. They have only one advantage: they have a large number of units and steps. They can take attrition very well and can outflank the enemy. NATO has the combat points to defend Barvaria, but fewer units, resulting in a line hard-pressed to fill in all the gaps. It also means that the NATO Offensive Support will probably be put on the West German Headquarters in the South, with the idea of cutting the Warsaw Pact numbers to a manageable amount.

Therefore, the Soviet player must keep his units in stacks with a defense strength of at least five, and exploit any gap in the NATO line. The going will be slow, but the rich reward is the strip of major cities from Munich to Manneheim.

Rolling Through Denmark

The final area to consider is Denmark. The Warsaw Pact can scarcely afford to send an army away from West Germany, but seven victory points is too many to pass by. The task, then, falls to the special forces.

Rather than committing everything to a one-shot attack on Copenhagen, against a strong unit in good defensive terrain, the best bet is to hit 'em where they ain't (forgive me, Willie Keeler). Consider: Denmark has four minor cities and only two need to be taken. NATO has but three airborne units to send in, and some of them will probably be used to guard reforger sites. The Warsaw Pact should be able to walk into enough cities to knock out Denmark. To do this, send all the marine units to Aalborg and send two units by helicopter to Fyn Island; one to guard the bridge, one to cut the ferry. It is also worthwhile to send a couple of airborne units parachuting in with each group to ensure a zone is exerted over the city hex, so if a NATO unit does drop in, it will increase the chances of interception; and give more strength to any attack.

Odds and Ends

There are other considerations to examine. What do you do with all those leftover airborne and airmobile units? I suggest that they be kept in one stack and used to plug any holes in the Soviet line. A particularly troublesome area is between the 8G army and the southern units. The airborne units should drop on any reforger sites left unguarded, even

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The Sword And The Juggernaut

The NLF Offensive in Vietnam

By George Windau

In an earlier issue of the *Victory Insider*, Tony Curtis described a strategy for the US player to win the Campaign Game. He laments the defeat as a stain on the proud history of the U.S. Armed Forces. I would like to praise the military genius of the leaders of the Vietnamese Peoples' Liberation Forces. It is only now that we can begin to admit that the US was outmaneuvered militarily as well as politically by the brilliant and resourceful leaders of the Vietnamese Liberation Forces.

The Liberation Forces employed major offensives successfully in Vietnam, and in the game, it is also an integral part of a strategy for NLF victory. We will outline some basic points of strategy and tactics that will help the NLF to win.

Airpower

American airpower is devastating. To minimize the effects of U.S. air, the NLF player should only launch major offensives during the Spring, when airpower is cut by 25%. All operations must be planned with this in mind. The NLF player must determine what his objectives are before he conducts his first operation. He must have a strategy that will trigger certain responses in his opponent and wastes his resources in defending targets of minor importance. The NLF player will want to divert American airpower, use up Airmobile (helicopter) Points and waste US/ARVN defensive resources.

Play your opponent. By that, I mean something more sophisticated than knowing his style of play. The NLF player must visualize how the situation appears to the US player, and have some conception of his options and possible responses. This will help you construct a set of "if-then" plans to meet them. Also, remember that any major offensive will eventually run out of steam. Estimate how many units and replacement points you can afford to lose and be ready to call a halt when it happens.

Keep the enemy unsure about your grand strategy and timetable for as long as possible. The initial disposition of NLF/NVA forces must not disclose the NLF main objectives, yet the forces must be logistically and geographically stationed to allow them to reach those objectives on the first turn. Be aware that the over-all battle plan will eventually become obvious, yet the longer it remains a mystery, the longer the US player will be off-balance.

Timing your main strike is very important. If it comes too soon, then your hand is tipped and an enemy response will follow sooner. The enemy can compensate and relocate his forces to match your troop concentrations. If the main assault comes too late in the offensive, then your reserve of NLF/NVA replacement points may be too low to exploit any gains made. Each NLF/NVA operation, great or small, must encourage unwise use and deployment of airpower and defensive reserves. In the initial operations, the NLF player must use sophisticated methods of trickery, bluff and diversion.

Attracting American airpower to trivial targets is more an art than a science. With different opponents, a plan will have differing degrees of success. A series of minor attacks with small Viet Cong units might attract US airpower, but with other players, a more elaborate trick may be necessary.

The "Credible Target Ruse" works upon the principle that the enemy is unclear about NLF objectives. The NLF player conducts an apparently large-scale operation against a key position, key town or major capital city. To the US player, the operation appears credible as a major objective because the target seems worthwhile. He sees a respectable number of NLF/NVA units in position or moving into position for a second round of combat. The attack has been delayed until a good number of minor NLF operations have been conducted. The goal of this diversion is to induce the US player to leap to the conclusion that "This is the big one!" and unleash his air force.

Once he has committed huge chunks of airpower, the NLF player can close the trap by declining to attack, or announcing that his attack will

involve only one or two units. With sufficient NLF/NVA forces, the Credible Target Ruse can be used repeatedly until enough US airpower has been drained so that the main assault can be conducted with very little sting from the air.

Variations of this ruse can be employed. Wave assaults can be used against the true objective even after the US player knows these targets to be the objective of the NLF player. The NLF player can mentally apportion his forces, planning ahead for two, three or four assaults on the same target in the same turn. These assaults would each be discrete, separate operations that would use up the enemy airpower before the final assault. At least the punishment from the air will be divided into smaller, less devastating packets.

While the influx of US/ARVN defensive reserves may tip the odds unfavorably for the final assaults (these reserves being triggered by the initial wave assaults), the influx of reserves may also put the US player's forces in a higher casualty column on the CRT. If there are too many reserves committed, the NLF player can call a halt to the wave assaults and try again later.

Strategic Options

Any NLF major offensive will be a blend of two basic strategies: the Sword and the Juggernaut.

The Sword strategy divides the NLF forces into roughly equal strengths. These forces attack weak points in the line, avoiding the heavily defended positions. This will create so many pressure points that the US player cannot adequately defend all of them. The NLF plays the odds to win a significant fraction of the objectives. Although some of the attacks will fail miserably, other attacks will succeed immediately or eventually. This strategy works best when the US/ARVN forces are spread thin and the US or ARVN replacement pool is dwindling. If many ARVN units are ineffective, then the US and Free World Allies (FWA) forces will be overworked retaking captured positions or relieving units facing the NLF offensive.

The Juggernaut strategy deploys a strong NLF force against well-defended US/ARVN positions. Despite many other minor operations or diversions across the map, the Juggernaut would be the main action of the offensive. In theory, the Juggernaut would topple one objective, and then move on to a second objective in the line of march. For the life of the offensive, the NLF player may be able to seize one or two heavily defended US/ARVN positions.

The disadvantage of this strategy is that the US player can see what the NLF player is doing as soon as the Juggernaut is assembled. He can deploy his reserves and utilize strategic movement, holding, and patrol operations to block the Juggernaut's advance. US airpower will be used against the mass of NLF units. The NLF player will suffer a lot of casualties in the set-piece battles. So the NLF player must be careful not to sustain too many losses, and know when to move to the defensive. If he is not careful, he will have to run and give up the one or two objectives that he fought so hard for.

By combining these strategies, the NLF player can keep the US player off-balance. One or several Juggernauts could be used as a massive diversion to induce matching US/ARVN troop deployments. Meanwhile, an aggressive Sword strategy could be made against non-reinforceable positions all over the map. Likewise, a series of smaller task forces could break off from a Juggernaut, by-pass US/ARVN strongpoints and attack positions from which the US player has formed defensive reserves. The success of these two strategies depend upon the deployment of the NLF forces. Putting too much distance between two components of a Juggernaut that are supposed to link up will not work. Scattering NLF forces into task forces that are too small will tie them up in frustrating attacks on positions that will not fall or retreat. Deploying all NLF units into one massive Juggernaut will shorten the effective life of the offensive. The NLF player must be flexible and have a set of contingency

plans ready to implement.

Guerilla Warfare and Set-Piece Battles

Hit-and-run tactics are good for inflicting moderate casualties on the US/ARVN positions, or for snatching ungarrisoned or lightly garrisoned provincial capitals. Yet guerilla tactics alone will not seize and hold them very long. This strategy is best used when coordinated with conventional formations that can topple strongpoints like bowling pins. Guerilla actions work best by spearheading a Juggernaut. They can cut roads and take up key positions and approaches to key positions so that the US player cannot deploy buffer units and obstacle units to slow down the Juggernaut. Likewise, guerilla actions can facilitate the withdrawal of main force at the end of an offensive, serving as buffers to the US/ARVN chase.

At some point in the offensive, the NLF player may be forced into a set-piece battle, either to take a main objective or as the only defense against a US/ARVN counterattack. If the set-piece battle is the only solution to capturing a main objective, then it is important to conduct the attack wisely and efficiently. The main assault should be made after all the possible casualties that can be cheaply inflicted on the US/ARVN replacement pool have been taken. It may be wise to conduct the main assault(s) on the second turn of the season to make sure that the enemy's replacement pool is as low as possible. The main assaults should be joint Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army operations unless the NLF player is using a wave attack with NVA mech units in the final push.

In a set-piece battle, the NLF player should follow these guidelines if the objective is heavily defended by US/ARVN units and airpower:

1. Take the time to seize key positions around your objective. Surround it to block lines of ground reinforcements and inhibit reinforcement by air. When making your timetable, you may have to take into account the time needed to brush away US/ARVN units in buffer perimeters around the main objective.
2. Hold key positions adjacent to the main objective with sufficient forces, even though these forces are not enough to actually take the objective. Take time to position your forces correctly so that those units that will take casualties will be ones that are attacking across rivers. These units (when the assault comes) will satisfy loss requirements without changing the assault odds much.
3. Besiege your main objective until the big main force units arrive along with artillery units. Be satisfied with bombarding the main objective until a good number of US or ARVN replacement points have been eaten up by other actions.
4. Drain as much airpower as you can with "Credible Target" and "Credible Assault" tactics before beginning a major assault.
5. Use VC/NVA units in the initial wave attack to distribute casualties between the two armies.
6. Attack at no less than 3:2 or 2:1 on the final assaults.
7. Save most of the NLF artillery for the final assaults.
8. Save most of your NVA Mechanized units for an assault with NVA units only so that their inherent +2 pursuit modifier can be used.
9. Be prepared to take 20% to 40% casualties of units assaulting the main objective before calling off the attack.

Tactical Methods

Now that we have discussed the overall battle plan for the major offensive, we can outline some tactical methods to employ:

1. Cut strategic roads in many places. This can be done by moving units right onto the road, or stationing them alongside it in five or six locations. If they are on patrol, it will have the same movement effect as if they were right on the road.
2. Attack weak enemy outposts to quickly destroy them before the second round of combat.
3. Attacks on American-held positions at weak odds can be made to draw and drain American airpower. Earnest attacks should be made when that unit is isolated, on its own, and not combined with ARVN. Massive attacks with artillery support and offensive interdiction are best. The NLF player can also inhibit the escape of an isolated US unit by entering the target hex.
4. In general, keep NLF units in some sort of cluster formation to prevent easy encirclement by US/ARVN search and destroy missions. Only use units individually (usually Viet Cong battalions) to make hit-and-run attacks that drain US airpower or inflicts minor casualties on the enemy. Individual units can be used to tempt US/ARVN search and

destroy operations or cut roads but, even then, try to keep units within one or two hexes of each other.

5. Use NVA Mechanized units to punch through weak spots and suddenly appear in battles that they were deployed near.

6. Get as much as you can out of one search and destroy operation with as many rounds of combat as you need to accomplish your purpose. Do not let US/ARVN delaying tactics slow you down. Very often, the US player will surround one of your main objectives, and, once attacked, retreat behind other US units so that the NLF cannot continue the attack. The NLF player can counter by positioning his forces in the perimeter-busting operation in such a way that no matter where the US player retreats, he will have to face operating NLF units. If the target inside the perimeter is a main or major objective, be ready to squeeze as much action out of your attack on his perimeter and be ready to assault the objective if the US player retreats there.

7. Use distractions, decoys and feints to attract matching enemy troop deployments or to attract search and destroy operations. The NLF player may want to sacrifice one or two VC battalions to decoy US units away from the main action. After the enemy has come after some of your isolated units or your decoy formations, he may not be in as favorable a position to strategically move these units next turn to the main action areas.

8. Keep the escape routes open. The US player may be waiting patiently for your offensive to end. In his offensive operations he might position his force deep in your rear to cut off your escape into the DMZ, Cambodia or Laos. Have sufficient force ready to fall back on these enemy units and clear them away. If this is not feasible, then alternative escape routes need to be found.

9. Concentrate NLF forces for defensive set-piece battles when the search and destroy mission uses more manpower than firepower. Conversely, scatter your forces in defensive actions when the S&D mission uses more firepower than manpower. If you have kept your units in clusters, and the US player attempts a major S&D operation against that zone, it is best to concentrate NLF units using reaction move, alert move and retreat. Even though such concentrations will make it easier for the US player to encircle the NLF forces, it also makes it more likely that such a concentrated force will be able to break out of the encirclement by crashing through the weakest US/ARVN units. This is a good tactic unless massive amounts of US firepower is available. If so, bring the enemy's operation to an quick end by sending your forces out in as many directions as possible. Deny the enemy an effective target hex to bring his firepower down on, even if that means dispersing (removing from the board) one or two VC units and scattering the remaining units. That is better than feeling the full effect of the airpower and artillery. If you can force the US player to end a heavy firepower operation, you have done the best that can be expected.

On the other hand, it is best to stretch out a heavy manpower S&D operation. The purpose is to force the enemy to chase you in the direction you want while punishing him in battles that are not all that favorable for him. Plan your retreats of massive forces over weaker units and outrun slower units which will keep shaving the odds against you even more, thus making the next round of combat less attractive for the enemy. If you run out of favorable terrain to retreat over and the odds against you mount, scatter your forces and compel the enemy to pick on one or two of your units while the rest escape. The US player will find that he has committed a lot of troops to an operation that has cost him a sizable amount of casualties while inflicting only moderate casualties.

Psychological Warfare

"Playing your opponent" is the essence of *Vietnam*. There are no set strategies that will work all the time. The NLF player must keep the enemy unsure about what the appropriate US response should be. Blatant NLF troop movements warrant a response, but what kind? Obvious troop concentrations may demand a matching deployment from the US player. NLF forces scattered in a region, yet within range of a key position that could be the focal point of an NLF assault can also cause the US player to think twice about moving his forces to another area.

Remember that the NLF player must have definite objectives for each operation. The US player will not always respond as you want him to, but there will be times when he will. And when that happens, you can exploit this opening to the fullest advantage.

Fire In The East

German Strategy on Hell's Highway

By Scott Jackson

The leading tanks of XXX Corps' Irish Guards rev their motors as an armada of transport aircraft fly overhead to drop their cargo of Allied paratroopers behind German lines along what will become known as *Hell's Highway*. This article will look at the tactical and operational considerations of the German command (the second part of this article about the Allied command will appear in the next issue). It is not meant to be a master plan, but more a foundation on which to build your own playing style. Tactical considerations will be covered, followed by the options of each command.

Tactical Observations

The *Hell's Highway* combat system rewards the offense and defense in different ways. The defender has first fire against direct attacking units that cannot retreat and must take step losses if called for. The attacking units are usually in more open terrain than the defender and will be more vulnerable to defensive fire than the defender will be to the offensive fire.

The attacker, on the other hand, can concentrate his firepower on selected defenders to receive more favorable results. Rule 8.3 prohibits the defender from doing this unless there are more defensive firing units than available direct attacking target units. Both sides will find it easy to disrupt enemy units, immobilizing them for one turn.

There are two basic defensive and offensive tactics available to each commander. On the defense, you can either delay or hold the enemy.

Delay requires very few units, and weak units work just as well as strong ones. The positioning of the delaying units is the key to their success — good defensive terrain and a reasonably secure retreat/supply path are necessary. Good defensive terrain is easy to find with the abundance of water obstacles, towns, woods, hills, and cities. Finding a position with a secure retreat/supply path is a little tougher since contact with the enemy usually means the delaying units will be pinned down and unable to withdraw quickly, if at all. One or two enemy units slipping around your flank to cut you off will destroy the delaying force. Since this flanking movement is hard to prevent with so few defending units, try to choose a position with flanking terrain that will really slow an enemy flanking movement. Also, since delaying units will probably be destroyed, try to use independent units where possible — their loss won't count toward Catastrophic Losses.

Holding terrain against an enemy attack requires lots of units close together, artillery support, and reserves. Strong units are preferable; they provide more defensive fire and can absorb more punishment than weaker units. Weak units can absorb losses and secure the flanks. A high unit density ensures plenty of defensive fire opportunities with adjacent hexes able to support each other, a strong counterattack capability, and the ability to absorb losses without giving up terrain. Artillery support provides defensive fire and counterattack capability. The reserves are necessary to replace losses, strengthen weak sectors that come under enemy attack, and cover and support any counterattack. Any counterattack should be well thought-out since any counterattacking units that are disrupted will be sitting ducks for the next enemy attack. Flank security is also important in a holding defense. If the enemy successfully turns your flanks, you'll have to withdraw or have your retreat/supply path cut.

On the offense, a commander will use a combination of two basic tactics: *maneuver* and *assault*.

Maneuvering involves outflanking an enemy position to cut their retreat/supply paths. The enemy is usually pinned by a few attacking units while the maneuvering units slip around the flanks. This forces the enemy to either withdraw or be surrounded. Notice that Zones of Control (ZOC) are very effective in pinning enemy units so that the attacker does not have to attack if his position is too exposed.

An *assault* involves the use of air power, armor, indirect fire, and

assault groups. Air power is very useful since a disrupted defender cannot use defensive fire. Armored units (primarily tanks) have such low direct fire die roll modifiers that they are used as direct fire units in an assault. Unfortunately, terrain is not much help in their employment in the direct fire role. Indirect fire is also important since indirect firing units cannot be fired upon by defensive fire. This means that an indirect firing unit can occupy open terrain and be protected against losses. Care must be taken when using indirect fire, though, as using more than 50% indirect firing units causes you to lose the excellent direct fire modifiers.

Finally, in order for an assault to succeed, the defender must be forced out of position and/or suffer losses. This can best be accomplished with "assault groups": a collection of units that can either destroy an enemy position or to ensure a high-odds attack (with 21+ being the most preferable). When forming an assault group, keep in mind that you will probably need reserves to compensate for defensive fire disrupting some attacking units.

Combining these two tactics is the best way to ensure the destruction of the enemy. The maneuver element cuts the enemy retreat/supply path, thereby preventing retreat and thus increasing the losses suffered as a strong assault hits them.

1st Parachute Army Operations

The 1st Parachute Army will take a pounding, especially during the opening game as the XXX Corps steamrolls into Eindhoven. They must accomplish three objectives if the Germans are to win: slow the XXX Corps down; keep the 82nd Airborne out of Nijmegen; and harass the 101st and 82nd Commands. Naturally, all these objectives must be accomplished with the few 1st Parachute Army units available. *Every* unit must be utilized to good effect as they become available or the Allies will overwhelm you. Actually, the Allies will most likely overwhelm you anyway; what you must do is to make their success costly and time-consuming. Losses will be very high, and you should consider every unit committed farther than four hexes from a TR box exit hex as lost.

There are three ways to slow XXX Corps. The hardest is to cut the highway after they passed by. If all of the roads leading from the TR boxes are blocked, and if the Allies have an available reserve, the attempt is doomed to fail. The second way to slow the Allies is to command a delaying defense along the highway with whatever you have. Only one or two units will usually be able to work together, and with no secure flanks they will be surrounded and destroyed. Still, each unit on the highway will force the Allies to deploy into combat mode and clear the highway before moving on.

When choosing delaying positions, remember the Allied airborne units: you want to be far away from the heavy airborne units so that they won't clear you off before XXX Corps arrives. Getting into position requires planning and coordination as you try to draw off the airborne units to other areas, so that the delaying units will be relatively unopposed in reaching the highway. The easiest way is to hold city hexes that the Allies must take before supply can be traced any farther along the highway. These city hexes have the best defensive die roll modifiers of any terrain on the map; even surrounded, they are better than woods or rough terrain modifiers. Eindhoven and Nijmegen are the only such cities in the 1st Parachute Army area. Eindhoven is the easiest to get into, since the 82nd isn't around to cause trouble. It is also the hardest to defend, since it can be easily surrounded and bypassed. Still, defending in Eindhoven should delay XXX Corps for at least one day if more than the original two units can be positioned in the city.

Getting into Nijmegen is an objective in itself, as the 82nd Airborne can pretty easily cut all of the roads except for the highway from Arnhem, and force you to fight your way in. The decision to mount a major attack

From the history books:

“Had Montgomery wobbled into SHEAF with a hangover, I could not have been more astonished than I was by the daring adventure he proposed.”

—General Omar Bradley, upon hearing of Operation Market-Garden

towards the city should not be made lightly, since the concentration of units required will mean fewer units available for delaying XXX Corps elsewhere. If the British get into Nijmegen before your attack does, you've probably lost the game. Should the 2nd SS Panzer Army arrive on the scene, the 1st Parachute Army can vigorously harass the 82nd from one side while the 2nd SS works the other.

Harassing the enemy airborne commands is also one of the trickiest and vital objectives that the 1st Parachute Army will face. The harassing units are attempting to distract the Allied commander so that he will make mistakes that can be exploited. This can be done by destroying unprotected weak Allied units and by dashing on and off of the map in different places. The Allied commander will have a tough time deciding what to do if he is unsure of what you are up to. A good way to encourage this indecision is to have one group of harassing units move from a TR box onto the map and then back into the box. These units should stay on the map only long enough to attract the enemy's attention. It will be hard for the Allied commander to ignore the telegraphed message: “The Germans are coming on there; better get some troops over that way.” Watch for holes in the defense, and plan ahead how you will take advantage of these openings *before* they appear. Motorized units kept in OR boxes will usually offer the most flexible exploitation force.

15th Army Operations

The 15th Army needs to accomplish two of the same objectives as the 1st Parachute Army: slow XXX Corps and harass the Allied airborne commands. Its options are exactly the same as those of the 1st Parachute Army, except they are almost entirely lacking in motorized units and have stronger units. These non-motorized units are great for employment in the congested terrain around Grave. They also have an easier time working around weak Allied delaying units, and stand a good chance of getting into Grave if the Allies have not garrisoned it. Also, the 15th Army has the capability to attack the highway after XXX Corps has passed by. The major liability that the 15th Army has is its short range artillery. Trying to get it into action will result in heavier losses, since it can be pinned by enemy units.

2nd SS Panzer Army Operations

The 2nd SS Panzer Army is the strongest German command, and it needs its strength to accomplish four missions: clear and hold Arnhem; clear and hold Nijmegen; annihilate the British 1st and Polish 1st Airborne; and stop XXX Corps. Use of armor and terrain is vital as the 2nd SS tries to accomplish these objectives. Concentration of force to accomplish just one or two of these objectives at a time will often produce quick results. The successes of XXX Corps and the 82nd Airborne should be indicative of what objectives need to be concentrated on and when to do so. If the Allied commander cannot get more than a battalion into Arnhem, the first objective should be easily accomplished. Should the British get into the city in strength, they will need to be cleaned out one hex at a time. Armor is extremely useful here, since it keeps casualties down while offering a chance of surviving enemy fire untouched. This provides the direct fire benefits as well as enabling engineer use for your HQs. If the city can be cut off from the British supply head, the clearing process should speed up as the isolated units run out of supply. Once Arnhem is cleared, your troop movements become almost unrestricted north of the Waal River, and you will be able to work on whatever other objectives need attention.

Nijmegen is an important objective, since its city hexes offer the best chance of stopping XXX Corps anywhere short of the Neder Rijn River. With the 82nd starting so close to the city, it is important to start reinforcements towards the city as early as possible. The reserve boxes can be used to move a few units while other units utilize the ferries to cross the Neder Rijn. If the 82nd can be kept out of Nijmegen, the 1st Parachute Army will have a good chance of getting additional reinforcements into the city. This will free up 2nd SS units so they can be used on other objectives. If the 82nd manages to grab most of the city, it will be virtually impossible to force them out, so dig in and wait for reinforcements.

The destruction of the Polish 1st Airborne can be quickly and easily accomplished once they are down if you can spare the units. The British 1st is a tougher nut to crack: they have more and stronger units, plus artillery and headquarters' support. They will also have a perimeter that will usually allow them good defensive terrain with secure retreat routes. Cutting these retreat routes using selective attacks and advances is the best way to force the perimeter back. The weak British units can be infiltrated around and left for later mopping up. Pressure from XXX Corps or the 82nd may require using fewer units, but it should never be abandoned. Keep the pressure on the British, or they'll put pressure on the 2nd SS.

As to stopping XXX Corps, you can only do it if you have the favorable terrain. City hexes are the best defensive terrain on the map, which is why clearing Nijmegen and Arnhem is so important. The next best terrain to stop XXX Corps is in terrain where tanks cannot operate. This will effectively cut XXX Corps' strength in half. Any defense must be in depth, or the superior Allied airpower will allow any defensive line to be quickly penetrated and destroyed. Keeping an assault group in reserve as a counterattack force will prevent a critical Allied breakthrough. Covering your flanks could be a problem, so try to anchor them on rivers or canals. As a last resort, you can always fall back behind the Neder Rijn and stop XXX Corps cold at the river crossings. Beware of Allied airborne units using bridge engineers to cross the river.

Postscript

Hell's Highway is a complex yet extremely enjoyable game. The more experienced or successful player should try his hand at the German side, as they are hard-pressed to win.

If you enjoy experimenting with the game, I found the following variations fun and interesting:

- 1). Use just XXX Corps against the Germans to see how well Monty would have done by himself.
- 2). Start with just the XXX Corps and the 101st on the map. All other Airborne forces are available on turn 2, but all of the 101st must come on first, followed by the 82nd, the British 1st, and the Polish 1st. This simulates a smaller Allied airlift capability. The Allies should also be allowed to change drop zones before the game starts.
- 3). Use just the XXX Corps and the British and Polish 1st Airborne commands. This simulates Eisenhower's rejection of Monty's plan, but Churchill's insistence on a separate British attack. The airborne troops can either be made available on their scheduled turns, or all start available on turn 1. The Allies should be allowed to change drop zones before the game starts, and can even move drop zones across rivers and canals.
- 4). Use just the XXX Corps for the Allies, and the starting units from all commands for the Germans as well as the 2nd SS Panzer Army reinforcements. The 1st Parachute and 15th Armies are withdrawn to fight elsewhere, and the tankers on both sides battle it out alone.

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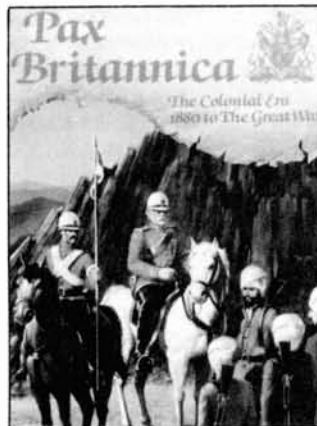


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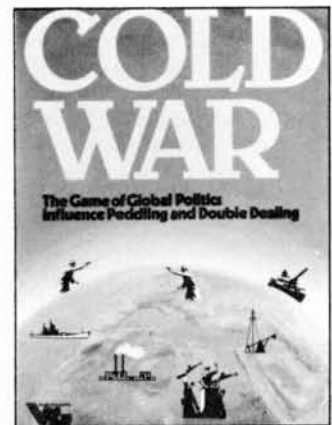


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Victory Insider Article Index Issues #1 to #8

Compiled by William E. Peschel

We hope that this will be the first of a long line of indexes for readers of the *Insider*. It is presented in the same manner as *The General's* Index, except that we give the issue number of both magazines with each entry. Further explanations precede each section.

Article Index Key

Each entry consists of the article's title, (the author), the *Insider* issue number, the *General* issue number, (article type), and page number.

Article types: (H) is historical in nature, (P) relates to the play of the game, (V) is a variant, (V, P) combines a variant with a discussion of the play of the game, (V+C) is a variant article that has counters published, usually in the *General's* insert.

AMBUSH!

An Infantryman's Diary (William Hamilton) #5, Vol. 21, #4 (Humor) 11.

His Majesty's Soldiers (Stephen Negus), #6, Vol. 21, #5 (V) 5.
Ambush! Scenario VI #1, Traffic Control (Paul Fasoldt), #7, Vol. 21, #6 (P) 4.

THE CIVIL WAR

Battle-tested: A Leadership System for The Civil War (Glenn Rahman) #4, Vol. 21, #3 (V+C) 13.

COLD WAR

Cold War Design Analysis (John Prados) #5, Vol. 21, #4 (P) 3.
Additional Cold War Options (John Prados) #5, Vol. 21, #4 (V) 4.
How to Fight Cold War (William E. Peschel) #5, Vol. 21, #4 (P) 3.

1809

1809 Designer's Notes (Kevin Zucker) #3, Vol. 21, #2 (H) 6.

GULF STRIKE

Tactics & Strategies for Fighting the Next War (Mark Herman) #1, Vol. 20, #6 (V,P) 1.
The Iranian Civil War Scenario (Mark Herman) #2, Vol. 21, #1 (P) 8.

HELL'S HIGHWAY

Red Devils and Irish Guards (John Butterfield) #2, Vol. 21, #1, (P) 4.
Fire in the East (Scott Jackson) #8, Vol. 22, #1 (P), 7.

NATO

NATO: The Next War in Europe (Bruce Maxwell) #3, Vol. 21, #2, (P), 2.
The War of Nerves Scenario (Bruce Maxwell) #4, Vol. 21, #3, (P), 14.
The New Red Dawn (Derek Croxton) #8, Vol. 22, #1, (P), 3.

VIETNAM

Finding the Tunnel's Light (Tony Curtis) #4, Vol. 21, #3, (P), 3.
Hunting the Vietcong (Tony Curtis) #5, Vol. 21, #4, (P), 3.
The Marine's Alternative (Carl Amato) #6, Vol. 21, #5 (V), 7.
The Sword and the Juggernaut (George Windau) #8, Vol. 22, #1 (P), 4.

THRILLING TALES

This section lists the *Insider* issue number, the *General's* issue number, and the title of each Thrilling Tales column.

1. (1/20:2) Untitled
2. (2/21:1) NATO success at NGAP
3. (4/21:3) VG game development process
4. (5/21:4) Part two of #3 TT
5. (7/21:6) Anniversary
6. (8/22:1) Writing rules

LETTERS

HELL'S HIGHWAY

1. M.J. Mishcon (key hexes to take) #7, 21:6, 3.

VIETNAM

1. Gary Hladik (reply to Curtis, "Finding the Tunnel's Light" #4, 21:3), #7, 21:6, 14.
2. Gary Hladik (crit. diagram errors, reply to Curtis, "Hunting the Vietcong" #5, 21:4), #7, 21:6, 3.

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Back Issues For Sale

Yes, there are back issues for sale, but in order to get them, you have to purchase the *General* back issue the *Insider* was tucked in. The first five issues of the *Insider* are not numbered, so the game title that the cover featured will be listed. The price is \$3.00 per issue plus 10% postage and handling charges (20% to Canadians and 30% overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax. *General* postage coupons may not be used for this or other non-game orders. Due to the low quantities of some back issues, please specify alternate selections.

- #1 (Gen 20-6) Cover *Gulf Strike*. Gulf Strike Strategy
- #2 (Gen 21-1) Cover *Hell's Highway*. Hell's Highway Strategy, Gulf Strike Scenario
- #3 (Gen 21-2) Cover *NATO*. NATO Strategy, 1809 Designer's Notes
- #4 (Gen 21-3) Cover *Vietnam*. Vietnam Strategy, Civil War Variant, NATO Scenario
- #5 (Gen 21-4) Cover Title "Vietnam Part II". Vietnam Strategy, Ambush Fiction
- #6 (Gen 21-5) Cold War Strategy & Variant, Vietnam Variant, Ambush Variant
- #7 (Gen 21-6) Ambush Scenario VII: Traffic Control
- #8 (Gen 22-1) Crypto-Fascist Strategy Issue: NATO, Hell's Highway, Vietnam

The 82nd And The 101st

American Airborne Strategy in Hell's Highway

By Daniel J. Vivian

When discussing strategy for *Hell's Highway*, gamers all too often overlook the importance of the American divisions which participated in the ill-fated Operation Market-Garden. They realize the importance of the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division at Nijmegen and the 101st Airborne Division near Eindhoven, yet all too often, Allied players concentrate their efforts on either the British XXX Corps or the British 1st Airborne Division. Allied players who do so often see the 82nd suffer Catastrophic Loss while the 101st is battered by the German 15th Army and First Parachute Army.

Does this sound familiar? In this article, I will outline strategies for both the 101st and the 82nd Airborne divisions, so you, too, can discover the best way for the Allies to win.

The 82nd Airborne

The 82nd's objective is to take and hold the bridge across the De Waal river at Nijmegen: a task almost as difficult as getting the British 1st Airborne Division into Arnhem. First, the 82nd drop zones are located near Groesbeek, forcing them to land nearly as far from Nijmegen as the British 1st lands from Arnhem. Secondly, the woods and rough terrain between the 82nd drop zones and Nijmegen make it difficult for them to get to their objective quickly. After landing, get as many units marching in travel mode towards Nijmegen as possible. The numerous minor roads are the obvious route.

Unlike the 101st drop zones, the 82nd's are immediately hampered by minor German attacks. Not only does the German 2/406 sets up in hex 6026, but the First Parachute Army coming out of Operational Reserve box o9 will fight for control of the drop zones to hamper the supply head and prevent later landings. To defend against these assaults, D, E, and F Companies of the 504th Parachute Regiment's 2nd Battalion should be left behind as a first line of defense. If the Germans really press, and the units dropped later are desperately needed, you can always bleed units from the fighting near Nijmegen.

Unfortunately, unless the German player makes a terrible mistake, it isn't likely that the 82nd will take Nijmegen without XXX Corps. There are two plans which keeps the division out of a costly city-fight. For the defensively-minded player, the best and perhaps the most innovative strategy is to form a perimeter near Beek, with the western edge bordering on the edge of Nijmegen, and the southern edge near Ubbergen. The Waal river forms the defense line to the north. On turn three, the 82nd's supply head should be removed from play and repositioned on turn six in or around Ooij. From there, the 82nd can easily assault Nijmegen by itself, or when the XXX Corps arrives. The 82nd occupies rather good terrain, which will help fend off the numerous attacks that will be made by the multitude of German units entering from Tactical Reserve boxes e11 and e12.

Most plans do have a few drawbacks, and this one is no exception. The largest problem occurs when the British 1st does not make it into Arnhem. When this happens, the German 2nd SS Panzer Corps can travel down the highway until they encounter the 82nd or 101st. The easiest way around this is to see if the British 1st makes it into Arnhem. If they don't, a more aggressive plan can be used. It is highly unlikely that the major bridge at Nijmegen can be easily taken if the armored recon unit of the 9th SS Panzer Division is moved into 6719 as it should be on the first German turn. If the bridge connecting 6617 and 6718 is not destroyed, send units across and surround the unit in hex 6719.

Unfortunately, that bridge is destroyed five out of six times, so it is not too likely that it will remain standing for you. Another way to Nijmegen must be found. Numerous turns of concentrated assaults upon the unit will eventually dislodge it, but the Allied player will probably find it more efficient to wait for XXX Corps and its overwhelming firepower. Committing yourself to a full-fledged battle in Nijmegen is prob-

ably going to cost more than will gain, but it is one way of establishing yourself in the city until XXX Corps arrives or you happen to get lucky and eliminate any units guarding the bridge.

If you do attack, organize your assault in some depth so the attacking units are not so easily surrounded. It may be advisable to form a loose perimeter so you can move the 82nd's supply head off the drop zone (it's likely to be overrun by turn 7 or 8). Another advantage of forming a perimeter is that the 82nd's HQ can be moved where it provides support to all attacking units. From this perimeter, the 82nd can form a concentrated assault against the German units holding the bridge at Nijmegen. One important word of caution: if you decide on this approach and march straight into the city, be careful not to suffer Catastrophic Loss, as this occurs fairly often during the fight for Nijmegen.

The 101st Airborne

The 101st enjoys the luxury of landing in a very lightly defended area, not subject to the immediate German attacks which cause such difficulties at the other landing zones. The fierce German attacks against the 101st are likely to begin around Turn 5 or 6 when the German player mobilizes the 15th Army. Usually, the first units seen are those of the German 59th Infantry Division, which appear in Operational Reserve Box o2 beginning on Turn 2, although some of the division's most powerful units do not appear until Turn 4 or later.

Unfortunately, the 101st landing area does not exactly abound with good defensive terrain, except for the forests west of Olland and St. Oedenrode. The best strategy there is to organize a strong defensive line, and prepare to repel the assault. By forcing the German player to keep his attacking units in clear or mixed hexes, you should be able to destroy him with your defensive fire, or force him to use indirect fire. If he uses indirect fire, he will have very poor Fire Modifiers (a +1 if you are in woods in combat mode), and you should be able to devastate him next turn with your offensive fire. To deny him defensive fire, the 101st will probably want to use indirect offensive fire.

The objectives of the 101st are not so clear-cut. Eindhoven has a high concentration of bridges, but the XXX Corps usually overwhelms whatever German units are left there. The many bridges across the streams and canals near the 101st drop zones should be its first objective. After the 101st has landed, the German 1/189 in 3107 should be quickly surrounded and, once it is eliminated, capturing the bridges across the Zuid-Willems canal and the Aa river at Veghel (hexes 3808 and 3809) should be next. Of secondary importance are the bridges at Zon and Best across the Wilhelmina canal. The few flak and garrison units guarding these crossing are eliminated easily enough and, once these are taken, prepare yourself for any German attacks which may occur before the XXX Corps links up with you.

Many players give diminishing attention to the 101st Airborne and move it towards the rear after the XXX Corps has linked up with it. In many cases, this will be a major mistake. Remember that only airborne infantry units can use the Bridge Engineers of the Allied HQs in XXX Corps Command to cross an unbridged river or canal. As many 101st units as possible should stay with the spearhead of the XXX Corps in case a crossing further up the highway is destroyed. If so, the airborne infantry should cross the river or canal quickly and form a bridgehead to protect the crossing. The Bridge Engineers can then expeditiously begin repairs.

It is sometimes useful to send airborne infantry units across a river or canal at an unbridged site to attack German units blocking the line of advance. Sometimes, the XXX Corps becomes stalemated for several turns at one of the many canals and rivers along the highway. From across the river, the airborne can apply additional pressure on the Germans and can break what could have been the game-deciding stalemate.

continued from page 2

must also maintain a minimum number of Notoriety points each turn or lose the game, and he can be wounded or killed in battle. Playing *Mosby's Raiders* is a lot like running on a conveyer belt: you must run faster than the speed of the belt to keep from falling off.

Potpourri

I hope you all have enjoyed last issue's foray into *Ambush!* Special thanks must go to Paul Fasoldt, for not only designing and writing the scenario, but closely checking the typeset galleys as well.

This time around, we have a potpourri of delights from a variety of games. Rather than go into them, I just want to note that in addition to the articles, we will be publishing any and all letters that we receive to the Insider. We consider this feedback not only ego-satisfying ("At last, someone is really out there playing our games!"), but a prime way of tying together the body of wargamers who delight in VG games.

In the last few issues, we have been reprinting the errata sheets to our games. To those of you to write in with a SASE, this is a redundant waste of space. To those of you who have not yet found the time to write in, it's primo material. To us, it's another reason to regularly purchase *The General*.



Sorry, but the crop of Oversights for *Sixth Fleet* and *Cold War* is a bit sparse. A handful of gamers have mentioned the following gaffs, all of which are far too minor (praise be!) to detract from the games' playability.

Cold War

On the Summary Sheets (page 1, last paragraph in righthand column), delete "(except Masterspy)." An appropriate Mole Card *will* defeat the Masterspy Card, as indicated on the Action Card Summary and on the Mole Cards themselves.

W. Bill Rule of Oversight: *When you repeat a rule three times, make sure it says the same thing at least twice.*

On the Event Cards, the Cards specifying Vital Region SP Increase for Venezuela and Central America should be Vital Region SP Increases for Korea and West Africa, respectively.

W. Bill Rule of Oversight: *When you change your mind about something in mid-development, don't forget to change the rules.*

The Rules booklet example at the top of page 4 should read: "For instance, if the Game Ends Turn 9 Card is currently in the Game Ends Box, and you draw the Game Ends Turn 10 Card during Game Turn 9, you must reshuffle the Event Card Deck, including the Turn 9 Card. it is perfectly possible that the Game Ends Turn 9 Card will reappear."

W. Bill Rule of Oversight: *It's always a good idea to have your examples in firm agreement with the rules.*

Sixth Fleet

On both Combat Results Tables (on the map), the text under the "Modifiers" heading should read: "4. SSM Combat: -2 if no friendly surface unit is adjacent to enemy units being attacked by SSM Combat . . ."

In the Rules Booklet (8.2, CAP and Air-to-Air Combat, clarification): CAP units that interrupt enemy air units to perform Air-to-Air Combat are always the attackers and the enemy air units the defenders. (14.1,

Aircraft Carriers, clarification): US carriers are assigned air units in scenarios, and these units must remain assigned to their respective carriers. These air units can be assigned to Strategic Air Missions, CAP (3 air units normally) or combat missions during the Action Phase. Air units can perform missions in stacks of up to 4 units, but *all* the air units can be sent on different combat missions in the air unit Action Segment (assuming none were assigned to Strategic Air or CAP missions).

NATO

Strategic Surprise Scenario:

Warsaw Pact Activation should read as follows:

Game-Turn 1, all WP units in East Germany;

Game-Turn 2, all WP units in Czechoslovakia;

Game-Turn 3, all WP units in Poland.

Warsaw Pact receives reinforcements as called for, in addition to Movement Phase.

Warsaw Pact receives 3 Chemical Warfare markers and 3 Offensive Support markers for the scenario, at the outset, and receives no more during the game.

Warsaw Pact should receive Olo HQ on Game-Turn 2, and the following units on Game-Turn 3 (rather than GT 2): p10T/SM, p16T/PM, p20T/PM, p8/PM, p7/Mar. (See WP Reinforcement Display.)

NATO US 2A/III (arriving Game-Turn 5) should arrive at full strength (See NATO Reinforcement Display).

continued from page 3

if it deprives support for the Denmark attack, but not at the expense of the marine and helicopter-transported units.

Another stratagem is to drop adjacent to a key city in Holland or Belgium. Threatening to knock out a country and an air point with one unit can tie up NATO units which would otherwise be at the front. After turn five, the interception number is generally too large to risk airborne transport. Thus, airborne units are more useful in their proper role anyway.

If the game is planned for 15 turns, something must be done with the Category II divisions. There are three possible uses for them: to stop a NATO counter-offensive, reinforce the Rhine attack, or attack Austria. The Austria offensive should wait until turns 14 or 15 to minimize the effect of Italy's entry.

Airpower is an important part of NATO, and correctly using it is a key to victory. Rail interdiction is useless, given NATO's large rail capacity and how little they are likely to use it. It is also unlikely that Support Suppression will be used. Most of the Warsaw Pact air points should go towards softening up the big NATO frontline units. Also, during the first few turns of the thrust to the Ruhr, it will probably be expedient to use road interdiction to slow up or block NATO reinforcements to the breakthrough sector. By and large, though, the majority of air points will be spent grinding away at large NATO units (don't waste your time on small ones — they are too easy to kill with ground units).

Chemical Warfare

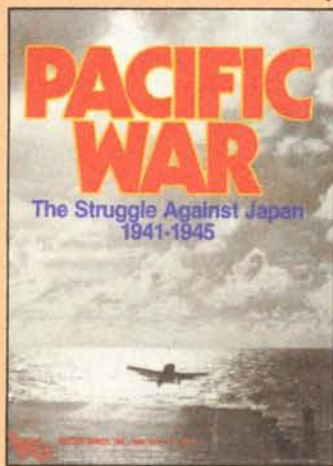
The last consideration is a simple choice, yet one which could make or break a Warsaw Pact victory: when to declare Chemical Warfare. It must not be declared too early, and hence miss the full effect of the column shifts; neither must it be declared too late, after NATO has a solid line and its airpower has devastated Soviet units.

Two time periods can be ruled out. Turn two is probably too early. It is doubtful that enough Soviet units can move adjacent to NATO units to warrant chemicals. Turn five is too late; by then the time for breakthrough will have passed, and NATO air superiority will have taken its toll. Turn three or four is the right time. The exact turn should be decided by NATO opposition. On turn three, if both the 1GT and 2GT armies, or one of those and both the 3S and 8G, face stacks of nine defense points or better, it is time. If this does not occur on turn three, chemicals should be declared on turn four. As a rule of thumb, never use a chemical point when you can get at least a 7-1 without it, so that you do not deny yourself exploitation and waste the point.

Despite its problems, NATO remains a strong force. The Soviet player can get inebriated on his initial success only to find that NATO has used reserves to block the way to the Ruhr just a few hexes away. It is imperative that every breakthrough be followed with another one, pounding the NATO line, pressing it for units, and keeping it reeling backwards in disarray.

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Complexity: Medium to very high. **Solitaire Suitability:** High for the Engagement Scenarios; medium for the advanced scenarios. **Time Scale:** Monthly turns. **Map Scale:** 100 miles per hex. **Unit Scale:** Individual capital ships to amphibious groups; air squadrons; division/battalion land units. **Players:** Two (Campaign Scenarios highly recommended for team play). **Playing Time:** 30 minutes for introductory scenarios to 200 hours for the whole war.

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Mosby's Raiders

Guerrilla Warfare in the Civil War

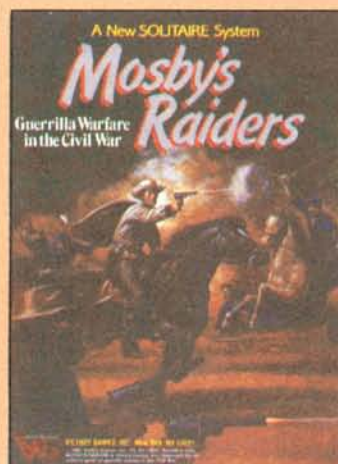
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Mosby's Raiders

\$18

Complexity: Medium. **Solitaire Suitability:** Very high. **Time Scale:** Variable; a few days per turn. **Map Scale:** Four miles per inch. **Unit Scale:** 25 men per Strength Point. **Players:** One. **Playing Time:** Two hours.