The Avalon Hill General

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Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 69

ORIGINS V. VI. VII. VIII. etc.

There has always been considerable confusion on just who controls the national convention and determines where it will go every year. Although some have played a prominent role in the establishment of ORIGINS, I'd like to lay out the many and varied misconceptions which exist pertaining to our control, or lack thereof, the event.

While it is true that the ORIGINS concept was born in Baltimore in 1975, under the control of AH and a local gaming club, we no longer run the event or have sole determination of where it shall go. In hosting the event for the first two years, we were subject to criticism from some quarters for hopping the show here in Baltimore. The arrangement in Vienna was that a town show should travel from year to year to different cities giving enthusiasts from a far ranging area a chance to attend. That opinion, then as now, seemed quite reasonable to us and with a huge sigh of relief as accompaniment, we bid our creation a fond farewell and sent it packing to New York under the aegis of SPI. All of this high corporate, behind the scenes, wheeling & dealing boiled down to a gentleman's agree- ment made in 1976 that SPI would support our ORIGINS II if we supported their ORIGINS III.

The choice was made without all that much gnashing of teeth and beating of breasts, the logic of it all covering our best intentions of unifying the hobby, under our umbrella with SPI, the ambassador. Actually, we were able to argue Howie in and out of the house with nobody the wiser, although I still cringe at the possible repercussions of having harbored an SPI varlet, which, for no one's sake, we didn't. All along, we asserted that a convention wasn't worth having if not supported totally by both companies, because between them they reigned the majority of hard core gamers. The travelling site matter had many parallels in the real business world and is standard practice for major industry shows. Besides, we deemed it fair only that SPI should get its rightful share of the headaches we'd experienced the past two years, and looked forward to finding ourselves for a change at the next ORIGINS. And so it was, that after some initial reluctance by Interest Group Baltimore to give up their creation, ORIGINS put on its travelling shoes.

That it could be, has since decided to donate all profits from the first two ORIGINS to charity. Although SPI pocketed the profits from ORIGINS I, we lost no faith with the future. Hosting an event as large and diverse as ORIGINS is a major undertaking requiring a great deal of time and hard work that could be more profitably directed elsewhere. It is our opinion that the sponsors deserve whatsoever financial rewards accrue from such an effort. Only if the sponsor goes to excess in charging for services rendered should the principal backers of the show—the manufacturers—step in and withhold their support to protect the hobby.

At this point, it was realized that ORIGINS had grown beyond the realm of a gentleman's agreement. An organization had to be formed with rules of procedure for selecting future sites and safeguard the consumer. Although the first three ORIGINS had been held strictly on the basis of a gentleman's agreement between the hobby's two principal companies, that arrange- ment couldn't be allowed to continue especially since the show was about to pass out of the direct control of the two principals for the first time. Both AH and SPI had a great deal to lose in terms of consumer trust by hosting a lackluster of rip-off convention. The same could not be said for Podunkian, our wargame club or John Doe's Revolving Door Game Company. Concerns with such limited rights might well convert them to a scaled-down version with $20,000 advance convention receipts.

So, an agreement was drawn up to legalize the entire selection process. With the emerging semblance of administering justice upon a captive hobby, it was decided to invite other major manufacturers to belong to the Associa- tion with full voting rights. Five such manu- facturers, later increased to 7, were so invited to participate; 3 boardgame companies, 3 minia- tures companies, and one which covered both fields, so as to remove any possible bias which might arise between the two gaming classifications. Although not signed into existence, the agreement was used to choose between two fine bids for ORIGINS IV, with Metro Detroit Wargame the selection by a one vote margin. The system had worked, unofficially. Unfortunately, the committee involved never got around to ratifying the agreement, and when first one company and then another backed out, dis- missing any involvement with the process of the "politics" of the hobby, we were left with a manufacturer's committee of two. As a result, our Association never mustered a quorum and therefore could take no binding action. Informa- tion regarding what was expected of a prospec- tive bidder was never disseminated. As a result, some pretty wild rumors circulated, not the least ridiculous of which was the published report that a bidder had sent a $5,000 advance to AH and/or SPI to guarantee their intentions. The end result was that AH and SPI again had to hold sway at the ORIGINS '79 meeting with nary another manufacturer caring to cast a vote or with any advance information for prospective bidders. The result was shocking, but predict- able. No one entered a bid for ORIGINS V until Joy Hadley of PENN CON was enlisted into an impromptu presentation—a year before he really wanted to make a bid. With only one real bid on the table (Paul Wood of MDG cast the potential tie- breaker), at least the vote for the next year's site was not left in the hands of the manufacturer. We had proved in the past that we could handle such decisions without annoying petty politics which the others seemed reluctant to
Air Assault on Crete

Creating a Paratrooper's Hell . . .
And Jumping Into It

An introduction to Air Assault on Crete

By Mark G. McLaughlin

An airborne invasion is probably the most thrilling move for an amateur general in any modern wargame. The solid, steadfast defender can be outflanked, outmaneuvered and outfought in a series of daring, dazzling machinations as the airborne glory boys leap into the enemy's vulnerable rear areas. Confusion spreads throughout the battle zone as the defender discovers that his units are pinned, pocketed and pulverized by the parachute infantry. A few units form up and break through the attacker's cordon, but the defense is shattered, the position lost, and the game becomes a contest between the pursuers and the ragged rear guard of a routed army.

This humiliation of an opponent is the major attraction of the airborne arm. Whether it's the 82nd Airborne Division breaking up the Normandy defenses in D-DAY or the Fliegerkorps seizing London in THIRD REICH, the smug satisfaction which the attacking player derives from his brilliant move is almost enough to make the defending player wish he'd loaded the die.

Avalon Hill's newest release, AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE, is the first wargame which pits a purely airborne force against a relatively static defense. The attacker can plan and execute an airborne assault almost from scratch. CRETE is a paratrooper commander's dream: a blitzkrieg from the skies.

The German player has at his command the cream of the Nazi war machine: a reinforced airborne division, complete with gliders, anti-tank guns and light artillery. To support this powerful lightning bolt, he has a large force of bombers, fighter-bombers and strafing planes which can neutralize enemy anti-aircraft batteries, hinder troop movements or act as flying artillery against his opponent's strongholds. A crack mountain division is available to reinforce the paratroopers once an airfield is secured, and two convoys of tanks, artillery and infantry can be landed to further strengthen the airborne regiments.

In wargame terms, this boils down to a total of 312 ground combat factors, more than half of which are parachute forces. The Luftwaffe is represented by 21 bombardment factors and five road interdiction counters, all of which are available for three out of every four turns (the fourth turns are night turns).

The defense of the isle of Crete is entrusted to the Commonwealth (British-Australian-New Zealand-Greek) player. His forces, the remnants of the Allied army which retreated from Greece in 1941, comprise the equivalent of four divisions. Two of these divisions, the Australians and New Zealanders, have powerful combat units. The division and a half of British troops include some of the finest names in His Majesty's Army (Black Watch, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Rifle Corps, etc.), but the bulk of the force consists of a ragamuffin mish-mash of weak infantry battalions, barely mobile non-combat units and unreliable armored sections. Ten "regiments" of Greeks, each comparable in strength to a German company, round out the defender's army.

The Cretan Force (aptly named) begins with 147 combat attack factors. An additional 16 factors may come in later in the game as reinforcements. A handful of coast guns and heavy flak batteries are available to help defend against the German convoys and aircraft. The defender does have the advantage of inverting his units for concealed placement and movement, and ten decoys are provided to help further confuse the German player.

Each player's forces are dissipated across the various sectors of the three boards which comprise the map of Crete. The Commonwealth player is placed to defend four sectors: Suda Bay, and the three airfields at Maleme, Retimo and Heraklion, respectively (See Figure 1). The Suda group is further divided into an Inner force (around the port), an Outer force (near the Maleme sector boundary) and a Middle force (located between the other two forces). The German player is similarly divided, in that most of his airborne forces are pre-designated to attack in each sector of the Cretan defense.

In a comparison of the initial dispositions, (See Figure 1) the German airborne forces alone either approximate or exceed the Commonwealth forces in each of the four battle sectors. Should their attack succeed in controlling an airfield within the first few turns, the might of the mountain division can upset the delicate balance of power on the island. The committal of air power, convoys and paratroop reinforcements can heavily tip the balance in favor of the Germans in any given sector.

FIGURE 1: Attack factors available by sector in AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>GERMAN</th>
<th>COMMONWEALTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suda:</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46 (21 Inner Suda) (16 Middle Suda) (9 Outer Suda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maleme</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retimo</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heraklion:</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Sector Turn 1:</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Sector Turn 6:</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Sector Turn 10:</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Sector Turn 16:</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convoy #1:</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convoy #2:</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Landing:</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL: 312 163

NOTE: Total does not include Luftwaffe factors available on each daylight turn. German convoys begin landing turn 2 or later. German Air Landing units come in at captured airfields.

Unlike the German player, the Commonwealth player has little chance of reinforcing his scattered commands. The only way he can shift troops around is by using the coastal steamer to transfer one battalion between the ports. The reinforcing groups which come on later in the game will not arrive in
time to affect the defense. The Commonwealth player is thus fated to do battle in isolated combat groups.

On paper, therefore, the Commonwealth player has little hope of holding the island in the face of his opponent's high mobility and two-to-one superiority. The airborne attacker's dream appears to have come true in *AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE*.

This advantage often creates a cocksure attitude which closely resembles that held by General Kurt Student, commander of the German forces in the real air assault on Crete. In May, 1941, Student produced an imaginative and daring plan of attack which resulted in the wholesale slaughter of the parachute army. The island fell, but the Commonwealth forces pulled a Dunkirk-like evacuation. The heavy German losses convinced Adolf Hitler that airborne assaults were foolhardy ventures, and he forbade his generals to launch any major combat jumps for the remainder of the war.

A German player who prepares to play *CRETE* with a similar disposition will suffer an equally disastrous fate. Although the Commonwealth player is weaker and less mobile than the airborne army, he has the bite of a wounded lion cornered in his own den.

I. Defending Crete

The Commonwealth forces are already divided into specific brigade groups. The two easternmost groups, those at Retimo and Heraklion, have powerful combat units but are not large enough to fight their way towards the main army at Suda. Maleme, in the far west, can be cut off by even a moderately capable German player. The main army, spread out over the Suda sector, has only six strong battalions; its other units are one-factor battalions and non-combat service troops.

In order to win, the defender must either hold all three airfields at the end of the eighth turn or eliminate 75 victory points of Germans while evacuating 80 victory points of his own forces. The Commonwealth player should resign himself to losing at least one airfield; German air power and reinforcements are strong enough to decisively outweigh the defenders in any single sector.

The defense of Crete, therefore, becomes a matter of bleeding the German airborne forces, fighting a strong rear guard action, and setting out with enough units to win. A bitter struggle to the end for the airfields will give the Germans a victory by wasting the Commonwealth's few good units and leaving the escape routes unguarded.

The bloodletting can be accomplished by a vicious counterattack when German forces drop from the skies and again on the turn after they have landed. When the Germans come down they are scattered and disorganized; individual companies and headquarters detachments are easy targets. At the rate of two victory points per company eliminated and seven per headquarters destroyed, the Commonwealth's tally rises with the German death toll.

German headquarters units are prime targets for the Commonwealth attacks and for the defending artillery units. When the Germans attack, Commonwealth artillery should be directed against the weak headquarters (1-4) units in an attempt to eliminate or retreat them. Besides their high victory point value, the headquarters are essential to the formation of the concentrated German battalions. These battalions are formed by stacking a headquarters with four companies and substituting a battalion counter worth up to 10 factors. Two concentrated battalions can stack for a maximum of 20 factors. On the other hand, without the airborne headquarters, the German units become merely a collection of companies with a maximum of 12 factors in a stack.

A. Suda Bay

The most important defensive sector is Suda Bay. This is where the bulk of the Commonwealth non-combatant units are initially deployed. Each of the 4-0-2 service units is worth five victory points, the same as a Commonwealth headquarters or infantry battalion. There are 16 service units on Crete, nine of them in Suda. If all 16 were evacuated, the 80 point victory total would be reached without withdrawing a single combat unit. The more service units the Commonwealth evacuates, the more combat units they can leave behind to kill para-

FIGURE II: Suggested Defense of Suda-Maleme and sample Attack as presented in *AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE* booklet.

The key to Suda is the port and the hills overlooking the harbor. If the Germans choose the landing area nearest Suda port, they can cut off the escape routes to the south and eliminate the harbor as an evacuation port. The defense which is suggested in the *CRETE* game booklet (Figure II) is an open invitation to the Germans to take this option and transform Suda into a trap for the Commonwealth.

A strong defense of Suda can force the German player into diverting the bulk of his airpower and reinforcements to prevent the Suda force from escaping. The outnumbered, slow-moving defender can thus force his highly mobile opponent into fighting a battle dictated by the Commonwealth.

The Suda defense can be strengthened through the addition of miscellaneous units provided to the Commonwealth commander. The 4-2-2 light anti-aircraft battery and the 1-1-7 light tank unit will give the Suda force the extra power it needs to launch effective counterattacks. The mobile flak gun can keep pace with a withdrawal and limit the effect of the German airpower. The light tank will subtract one from the die in any attack (this is equivalent to a shift in the combat table of one column in the attacker's favor). The weak infantry units from the miscellaneous group can be used to guard the back door of Suda, and the Royal Engineer detachment can blow up the port and bridges as the Commonwealth retreats.

Figure III is an example of a strong Suda defense incorporating the miscellaneous units. The anti-aircraft batteries are positioned to provide an optimum coverage of the interior, both to limit German air power and to increase the dispersion of the paratroops. (Each anti-aircraft gun adds one to the scatter die roll of each German unit as it comes down. Anti-aircraft guns also halve the value of German bombers and force the Germans to use two straffing planes instead of one to interdict a road.)

The port is covered by three flak positions: the *HMS York* in the harbor, the battery on the hills just north of the town of Katokhori, and the light flak unit adjacent to Suda. Although the York normally will be sunk on the first turn, the other two
positions probably will remain hidden to the Germans and thus still cover the port.

As long as at least one of the anti-aircraft units is covering it, the Germans will need most of their air factors to neutralize the port. Even then, there are still two chances out of six on the bombardment table that the port will remain operational. The Commonwealth can evacuate 14 stacking points worth of headquarters and services units (some of which are three stacking points, others of which are only one stacking point) from Suda during turn eight if the Germans have not neutralized the port. This would mean that 35 of the 80 victory points the defender needs could be evacuated. If the port is still in operation on the next possible turn of evacuation, turn 12, another 25 points could make it out.

The Commonwealth army should not stay around Suda sector if the port has been neutralized for turn eight; the defender should immediately begin moving south towards the Georgopolis sector and the southern evacuation road. This move will force the Germans to drop their reinforcements in front of the Commonwealth army as a blocking force. Although these paratroopers can slow the retreat, they are weak and can be beaten back by the stronger battalions of the Commonwealth army.

A German seaborne landing to cut off the retreat would have to arrive at Georgopolis. This is a very risky proposition for the attacking player. The beach defense guns which should be placed in this area (See Figure IV) would get a good shot at any convoy which makes it to the beaches. The easternmost coast gun is deployed to shell targets on the Retimo beaches as well as those at Georgopolis. To neutralize these guns, the Germans would have to divert the whole Luftwaffe on the turn the convoy is slated to arrive. Placing a decoy among the real guns in this sector will further dissipate the available German air power.

If a convoy attempts to hit the beaches in a daylight turn, the Convoy Table is broken down into three even chances: half of the force reaching the beaches, none of the force landing, and all of the force arriving. A night convoy has an even poorer chance of reaching the coast than a daylight invasion. Moreover, the coast guns cannot be neutralized unless the Luftwaffe was extremely lucky on the previous daylight turn. Although the guns are halved at night, they still have a one-third chance of eliminating each invading unit.

By defending Suda and preparing for a southern evacuation, the Commonwealth player can force the Germans to waste their airpower against the port and the beach guns. Instead of using their reinforcements against an airfield or in conjunction with their already powerful forces, the German must send these extra companies in unsupported in order to stall the retreat. This course of action is forced upon the Germans because they cannot afford to let the Commonwealth army escape.

This diversion of air, sea, and paratroop forces will leave the airfield assault groups on their own against strong Commonwealth defenses.

B. The Airfields

The Commonwealth player is required to position his troops around the three airfields. Each of these brigade-sized battlegroups is strong enough to match the initial enemy drop. The Germans will have tremendous difficulty, especially against Retimo and Heraklion, unless they are substantially bolstered by the Luftwaffe and other reinforcements.

The artillery, tanks and strong battalions in these two sectors can form very effective killer packs which can strike against the initially disorganized paratroopers.

Retimo should be defended from a position in front of the airstrip (See Figure V). A drop behind the Commonwealth lines will either drift into the sea or be pushed into the surf by a strong counterattack. Since there are no flak guns designated to defend Retimo, the anti-aircraft unit which is available for free set up should be placed here.

A similar defense is illustrated in Figure VI for Heraklion. The port is an important position for the defender to maintain. Like Suda, its dock workers can evacuate up to 30 victory points on each night turn, beginning with turn eight. The truck unit (0-0-6) is placed there for evacuation points.

Heraklion port is an excellent position for the coastal defense. If the Heraklion defense has done well, a battalion can be shipped from there to nearby Retimo or even to Suda. This extra battalion can be a powerful factor in stalling the German advance.

Maleme (See Figure VII) is defended a little differently than its sister airfields. The artillery and anti-aircraft units are placed on the overlooking hills both to control the airfield and to add firepower to local counterattacks. A light tank (1-1-7) has been added from the miscellaneous force to assist in the counterattacks (unlike the heavy tanks, they don't break down).

A coast gun is situated on the peninsula to the north of the airfield so it can cover both Kisasos Bay and Maleme beaches. The non-combat units which begin in the Maleme sector are placed along the western edge where the Greek regiment can help escort them off the south edge of the map. If nothing else, these units will cause the Germans to divert a few companies from the Maleme battle. Unless these noncombat units are stopped, the Commonwealth will gain 21 victory points worth of evacuated units.
FIGURE VII: Sample Defense and Attack at Maleme; German Glider Battalions are being used at Suda instead of Maleme. Commonwealth

C. General Tactics

The defenses which are illustrated in this article are designed to force the Germans to land away from their objectives. The farther away the Germans land, the more time the Commonwealth will have to maneuver and fight. Time is the German’s enemy; land, the more time the Commonwealth will have to move closer to their objectives. The farther away the German’s defenses, a close-assault by the Germans onto their flanks will be required. The Commonwealth can begin to solidify Suda’s chance to eliminate paratroopers and move closer to the port. The defenses which are illustrated in this article are vulnerable to Commonwealth attacks.

As the western force withdraws on Suda, the German’s port becomes a mobile Napoleonic “square”, always moving and finding off the fast moving enemy units, while sheltering its noncombatants inside. The Luftwaffe has neutralized Suda port, preventing the Commonwealth from evacuating on turn eight, the “square” should keep moving as fast as possible into Georgeopolis, leaving the engine detachments to blow up the port and stop the Germans from bringing in convoys. By staying within the “square”, the mobile light flak gun can reduce German road interdiction and attack airpower. The artillery and light tank should be directed toward the front of the “square” to give the leading units more attack power.

The Maleme force is basically a suicide detachment. Once the German assault battalions have been formed, the defenders must retreat into the hills above the airfield. From a line here they can control the airstrip, especially if the light flak gun is still operational. Two battalions can stack with the 4-2-2 flak unit, forcing the Germans either to launch an all-out attack, or to waste planes on each turn attempting to neutralize it. If the 4-3-4 and 5-6-4 New Zealand battalions stack with the flak gun on the Maleme hills, together they will have 22 defense factors. In order to succeed, an all-out attack will require odds of at least three-to-one. The Germans will have to bring in armor and artillery from the convoys, as well as several units from the mountain division to strengthen the airborne forces sufficiently for the assault. Although the defenders will ultimately perish, the hill defense will tie down a large number of German units for several turns.

The wave of paratroops which hits Heraklion and Retimo on turn three presents the Commonwealth with its best possible chance to kill German units. Neither airborne group is strong enough to grab an airfield on its own. The Commonwealth player can go on the offensive against these groups until the Germans are reinforced. They can chase the Germans even farther from their objectives by hunting down their dispersed companies on turns three and four.

The presence of German reinforcements in Heraklion will determine whether the Commonwealth tries to evacuate by sea or overland. A quick offensive can swing the paratroops away from either or both of the evacuation roads.

D. Reinforcements

The handful of units which comes in on turn eight and 16 has three uses: to secure evacuation roads, to be evacuated as victory points (a total of 26 points) or to help kill off the extra German units needed for victory.

The turn eight battle can hold the German’s road open or can come in behind an enemy airborne roadblock at one of the other sectors. The turn 16 group will rarely have any effect on play, but if the game is still in progress, it can push the Commonwealth over the edge to victory. The best targets for this group are the weak German airborne companies (2-1-4 and 2-2) which cannot be used to form battalions.

II. An Airborne Thunderbolt

The German player still has the opportunity to enjoy humiliating his enemy with a daring, well-coordinated assault. A capable Commonwealth player can make the German task extremely difficult, though not necessarily impossible.

The first thing the German player should realize is that the game probably will not last more than eight to twelve turns. If an airfield is not taken by turn eight, the game is obviously over since the defender has fulfilled his victory conditions. The game can still be over on turn eight unless the German have prevented the Commonwealth from withdrawing through the two ports. An unhindered naval withdrawal would total 65 evacuation victory points; another three battalions from the board or reinforcement chart, and the Commonwealth player is home free.

The second factor the Germans must, unfortunately, consider is that losing 75 points to casualties is very easy. A few unlucky dice rolls on the first drop can scatter headquarters and individual companies all over creation, making them easy prey to the enemy counterattack. Even a poor Commonwealth player will realize that the time to deal with an invasion is on this first turn, and he will jump on these companies as viciously as he can. Each convoy which sinks or is blown away by coast guns will cost heavily in casualties (13 points for convoy number one, 25 for convoy number two, and the weak companies which drop on turns six and seven (each worth ten points) are highly vulnerable to Commonwealth action.

So where does this leave the vaunted airborne assault? Faced with heavy losses and a limited amount of time to stop the enemy withdrawal, what does the German player do?

One thing the German player should not do is take the safe route; the attack outlined in the CRETE game booklet (Figure II) will help minimize losses and take Maleme, but will leave the Commonwealth free to evacuate from Suda sector. Furthermore, this approach requires committing the entire Luftwaffe against Suda port on turns six and seven in the hope of knocking it out. Such a plan places the whole German game at the mercy of one or two uncertain die rolls, neither of which are guaranteed to neutralize the port. The German player could do with a little more calculated daring.
THE GENERAL

"Audacity, audacity, always audacity" was one of the key maxims of Frederick the Great, Germany’s greatest soldier. An airborne assault must become the modern embodiment of Frederick’s 18th century phrase.

A. Suda—

The objective for the German player is not an airfield—it is the Commonwealth army. To get at this army, the Germans must jump right down its throat with a massive assault into central Suda. The Engineer battalion, the reinforced paratroop regiment, and the spare companies which are allocated for Suda should be augmented by the powerful glider battalion. Once they are all formed on the ground, their 55 combat factors will overwhelm the defenders. The total Suda defense force, much of it weak in offensive power, is only 46 factors when compacted. The tight German drop pattern shown in Figure VIII will cut this defending force in two.

![Figure VIII: Sample German close-assault drop on Middle Suda Sector. Drop is designed to form strong combat stacks as close to Suda harbor as possible while staying out of the sea. Glider Battalion is dropped on far right (10-10-6-4) as an anchor.](image)

Figure VIII’s suggested jump pattern puts six stacking points in each group: a full battalion with either a headquarters or a combat company (two companies go in with the smaller engineer group). The glider force is dropped as the eastern anchor because it is the least likely to scatter. According to the diagram provided with the game, the other units will drift in a northeasterly fashion. This six-battalion-equivalent drop should enable at least two or three battalions to form up at the start of turn two. Few companies will land in a hex alone against the Commonwealth units and will thus have a better chance of survival against drift combat and the enemy counterattack.

The Germans can begin pushing on Suda port immediately, thus catching some of the noncombat units still outside the port. The attack should be sustained by airpower for two turns to keep Suda port within German striking distance and to cut the Georgopolis road. Reinforcements arriving on turns six and/or seven can be dropped just below the port to link up with the main force if necessary. This drop will further sever the Commonwealth’s escape route and will minimize casualties among the new German units.

This jump into the lion’s den will cut the Commonwealth army in half, and, against a defense such as the one outlined in the game booklet (Figure II), will cost very little in casualties. A defender who expects this attack will be able to check the assault, but the combination of tight German forces and the concentrated Luftwaffe should capture Suda for the Germans. At the very least, this attack will prevent the Commonwealth from evacuating more than a handful of units from Suda port.

The jump pattern in Middle Suda can be varied to land the Germans a hex or two farther to the west or to an individual company in each stack and give a firmer base to the attack. By attacking too close to the port, the Germans risk dropping into the sea or drifting onto the port city itself, either of which will cause unnecessary losses.

B. The Airfield Assaults—

The German player must take at least one airfield, even if he is wrecking the Suda Bay defenses. As the instructors at jump school in Fort Bragg, N.C., used to say, unless an airborne force is supported within 48 hours it will be doomed. This idea holds true for the Germans on Crete.

Maleme is normally the easiest airfield to take. The drop which is suggested in the game booklet (Figure II) is probably the safest and most effective drop possible. The diversion of the glider battalion to Suda, however, will necessitate a tighter pattern to conserve force among the remaining German battalions (See Figure VII). These German battalions should head straight for the airfield with full Luftwaffe support as soon as planes can be spared from Suda.

An early landing at Kissamos (just west of Maleme) and another at Maleme beach should give the airborne group the extra power necessary to secure the airfield. The convoys should be planned for the first five turns of the game to maximize their availability. If these forces are not sufficient, the turn six and seven airborne groups will have to be committed at Maleme instead of Suda. The flak guns above the airstrip should be neutralized by the Luftwaffe for one turn to allow artillery from the mountain division to land. These artillery units should give the Germans enough power to assault the few positions that are within range of the airfield.

Retimo is probably the worst death trap of all for the Germans. With only two reinforced battalions at their disposal, they are almost incapable of an offensive. If reinforcements are available, drop them at Retimo to strengthen the assault, but the availability of reinforcements indicates that Maleme has already fallen, so why waste them in a sideshow attack against a superfluous airfield?

The most advantageous use of the Retimo force in blocking the evacuation roads. The drop at Retimo should be far enough from the Common-wealth positions to give the Germans time to form up (See Figure V). This landing still threatens the airfield, and the Germans can seal a march for the roads. Air interdiction and the necessity of holding the airfield will slow the defender’s reaction against this maneuver. (The Commonwealth cannot afford to uncover an airfield until the Germans have seized one.)

Heraklion holds two objectives for the Germans: the port and the airfield. The port must be either taken or neutralized in a neutral fashion as Suda port. Given the chances of air neutralization, an attack is the German’s best bet. The Luftwaffe is more efficiently used for a one or two turn assault on the port than in an unsure neutralization bombardment. The three reinforced German battalions in this drop can take the port and still contest the evacuation roads.

The air assault shown in Figure VI is designed to keep the Germans relatively intact so they can choose their objective. A drop closer to the port would make a move on the city easier but would not threaten the airfield and could in fact lead to heavier first drop losses.

Should the Maleme assault peter out or should the Germans want a chance of pace, they can go all-out for Heraklion field with planes, convoys, and airborne reinforcements. Such an offensive would force the Commonwealth to give up the port in order to defend the more crucial airfield.

C. Reinforcements—

The attacker has four types of reinforcements: Luftwaffe, airborne, convoy and airlanding units. The aircraft are a reinforcement in the sense that they can be continually shifted around the board to strike wherever the need is greatest.

The Luftwaffe has two jobs in AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE: to hinder Commonwealth evacuation and to hammer the defender like an airborne artillery group. They can severely curtail evacuation by interdicting the road network ahead or in the middle of an enemy column, or by attempting to neutralize the ports. Although bombardment against Heraklion and Suda puts too much hope in a die roll, unless the German ground units can strike at the ports on turn seven the planes must go in.

The flying artillery value of the Luftwaffe enables the Germans to put tremendous pressure on a single hex. Even in the face of anti-aircraft fire, at least 10 attack factors can be added to any single attack. Neutralizing flak positions before the bombers aid a land attack is often a waste of planes. Even with the entire 21 air factors going after one position, there is still a relatively good chance it will emerge unscathed or be back in action next turn.

The airborne reinforcements which enter on turns six and seven, each worth ten attack factors, can turn the tide against a reluctant airfield or can bottle up a retreating column long enough for the ground forces to catch up. The favorite bottletop- per drops are around the pass at Petres in Georgopolis and on the roads leading off the board from the nearest sectors. Ten attack factors of paratroopers coupled with the 21 Luftwaffe factors should stall or break the head of most retreating columns. These companies must be supported within a turn or two or they will be overwhelmed by the Commonwealth.

The convoys are dependent upon their intended destination, the discovery and neutralization of Commonwealth coast guns, and the luck of the die. The German player cannot put all his hopes on the convoys, but he should try to get them in as safely as possible. Convoy landings should be scheduled for the second or third turn after parachutists have hit an area to ensure that coast guns have been searched out and destroyed. Although this ties up a few companies and perhaps some planes, if the convoy makes it past the debilitating die roll the effort will be rewarded.

The armor, artillery and infantry of the convoys are even more powerful than the airborne reinforcements. An intact convoy can put unbearable pressure on a defensive position, especially if it is used in concert with the Luftwaffe.

The airlanding units of the mountain division are dependent upon the availability of the airfields, and thus come in only after the climax of the battle. A Commonwealth player who is staunchly holding a defense can keep the Germans relatively intact so they can choose their objective. A drop closer to the port would make a move on the city easier but would not threaten the airfield and could in fact lead to heavier first drop losses.

Should the Maleme assault peter out or should the Germans want a chance of pace, they can go all-out for Heraklion field with planes, convoys, and空中 reinforcement. Such an offensive would force the Commonwealth to give up the port in order to defend the more crucial airfield.

III. Summary—

The German player has the opportunity to create a true lightning attack. Even when faced with a well directed defense, a decisive airborne onslaught can end the game in a German victory with-
Military operations are fickle creatures. Invariably, they are planned down to the last roll of toilet paper, but once the action starts, they hardly ever follow the script. The deviations come either as a result of poor planning, enemy counteraction, or just plain fate. Some historical examples:

Operation Citadel—Hitler's offensive against the Kursk Salient, 1943. This operation was a disaster because enemy intelligence was far better than the Wehrmacht's. The Soviets knew every step the Germans were going to take.

Operation Thunderbolt—the Israeli raid on Entebbe, 3 July, 1976. A near perfect operation, despite having its objectives defined in terms of minutes instead of days or hours. (The commandos had two minutes to gain control of the hostages.) Good intelligence, excellent planning, and precise execution pulled it off. By comparison, witness the Egyptian debacle at Nicosia, Cyprus just this year.

In Avalon Hill's game, *INVASION OF MALTA, 1942*, gamers are given the opportunity, perhaps more than in any other game, to plan out a complete operation. They must map out strategy, then attempt to execute their assault, coordinating reinforcements, and react. Note: An Axis commander is fully capable of dropping anywhere on Malta—the flak setup will tell him where he should have dropped!

Another viable option is the "flak trap," that is, flanking the suspected drop site with every battery that can be brought to bear. There are two problems with this option. The first is where to expect the initial drop. Guess right and the battle will be all but over before it starts; guess wrong and your flak batteries will sit where they are, virtually useless for...
the duration. The second problem is what to do if you guess wrong. A tight Axis drop in the wrong place can put the Allies in a world of hurt! The potential for a wrong guess should be considered and planned for.

One final note on flak—PROTECT THE LIGHT BATTERIES!!! They are important. Not only are they the only mobile force available to stop air landing on captured fields, but their 12 fire factors used as artillery are crucial in the early going. Don't try to hold a field closed too long and allow these units to be cut off.

B. Coastal Defense Artillery—

Coastal defense artillery (CDA) is exceedingly powerful—a strength 3 CDA has a 50% chance of eliminating every unit in a given BLB. But their immobility makes them nearly a one shot defense weapon. (Unless the landings are on Valletta Beach where the sheer numbers of CDA batteries may overwhelm the Axis capability to destroy/neutralize them all . . .) The Allies can expect a strong paratroop effort against suspected CDA positions overlooking the landing site as well as air bombardment immediately beforehand. The batteries should be defended vigorously from land assault prior to the landing—but not to the extent that other vital targets are made vulnerable.

There are 14 CDA units and 19 possible locations to place them in. On the surface, it would appear that Valletta Beach is the only one of the four adequately covered and that careful placement of these units is an exercise in futility. There are a few things to consider—like placing the short range batteries in a central location to cover the maximum BLBs. But on the whole most of the placements are clear. Figure 3 shows a CDA deployment and a few LOSs which may not be immediately obvious.

The heavy CDAs (range = 24) are seemingly Very Important Pieces. Given a spotting unit, these batteries need no direct LOS to the target landing box. The catch is, of course, those spotting units. The Axis will expend considerable effort to knock off any defender they find on coastal beach hexes, so, without considerable luck (and a strategic attack or two) indirect CDA fire should not be depended upon. Of the four beaches, Western, with its rough terrain, stands to gain the most from the heavies. One note: There is an immediate urge to hide these four CDA units in Valletta under a strong flak blanket to protect them. But by putting them in battery positions on a beach, they also have direct LOS firing capability and are thus a double threat.

C. Infantry and Supporting Units—

Flak is preventive; CDA are defensive; the rest of the Allied units are active. Once the Axis are on Malta, the infantry and their supporting units must take over. They have to defend against a horde of enemy troops and not only keep them from taking the three main objectives, but inflict maximum airborne casualties as well.

As was stated before, a major Allied advantage is time and it's the infantry who must make the most of this advantage. There are two basic ways of doing the job. The first is the Allies inverted status at the start. The Axis cannot plan their attacks efficiently before their movement phase if they don't know what they'll be up against. Allied units should stay inverted until the last possible moment, or unless an opening for a surrounded counterattack shows itself. The second method is the "pin"—an Allied unit, by moving next to an Axis stack, effectively pins it. The enemy either attacks the unit(s) pinning it, or it doesn't attack at all during the turn. Pinning the Axis will force them to fall back to regroup or attack where they might not want to—either way it will delay them.

An example of a pin is shown in figure 4. The Italians are ready to hurl an attack against the city of Hamrun, the last defensive position before Floriana Bastion. The attack, if not countered, should be successful. (A 3-1 with a -1 modifier for the assault guns has a 5/6 chance of dislodging the defenders). By moving out from Valletta to the position indicated, HQ-Malta pins the assault guns and two strong battalions. These units must now attack the headquarters or not attack at all this turn—and Hamrun holds for another important turn.

Day 1 is a key to the Allied cause. Although restricted by the surprise rule (movement restricted to a single hex on turn 1), Allied defenders within range should pin the scattered airborne units and attack those they can achieve decent odds against. Counterattacks are vital during the day against the paratroops, especially the German Fallschirmjager battalions. Surrounded attacks, even at odds as low as 1-1, can wreak havoc on an already tight Axis turnable, by stalling linkups and destroying needed units. (Nail two battalions of German paratroopers and the Axis player will be staring at the possible premature withdrawal of his best units!)

Initial positioning is somewhat restricted as the defenders are split up among the four command areas. Some guidelines:
1. **Northern Command Area.** One unit on the rough terrain near Mellieha to cut off any northern landings and to be ready to move up to St. Paul’s Bay. (Best unit for this task is probably HQ-North.) Other infantry battalions located near Takali (and in the Gargur Hills) in double positions, hoping for drop combat. One unit is placed directly on Takali to insure a reasonable defense. These NCA units are thus in a position to pin Axis paratroops if the initial drop is near Takali; or, if the drop is elsewhere, they are ready to defend St. Paul’s Bay if necessary.

2. **Western Command Area.** One unit directly on Krendi Airfield and the others doubled and ready to roll in any direction.

3. **Southern Command Area.** One unit on Halfar Airfield, the others doubled and ready to go where the action is when needed. If the Axis do land near Takali, these units will remain immobile as a reserve.

4. **Central Command Area.** Some weaker units deployed in and around Valletta to mask the location of the flak battalions. Units stationed on Luqa and Kirkop Airfields, the others in double positions ready to move. The CCA battalions should be placed near the area in which the main Axis thrust is expected. (near the NCA/CCA border if a drop is suspected near Takali, for example.)

The infantry support units definitely have their uses in the defense of Malta and their tactics are covered in the next few paragraphs:

1. **Artillery—**

   The artillery regiment and the light flak batteries represent the second major advantage the Allies have early in the game—the Axis don’t have any of note until the Followup Convoys begin to arrive. These units should be placed in position to support the immediate series of counterattacks against the paratroopers. Figure 5 shows one such initial placement—as before, the focal point is to help defend Takali.

   While the artillery is invaluable during the Allied combat phase, it is during the Axis phase that these big units really do their stuff. In defensive fire, the artillery can concentrate on a single unit in a stack to push it out of an attack or destroy it. Priorities depend upon the circumstances; choosing whether to shoot to kill or to reduce an attack is a judgement decision. Example: Figure 6 shows a position just prior to Axis combat. Two battles have been announced, a 4-1 against 2/RWK in Zebbug and an 8-1 against 16/f/RE. There are several possible shots for the massed artillery regiment: a 3-1 against the 7th Engineer Battalion, a 2-1 against either 1/1 or III/2 (either of these shots, if successful, will lower the odds against 2/RWK, with the shot on the 7th having a 1/6 shot at killing the battalion), or a 4-1 against any of the three 185th battalions. (This last shot would be classed a kill shot as success would have little effect on the battle.)

   Before the game, the Allied player should study the terrain of Malta and choose artillery positions for future turns. One particularly good position is shown in figure 7—the Kill Zone. This area must be crossed by the Axis on their drive to Birzebbagia if they drop anywhere but around Zeitjun. With the exception of the cities in the Zone, the Axis units will be undoubled and, if the Italian sea-born reinforcements are detained, the airborne troops will have to run the gauntlet—obviously a strong defensive effort should be made (given the chance) to keep the enemy in the Zone for as many turns as possible.

   One very important rule: AS LONG AS THE AXIS HAVE PARADROP CAPABILITIES,

   ARTILLERY UNITS SHOULD NEVER BE LEFT ALONE. It would probably pay the Axis to drop a couple Italian units behind the lines to attack these units if left vulnerable. Once the drop threat is over, the regiment should be concentrated for maximum effect. Given the fact that these units cannot be neutralized by air bombardment, they are the most valuable units on the island.

2. **Armor—**

   Armor is a nice weapon to have, especially if the other guy doesn’t have any. With this in mind, these units should be placed where they can participate in the Day 1 counterattacks before the Axis antitank units can intervene. The reliability roll is just something the Allies will have to live with—a successful roll can effectively raise the odds of an attack with its -1 modifier.

   The light armor unit should be heavily protected as it doesn’t require a reliability roll and its long range allows it to move freely all over the island—keeping in mind, of course, that it can only enter rough terrain via road. Once the Axis pick up some artillery support, the light armor will be a certain target for defensive fire when used in attacks, so caution is recommended.

3. **Beach/Fortress Companies—**

   These five units are primarily defensive in nature. The Beach companies are a good start in meeting the Italians on the beach and denying them beachheads—tantamount to delaying reinforcements as the followup convoys can only land on beachhead hexes. Western Beach, with its doubling rough terrain, is an ideal place to start these units, unless some other beach is suspected strongly. Fortress companies should be used to defend CDAs, with the secondary goal of moving to defend beaches if needed. Magdalena and Dragonara Batteries, overlooking St. Paul’s Bay, are excellent starting points for both purposes.

4. **Dummy Units—**

   These decoys should be used near key AA units to possibly divert Axis bombers. Another crucial use is on the beach hexes. Putting dummys on the beaches will force the Axis to respond madly, ferreting out the real enemy from the imaginary ones, trying to clean them up prior to the initial landings. His efforts should tip his hand concerning his landing site and allow the Allies to start their defensive reaction early. One note of caution: A wily Axis commander may pull the old “think-double think” against a rival defender by throwing all his attackers against one beach to clear it, then landing the Italians on a totally different beach...
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For the Allies, the tactics are basically "delay, disrupt, and survive", punctuated by counterattacks whenever possible. Serious consideration should be given to taking offensive action against the suspected beach just prior to the Assault Convoy's landing to throw the enemy on the defensive. Example: In figure 8, it is evening, Day 1. The struggle for the Gargur Hills is still in progress. The Allies can throw a kink into the Axis plans by massing their artillery and, with the light armor in support, attack the two Folgore battalions at 4-1. This attack, in combination with pinning action against other Axis forces in the area has an excellent chance of killing both Italian units or, at least, pushing them back to allow 2/ KOMR to move into the vacated hex and contest any landing there—not to mention spotting for the heavy CDAs.

The one major consideration the Allies should keep in mind is their limited strength—a battalion lost is a battalion gone forever. If they try to defend too much too long, sooner or later the casualties are going to catch up with them and a major breakthrough will occur. The defenders will find themselves suddenly isolated away from the main enemy targets. But, by the same token, they can't afford to simply fall back to Birzebbuga and Valletta and hope for the best. The Axis drive must be contested all the way but a delicate balance must be drawn on whether to hold or fall back—there's no set criteria, so it's strictly a judgement call. One pitfall to try and avoid is allowing the strong battalions to try and defend untenable positions. Example: Figure 10a shows a position just before Axis combat. The 8/KO battalion has a way out of the city if forced to retreat. The next turn the position will be untenable as shown in figure 10b. The two German battalions can now attack A/26RA, forcing its retirement (or outright destruction) and then assault Zebbug again with the remainder of the forces to have an excellent chance to kill off 8/KO. Even if the city holds out, the battalion is trapped by enemy zones of control, cutting his movement to a maximum of one hex into open terrain.

In general, though, the Allies defense of Malta will depend on what the Axis player cooks up. The defenders must be prepared to expect and counter anything that comes their way.

II. AXIS OPERATIONS

Analysis of Axis operations is far more difficult as everything depends upon the set plan of battle. For the purposes of this article, a plan has been developed and explained to show the reasoning and thought behind each decision.

The first step in planning any offensive operation is the gathering of intelligence. Setting objectives and timetables without first studying the opposition is like a low odds attack in STALINGRAD—you might succeed but it would be pure luck. Innumerable operations have failed because of poor intelligence, a good example being Operation Market Garden. (What SS Panzer Divisions? ?) In MALTA, the numbers and strengths are given in the OoB, so all that's missing is their exact disposition—and a guess can be made at those with an analysis like that of Section I.

Time is the most pressing problem. All three objectives, Luqa Airfield, Valletta and Birzebbugia must be in Axis hands before the end of the fifth day (Turn 20) to allow for the four turn holding requirement. Despite the numerical superiority of the Axis on paper, it is a tough task. The voluntary defended. However, this is not to say that these traps the Axis must avoid are numerous. To list just a few:

1. The beaches must be secured for the Assault Convoy and kept secure. A successful Allied counterattack against the established beachheads would spell total Axis disaster by cutting off the flow of reinforcement.

2. The Allied units must never be allowed to concentrate their forces. The Axis should attack along the broadest possible front, keeping the defenders stretched thin and reserves to a minimum. Breakthroughs, when accomplished, should strive to separate the Allied defenders from the main Axis targets.

3. The airborne units must be protected from overextending themselves and becoming the targets of surrounded counterattacks. The effort to extricate them from the trap will be costly and time consuming.

The use of the airborne units is probably the strongest nut for the Axis commander to crack because the role of the paratrooper is somewhat contradictory. The airborne units cannot afford to single out one objective and concentrate against it as this will allow the Allies to concentrate their forces against the thrust. On the other hand, the troops can't become totally separated as they would be cut off, surrounded individually, and most probably destroyed. A delicate balance must be found.

Once these general factors have been considered, it becomes time to draw up the plan of action.

The Plan

In broad scope, the battle plan is a three pronged assault, two aimed at putting pressure on Valletta immediately and the third thrust cutting southwest against the airfields and Birzebbugia. Above all else, the three attacks should actively pursue the offensive to keep the defense stretched and harried. A solo attack anywhere would result in the defenders being able to extricate a large reserve of units and withdrawing into the bastions of Valletta and Floriana, where they would be extremely difficult to dislodge without proper support. In addition, if the majority of the island's defenders can be lured into the line in central Malta, they might emerge too weak to adequately defend everything they have to.

With this overview in mind, the details of the operation can be detailed as follows: (see Figure 11)

A. The Landing Force

The Allied analysis of the four beaches is right on—the best choices are St. Paul's Bay and Western Beach. North is too far away and Valletta is too well defended. However, this is not to say that these beaches must never be used. The Axis key is, in reality, their unpredictability. The plan considered
here calls for a landing on St. Paul's Bay Beach for several reasons. First, it's near a superb drop zone to allow for beach preparation by the airborne units. Second, aside from the four heavies, the three CDA battery positions are easily accessible and only one is defended by doublet defenders. Finally, it is nearer Valletta than Western Beach and, once the batteries are taken out, the capitols can be attacked early on, no doubt causing considerable alarm and defensive reaction by the Allies.

The next decision to be made is where to land. The choice for this operation is the morning of Day 2 (Turn 5) for two basic reasons. It gives the para troopers an additional turn to find and reduce CDA and coastal hex defenders, unhampered by Allied artillery, unless it happens to be adjacent to the Axis units. It also allows the air force to do its thing against any remaining CDA positions. A night landing on turn 4 is also attractive as it would have any remaining CDA and allow the Commandos a free reign of terror in the rear. Experience shows that the air power availability is the key to this decision for now.

The objectives of the sea landed Italians:

a. Relieve airborne units on the front lines to keep their casualties to a minimum.

b. Protect the beachheads for the next convoy.

c. Assault and take Valletta. (Four words, but the hardest of the three objectives. It will probably require cleaning out every hex surrounding the port for artillery positions.)

d. Special Orders—Commandos. Land on the southern end of Malta near Marsa Scirocco and attack any available targets. Overall objective is to make absolute nuisances of themselves . . . .

B. Airborne Units—

Before the para troopers and inflict casualty points. (His alternative is to concede the airfield with no fight which will also give the para troopers free movement to their next objective, not a pleasant prospect.) By keeping the defenders occupied on a secondary target, the main show (the landings) can go on with less defensive interference. The Axis alternative of concentrating on preparing the beaches for the landings will lose them an entire day, something they just can't afford. (Not to mention allowing the Allies to hem in the beaches with strong forces . . .)

While drop 1 is the mainstay of the Axis airborne effort, drops 2 and 3 will keep the Allies guessing and keep him from committing himself wholly to a single sector. These two Italian regiments should be used as required for any number of purposes. For example, they could be dropped onto a weak position behind the Allied main line of resistance to cut off retreats or pin down Allied reinforcements. Particularly good drops would involve attacking the artillery regiment of the defenders—put that out of action and white flags might fly sooner than expected. Care must be taken here, though, as it would be very easy to drop the Italians into a situation where they could be cut off and killed. So, if you do drop them behind the lines, make sure it's worth it!

The specific orders:

a) All bombers, initial turn. Concentrate on Takali Airfield—this will give 9 effective air bombardment points and a 5% chance of neutralizing the 65th AA battalion defending the airfield. Subsequent 1st day turns—targets of opportunity, especially the light flak batteries. A good ground-air tactic is to neutralize the battery, then move next to it. It can't move out of Axis ZOC, so it will have to be rescued by force or abandoned—more hard decisions for the defender. One note of caution: keep the light flak battalions neutralized until they've been destroyed—those 12 fire points can hurt!

b) 1st and 2nd Fallschirmjager Regiments, including the 7th Engineers. Land at drop zone north of Takali (see figure 11). Objectives: Day 1, Takali, Musqa, Mdina, and the eastern edge of the Gargur Hills. Support the Italians if required to secure St. Paul's Bay. Day 2-3, drive across Malta and take Birzebbugha.

c) 185th Folgore Regiment: land near St. Paul's Bay. Objectives: any beacon hex units and reduction of the possible CDA sites at Magdala, Dragonna, and Spinola Batters. Upon completion, penetrate the Gargur Hills.

d) 186th Folgore Regiment: Land turn 2 in support of the 185th.

e) 187th Folgore Regiment: land turn 5 as dictated by circumstances.

The smaller units arriving with the 186th and 187th should be dropped in areas already secured by the big battalions, where they can be landed without...
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danger and be able to get into action with a minimum of delay—especially true of the artillery and antitank units landing with the 187th.

Figure 12 shows the result of these orders and the Allied reaction on turn 1. Although 2 battalions have been wiped out (32 victory points), the drop was tight and a large German force is unpiined, allowing their full operating capabilities on turn 2.

Tactically, the Axis should hit hard, fast, and often. When attacking with the convoy units, casualties don't count, so shove forward regardless of the defense. More caution should be used when advancing with artillery and the assault guns. These should be protected against any sudden Allied attack, as they will be required, along with everything else the Italians own, for the final reduction of Valletta.

The airborne units have to be somewhat more careful on their attacks as their casualties count. This is especially true of the Fallschirmjager battalions as it would be highly disadvantageous to the Axis cause to have their elite troops pulled out early. The Germans should link up early and take advantage of maximum stacking. Their method of attack should be the high odds bludgeon, such as shown in figure 10a, in an attempt to kill off any Allied units that get in their way. This guideline, of course, has its exceptions. An example is figure 13: Here the Axis have come against the Luqa-Zurrieq line, the last strong doubled position before Birzebugga. In order to force this line quickly, both Imkhaba and Zurrieq should be hit at 3-1 for one turn—if the attacks fail, then it's back to the bludgeon.

![Figure 13: Assaulting the last line to Birzebugga: two 3-1 assaults instead of a single bludgeon may turn the trick for the Axis.]

Some final notes on Axis tactics:

1) Keep moving. With most of the main battle for having MA - 4, they can move through enemy ZOCs. By moving forward, the Axis can force positions that assaults failed to carry, such as the one in figure 10b. But, at the same time, make sure advanced units have open lines of retreat in case the Allies get ambitious.

2) Protect weakened German battalions. If forced to break up a battalion due to combat results, pull the remainder back out of the fight. If another battalion is broken up, recombine the two weakened units into a full sized battalion as in CRETE.

3) Against an opponent who uses the Allied hidden deployment rule, it pays to keep a record of the Allied units contacted and identified. This will help the Axis figure out what's in store at the next town.

III. REFLECTIONS

While INVASION OF MALTA, 1942 does an exceptional job, no game or simulation can...
Malta is covered with fortifications. Even since the British occupied the island in the Napoleonic Era the island was considered a naval fortress. During the mid-19th century many coastal fortifications were built and batteries installed. Remnants of these were pressed into use during WWII. One prominent system of fortifications was known as the Victoria Lines. It consisted of many weapons sights and small forts, and incorporated a natural defense line running from the Madalena Battery through Forts Verdala and Tarja to Birjemma Battery. During the 19th century an enemy could occupy the island outside this line, yet Malta could still operate effectively as a naval base. However, by 1940 the range of field howitzers was so great that, at best, the fortifications would serve as the last line of trenches. Given the dimensions of the island, the British had to move their defense seaward and into the skies. Once enemy troops had arrived on Malta, had artillery in action, and had secured supplies then Malta would cease to be a base and essentially would have been captured. The critical factor in the strategic defense of Malta was command of the air. When this was lost, the Royal Navy could not remain. So a study of the struggle for Malta is a study of the air war above.

The air war over Malta underwent several phases. There was the Blitz by the Italians during 1940, when the British had only three scratch-built Gladiator fighters. After the Italian attack died down the German Luftwaffe arrived in January, 1941. On the day of their arrival they inflicted severe damage to the British carrier ILLUSTRIUS. British naval power then departed the central Mediterranean and the Axis commanded the skies until the invasion of Crete and the Russian campaign called away the Luftwaffe. The Allied command always desired to maintain Malta’s use as a base and during the second half of 1941 Malta became a stopover point for aircraft flown to Egypt. Malta then had sufficient aircraft to go on the offensive by attacking Axis supply convoys to Africa. This offensive was so effective that in December the Luftwaffe returned beginning from Russia. As the pressure grew during the next three months the British were forced to send the first Spitfires to the Mediterranean. On 20 March, 1942 the Axis felt strong enough to begin the Grand Assault, the air Blitz to neutralize Malta. By mid-April the Spitfire reinforcements had been reduced through daily air action to six. In this grim situation the Axis had achieved their greatest control of the air. When on 20 April forty-six Spitfires were flown to Malta from the U.S. carrier WASP, the Axis superiority was such that all were shot down or destroyed on the ground within three days. It was this success and the continued Allied weakness that prompted the Axis command to report the complete destruction of Malta’s air defense. Presumably the next major step would be the actual landing on Malta. But the very same day this report was made (10 May) another sixty-one Spitfires were flown from the WASP (and 17 more on 18 May). In one day the picture had changed: Malta was combat ready again.

The Axis could not invade without air superiority, but even if the Axis could have gained a lasting command of the air, they faced several other problems. The spearhead of any attack on Malta would consist of the paratroopers. While they could be dropped anywhere on the island, they would need heavy weapons support to break the fortifications. Barraging quick capture of an airfield the weapons would have to come across easily defensible beaches dominated by hills, forts, and steep cliffs. The north and east approaches to the island were covered by minefields and considerable coast artillery. For the sake of the game it must be assumed that Italian mine-sweepers would have been successful in clearing the way to St. Paul’s Bay Beach and Valletta Beach. Once the invaders are ashore and have survived the counterattack, he is faced with the necessity of quickly seizing a supply port because the beaches were too narrow to bear heavy supply traffic. In sum, invasion would depend upon the success of the airborne battalions in capturing the few key points necessary to enable the main invasion force to land successfully.

Fortress Malta was tough but it faced many problems too. First, in consideration of the civil population, Lord Gort (first command from May 1942) would have to consider capitulation when food and water supplies ran low as Percival did earlier at Singapore (15 Feb 1942). The equivalent of four reinforced brigades defended the island, but during the spring and summer of 1942 they had become weary, were hungry and malnourished, lost their infantry training edge, and even were split up to provide labor details to remove bomb damage. In some photographs even the uniforms were in tatters. Another problem was that at times the AA guns fell silent as sufficient stocks had to be available in event of an invasion. Malta was also besieged psycologically. Every soldier and civilian watched the convoys and after 22 months of this behavior a debilitating siege mentality had taken hold. Many were anxious for the Axis to invade just to get the agony over with. On the other hand, the seige united the Maltese people with the result that there were no saboteurs or collaborators.

An interesting aside to the fortification problem is that the island is honeycombed with caves. Some of the cave systems were so extensive that one writer called the tunnel from Valetta to Rabat "an underground highway". Although most cave systems were unknown even to the Maltese, and military use would have been limited to partisan action, the island headquarters at Valetta, most granaries and water reserves, and by 1942, workshops and some aircraft hangars were underground.

GAME SCALE

The strategic setting constraints also had an effect on the size of the mapboard and the level of conflict. Since the subject matter is the invasion of an island it was necessary to represent all of the important battle areas in one continuous map surface. CRETE employs a scale of 1.6 km per hex. A scale of 1.2 km would have been preferable, for more exacting tactical detail, but the 1.6 km scale was the largest possible given the dimensions of the gameboard sections. The long odd gameboard arrangement is regrettable but unavoidable given the nature of Cretan geography. The MALTA game uses the recommended 1.2 km per hex scale, and the entire island fit onto one gameboard section.

Closely related to the hex size problem was the unit size problem. Decisions on both problems were made because the unit is a function of the amount of terrain represented in one hex. A battalion level of representation was chosen because, at this level, players could easily see and control the action of an entire battle. The alternatives: brigade level or company level would reduce visibility and likely control. Given a 1.2 km representation overall battle. The rule allowing the German player to substitute companies for his paratroop battalions reflects the necessity of simulating paratroop drift and the German practice of assigning missions to individual companies. Research indicated that two battalions would fit well into 1.2 km per hex. At 1.6 km, however, the question would be whether the two battalions should be stacked. So, other factors had to be considered such as command control, unit density, total units in the game, and the historical record. The most practical approach was to keep the game in battalions level, with two battalions per hex thus maintaining consistency with MALTA's scale. Related to the unit size problem was the decision to stick with full units in the combat system. An alternative to the full unit elimination found on the Combat Results Table would have been to reflect partial losses through step reduction. This would give the advantage of allowing many battalions a degree of staying power. But it also would have meant an unacceptable increase in set-up time. How could anyone ever sort out all those step reduction counters? Some people thought ANZIO was bad enough. But the reduction system was tested, it did not work well, although combat resolution was perhaps more realistic.

Despite appearances, the CRT is not very bloody for a unit elimination table. Only in the worst circumstances in real battle would a unit be completely destroyed within a few hours. Most games, particularly those involving two thirds of one no getting hurt, unless surrounded, units usually must be attacked several times before being eliminated. A unique feature in this game is the new exchange system which is found at the low odds level, with two battalions per hex. This allows the attack to adjust the level of intensity of a battle to where he can sacrifice extra casualties to gain a position. In sum, the CRT provides a clean resolution that fits the game scale and maintains the player's focus on the more important problem posed by the game.

TIME SCALING

A scaling decision all its own is the time frame in which to situate the game. MALTA presents no problems—the game lasts until one side collapses, or mutual exhaustion. CRETE is more complicated. CRETE was designed to encompass the decisive struggle for the airfields, without which the German player could not adequately supply and reinforce his paratroopers. To stretch out the game to include Allied retreat strategies would distract from the central purpose, and would ignore political complications. After the fall of Crete should be a naval fortress, and that the island
should be held to inflict enough casualties on the German parachute corps to discourage possible future airborne attacks on Cyprus, Syria, or the Suez Canal. This restraint allows the Allied player a choice of only two strategies within the scope of the game: hold the island, or inflict heavy casualties on German paratroops before evacuating. Allowing a strategy emphasizing evacuation would defeat the purpose of the game. Only the first two strategy alternatives were codified in the Advanced Game Victory Conditions, and the game length was restricted to the moment Gen. Freyberg, the Allied commander, decided on final evacuation.

The final time scaling decision was to create four game turns in one game day, with both unit and battalion scale units, fewer turns per day would have been preferable but sufficient time had to be allowed for paratroops to land, organize, and attack all during the same day. Otherwise, more game turn phases with the required complexity would have been required.

PARATROOP DRIFT

The paratroop drift results do not represent another scaling decision but a German organization problem. The intention is to scatter paratroops all over the countryside, emphasizing the vulnerability of the paratrooper during his first moments on the ground as well as a normal scattering. There can be no “perfect plan” if only because of the random element of drift. Yet the drift result is not totally random. This too was intended. The actual landing location for each unit should be a function of the aircraft approach route, the prevailing winds, and anti-aircraft fire. Ground opposition will break up the aircraft formation and then the paratroops will be scattered and disorganized, but still according to the critical factors. The bias is important since at this scale total randomization is not correct.

NAVAL ACTION

A paratrooper’s game should be concerned with only one subject, how best to accomplish his objective with the parachute forces at hand. Naval action was contained within another sphere of command for both sides. At Crete neither Gen. Student nor Gen. Freyberg had any control over the naval forces involved. The Germans attempted to send two invasion fleets to Crete but both were intercepted, probably due to the British advance knowledge through the Enigma. Our aircraft and we were partially destroyed. An introduction of naval action to “save” the fleets or to intercept the British evacuation convoys would shift concern away from the primary tactical fight at the airfields. This is not the purpose of the game. Further, such a shift would raise the problem of a conflict of strategies: one of isolating the island versus one of seizing the island by airborne forces. In sum, to add to the naval action would hinder a playable situation. The HMAS YORK and the coastal steamer are exceptions because of their limited tactical nature.

One naval activity which could have affected the outcome of the battle on land was naval bombardment. Historically the British Royal Navy did bombard Crete, but with disappointing results. The British conducted a night raid against Maleme with their faster ships, and later made a carrier-assisted raid against a German airfield on Scarpanto Island. Each raid lacked effectiveness due to lack of proper observation of target and lack of co-ordination with ground based activity. The Italians too planned a bombardment raid only this was to be against Malta. Malta’s fixed coastal installations were to be bombarded by two old battleships which were not to fire more than 200 partial charge rounds. Observation was to depend upon spotter biplanes launched from the decks of the battleships. The British plan this action lacked co-ordination with ground forces. Both the British action and the Italian planned action were omitted from the game because of their brief and insubstantial effect.

AIR OPERATIONS

Although the naval action is peripheral, air action is not. The critical prerequisite before any airborne invasion is the necessity for complete air superiority. Over Crete the Luftwaffe met only token British resistance until 19 May. On that day the last British aircraft (four Hurricanes and four Gladiators) were withdrawn to Egypt. The next day the German airborne invasion began. This, however, was more coincidence than plan. In its struggle for air superiority the Allied air strength had been eliminated in Greece. Still, some 45 aircraft evacuated to Crete (27 Blenheims, 12-14 Hurricanes, and 6 Gladiators) during 22-24 April but conditions there were so primitive that these could not be maintained in continual air combat. By 13 May the Blenheims had departed and the Hurricanes were reduced to six. On 17 May ten new Hurricanes arrived but these too could not hold against the daily Blitz. Throughout the battle the British maintained the hope that the RAF might return. This intention prevented the Allied ground troops from destroying the airfields. That this hope was strong is proven by the actual arrival at Heraklion on 23 May of seven Hurricanes (of 12 sent). Still, these could not materially affect the outcome of the battle. They were too few. The British also tried bomber operations with Wellington and Blenheim bombers from Egypt. These bombarded airfields in Greece and later bombarded Maleme airfield. Where the nightly efforts (13-19 May) before the invasion had little appreciable effect in preventing invasion the occasional later efforts had even less effect. There were just too few bombers available. The situation recalls the campaign in 1940 where the RAF failed to destroy the airfields. That this hope materialised is not entirely by coincidence but was more coincidence than plan.

The Axis Invasion Fleets

The Axis invasion fleets consisted of a mixture of small coastal freighters and passenger ships, an odd steam yacht, some naval tugs, and a large number of caissons (auxiliary engine wooden fishing boats). This unwieldy assemblage was organized into two convoys and was to carry all the heavy equipment that was not transportable by air as well as some infantry for whom no aircraft space was available. The exact number of men and amount of equipment has proven impossible to determine, but it can be estimated that the first convoy of 25 vessels was bound for Maleme with about 2331 men. The second convoy with an estimated 4000 men in 38 vessels departed later and made for Heraklion. A third convoy also sailed for Crete. It carried about 2685 men drawn mainly from the Italian “Regina” Division based on Rhodes. For this operation the Italians used an even more wretched collection of their naval craft. Yet the Italian command with no prior notification of the impending attack, was able to plan, lead, and land this invasion fleet within six days of the decision to intervene. It is possible this fleet succeeded in passing from Rhodes to Crete because the British were too occupied with evacuations.

### AXIS AIR ORDERS OF BATTLE

**Cret, May 20, 1941**

4th Luftflotte (Gen. Lohr)

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### Fiegekorps XI (Lt. Gen. Student)

A total beyond of 493 Ju52/3m aircraft and 78 DFS gliders.

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<td>KGz.b.V. 40</td>
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<td>KGz.b.V.101</td>
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### Malta, May 10, 1942

2nd Luftflotte (F.M. Kesselring)

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### Fiegekorps XI (Gen Student)

A total of about 400 aircraft, mainly Ju52/3m but including some He111, Ju88, and Ju87 used as glider tow-planes.

By summer gliders prepared amounted to some 300 DFS, 200 Go242, and 15 Me321. About 200 glider pilots had been trained.

### Italian Royal Airforce

Located in Sicily, it possessed about:

- 200 Savoia S2 transports
- 150 bombers
- 140 fighters
- 10 air/sa rescue
- 160 ground attack
- 60 torpedo bombers
The units—
In the game, the Germans may look like supermen compared to some Allied units, but there are some very strong reasons for the disparity as may be discovered by examining the cross-section of units displayed below. Each unit in the game underwent a similar analysis. The results, with slight modification, are found in the game box.

**GERMAN UNITS—**

Consisting of about 120 men this unit, typical of all parachute rifle companies, was well armed, had good modern equipment and the right equipment when organized; it was well led and performed well. Four of these plus a headquarters composed one battalion. The Sturm Regiment had been recently formed from the assault battalion that attacked Eben Emael. On paper this regiment was the elite and was to be carried in gliders.

While this unit was typical of the German paratroops, it was the first paratroop unit raised (in 1936). Commanded by Col. Bruno Brauer the 1st Regiment took part in the attack on Denmark and Norway and later saw action in Holland at Rotterdam. Contrary to the Sturm Regiment, the battalion headquarters in the regular battalions was not intended for assault.

Both units represented recently formed support formations for the air division. The anti-tank unit had air-droppable 28/20mm AA weapons, as their only effectiveness was against a Matilda tank was a chance track hit. The anti-aircraft unit was composed of air-droppable 20mm AA weapons.

Consisting of about 100 men, this unit was essentially a well equipped heavy weapons company. Since the rifle battalions had to paratroop without their heavy weapons, these units were attached to each assault group to restore weight to trained, well led, and had high morale. The San Marco Regiment was a navy marine unit and was easily the best unit in Italy. It was well trained, well led, and its members fought with great determination. Originally, the regiment was raised for special small unit missions but eventually the regiment expanded to seven battalions, four of which fought in Africa. At Malta, commando detachments were to make special attacks against forts Benghaisa and Delimara.

Just a detachment, this unit represented four 75mm/LG 40 recoilless rifles. This weapon could be hauled by two men. It had a good rate of fire (6 rpm) and had an effective range of 5,600 yards. While quite effective in direct fire its use as a howitzer was wholly unsatisfactory.

The first unit was typical of the mountain units employed on Crete. Like the paratroops it too was short on heavy weapons but was a veteran unit, was well led, and had high morale. The recon unit was essentially a stripped down maneuver battalion.

**ITALIAN UNITS—**

The first unit consisted of twelve 75mm howitzers with range of 4,800 meters. It was effective against fortifications. Each piece required several transport planes to carry it, the gunners, ammo, and draft animals. Twelve 150mm howitzers with range of 12,325 meters composed the second unit. This artillery was much too heavy for air transport.

Both armor units had over a dozen tanks apiece, the first being composed of Pzkp II and the second of Pzkp III made available from the 5th Panzer Regiment. Large amounts of armor were not made available due to the stress in transport and the scarcity of available shipping. No armor could be transported by air.

The 33rd Regiment may be considered representative of regular Italian infantry during 1942. It consisted of 3,322 men organized into three battalions (each 576 men) plus support companies. The “Livorno” Division was well trained and organized and fought well in Sicily a year later.

The Italians had detachments of paratroops since the beginning of the war but they did not compose an exclusively parachute division until a German training mission arrived in early 1942. “Folgore” was an elite unit, comparable to German units, and it fought well and gallantly at El Alamein.

The San Marco Regiment was a navy marine unit and was easily the best unit in Italy. It was well trained, well led, and its members fought with great determination. Originally, the regiment was raised for special small unit missions but eventually the regiment expanded to seven battalions, four of which fought in Africa. At Malta, commando detachments were to make special attacks against forts Benghaisa and Delimara.

On paper the normal Italian artillery regiment had 2769 men and 36 guns, but for the Malta operation the heavy artillery was removed from divisional command. For each division this left two groups of twelve 75mm howitzers. The light artillery unit for each division consisted of the independent mortar battalion of 529 men and 27 mortar tubes. The Italian 81mm mortar was considered one of the most effective in Europe.

**THE DESIGN OF MALTA**

With the completion of the CRETE design a complete game system for use in another parachute game was available. While CRETE was built first, MALTA tested many of the design features found in the CRETE system and thereby provided an instant feedback as to the success of each design solution. This feedback aspect is perhaps quite unusual in wargame design because the changes occurred before publication of either game. It was fortunate that the MALTA design was in no way forced by some element in the CRETE design. Generally, many of the same historical conditions present at Crete were also present at Malta one year later, thus there was already the design “solution” for: nature command blamed many of its difficulties on the lack of replacement aircraft rather than face where the problem more squarely stood: an inability to set policies and lack of ground organization. On Crete the ground organization problem was particularly acute. The ground crews had little equipment, no facilities, no back-up personnel, and were reduced to cannibalizing damaged aircraft to keep a few in the air. Clearly, for the game no RAF units could effectively operate from bases on Crete. In examining the historical record, these twin problems of poor policy making and lack of ground organization appear endemic to all British military operations outside of Britain. It is little wonder that the other service arms lost confidence in the RAF. One British seaman was heard to say as he inflated his lifebelt, “This is all the ruddy air support I'll get this trip.”

As the British air operations faded away the Luftwaffe gained an undisputed command of the air over all the Aegean and much of the Eastern Mediterranean. While some German air strength was always directed against Allied shipping, its focus was on operations over Crete. In the game the Luftwaffe is represented in three ways. First, the Allies have limited road mobility due to the presence of German tank units. Second, they are faced with the lack of a fighter force. This mobility is further hampered by fighter plane concentrations. Second, there is strategic bombing of specific types of military targets. Third, the Luftwaffe is represented as combat strength points to fulfill its mission of tactical support of the ground troops.

Tactically, the Luftwaffe is represented as strength points rather than as individual aircraft formations. This reflects the fact that aircraft were dispatched from the airfields as fast as they could return to base refuel, forming up in battle as ad hoc groups. It is specifically a strength point representation in the game as this directly relates its function as “flying artillery” to the combat system. The alternative would have been more game turn phases with the resultant complexity of play. The only difficulty tactical air support had in the actual battles was where the British figured out the ground call signs. In sum, German tactical bombing proved quite effective in Crete.

In contrast, strategic bombing had its difficulties. Several targets were neutralized but not destroyed. The AA batteries, for example, could be knocked out only by ground attack. This is why special glider detachments were assigned to attack AA units in Suda Sector. The cities were also Luftwaffe targets although such bombing was intended as a terror device. Specific military targets other than fixed installations could not be readily identified because of the excellent British camouflage. Strategic bombing was limited to these roles and is thereby not part of the game's combat system. Therefore special missions are resolved on a separate table with results having a much different effect than found in combat results.
of combat, game scale, time frame, fleet activity, air operations, and physical lay-out for the game. The big differences in this historical subject were that: first, it never actually occurred and, second, the Axis placed more emphasis on the amphibious phase of the invasion. Despite the many similarities, MALTA had many unique design problems.

Because the invasion never took place there was the problem of what likely invasion date should the game assume. Malta presented a problem to the Axis from the very beginning of the war. Each year the Axis prepared another invasion plan. There were the Pre-War Plan, the 1940 Plan, the 1941 Plan, and several 1942 plans. No wonder that by mid-1942 the Italian general staff was anxious to get the invasion underway. The original game contained scenarios reproducing each plan, thereby leaving the players with the decision on most likely invasion date. But the scenarios were omitted from the final version of the game. With such necessary size and complexity, they would never have been played. The scenarios had really been designed for the avid and interested wargamer, so rather than entirely forget them, they are presented here. The most likely invasion in my opinion was the one scheduled for spring 1942. The plan for this date was the one chosen by Avalon Hill to be the actual game. One of the major reasons for choosing this date was the psychological predisposition of the Axis leaders. Mussolini did not feel the invasion would succeed without German help. But Hitler had a phobia about invading islands, particularly after the Crete experience. Furthermore, he was convinced the Italians would only run if they ever had to oppose the British fleet. For the previous two years neither Axis partner seemed willing to make any decisive Mediterranean

continued on pg. 32, Column 1

Allied Units

Headquarters staffs were, of course, important to the operation of any battle. In the game, each headquarters unit represents the commander, staff, signals, various liaison sections, and occasionally a defense platoon. The "Ceforces" and Malta HQ units each represent more headquarters personnel than found at brigade level but these had no additional combat effectiveness.

These composed the original defense force on Crete before the evacuation from Greece. While generally up to strength in manpower they lent out much of their equipment to the evacuees. They were still well organized and had not suffered the debilitating effects of a long retreat.

The M.N.B.D.O. (Mobile Naval Base Defense Organization) was a navy unit (Royal Marines) designated primarily for the defense of naval bases, as its name implies. 1,941 men of the organization were on Crete while another 1,000 were still at Alexandria, Egyp. This organization possessed all the anti-aircraft defense, coastal defense, signals, workshops, landing and command equipment necessary for the operation of a port. It was brought from England specifically for Crete, arriving at Suez on 21 April. It arrived at Suda between 10 May and 15 May.

The main body consists of the Signals unit (the 0-0-2); 684 signals, HQ, pioneer, and workshop personnel from the MNBD0 plus attached HQ and staff personnel from other services. Scattered in four detachments on Crete the "23/RM" unit was originally an LAA unit but on Crete was armed instead with light machine guns. During the battle a composite RM battalion was formed from assorted armored RM detachments. This is represented in the game by the MNBD0 infantry and the "5/L RM" units. The remaining units were generally armed as intended. The two coast artillery batteries had four 4" Mk IV L/40 guns (range 10,200 yards) and 518 men between them. The two heavy AA batteries had sixteen 3" AA guns and 172 men between them. Generally, the 3" AA guns (vertical effective range 20,000 ft) had not proven equal to the task of high altitude AA protection and were in the process of being replaced by the 3.7" AA gun (vertical effective range 32,000 ft).

This battalion held the vital Hill 107 overlooking Maleme airfield. While it was short on standard equipment and had only 644 men, it had within its perimeter RAF personnel, ten Bofors guns, machine guns, a coast artillery battery, and two Matilda tanks. The unit was well trained but a confused command structure impeded co-ordinated action. Furthermore its own commander chose to retreat at the wrong moment.

The Greeks were, for the most part, untrained, ill-equipped, and unorganized. They had no transport, and they were armed with five different types of rifle and an average of less than 20 rounds of ammunition per man. The deficiency was partially mollified by using weapons captured on the battlefield but so many were ill armed that the units dissolved in combat. The 6th Regiment had 1485 men but the units overall averaged about 1000 men, nearly all recruits. The Gendarmes unit (800 men) was disciplined and performed respectfully by repelling all German attacks on Retimo.

This is a cross-section of the composite units employed on Crete going from bad to the worst. The "comp/NZ" unit was composed historically of 1007 men arranged into five companies. These were armed men from the support services: artillerymen, truck drivers, and supply personnel. They had little to no training as infantry but fought well considering their background. The "Roy Per" unit represents a very similar situation but with only about 700 men. Originally it was just a camp for men about to be evacuated to Egypt but during the battle it organized as a combat unit and sent a detachment to the nearby village of Perivolao to help guard the King of Greece; hence the unit's name. The "comp/17" battalion consisted of remnants of the 17th Australian still on Crete. Its 387 men had only 270 rifles between them and simply had no other weapons. None of these formations had trained as a unit.

The artillery on Crete was nearly as bad as some of the infantry. For unexplained reasons the Allied command did not wish to risk 25-pounder artillery on Crete so 100 captured Italian pieces (generally 75mm) were sent instead, but only 49 survived transit. These guns, some of which the Italians had originally captured from Germany during WWI and others from France during the current war, lacked optical instruments, charts, and signaling equipment. Some sighting instruments had to be fashioned literally from chewing gum and bits of wood. Only 300-400 rounds were available per gun and some ammo lacked fuses. The "1 Lt" unit was the only modern unit with four 3.7" mountain howitzers. Unfortunately, because it had refused infantry support until too late it was overrun during the first hours.

Most of the AA units were modern, well supplied, fully equipped, and well camouflaged. On Crete the only big problem was the lack of sufficient numbers of guns. The "129" unit was equipped with twelve Bofors 40mm guns. The "234" unit was equipped with eight 3.7" AA guns.

All told on Crete there were 16 light tanks and 9 "Matilda" heavy tanks. As with the artillery, these were the worst available armor from Egypt. They seem to have been sent because it was known that paratroops would have almost no defense against them. Accordingly they were scattered in many small detachments. Armor losses were primarily due to mechanical breakdown.

When Italy entered the war on 10 June 1940 there was only one fully Maltese infantry battalion. Presumably it was organized and equipped along the same lines as the British regulars on the island like all other Commonwealth units. Eventually, three more battalions were raised but due to the continual siege these probably did not receive a full allotment of equipment and certainly could not train in large scale maneuvers. Whether the fact that they were fighting for their homes and family would make up for lack of equipment, one can only conjecture.
**SCENARIOS FOR CRETE AND MALTA**

By Vance Von Berries

Lately we've been offering professional quality components on a mail order basis to complement the better variants published in the GENERAL. Your initial response to such projects as the KINGMAKER variant event cards, RICHTHOFEN's maneuver cards, and PANZER LEADER drain counters has been such that we've decided to continue making the better variants which appear in the GENERAL with special mail order parts.

Such is the case here, where $2.00 will buy you a set of the variant CRETE/MALTA counters discussed below. While we wouldn't like to include these extras free in every issue as an added bonus, we couldn't do so without increasing the price of the magazine. So rather than make everyone pay more for variant counters which only some would want or use, we'll continue to offer them as a separate mail order item for those truly interested in exploring the variant further.

Many alternative scenarios are possible and all these were left out of the game on purpose due to the extra complexity they would have caused. GENERAL readers, however, might enjoy the extra complexity and so these scenarios with some optional rules included within them are presented here. All scenarios are entirely optional. Players should feel free to mix and match any of these until they have what they feel is the right personal mix of complexity and historicity versus playability. Always assume use of the regular rules unless an exception is specifically stated.

**AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE**

A. Additional Allied Equipment

In reserve in Egypt were some sixty 25 pounder artillery pieces. If these had been sent to Crete in place of the 75mm artillery pieces actually sent, the Allied defense might have been impervious to any attack plan. Players are cautioned that this scenario alters play balance heavily in favor of the Allies.

1. Delete the "2/2 AFR" unit and all field artillery units (4) except the 1 Lt/RA unit.
2. Add the following units (borrow some counters from MALTA):

   - Australian artillery

3. Placement:
   a. Place one artillery unit with each brigade and one with Cretore Reserve.
   b. The heavy AA units may be placed only with Cretore Reserve in Suda Sector.
   c. The remaining units may be placed anywhere.
4. Other rules:
   a. The Australian field artillery units may be moved by trucks.
   b. The "1 Lt/RA" unit and the four German mountain field artillery units do not need a clear Line of Fire to the target hex when attacking.

c. As an exception to rule H.5, parachute battalions may also be reformed by use of the RHQ unit of the same regiment, but only if at least one battalion HQ unit in that regiment has been eliminated.

d. OPTIONAL: To reflect the possibility that some Australian artillery might not have arrived, roll for the arrival of each unit. First, assign each unit to its brigade then roll. Unit is received on roll of 1, 2, 3, 4.

**B. Variations on Axis Convoys**

The arrival of a convoy in the game can have a considerable effect on play balance, tipping the notable landing area in favor of the Germans or by giving them a second chance in one sector. Obviously, because of this possibility and the great uncertainty as to the actual composition of the convoys, much design analysis was invested in the matter of the convoys. This scenario explores one further "answer" to the question. The presence of the extra units shown below is suspected but not confirmed.

1. Add the following units as desired to either convoy:

   - 2. Crete Axis Convoy Table adjustments:
     a. Make the following die roll adjustments:

     - NIGHT—add "2"
     - MORN—add "1"

     NOON—normal table

     EVEN—subtract "1"

     b. If a convoy (regular or decoy) is scheduled for an EVEN turn (turns 3, 7, 11, etc.):

     - Delete one fighter and two bomber strength points from air forces available that turn.

     2. Convert all "E"sum" results to "Abort".

     3. Convoy flexibility: Convoy times may be rescheduled after the game has started . . .

     a. Either convoy may be rescheduled any time up to four turns before regular arrival. For example, a convoy scheduled for turn #6 may be rescheduled only on turns #1 or #2.

     b. The beach destination may not be changed.

     c. The two convoys may be scheduled for the same beach destination but may not arrive within four turns of each other.

**C. The Italian Invasion Fleet**

The Italian invasion fleet was actually dispatched to Crete and it successfully landed on 28 May although at an unimportant location. It was possible this force could have been co-ordinated with the main Axis effort.

1. Add the following units:

   - 2. This convoy is scheduled like the other convoys for any turn, Turn #16 or later.

   3. Schedule one extra decoy convoy, Turn #16 or later.

   4. This convoy is restricted to either Heraklion Beach with the arrival resolved on the Sea Movement Table or to entry through the far eastern edge of the mapboard. East edge entry is like the Allied South Edge entry procedure with resolution on the Allied South Edge Table but with a one turn delay before entry. For either entry include appropriate beach destination marker.

   5. The Italian armor unit neither gives any special combat advantage nor can it act as an anti-tank unit.

**D. Additional German Paratroops**

During a battle such as Crete, estimations of enemy activities can become very confused. During the confusion on 3 May a miscellaneous group of paratroopers of uncertain size landed in Heraklion sector. The only thing certain about this group is that no historian has attempted to explain why they were not dropped earlier.

1. The following units are available as airborne reinforcements on Turn #13, any single sector:

   - 2. If combining this scenario with Scenario B then these units must first attempt to enter play by convoy. If any are "Aborted" then they may be available as airborne reinforcements no earlier than either the sixth turn after their convoy attempt or Turn #13, whichever is later.

   3. OPTIONAL: To allow the German player an edge in the game distribute these units as desired among the Turn #1 or Turn #3 blocks of airborne units (but not with the glider battalions). Distribute after the Allied player has completed his set-up. It was possible for the Germans to have had more transport aircraft available at the initial stages of the battle.

**E. Greek Irregulars**

Greek irregulars are expected to find a friendly population on Crete. Instead they encountered numerous partisan bands. While these bands had little tactical significance, they accounted for several hundred German casualties. This scenario brings some of this partisan action into play. None of the irregulars below is in play at the beginning of the game.

1. Greek irregular units available:
2. Starting the first turn the Allied player may roll the die to activate a Greek irregular. It is received on roll of 1, 2, 3. Only one unit may be obtained per turn and this unit may be placed on any town or city hex not in enemy zone of control. If the roll is unsuccessful then no unit is received this turn. Resolution and placement is during the Allied movement phase, so the unit may move this turn.

3. No more than five irregulars are available for the whole game. Once one is lost, it remains eliminated.

4. During combat they may not combine their attack strength with other nationalities unless stacked with a Greek Regular.

F. Adding the RAF and the Royal Navy

The RAF could have tried to return to Crete. The bombers represent Wellington and Blenheim bombers based along the Nile.

1. Allied RAF units available: on any night turn, starting Turn #12:

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   Turn #12:
   RAF B12
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2. The fighters must be placed on a friendly airfield, out of enemy ZOC. The bombers arrive from out of play and return out of play as do the German aircraft type units.

3. The Allied bombers may attack only airfields and German aircraft units that are out of play. Only an "N-2" result will affect an airfield or cause elimination of German aircraft units (only one elim per turn).

4. If any Allied unit evacuates all Allied fighter units immediately evacuate.

5. The following are additional air missions. Both players may conduct any or all air missions.

a. Fighter Interception of any other air mission—This mission is flown during the opposing player segment phase. Fighter units will fly from base and announce "interception" of mission. Fighters may intercept only once in a game turn.

   (1) Interception of fighters: Unit for unit cancellation of mission.

   (2) Interception of fighter-bombers: Unit for unit cancellation of mission.

   (3) Interception of bombers: Unit for unit cancellation of mission.

   (4) Interception of paratroops: The fighter cancels its mission and the paratroop unit affected must add "3" to die roll result. All other paratroop units in the sector must add "1" to die roll result.

   (5) Interception of airlanding: One fighter unit will reduce airfield capacity by two stacking points for that turn only. Place the fighter unit on the airfield hex as though on an interdiction mission. Both missions may be conducted simultaneously.

   (6) There is no combat result during interception. Cancelled units are immediately returned to base.

b. The dropping of paratroops or landing of airborne reinforcements is considered as an air mission.

c. Fighter escort—Fighters may be assigned to a sector as a general escort to all air missions being flown there. They may not conduct other missions in the same player segment. Intercepting fighter units must conduct fighter interception before remaining interceptors can affect other air missions.

d. Bombing of airfield—Conducted by bombers or fighter-bombers this mission is resolved on the Bombardment Table. A "neutralized" result means the airfield is unusable. Regardless of first result the die is rolled again for elimination of aircraft units that were based on that airfield. An "N-1" means one unit eliminated. An "N-2" means two units are eliminated. Only "N-2" results have an effect during NIGHT.

6. OPTIONAL: THE ROYAL NAVY

On two separate occasions the Royal Navy raided Axis held airfields. One of these was Maleme.

a. The Allies have available for two NIGHT turns a naval bombardment strength of four points.

   i. There must be compiled all together as one raid (attack) against one target: an airfield or German aircraft units out of play.

   ii. The raid must be planned on the Time Record Track at least two turns in advance although the target need not be decided until that turn.

   iii. The naval raid is resolved in the same manner as the bomber attack against an airfield. The bombers and navy may combine strength against the same target.

INVASION OF MALTA—1942

The game situation as found in the rules booklet is really the Spring 1942 Plan. This invasion would have taken place in late May or early June thereby delaying Rommel's offensive against the Gazala Line and Tobruk. The Spring 1942 Plan was not the only plan. The remaining important plans are shown below.

A. The 1940 Plan

This was a scaled down version of the Pre-War Plan. In common with that plan, it lacked equipment and trained men. In this plan 20,000 men (no Germans) were to be landed from 100 landing craft and four "tankers" at Marsa Scala, St. Thomas Bay and Marsa Scirocco and were to be followed by an attack against Mellieha Bay and St. Paul's Bay. An early September attack date is assumed.

1. Axis Organization:

   a. There are only two paratroop units:

   b. There are no airlanding units.

   c. Use the same Sea Assault units but delete the 10RCC (3 units).

   d. There is no Follow-up Convoy #2 or #3.

   e. Use all the Italian airforce and add German units (to represent added Italian strength) of two fighters and two bomber strength points.

2. Allied Organization:

   (Allied player receives only these units)

   a. The following units:

   b. Luga Airfield

3. Other Rules:

   a. Both the paratroops and the 1st sea assault convoy land on the first turn.

   b. The Axis player may form one or two assault convoys from the sea assault units available. The second assault convoy arrives second or third turn as desired but at a different beach.

   c. The Follow-up convoy arrives starting Turn #4. It may go to either landing beach as desired. Only one attacking point per turn may land.

   d. Krendi and Kirkop airfields cannot be used.

   e. One Allied heavy artillery unit must be placed adjacent to Grand Harbour. It represents the heavy guns of the HMS Terror. It may attack only enemy units landing at Valletta Beach or St. Paul's Bay Beach.

   f. No Allied RA F is possible in this scenario.

B. The 1941 Plan

In April 1941 the Axis had a choice, either occupy Crete as the end of the successful Balkans campaign or seize Malta to insure supply lines to Rommel's Afrika Korps. On April 21st Gen. Student persuaded Hitler to attack Crete, but what if Hitler accepted the earlier recommendation by the Wehrmacht Operations Staff to capture Malta? This plan was to employ one para division, one airborne division, some specialist units, and some 40,000 men to be landed by sea from 180 small craft. The first invasion wave however, would have 4000 men in another 100 special assault landing craft largely obtained from the now cancelled Operation "Sealion". Generally, it was intended that the amphibious landing would be a subsidiary effort. Players are cautioned that this scenario is heavily weighted in favor of the Axis.

1. Axis Organization:

   a. Use all the paratroop units shown on the CRETE Axis Organization Card. Units will drop on the turn shown and they may drop anywhere. Computer organization is used. Add the Italian paratroop units as found in the 1940 Scenario.

   b. The only airlanding units are the rest of the Italian "Folgore" Division.

   c. The Follow-up convoys are the same but there is no Follow-up convoy #3. Also, delete the 557th anti-tank unit and the 1st and 2nd CCNN battalions.

   d. Delete three German fighter aircraft units and six bomber strength points.

2. Allied Organization:

   a. Delete the following units:
b. The Axis player may decide how many armor units he wishes to use of those available. Armor units may enter play only in the Follow-up convoys. Since all the available shipping space has already been filled the Axis player must leave behind in Italy two stacking points (his choice of units) for every armored unit taken. The stacking points must be removed from that convoy the armored unit is placed in. In addition, one extra stacking point is subtracted from the convoy merely for having armor (represents supply vehicles).

e. The German PzIV unit will cause "NH" results to be "DR" unless the Allied heavy tanks are defending.

3. AXIS NAVAL BOMBARDMENT
This variation is similar to the Royal Navy "Raid" shown in the CRETE Scenario D except these Italian warships would be available only once.

a. This naval bombardment may be made on any daylight turn except the first. The exact turn must be planned on the Time Record Track before the start of play.

b. These eight bombardment points are used just like an air bombardment mission by aircraft units but only airfields, forts, or batteries may be bombarded and there is no effect against infantry type units.

c. Naval bombardment may not be within a 3 hex range (5 hex diameter) of an Allied heavy coast artillery unit.

d. Naval bombardment may combine with aircraft strength points.

4. RAF
a. Use all the aircraft rules as found in CRETE Scenario D.

b. The Allied player has only one fighter available and this unit may fly only on morning operation.

c. The German player need not use any aircraft against the Malta Follow-up Convoy Table.

5. OPTIONAL: NIGHT AIRBORNE ATTACK
As a variation of the Italian plan the German command explored the possibility of making a preliminary nighttime drop. This was to be a reinforced glider battalion led by Col. von der Heydte. It was hoped that he could do considerable damage before the British command was alerted.

a. This attack is conducted during the night before the first regular turn of the game. Add a pre-game NIGHT turn before the start of the first regular game turn.

b. The Allied player sets up as before.

c. The Axis player selects a force out of those available for Turn #1 of no more than six German parachute companies. Battalion centers may be substituted with company counters only so far as to obtain this force. These are the only units allowed to land on the pre-game turn.

d. The game now begins with the landing of these units. The units may be targeted to land on rough terrain.

e. While resolving drift subtract "2" from drift die roll result for all these units except those targeted to land on rough terrain (use normal table). There are no other adjustments to this die roll regardless of the number of AA units and other units in the target hex.

f. After drift is resolved, any Axis unit that landed on its targeted hex even after drift combat may be moved during Axis movement phase this turn and make an attack. No Allied unit is ever revealed unless attacked.

g. Only those Allied units adjacent to an Axis unit may be moved. They may move only one hex and only they may attack.

h. The first turn of the game proceeds normally from this point.

C. Variations on the Spring 1942 Plan
Players can mix and match these situations to suit needs. Each variation can stand by itself and none are mutually exclusive. It would also be permissible to use any of these options in the July 1942 Plan.

1. ADDITIONAL ALLIED UNITS
If the Allies had less trouble with the January 1942 relief convoys more men and equipment might have arrived. The additional units shown below might have been raised.

a. Add the following units:

b. The two "MSC" units (Maltese Special Constabulary) were essentially the Maltese equivalent of the British Home Guard. They cannot combine their attack strength with any units at all.

2. AXIS ARMOR
The "coup de main" variation of the Spring 1942 Plan envisioned the use of less men in the whole operation. The more interesting aspect, though, was the use of armor.

a. Armored units available:

b. The Axis player may decide how many armor units he wishes to use of those available. Armor units may enter play only in the Follow-up convoys. Since all the available shipping space has already been filled the Axis player must leave behind in Italy two stacking points (his choice of units) for every armored unit taken. The stacking points must be removed from that convoy the armored unit is placed in. In addition, one extra stacking point is subtracted from the convoy merely for having armor (represents supply vehicles).

c. The German PzIV unit will cause "NH" results to be "DR" unless the Allied heavy tanks are defending.

3. AXIS NAVAL BOMBARDMENT
This variation is similar to the Royal Navy "Raid" shown in the CRETE Scenario D except these Italian warships would be available only once.

a. This naval bombardment may be made on any daylight turn except the first. The exact turn must be planned on the Time Record Track before the start of play.

b. These eight bombardment points are used just like an air bombardment mission by aircraft units but only airfields, forts, or batteries may be bombarded and there is no effect against infantry type units.

c. Naval bombardment may not be within a 3 hex range (5 hex diameter) of an Allied heavy coast artillery unit.

d. Naval bombardment may combine with aircraft strength points.

4. RAF
a. Use all the aircraft rules as found in CRETE Scenario D.

b. The Allied player has only one fighter available and this unit may fly only on morning operation.

c. The German player need not use any aircraft against the Malta Follow-up Convoy Table.

5. OPTIONAL: NIGHT AIRBORNE ATTACK
As a variation of the Italian plan the German command explored the possibility of making a preliminary nighttime drop. This was to be a reinforced glider battalion led by Col. von der Heydte. It was hoped that he could do considerable damage before the British command was alerted.

a. This attack is conducted during the night before the first regular turn of the game. Add a pre-game NIGHT turn before the start of the first regular game turn.

b. The Allied player sets up as before.

c. The Axis player selects a force out of those available for Turn #1 of no more than six German parachute companies. Battalion centers may be substituted with company counters only so far as to obtain this force. These are the only units allowed to land on the pre-game turn.

d. The game now begins with the landing of these units. The units may be targeted to land on rough terrain.

e. While resolving drift subtract "2" from drift die roll result for all these units except those targeted to land on rough terrain (use normal table). There are no other adjustments to this die roll regardless of the number of AA units and other units in the target hex.

f. After drift is resolved, any Axis unit that landed on its targeted hex even after drift combat may be moved during Axis movement phase this turn and make an attack. No Allied unit is ever revealed unless attacked.

g. Only those Allied units adjacent to an Axis unit may be moved. They may move only one hex and only they may attack.

h. The first turn of the game proceeds normally from this point.
Almost any game can be the subject of a myriad assortment of variations and rule changes by a player who perceives such and such a rule as unrealistic from his vantage point. RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN is no exception and while we found most of Tyrome's suggested changes to be no better or worse than the normal fare, it was the author's opinion that the changes, as written, would be better for the non-literate reader than the professional or learned game player. 

The following set of rules additions, deletions and changes, is meant to serve as the “Tournament,” or “Strategic”, level version of Avalon Hill's second edition RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN game. Unlike most tournament level game versions, this one does not make its parent game more cumbersome or complex to play in any serious way. Instead, the variant was designed to try and show that many strategic level games can be brought more in tune with their historical realities without having to resort to all manner of play complexities. At the end of the new rules section I provide my rationale for the changes.

INTRODUCTION: The following rules are intended to be used in conjunction with Avalon Hill's 1977 rules of RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN (second edition). Except where herein amended, deleted or added to, those rules still apply in full.

OPTIONAL AND WHAT IF RULES: Optional rules 26.2, 26.21, 26.22, 26.4, 26.6 and 26.7 lose their optional status and become mandatory rules in this version of the game.

Rule 26.3 likewise loses its optional status, but is changed to read as follows: "Every individual armored unit used to attack major cities or forest hexes has its combat factor reduced by one factor for the purpose of computing the battle odds of that attack."

"What If" rules I and II also lose their optional nature and are fully incorporated into this game version.

Concerning rules 26.5 and 26.8, players should still feel free to choose whichever weather resolution system best fits their temperaments. 

COMBAT RESULTS TABLE: The combat result “C” is done away with. The “C” result in the 1-4/1-3, 1-2 and 1-1 odd columns is now considered to be an "AR" result. The “C” result in the 2-1, 3-1 and 4-1 columns is now considered to be a "DR" result.

MOVEMENT ALLOWANCE CHART: A unit's movement factor in the first impulse of a turn, as determined by the weather, is precisely the same in the second movement phase of that turn. Units starting their second movement phase in an enemy zone of control may still not move on the second impulse. (Players using weather rule 26.8 note: each impulse's weather roll effects a unit's movement factor as if it was a first movement impulse.)

DELETIONS: Rules 14.4 and 16.3 are entirely deleted from the rules.

AUTOMATIC VICTORY: Change rule 16.2 to read, "Units taking part in the 10 to 1 attack cannot move any further that impulse and may not attack any other enemy units for the remainder of that impulse."

MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS: Change rule 8.1 to read as follows:

"Units must pay an additional movement point to enter a woods, mountain or swamp hex. They may continue moving as long as they have enough movement points to pay these terrain costs."

EXCEPTIONS: Infantry and Mountain units do not have to pay the extra movement factor to enter a woods hex. Mountain units do not have to pay the extra cost to enter mountain hexes. Swamps are treated as clear terrain in snow months.

TERRAIN EFFECTS CHART: Change the "EFFECT ON MOVEMENT" column for mountain hexes to read, "Units must expend one additional movement factor per mountain hex entered. Exception: Mountain units." Change the "EFFECT ON MOVEMENT" column for swamp hexes to read, "Units must expend one additional movement factor per swamp hex entered. Exception: treat as clear terrain during snow months."

Add the following to the "EFFECT ON MOVEMENT" column for river hexes: "Rivers are treated as clear terrain during snow months."

To further clarify the above new movement rules: For example, a unit with a movement factor of four could travel through two swamp hexes in a movement impulse, paying the normal cost of one movement point per hex entered, plus one penalty point per hex because the hexes are swamps.

ADDITIONS: Add the following to the appropriate section of your rulebook.

25.3 All Italian units are removed from the game board at the end of the July/August 1943 game turn. They may never re-enter play. (This is a final limit on Italian participation in the war, no matter which "what-ifs," if any, are being used.)

25.4 If Finnish units are still in the game at the end of the Sept/Oct 1944 turn, remove them permanently from play.

27 WINTER FREEZE UP

27.1 Snow during turns 17 and 18 freezes major lakes and the board freeze.

27.2 During snow turns the seven lakes on the northeast quadrant of the board (The board quarter with Moscow on it, containing lakes Ilmen, Ladoga, Onega, the two unnamed lakes and the Finnish lakes) freeze. During these turns it becomes possible to move across and stop on these frozen bodies of water (players may find it convenient to pencil in the hex patterns) as if they were clear terrain.

27.4 Units may mount attacks and overruns from a frozen all lake hex.

27.5 If a unit is on an all lake hex when the weather changes from snow to some other condition, the opposing player immediately moves it to the lake shore hex of his choice (only to a shore hex of that particular lake of course).

27.6 Units may retreat across frozen lakes, and retreat across frozen lakes, and taking their retreats must end their retreat on frozen lakes.

27.7 Units on frozen lake hexes may be attacked and overrun in the normal manner.

28 FORTIFIED CITIES

28.1 The act of fortifying a major city takes place at the end of a player's second movement impulse. To indicate the fortification, simply flip the affected units over. All units in the hex of a city that is to be fortified must take part in the act of fortification.

28.2 All friendly units which subsequently enter and remain in that city at the end of the owning player’s turn also enter the fortified state and are flipped over.

28.3 Normal stacking restrictions still apply to units in fortified cities.

28.4 Units in a fortified city may not fortify at any point in the opponent's movement impulse. If more than one unit is in the fortified city, the owning player may choose to fortify only one, all or some of those units and move them away. However, all friendly units which are in a major city hex containing at least one fortified unit, at the end of the owning player's turn, are likewise fortified. A major city is either entirely fortified or entirely unfortified, there is no in between state.

28.5 There is no movement penalty involved in the acts of fortifying or unfortifying, and the act may be done even if the enemy units are adjacent.

28.6 Units fortified in a major city lose their zone of control. That is, they no longer project a ZOC outside the city hex they are in, and units outside that city hex, both enemy and friendly, no longer project a ZOC into the city. Such fortified units are therefore no longer required to attack adjacent enemy units, and adjacent enemy units are not required to attack into a fortified city. If, however, the owning player decides to use his fortified units in an attack, he must immediately unfortify them and conduct a normal attack. Likewise, enemy units attacking into a fortified city must attack all units in that city.

In addition to the above effects, units fortified inside a major city may ignore "DR" results when attacked. Simply read such results as no effect. "D1" and "EX" results carry no retreat penalty for defending units in a fortified city (And units involved solely in an attack on units in a fortified city do not suffer the retreat portion of "A1" results). All other combat results are normally applied.

28.8 Units in fortified major cities may not be overrun.

28.9 Minor cities may nor be fortified.

This is the end of the rules for Tournament Level RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN. What follows is an explanation of their use and historical significance.
TO WHICH WE REPLY . . .

To preface a discussion about this variant, I will say that there are many good ideas presented here, and some that are not so good. Regardless of how good the individual ideas may be, however, they are not likely to be incorporated into any future rulebook, for two reasons: the first, and most important reason, is that many people already have the old version of the rulebook, and revising the rulebook even to include good rules would lead to confusion and to the creation of two groups of players who really could not play TRC against each other because they would become accustomed to playing with very different rules (make no mistake, the rules expounded here would change TRC drastically); and second, no minor reason, is that the new rules would have to be thoroughly playtested for balance before they could be released, which is no small task. Thus, regardless of the virtues of these rule changes and how much I may like them, the TRC rules will remain as they are. As an example of this, merely consider the additional optional rules and “What If” rules that were added to the second edition of the rulebook, some of these rules are so good that they should really have been incorporated into the main rules, but in order to keep the play of the game the same the new rules were all made optional.

Now, on to the discussion of the variant at hand! I will handle the suggested changes in the order they are proposed.

First the options and “What If” rules. I agree, use ‘em all except for weather, and change that to your taste. Rule 26.3—the city and woods attack rule—is the only one that poses a problem, and the keep the play of the game your taste. Rule 26.3—the city and woods attack are probably going to need the full effect of rule 26.3 like them, the TRC rules will remain as they are. As it is now to have a chance of winning extremely high concentrations of almost pure rules are so good that they should really have been formalized, and whose game turns each equal two months of real time must, perforce, be a strategic simulation.

To begin with then. I greatly reduced the effects of rule 26.3. As it read, 26.3 would have been a fine rule, but “a simulation” with units somewhere below the division level. There is no doubt that the groups of tanks have great difficulty trying to penetrate against urban or forest defenders. A tank corps or army is not, however, a group of tanks. It is, as are all properly outfitted corps sized units since Napoleon times, a self-contained combat unit. True, its emphasis, its cutting edge, is uniquely dominated by armor elements, but at the same time, sufficient support units in the form of infantry, artillery, combat engineers, etc., are organically attached to the parent group. This was not possible in the major factors bringing about the concept of the “corps” in western military thought. A corps, by definition, is a unit capable of independently operating in all types of terrain and combat environments. This is not to deny that armored corps operated more efficiently in flat, open country, but to penalize them with a loss of 50% of their combat capability is certainly an overstatement of the case. The designers were trying to play PANZERBLITZ at 35 miles per hex, and it just doesn’t hold up.

I dropped the “contact!” result from the odds chart for the same reasons. A battalion or similar sized unit, operating in a small area, searching for other life-sized enemy units, during, say, a 24 hour period, might achieve such a result for its efforts. They might succeed in finding the frontal elements of some nearby enemy position. Imagine, though, a situation where, for example, the Soviet 1st Gd., 2nd Gd., 6th Gd., 1st, 3rd and 4th Tank Armies roll up against the German 48th and 52nd Panzer and Panzer Grenadier Corps near Kaunas. For the better part of two months, a fierce mechanized clash whirs over the White-Russian countryside. At the end of the Soviet commander reports to STAVKA, “Comrades! It is with much socialist zeal and patriotic pride, etc., etc., that I report making contact with the enemy!” Phew! Perhaps, but I doubt it. The designers were trying to incorporate lower echelon problems and limit the scope of trees; certain that no game of vastly broad scope, and it doesn’t work to any good effect, neither playability or historical sense is served.

My changes of the woods rules follow the same pattern of thought. At the small unit level, encountering some well emplaced enemy unit in a thin copse of trees can certainly slow down the day’s battle pace. With hexes of this size, however, we cannot actually visualize woods hexes to be 35-mile-deep, tree-to-tree copes. They are forests, thick here and thin there, offering different
degrees of cover and resistance to penetration at many different points. To allow the woods rule to stand as presently constituted would have been to lend a fortress-like quality to most of northern Europe's surface area.

By the same token, I've added the city fortification rule in acknowledgement of the fact that the campaign, even at so huge a scale of simulation, could bog down to siege, frontal assault, and months-long stalemate. These incidents occurred, without fail, at the big cities. Drives which had maintained their momentum, against all opposition for hundreds of kilometers, could suddenly crash to a halt upon reaching the gates of some determinedly defended urban center. Hence mention of Leningrad, Odessa, Sevastapol, Stalingrad and Warsaw should make my point.

Likewise, I froze the rivers and lakes simply because all the rivers and lakes shown on the board freeze up in real life every winter. An infantryman, charging across snow-covered ice, or a tank rolling across, hardly knows the difference. (Admittedly, I am a little weak on this one, but fellows, do you really think it is necessary to start dealing with riverbank elevation and depth-of-office rules? I don't)

My changes to the overrun rule should, by this point, be self-explanatory and obvious. Soviet tank corps did not hold up panzer groups for two months, nor would the fact that some other Soviet unit existed in the area after the completion of an overrun operation in any way tempt the victorious commander to offer up his sword in surrender. (If you need more corroboration, see FIRE & MOVEMENT magazine, issue 10, for an interview with John Edwards, TRC's original creator, who says much the same thing about AH's presentation of this rule.)

The Finnish and Italian units have been given definite end-of-participation dates simply because all my reading tends toward the idea that those two nations had serious limitations on their commitment to Barbarossa, and if victory still eluded the Axis by the dates given, both their wills and means to resist would have ended that commitment.

My most drastic change, without doubt, has been to do away with movement reductions on non-engaged units in the second impulse. And again, this is simply because the movement rules as originally presented, are not only unnecessarily cumbersome, they are totally unrealistic, in that they create snail-like rates of march. The distance between Dnepropetrovsk and Stalingrad, for example, is about 475 miles. Going by the old rules, marching unopposed, four months would be needed by a German infantry corps to go that distance. That's a march rate of about 1 mile per day. I'll say no more.

My guide in making all these changes, then, has been a fairly wide knowledge of the historical campaign itself, and the possibilities realistically inherent in it, and a clearer grasp of where tactical considerations must be left behind and strategic principles picked up, than I think was shown by TRC's producers. I invite the readers to be the final judge.

Playing "Tourney RC" you'll find, I think, that a well-run German offensive in 1941 can seize both Leningrad and Moscow. This is a valid result, as I'm convinced that a better run German campaign could have done just that. At the same time though, Soviet players will find themselves equally able to simulate the huge Russian counterthrusts, setting up whole army groups for destruction at one shot. I'll gladly receive your opinions at: 6931 Security Squadron, Box 402, APO NY 09291.

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**How I made a fortune in railroading**

"Actually, I only made $200,000! But that's all it took to win the most fascinating... exciting... uh, cutthroat and ruthless game I ever played."

Aptly named RAIL BARON, this new game fulfilled my widest fantasies of building a railroad empire. For several engrossing hours I was Jay Gould, grabbing everything in sight from the clutches of would-be Vanderbilts. "Games are supposed to be for kids, Well, sir, to a 36 year old kid the game of RAIL BARON rekindles my interest in games of strategy—which it is. And the study of railroad memorabilia—which it also is!"

**Back to the days of Empire Building**

RAIL BARON is played on a large board showing the United States RR network. It portrays 28 major rail lines and major cities they connected back during the halcyon days of railroading. "Mind you, I'm not a game player. But I simply couldn't resist the unusually high quality of the components. The huge gameboard—16'' x 39''—in full color and coated with some sort of varnish, wiped amazingly clean after I spilled coffee on Cincinnati."

"But to me, an old railroad nostalgia nut, the pieces de resistance were the Rail Line logos, reproduced in authentic colors on both the playing board and the Rail Line Title Cards, 28 logos in all. This beautiful touch set the tone for the game!"

Simple to Learn, but...

"A rather short set of rules suggests that it is simply a game of luck. Fooled again! I quickly evolved into an amazing game of nuances and subtle strategy. I really felt good about winning. My strategy consisted of buying up the rail lines that gave me a coast-to-coast link. Until that happened, I was paying through the nose for the privilege of using opponents' lines. Actually, I was on the verge of bankruptcy twice. So I cried poor mouth, and was joined by several others in similar dire straights in a neat little cartel we formed that brought down the leaders. At which point I had no choice, of course, but to turn against my pals and run for home with the game-winning $200,000."

**Great Gift for an avaricious friend**

"Designed for 3 to 6 participants, thought it an ideal game for rail buffs with a competitive bent. If I were the manufacturer of this fine game, I would offer some sort of discount just to get the game in the hands of more converts such as I."
1. MAPSHEET ALTERATIONS

While there is something very appealing about all those vast stretches of clear terrain hexes on the board, there is also something very sinister about their effect on the game. It is somewhat disturbing to see one's enemy rampaging through clear terrain hexes which should contain some of the roughest mountains in Europe, totally oblivious to the fact that his blitz should be impossible. The experience can be especially painful when one sees an opponent blithely (and purposelessly) invading some neutral which is easy pickin's mainly because of a failure to include pertinent terrain. The following terrain alterations are, therefore, suggested.

Caspian Sea, Tunia, Tangier and Helsinki (or, for the literal minded, Hangos, the hex due west of Helsinki) should all be ports. Also, the single beach hexes on both Crete and Cyprus should contain port symbols. There should be a crossing arrow between Suez and Port Said. There should also be a crossing arrow between Tangier and Gibraltar which is usable only by the player who controls Gibraltar. Attacks from Gibraltar to Tangier across the straits are permitted, but not attacks from Tangier to Gibraltar. Control of Tangier to Gibraltar does not convey the capability of interdicting SR between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. This capability is still vested solely in Gibraltar.

The northern entrance to the Crimean should be a marsh hex. This is the single land bridge running between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Two hexes north of Sevastopol for those who have been burned by sick invasions of the northern portion of the British Isles, neither Ireland nor any other island making up the British Isles is invadable except via beachhexes. The terrain in the northern island is far too rough to permit supply of any enemy force which could conceivably gain a lodgment (a debatable proposition in itself).

The following hexes are mountain hexes: Bilbao, Santander, the hex adjacent to and due west of Santander, Cordoba and the hex adjacent to and due east of Cordoba, the hexes adjacent to and NW, NNE, and W of Madrid, all non-coastal border hexes north of and to the north of the Austrian border, the hexes NNE and NNW of Venice and the two non-coastal border hexes on both sides of the Greek-Albanian border. While there are other hexes which could be classified as mountainous, these hexes were added for reasons of strategic balance as much as for purposes of realism.

Sevastopol should be classified as a fortress of the same type as Leningrad. It was often called Russia's Gibraltar and was, in reality, a far stronger position than Leningrad. The Germans were forced to bring up their powerful 600mm siege mortars in order to reduce the fortress and at least part of the delay in getting the German 1942 summer offensive going can be attributed to the toughness of Sevastopol. Similarly, Moscow and Stalingrad should be classified as Leningrad-type fortresses. Each was defended in approximately the same manner as Leningrad with bombproof pill boxes scattered throughout the suburbs and separate defense lines guarding the approaches to the cities. While neither Stalingrad nor Moscow had Leningrad's complement of pre-war fixed fortifications, their wartime defense lines were, if anything, stronger than those found before Leningrad. Moscow, for example, was guarded by three separate defense lines, each constructed behind a continuous anti-tank ditch the size of a small canyon.

It is possible to SR between controlled hexes on the northern board edge in Finland and controlled hexes on the northern board edge in Sweden and Norway. It is not, however, possible to move between these countries during normal movement. Nor is it possible to attack from Finland into either Sweden or Norway or vice versa. The nature of the terrain, weather and supply lines would make such opposed movement impossible at the level at which the game is designed. Supply may not be drawn off the northern board edge between these countries for the same reason.

All Russian units draw supply from the eastern map edge of Russia. Russian units may not draw supply from any other source. Once a BRP pipeline has been opened to Russia via Persia, the British player may SR units (at a cost of 2 SR's into Persia from India and British units may draw supply from either Tabriz or Sarab. Only 8 strength points may be supplied from these sources. Until Leningrad has been captured, only 6 non-Finnish Axis strength points may be supplied from or through Finland. Vichy and Free French units may draw supply from any friendly city in a French colony.

2. FORCE POOL ADDITIONS

Should any player declare war on Iraq, the forces listed in Axis Minor Variation #1 are deployed against the aggressor. Should any player declare war on Portugal, one 1-3 and one 1-4 unit are immediately deployed on Lisbon to represent the Portuguese army (which included some 20,000 veterans of the Spanish Civil War plus veterans of Portugal's colonial wars). Use Minor Neutral Forces. Once either Vichy France or any Vichy colony has been invaded by Allied forces which include 3 or more American land strength points, the Vichy French player may add two French 2-3's and one French 3-5 to his Force Pool to represent Gaulian forces. These units are in addition to other Free French forces which may already be available. Should Italy capitulate (see below) the British player may add one Italian 3- to his Force Pool.

3. BRP ADDITIONS

The Russian player receives 15 BRPs in Fall 1941 to simulate the arrival of strong units of the Siberian army freed from guarding against a Japanese attack by the Pearl Harbor strike. The German player's initial BRP level for the Campaign Game is increased to 30 to simulate the forces kept-secret during the Polish campaign (and thus undeployed). These include practically the whole airborne strength which was used against the West in 1940.

4. SWEDISH BRPs

The German war machine was dependent upon Swedish ore to an extent not commonly realized today. Yet, the strategic value of cutting off Germany's ore lifeline to Sweden was the singular crucial factor in the British decision to invade Norway. Hitler had hoped to keep Norway neutral until the shadow of British operations against the Swedish ore boats from an interdiction base at Narvik forced his hand. To simulate the strategic possibilities inherent in a British blockade of Swedish ore, the German BRP total is reduced by 15 BRPs during any Year-Start Sequence in which either Stockholm or Bergen are British-controlled
5. GENERAL WINTER

All lakes, rivers and marshes inside Russia are frozen over during Winter Turns. No Axis units receive any defense value from these terrain features during Winter Turns. During the first Winter Turn in which Russia and Germany are at war, the Axis undergoes an Attrition Attack at 31-40 on the Quarterly Attrition Resolution Table, regardless of the option chosen by the Russian player during that turn. This is a special effect of the first Russian winter and does not regulate any other action which the Russian player may wish to take if this effect is applied before the Russian player announces his option for the turn.

6. RUSSIAN OBJECTIVE HEXES

In an effort to offer some strategic reasons for an Axis offensive into southern Russia and to give the Axis some chance of killing off (instead of just crippling) the Russian player it is suggested that an Axis Objective Hex be given a BRP value similar to that given Leningrad and Moscow. While this alteration would tend to favor the Axis, expanded the game considerably but did not influence the outcome of the war in Europe. Yet, the game ignores the potential for resistance. Colonies do not. In all of Russia loses all capacity for Resistance. Should the Axis conquer a nationare permanent- resistance is impossible except as a result of Allied Second World War. The Allied solution to the U-boat war was a desperate diversion of maximum effort not provided for in the game system. Just as the Allies had their strategic crisis, so too did the Axis. Their solutions were the same: the diversion of maximum effort to shore up the crisis point. In both cases, the diversion of effort amounted to far more than a paltry 10% of available resources.

To simulate the pace of strategic warfare and the real amount of effort expended on it, it is suggested that both the Allies and the Axis be permitted to declare a Strategic Crisis during any Year-Start Sequence in which that side loses more than 30 BRP's due to Strategic Warfare. Once a side declares such an emergency, it is still limited to the expenditure of 10% of its available BRP's on strategic warfare of an offensive nature (i.e. U-boats and SAC). However, if it gains the ability to utilize U-boats, it may declare a Strategic Crisis which allows it to expend an unlimited number of BRP's on defensive strategic weapons (Interceptors and ASW). Once this ability has been attained by a side, it is retained for the remainder of the game. Thus, if Britain loses 34 BRP's due to U-boat activity during the 1942 Year-Start Sequence, the Allies may expend any number of BRP's on ASW during that Year-Start Sequence and all succeeding Year-Start Sequences.
Note: When employing this rule, British and American losses are added together to determine if a crisis has occurred.

While Germany withstood its trial at the hands of the Allied Bomber Command quite well, Britain could not have withstood the continual sinking of more merchant ships than was coming off the ways for very long. It is, therefore, suggested that the British be forced to seek peace during any Year-Start Sequence in which the British BRP level at year's start is less than 75. If Britain seeks peace, the Axis may decline to accept, in which case, nothing changes and Britain may not be forced to seek peace again. If the offer is accepted, all British units (including Free French) are removed from the game permanently. Britain is not, however, conquered. No BRP's or VP's are received for accepting a British peace proposal. American units may still deploy in Britain and any British-controlled nations or colonies which already contain American units. The Axis retains control of conquered British territory. British colonies which have not been conquered by the Axis and contain no American units become uninvadable neutrals (same status as Switzerland). Free French Colonies containing no U.S. units become Vichy. Once Britain has been forced to seek peace, the British Isles may not be invaded by the Axis, nor may any Axis units in the British Isles or in British colonies which go neutral must vacate the area on the next Axis Player Order. They are destroyed. The U.S. is still allied with Britain due to agreements regarding the Pacific war and it is assumed that British troops have been conveyed there.

British surrender under this suggested rule involves the acceptance of a secret agreement by which the British withdraw from aggressive actions while the Axis loosens the blockade around Britain. It is assumed that the U.S. continues the war effort and that U.S. pressure forces a weakened Britain to accept occupation of much British territory by American troops. While not wholly realistic, the option allows some latitude in Axis strategy and actually plays quite believably.

12. CONCLUSION

The suggestions offered in this article may or may not constitute an improvement. They do, however, make for a much more subtle mixture of strategies while offering the Allied player a chance to punish the Axis a bit earlier in the game and, thus, pave the way for a real blitz similar to that which took France from the Axis. The realistic resource drain imposed on the Axis plus the disintegration of various allies possible under these options tend to keep the German player from building up an unassailable BRP position while providing for the superiority which gave the Reich its early successes. Generally, by mid-1943 the Axis is on the run and by mid-1945 the Allies are knocking at the gates of Berlin. A sharp Axis player can still, however, march to a Decisive Victory under these rules even if superiority which gave the Reich its early successes.

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Vol. 14, No. 4 of the GENERAL printed a variant for RICHTHOFEN'S WAR which featured the use of a deck of 27 maneuver cards to augment the mechanical movement system and add a degree of uncertainty and excitement to the game. Not just a random luck element, use of the maneuver cards is dependent upon such factors as turning ability, attack position, and pilot skill. Using the maneuver cards one can more vividly execute the classic maneuvers of the day: Barrel Roll, Failing Leaf, Flat Spin, Immelman, Loop, Nose Dive, Side-Slip, Tight Circle, and Vertical Spin in an attempt (not always successful) to get on the enemy's tail, rather than just trade shots.

RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN PBM KIT

Each kit comes with full instructions for both PBM in general and RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN in particular. A kit includes 4 pads—two each for American troops. While not wholly realistic, the option allows some latitude in Axis strategy and actually plays quite believably.

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ROLL OF HONOR

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SQUAD LEADER
SIMULTANEOUS MOVEMENT

By Mike Chiappinelli

Simultaneous Movement variants are nothing new but few games are better suited to the beast than SQUAD LEADER as Mike Chiappinelli so ably points out. Readers who find themselves thirsting for even more realism after mastering the voluminous SL game system could do far worse than delve into the intricacies and added possibilities offered by Si-Move.

A controversy often arises in wargaming circles over the issue of realism vs. playability. Just how much realism should be sacrificed for the sake of playability and vice versa? As with all issues, there are those who limit themselves exclusively to one of the two extremes possible: in this case either (1) measuring a game's overall value by the degree to which it realistically simulates a situation, or (2) measuring a game's overall value by its playability, even if attained at the expense of realism. Fortunately, however, the number of extremists is small compared to the number of players that lie along the rest of the spectrum who favor getting as much realism and playability into a game as possible. And it is to these players that SQUAD LEADER is especially appealing in that the game probably offers the best balance between realism and playability that you can hope to find in a simulation of WWII infantry combat. Then why upset the balance by adding simultaneous movement? The reason is that, in the case of SQUAD LEADER, the scales can be tipped just a little to achieve much greater realism without the sacrifice of as much playability as you might think.

SQUAD LEADER is easily adapted to simultaneous movement for the following reasons: 1) each player turn is already conveniently divided into phases; 2) each phase contains a letter and number for easy identification; and 3) many of the scenarios involve the use of a relatively small number of units. Simultaneous movement also requires the addition of only a few basically procedural rules to the game system. In other words, a player can easily switch from playing the game as it is now to playing it with simultaneous movement without having to learn the rules to an entirely new game in the process.

The drawback to simultaneous movement is, of course, that some paperwork is needed which necessarily lengthens the playing time. However, the following advantages make it well worth the extra time and effort: 1) the number of command decisions facing each squad leader is increased; 2) quite a bit of uncertainty is created for each squad leader as he now needs to anticipate his opponent's move in order to plan his own, and 3) the game becomes a great deal more realistic without sacrificing too much playability. (The only detriment to playability will be that players will have to predesignate their moves prior to the execution of each phase, requiring a little extra time and patience.)

SEQUENCE OF PLAY
One complete turn will consist of 7 phases, all involving dual player participation. The player who normally moves first in the scenario will move first in each phase of each turn.
1) RALLY PHASE—Identical to the present rally phase.
2) PREP FIRE PHASE
   a) Players simultaneously predesignate all prep fire.
   b) Since fire is simultaneous, all attacks are executed at full strength regardless of the effect of enemy prep fire on firing units.
   c) As stated earlier, the players who will normally move first in the scenario resolves his attacks first.
3) MOVEMENT AND DEFENSIVE FIRE PHASE
   a) Only units which did not fire during the Prep Fire Phase can be predesignated to move.
   b) After all prep fire has been resolved, players simultaneously predesignate the movement of their units by selecting the hexes they wish those units to occupy after movement has ended. A unit is free to take any route it wishes as long as it ends movement in its predesignated hex and does not exceed its movement factor.
   c) Once both players have finished predesignating the units they will move, the procedure followed is identical to that described in rule 16, SEMI-SIMULTANEOUS MOVEMENT AND DEFENSIVE FIRE, found on pages 22 and 23 of the second edition rules in the optional rules section. Ignore rule 16.8. Once the player moving first has finished moving all his predesignated units, the procedure is repeated for the second player.
   d) Defensive fire is not predesignated on paper.
   e) Only moving units may be fired upon during defensive fire.
   f) Units may defensive fire only if they did not fire during the Prep Fire Phase and have neither moved nor been predesignated to move during the movement portion of the phase.
   g) Place a prep fire marker on any units which defensive fire. This will help players remember which units are still available to fire during the Advancing Fire Phase.
4) ADVANCING FIRE PHASE
   a) After all movement and defensive fire has ended, players predesignate the fire of all units they have moved in this turn. (Moved units still fire at half strength.) Players may also predesignate the fire of any units which have neither prep fired or defensive fired. These units may fire at full strength.
   b) As in the Prep Fire Phase, all attacks are executed regardless of the effect of enemy fire during this phase on firing units.
   c) After all fire has been resolved, remove all prep fire markers that were placed on units that either prep fired or defensive fired.
5) ROUT PHASE—Identical to the present rout phase.
6) ADVANCE PHASE
   a) Players predesignate the advance of any of their units.
7) CLOSE COMBAT PHASE—Identical to the present close combat phase.

SPECIAL SITUATION RULES
1) The locations of new smoke counters, attempts to entrench, and the changing of building levels must all be predesignated.
2) Units which cannot reach their predesignated hex due to a loss in movement factors must end the movement phase as close to that hex as their remaining movement factors allow. For example, suppose a squad is traveling together with a leader who breaks because of defensive fire. If the squad remains unbroken, it must continue moving in the direction of its predesignated hex even if it can no longer reach the hex due to the loss of the leader's bonus of two MF.
3) As with both players have been predesignated to occupy the same hex during the Movement Phase, then the units of the player moving first in the phase may enter the predesignated hex while the units of the player moving last and the phase adjacent to that hex.
4) Units of the player moving last may still carry out a predesignated advance during the Advance Phase even if enemy units have just advanced into the hex they presently occupy. However, there is one exception. Units of the player moving last may not advance if they were predesignated to advance into the hex that the enemy units are advancing from. In this case, the units of the player moving last would remain stationary and enter into close combat with the enemy units that have advanced into their hex.
5) Players reveal the predesignated hexes of their moving units after the movement of each unit has ended.
6) When playing scenarios which include AFV's both players should move all their infantry, trucks, and jeeps first. Once this has been accomplished, both players should go back and move all their AFV's, executing any overruns in the process. Overruns can only be made against the hexes that infantry, trucks, and jeeps occupy after all non-AVF movement has been completed.

CONCLUSION
I suggest trying simultaneous movement first in Scenario 1, since players are probably most familiar with the play of this scenario and can best use it as a basis of comparison.

Fire and Movement pads containing ruled columns for identification of units, location, and target hex (Fire); and units, present location, final location, and advance (Movement) will facilitate the predesignation process so that each player can concentrate more on the increased number of decisions he now needs to make. For example, now a player not only needs to decide which units he will move, but, also, in what order he will move them. This gives a player the option to use a unit as a diversion to draw fire away from other units predesignated to move. Also, predesignation of fire forces players to carefully weigh priorities before deciding when and where to commit the fire of their units each turn.

Thus, anticipation becomes the key to success when using simultaneous movement. Without anticipating your opponent's move you won't be able to time your movement and fire to best advantage. The reason for this is that the outcome of each phase and of each turn no longer depends solely on your move, but, rather on how your move interacts with your opponent's yielding a very realistic portrayal of WWII infantry combat. Questions can be addressed to me at 19 Hollow Tree Rd., So. Norwalk, CT 06854.
WAR AT SEA

By Sean Canfield

WA R AT SEA has been an extremely popular game for which at least 20 variants have been designed. Some of these variants extend the navies of all concerned, adding a French navy, German surface raiders, Italian Frogmen, the Caribbean Sea and Cape of Good Hope and a tie-in to sister game VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC. Sean Canfield has gone them all one better by adding the Black Sea and extending the Russian navy. All of the variant counters discussed below as well as those utilized in earlier GENERAL variants (Vol. 13, #3, 14, #3, 14, 94) can be obtained for $2.00 as part of this issue's CRETE/MALTA/WAR AT SEA variant counter sheet from our mail order dept.

Of all the major prewar powers the Russians were conspicuously unfortunate, having suffered three major naval disasters in less than 40 years. The first was their defeat at Tsushima Strait by the Japanese in 1905, in which the entire Baltic Fleet was either sunk or captured. The second was the start of WWI which broke out before a major rebuilding program had made much progress. In addition, the two revolutions of 1917 and sabotage by the Germans and Anglo-French forces destroyed yet more ships and wrecked the morale of the navy. The last disaster was self-inflicted by Stalin's purge of the high command in all military branches in 1937. The purges did as much damage to the Russian Fleet as anything that had happened before.

Another problem with which the Russians had to cope was that of geography. The Soviet Union is surrounded by four large bodies of water: the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, and the Arctic and Pacific Oceans. Russia has always had to deploy its naval resources between four areas, which are separated by often hostile territory. Once a ship is deployed in the Arctic, it is no easy matter to redeploy it to the Baltic. After the defeat by the Japanese the Pacific had been maintained at a weak level, and there were only eight forces in the Arctic. This left the Baltic as the main force, with the Black Sea Fleet somewhat lighter but also strong.

THE RUSSIAN NAVY

When the government began to rebuild the navy in 1922 it was obvious that a major and expensive job lay ahead. To add to the problems, many of the surviving ships were in very poor condition and had to be scrapped. It was decided to try to complete unfinished warships that had been laid down before the revolution, many of which were useless hulls, and, after thoroughly weeding these out, the Russians were left with the following:

SERVICEABLE SHIPS
3 battleships (in commission or refitting)
5 cruisers (2 in commission, 3 still under construction)
17 destroyers (10 in commission, 7 under construction)
19 submarines (not all in commission or complete)

The three battleships were rechristened with Marxist names. The GANGUT became the OCTOBER REVOLUTION; SEVASTOPOL became PARIS COMMUNE; and PETROPAVLOVSK became MARAT. All three mounted 12-12" guns and displaced 25,000 tons; all were modernized with oil-fired boilers, and at least one was re-engined. Their best feature was their guns, which had a range of 25,000 yards. Accommodations were, however, terrible: extremely unsanitary, and very poorly ventilated.

The cruisers were a pathetic lot. They were retained more out of sentiment than for military value. All five of the Russian cruisers were modernized, they were still no match for foreign foreign cruisers in almost all categories.

1935 was the turning point for the Russian Navy, for it was realized Nazi Germany was the main enemy. Russia was alarmed by the growing strength of the German Navy. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 gave Germany the right to build up to 35% of the strength of the British Fleet in surface ships and up to 100% in submarines, and the Soviet Government therefore felt themselves forced to commence the first major warship program since 1917. Two heavy cruisers were laid down: the KIROV at Leningrad and the MOLOTOV at Nikolayev in the Black Sea.

The Kirov-class cruisers were built with much Italian assistance. A total of six of these cruisers were ordered between 1935 and 1939, each displacing 8800 tons. They mounted nine 7.1-inch guns, which had a range of 39,000 yards. The MASAKIM GORKI was completed in Leningrad in December, 1940. The VOROSHILOV was finished in June, 1941—just one week before the German attack—for the Baltic Fleet. The latter three were not in the original game, however they did take an active part during WWII, participating in the Battle of Cape Matapan and rescuing unscath'd. The Italian ships belong to the Axis player and are available on turn one.

The Italian Navy suffered from having to rely on an independent air force. In consequence Italy lagged behind other navies in the development of carriers. Plans to convert the trans-Atlantic liner Roma had been prepared in the middle of 1940. It was not, however, until the encounter between the Italian and British fleets off Cape Matapan on March 28, 1941, a disaster which the Italians ascribed to a lack of fighter protection, that orders were given to proceed with the project. Renamed the Aquila, the ship had a displacement of 27,000 tons, a speed of 30 knots, and operated fifty-one Re 2001 fighter aircraft. The ship was ready for sea trials when, at the Armistice on September 9, 1943, she was sabotaged by her crew and abandoned, to be captured by the Germans. The Aquila is available on turn seven. The airstrike factor is purely defensive and may be used only when the allied player is making an airstrike on the Italian Fleet in which it cancels out an equal amount of its attackers airstrike. The Aquila's airstrike may never be used for offensive purposes.

III. RULES CHANGES
A. AXIS AIR STRIKES

Turn three (1941) witnessed the invasions of Greece and Crete. The Germans needed air superiority in order both to keep the Mussolini airborne invasion of Crete. The Axis player on turn three must place his airstrike counter in the Mediterranean.

B. DAMAGE CONTROL

Subtract one from each damage die rolled caused by a hit from a Russian 3-3-3 battleship. This reflects the antiquated design of the Russian battleships.
The "Opponents Wanted" Survey

or,

What Are They Playing in Dubuque?

by Gary Charbonneau

There are many measures of a game's popularity, all more or less imperfect. One such measure is gross sales. From the standpoint of the manufacturer, this is the only measure of popularity that really counts, since it is the only one which tells how many dollars each game has earned. It is, however, somewhat biased in favor of newer games, since hard-core gamers already tend to own the bulk of the older titles and certainly aren't about to go out and buy duplicate copies just to boost a game's popularity rating. In addition, a real turkey of a game with an attractive title or box cover may sell well for a while after it first appears, but, after one or two playings, be relegated to the closet to gather dust.

Another measure of popularity is the direct survey, such as that conducted by Avalon Hill with its "Reader Buyer's Guide" forms. This is probably a more valid measure of popularity than is mere sales volume, but, it is, too, not without its flaws. Only those who bother to mail in the survey have their "votes" counted, and since they are often limited in their replies by the categories provided on the survey form, "Write-in" responses are effectively discouraged. In addition, such surveys, particularly SPl's "Feedback," rely heavily on initial impressions. These may change radically one way or another as a game is played over and over again.

A third way to measure game popularity, although one somewhat tedious to carry out, is to find out what games people are actually desperate to find other people to play. The easiest and perhaps the only really practical way to do this is to examine the "Opponents Wanted" ads on the back cover of each GENERAL and count the number of requests each game receives. Being a statistics junkie with some time on my hands one weekend, I actually went ahead and did just that. And, folks, I am happy to announce that the results for Vol. 14, No. 1-5, are now in.

Not counted were the rare requests for such non-wargames as FOOTBALL STRATEGY and OUTDOOR SURVIVAL.

Compare these results with the Reader Buyer's Guide Rating Chart in this issue. You may be surprised at the low correlation. PANZERBLITZ, the overwhelming favorite in the "Opponents Wanted" survey, is rated at number 10 on the Jan-Feb 1978 RBG Chart. CAESAR/ALESIA, number 7 on the RBG, is a dismal 30th place game according to "Opponents Wanted."

A few other points are worth of note. One is the overwhelming popularity of games of the World War II period. If we count BLITZKRIEG as basically a World War II game, then it is not until we get to 1776 in the number 10 spot that we find a game that deals with another topic. Conversely, if we look at the games on the bottom half of the list, in positions 19 through 38, we find that 10, or over half, are non-WWII games. If you are a Hussite Wars buff, read it and weep, for you are probably alone in a very large crowd of junior Rommel and Pattons.

The survey does produce a few surprises. For a game now fourteen years old, AFRICA KORPS is certainly holding its own. It is especially popular for PBEM, but, that, at least, is no surprise, since it is so well adapted for it. I thought RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN would do a bit better than it did, but, perhaps it is still too new, I would expect it to move up a notch or two in the next couple of years. SQUAD LEADER looks rather out of place down there near the bottom of the list sandwiched between JUTLAND and KRIEGSPIEL, but this is due to the fact that it really only just came out. Look for it to move into the top ten by this time next year, and possibly even into the top five.

The process of compiling this survey brought another point or two to my attention. Judging by the ads I have had to read, some of you could use a refresher course in penmanship. All of those misspellings and groans can't be Avalon Hill typos! Some of you are also not terribly precise in formulating your ads. It is not always easy to tell which games you want to PBEM and which you want for FTF play. For example: "Wanted: FTF AK, DD, JT, Pa, 'Grad. Will also consider PBEM." PBEM what, son? Are you really sure you want to play JUTLAND by mail? Sometimes I'm not sure, although I counted ads of this type as being both FTF and PBEM requests for all games listed.

It would also be nice if those of you who are looking for AREA rated games would be kind enough to include your current ratings. If you are rated at 900, then somebody rated 1600+ is just wasting a stamp and an envelope by writing to you. I realize that your rating could change drastically between the time you submit your ad and the time it actually gets into print, but still, some information is better than none.

I am also not sure whether I really like the "shotgun" approach to "Opponents Wanted" requests. Some of you are advertising your willingness to PBEM as many as ten or a dozen different games. Either you have got to be kidding, or you must be spending the bulk of your lives running back and forth to the post office. I know AH gives you 25 whole words for your quarter, but that is no excuse to list every game in your collection just because you can't think of anything else to say. Wouldn't it make more sense to be more specific about the two or three games you really are interested in? For a start, he about indicating your side preference and the optional rules you want to use? If you do this in your ad, you and your opponent won't have to waste time negotiating about the matter by mail.

I suppose I'm getting old and crotchety and have no real right to expect lucid writing in the want ads, but try to humor me, will you?

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A.H. Philosophy . . . Continued from Pg. 2, Col. 3
become entangled in. After all, despite great
differences by other members of our fraternity, we
still control the major means of contact to the
majority of hard-core boardgamers. Further-
more, both companies have proved they can put
the hobby in proper perspective by their
unsselfish sponsorship of the first three shows.
Few rational observers could refute that the
ORIGINS platform summoned forth the steady
customers of the large companies to see for the
first time the small, struggling manufacturers.
Steve Peek of Battleline has often stated
that his sales at ORIGINS II kept his little
company going when things were looking bleak.
In contrast, AH led the show in sales, but that
amount was far less than 1% of its total income
for the year. In short, the other manufacturers
have placed their faith in us, as both the first
and principal backers of ORIGINS, to run the
selection and safeguard process. As a result, we
have entered into the following agreement with
SPI to ensure that future ORIGINS will
be handled in a more secure manner.

PROPOSED BYLAWS
NATIONAL WARGAME ASSOCIATION

1. NAME. The name of this organization is NATIONAL WARGAME
ASSOCIATION. It is a corporation of the State of New
Jersey, organized pursuant to the laws of New Jersey
and the Revised Statutes, as a corporation not for profit.

2. OBJECT. The object of this organization is the promotion
of the hobby of wargaming, in all its facets, but limited to,
the holding of conventions for the purpose of promoting the hobby.

3. MEMBERS.
   a. Governing membership in this organization shall be
      by invitation of the director of the governing members.
The initial permanent governing members shall be:
      Simulations Publications, Inc., New York, New York, and
      The Avalon Hill Game Company, Battle Creek, Mich.,
      b. New permanent governing members shall be selected
      by a three-man committee known as the Awards Committee.
      c. Membership as a permanent governing member may be
      terminated by one of the following methods:
         (1) Voluntary withdrawal upon written notification.
         (2) Filing for bankruptcy, organization, assignment
         for the benefit of creditors, or any other act of insolvency
         under state or federal law.
         (3) Merger with or becoming a wholly owned subsidiary
         of another permanent governing member.
   d. The corporation shall have a temporary governing member,
      which shall be the corporation, organization, or individual
      who had responsibility for presenting the convention
      in the previous year.
   e. The permanent governing member may establish other
      classifications, by majority vote, under such conditions
      and at such times as the trustees may deem suitable.

4. OFFICERS.
   a. Trustees. Each governing member shall designate one
      of its employees to be a trustee of this organization.
      Any trustee so appointed shall remain a trustee at the pleasure
      of the governing member appointing that trustee.
   b. Other Officers.
      (1) This organization shall have the following officers:
         a. A chairman of the board of trustees and a secretary/treasurer.
         (2) The election of officers shall be held annually, at
         the time of the annual convention.
      (3) Officers shall hold office for a term of one year or
         until their successor shall be elected.
      (4) One person may not hold the offices of chairman
         and secretary/treasurer simultaneously.
   c. Duties of the Chairman. The chairman shall be the chief
      executive officer of the corporation; he shall preside at all
      meetings of the corporation; he shall have the management
      of the business of the corporation and shall see that
      all orders and resolutions of the board of trustees are
      carried into effect. He shall have the power to appoint and
      dismiss such agents and employees of the corporation as
      may be necessary to effectuate the business of the corporation.

5. MEETINGS.
   a. Meetings of the Trustees. The board of trustees shall
      meet at least once in every year, at a written notice
      to be given to every trustee at least fifteen days
      before the meeting. At any regular meeting, a
      quorum shall consist of a majority of the members
      then present. The board shall keep an accurate
      record of each meeting and shall keep a record
      of every transaction of its business. The board
      shall keep its records in a secure place and be
      required to adopt such amendments. The Trustees, in casting
      their vote, shall send it to the secretary/treasurer. The
      secretary/treasurer, in reporting the results of the voting,
      shall furnish a copy of the same to each member,
      and shall keep a record of how each member
      who voted actually voted on the proposed amendments.
   b. Special meetings. Any members required to be sent
      shall be sent to the trustee designated by the respective governing
      member, at the annual convention. In any case where the
      business of the governing member which the
      trustee represents.

   It should be noted that this decision was by
   no means unanimous and that there were
dissenting voices at the ORIGINS 79 meeting
which was open to the public. Some of the
smaller manufacturers wanted a seat on the
Association and while it is true that we originally
invited the other professionals to join us in the
Association, it seemed hardly reasonable
to expect several multi-million dollar companies
to bow to the dictates of a few part-time publishers
whose contribution to the convention does not
run farther than their booth fees. Any realist
should see that a company which draws the
majority of the attendees with free publicity in its
journals should be under no obligation to smaller
companies as who bring $10,000 or no new
attendees by virtue of their efforts. While it is
hoped that all companies would contribute free
publicity to the extent they are able, their efforts
should not be equated with those on a far larger scale.

Neither are we willing to reduce the selection
process to a show of hands by all in attendance,
as one overzealous lover of democracy suggest-
ed. We are, for all, engaged in this pursuit as
our livelihood and are not willing to bow to the
dictates of the massed membership of Po-
durumia. We will hold our meeting as we
wish, which may decide to attend the meeting as a lark.

We’ve also heard complaints that several
manufacturers were given false information as
to the time and place of the ORIGINS meeting.
Funny, the conversation program we had was
quite clear on both points. Suffice it to say that
we’re embarking on the above course with the
best intentions for the hobby and well wishes
from most, if not all, of the major manufacturers.

And now it seems we’ve come full cycle on
the subject of ORIGINS sponsorship, as an
individual manufacturer has called for ORIGINS
to remain on the East Coast where it won’t compete
with other established regional shows. At this
point, my only response is that the 1980 site will be
decided by the bidders and fellow voters Howard
Barlow and James Hughes of PENN CON.
In expectation of encouraging a reliable of
guarantees to enter the bidding picture for ORIGINS ’80, we
are presenting the following guidelines to aid
the prospective ORIGINS sponsor inapproach-
ing the matter.

The listing which follows in two parts; the first
consists of a dozen requirements which any
sponsoring company must adhere to, and the second being a
suggested outline of points to be covered by any
bidder in his presentation.

ORIGINS SPONSORS REQUIREMENTS & OBLIGATIONS

1. Selling Exhibit Area. If the space is auctioned it shall be
   restricted to one or a group contacted by the
   governing club.
2. Manufacturers first right of refusal for running tournaments
   under auspices of ORIGINS within the geographic
   area of the convention.
3. Event sponsor’s right to entry fee reimbursement if desired.
4. Supply place ORIGINS plaques for all tournaments,
   for all contests (in addition to the Charles Roberts
   Tournament of the Year)
5. Provide facilities as outlined and accepted at presentation.
6. Provide facilities as outlined and accepted at presentation.
7. Minimum of 4 quarterly reports to committee members and
   other interested parties (i.e., magazines, clubs, manufacturers)
THE GENERAL

8. All fees should not increase more than the previous years amount plus that year's inflation rate (use latest figures).
9. Program book must be prepared for distribution at or prior to convention, containing all pertinent information at show, and by mail pre-registration offered for both attendance and events.
10. Liability insurance must be taken out for the sum of not less than $1 million.
11. Held harmless to committee.
12. The committee reserves the right to require a payment and/or fidelity bond for new or inexperienced organizations or groups. Potential bidders falling into this category will be notified in advance of the selection so that they can investigate the cost in their local area of obtaining these bonds. Such information is readily obtainable from any insurance agent in general lines insurance.

ORIGINS BIDDING PRESENTATION
1. Description of organization and its structure to include size, history of existence.
2. Key people involved and background information to include any previous convention/organizational experience.
3. Personnel available to work on convention which would include the biddings organization itself and additional help from outside groups (also their key people and extent of support).
4. Finances of organization (initial start up capital recommended is $1,000).
5. Letter of confirmation from site owners or their representa
tives that it has or can be reserved.
6. Site facilities:
   A. Type of layout, relationship of buildings, general description of buildings (AC, and costs of each).
   B. Exhibit hall size (160 Sq. Ft. per booth required).
   C. Seminar facilities—number of rooms, size and capacity of each.
   D. Tournament facilities—number of rooms, size and capacity of each, chairs and tables suitable for gaming.
   E. Open gaming—amount of space, accessibility to space, location.
   F. Other special facilities—artistic fields, proximity to site, other features.
   G. Lodging on site—capacity, costs.
   H. On site food, hours, price range.
   I. Handicapped facilities, accessibility to events in and around site.
   J. Security arrangements, hours of con, exhibit safety, money security.
   K. Transportation to site—proximity to major modes of transportation, distance from major town/city.
7. Special activities planned, movies, guest speakers, etc.
8. Proposed fees, by-mail pre-registration, daily, weekend and special entrance fees, booth costs, advertising costs, other costs.
9. Off site lodging, number of hotels/motels, number of rooms available in each, distance from con, costs.
10. Off site food facilities, accessibility, distance, types, price range.
11. Invitation of hobby and general advertisement/publicity.
12. Convention data.

Before ending the subject of conventions, I'd like to mention our requirements for attending and plugging something new. There are now so many gatherings of varying sizes spread across the country that we can't possibly attend or sponsor events in all of those to which we are invited. Therefore, we have adopted a blanket policy regarding convention attendance which we feel is fair to all concerned and removes the possibility of slighting some to attend others, while utilizing subjective opinions to pick and choose. The following objective formula is our standard for convention participation.

ORIGINS MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION
2,000+ EXPENSES REQUIRED
2,000+ 2 or more representatives

Simply put, we cannot attend a convention without the prospect of making our expenses. To promote the hobby, AH is willing to foot the bill for the salary of their employees and time lost due to such trips, but must insist upon out-of-pocket expenses. This means that we cannot attend a convention for the first time unless the organizers advance us the airfare for our representatives and extend complimentary lodging. In exchange, our representatives will be available to run tournaments, give seminars, etc. Should he return with a report that the convention is large enough (minimum of 2,000 attendees) to warrant a return trip at our expense, we will attend the event in the future at our own expense. This arrangement has been utilized three times in the past year and has resulted in our commitment to attendance at the MDG conventions in Detroit.

We are more than pleased to provide free listings of conventions in the GENERAL providing you supply us with the necessary information at least 4 months in advance. We must also request that you list events of interest to AH gamers. Many readers of the GENERAL are not hard corps wargamers and have little interest in fantasy, miniatures, or even wargames of other manufacturers. Such people, with interests limited to only a few AH games, would be done an injustice were we to publicize conventions with no planned activities in games which interest them. It is most distressing to a casual gamer to travel upwards of 100 miles only to find little activity in his main field of interest.

As usual, we welcome your comments on this or other subjects.

AH BEST SELLER LIST

Close on the heels of our 1976 Best Seller List, we present the updated lists for 1977. Both lists are based on total retail and mail order sales for our 1977 Fiscal Year which began in April '77 and ended May '78. Titles indicated by an asterisk indicate that they were not available during the full fiscal year due to recent introduction. Figures for the ALL TIME list include all versions of the games sold to date which in some cases (GETTYSBURG) can include as many as five different editions.

1977 AVALON HILL BEST SELLERS

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<td>FACTS IN FIVE</td>
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<td>STARSHIP TROOPERS</td>
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<td>ARAB-ISRAELI CAMPAIGN</td>
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<td>VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC*</td>
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<td>SQUAD LEADER*</td>
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<td>GETTYSBURG*</td>
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<td>RAIL BARON*</td>
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1976 AVALON HILL ALL TIME BEST SELLERS

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<td>BATTLE OF THE BULGE</td>
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<td>GETTYSBURG</td>
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It is interesting to note that all games in the ALL TIME list have sold over 100,000 copies.
commitment. So given that attitude, if one delay was made, another delay would be even more likely. The reason cited at the time was the need to allow Rommel to attack the Gazala Line and Tobruk before the British attacked him. After Tobruk fell then, it was clear that Malta would be invaded. But given the impetuosity of Rommel, such a halt would be most unlikely. Also politically, given the tremendous victory necessary to capture Tobruk, how could the Axis revert to a defensive posture in North Africa?

Given the approximate date for each invasion plan, the next step was to develop an order of battle for each of those plans. Since the battle never actually took place, popular histories and even some of the official histories gave little note to forces available. Some detective work with international assistance filled many gaps and from the mass of data the scenarios emerged. Interestingly, the craft commando operations and were eventually forced unlikely. Also politically, given the tremendous official histories gave little note to forces Italians had no amphibious technology beyond victory necessary to capture Tobruk, how could the plan mens and had to be supplemented by lagoon schooners, ferries, and fishing boats. With the much simplicity of the invasion, invasion rules grew more and more complex. But with the game reduced to just one scenario, the problem of special invasion craft could be ignored.

Finally faced was a problem that is probably uniquely Maltese: could all those stone forts on Malta really withstand a modern assault? Central to the MALTA design was the analysis of the effectiveness of the Maltese fortifications combined with field, coast, and anti-aircraft artillery. Research showed that the fortification system, while extensive was too old and too small to withstand modern artillery. Yet when a game was tested without them, British resistance broke after the first day. The best solution was to have three classes of fortifications: bastions representing the immense walls surrounding some cities, forts that are large enough to provide cover for infantry, and battery positions which are really those forts too small for anything else. Actually, the coast artillery required fixed installations and could not be moved about. This choice of three types represents considerable testing.

On Malta during spring 1942 there were hundreds of artillery pieces. In daily use were the 112 heavy AA guns and 138 light AA guns. All modern weapons, these composed one of the critical factor limiting all plans was the Axis lack of amphibious invasion craft, exactly the same problem faced earlier by the Germans in 1940. The Italians had no amphibious technology beyond commando operations and were eventually forced to import invasion craft. The Germans had developed for use in the now cancelled Operation "Sealion." Still, these did not fulfill invasion force requirements and had to be supplemented by lagoon schooners, ferries, and fishing boats. With the much simplicity of the invasion, invasion rules grew more and more complex. But with the game reduced to just one scenario, the problem of special invasion craft could be ignored.

CRETE Continued from Pg. 7

in the first eight turns. The longer the game drags on, the dimmer the light of victory becomes for the Germans.

There is a fine line between recklessness and the calculated audacity which the German player must follow. Attacks at less than three-to-one odds and important attacks at less than four-to-one odds put too much faith in luck. Two-to-one assaults are either foolhardy or desperate and should be avoided. The Germans have mobility, surprise and high concentrations of firepower; to dissipate any of these is a sure road to defeat.

Defending Crete completely, i.e., holding all three airfields, is mostly a matter of luck for the Commonwealth player. If the Germans scatter badly on the first drops, if their convoys sink, and if the die has a British flag carved on it, the airfields will hold.

Once the Germans have played their hand, the Commonwealth player must rapidly replan his game. Nonessential units should prepare to evacuate from the ports, and move toward the sector boundaries. A few other Commonwealth units may be able to slip into Maltese to strengthen the air defense if the Germans have established a poor block. Another battalion can be shifted via coastal steamer from Heraklion to either Retimo or Suda if either in difficulty.

The Commonwealth player must remember that once one airfield is lost, he should abandon the rest of them and go for the evacuation. He must get the noncombat and weak units off first and save the big battalions for killer packs to get the necessary 75 points of German dead.

Although the German player has the unique ability to launch that humiliating aerial envelopment, the Commonwealth player can still turn that momentum to his advantage. The value of wargaming as an historical tool goes beyond analyzing what history was like; it allows the exploration of the imponderables of history. Some games have been likened to "paper time machines." MALTA and CRETE are faithful recreations, but they also are games that people play and talk about, games that can't be "solved" in the first sitting.

ORDER BY PHONE

We will now accept game orders by phone from those individuals with currently valid MASTERCHARGE, BANKAMERICAN (VISA), or AMERICAN EXPRESS credit cards. The number to call is 201-254-5300, Ask for Clo. Newton or ext. 34. Continue to state that you wish to place an order for a game. You must give the order taker the number, expiration date, and name of your credit card along with your order and shipping address. Phone orders are available every Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5 PM. Absolutely no collect phone calls can be accepted.

THE GENERAL

1. The German Fallschirmjäger Battalions break up and drop as companies as they do in CRETE—this will drastically revise the drop plans as companies are harder to form up and far easier to counterattack effectively.

2. All three airborne drops should be preprogrammed prior to the start of the game. This will portray the relative inflexibility of most operations once the ball gets rolling and will add more emphasis on the attackers getting to the right place on time.

3. Roll for Allied surprise: 1-4 normal surprise on the first turn, 5-6, no Allied surprise and no first turn movement restrictions. This one is obvious—better Allied intelligence. For added ulcers, roll for surprise after the initial Axis drop.

In conclusion, this is a game that puts tremendous pressure on both sides, moreso as more games are played (neither side can afford to be predictable—against the same opponents, different plans will have to be tried). There is enough pressure so that careful thought and preparation beforehand will pay handsome dividends—and make the game all the more exciting.
Dear Mr. Greenwood,

This letter is in reply to a letter printed in the Vol. 15, No. 8, from Frank Avent of Jackson, Tenn., in regard to SQUAD 2000.

I feel, as an experienced player of the game, that Mr. Avent’s letter was misleading, and can result in false impressions being made upon new readers who have not yet bought SQUAD 6. It is without doubt the finest small-unit-action simulation currently on the market, that would be a shame if it were misconstrued.

He states that SQUAD 6 has left, either deliberately or by incompetence, two very valid differences between the game and the rules. It is completely ignorant that the fundamental premise of SQUAD 6 is that you have to plan your move carefully, i.e. you have to think ahead of time, and constantly think of the next step. The point of the game is not to prevent the power of SQUAD 6 from being used to its fullest potential, but to make it as fun as possible. The key to SQUAD 6 is to constantly be on the lookout for new ideas and strategies, and to be able to adapt to any situation.

The great thing about SQUAD 6 is that it is not a game where you have to spend a lot of money on equipment. It is truly a game that can be played anywhere and everywhere. You can play it in school, at home, at work, on the bus, or even on a train. It is a game that can be played by anyone, regardless of age, gender, or nationality. It is a game that can be played by people of all walks of life, and it is a game that can be played by people of all ages.

The objectives of the game are to field the best possible force and to win the game. The best way to do this is to have a good understanding of the rules and to be able to adapt to any situation. The game is not a game of chance, but a game of skill and strategy. It is a game that can be played by anyone, regardless of age, gender, or nationality. It is a game that can be played by people of all walks of life, and it is a game that can be played by people of all ages.

It is a game that can be played by anyone, regardless of age, gender, or nationality. It is a game that can be played by people of all walks of life, and it is a game that can be played by people of all ages.
SUBMARINE is a tactical level game with one player controlling one or more submarines and his opponent controlling the surface and air defenses. You may control up to ten submarines for one or more players. Each move involves a complex interplay of factors affecting both the surface and air defenses. The aim is to destroy the enemy submarines before they can reach your base.

The game consists of a large mapboard, which represents the ocean, with a number of key points marked on it. Each turn, the player must decide where to move his submarines and what actions to take against the enemy. The enemy's position and strength are unknown, but the player can gather information through reconnaissance and intelligence reports.

The game is played on a 20x20 grid, with each square representing a 50-mile square of ocean. The grid is divided into four quadrants, each representing a sector of the ocean. The player can choose to operate in one or more sectors, depending on his strategy.

The game is played over a number of turns, with each turn representing one day. The player must decide where to move his submarines, what actions to take, and what resources to allocate. The game ends when one side reaches a predetermined objective or when a predetermined number of turns have been played.

The game is designed for 2-4 players and can be played in 2-4 hours. It requires a good understanding of tactics and strategy to succeed. The game is challenging and requires careful planning and decision-making.

The game includes a detailed rulebook, which provides a comprehensive guide to the rules and strategies. The game is available in both print and digital formats. It is suitable for experienced players and is recommended for ages 16 and up.

The game is published by Avalon Hill and has received positive reviews from players and critics alike. It is considered one of the best tactical games ever made and is a classic in the genre.

The game is available online at www.avalonhill.com and in physical stores. It is a must-have for any serious gamer and is a great addition to any gaming collection.
THE GENERAL
Vol. 15, No. 1 of THE GENERAL polled a 3.48 cumulative rating, which was a slight improvement over Vol. 14, No. 8, but still far worse than our average effort. The individual articles fared as follows in our 1200 point scoring system based on a random sampling of 200 readers with 3 points awarded for 1st place, 2 for second, and 1 for third.

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ADVANCED GETTYSBURG .......................................................... 187
THE ROAD TO BERLIN ............................................................. 285
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MISSING LINKS ............................................................................. 97
INTERVIEW: JOHN EDWARDS ...................................................... 88
SCENARIO GETTYSBURG .............................................................. 70
AVALON HILL PHILOSOPHY ......................................................... 23

Congratulations of sorts are due for the longevity and expert play of Jim Reilly's OOPS and Bryan Mundell's Lithica/CORSIMA clubs for staggering to a first place tie in the first AH PBOM team championships with 9% wins apiece. The tournament, which started in 1975, was plagued by dropouts, rule interpretations, and all the other hangups of postal play complicated by excessive time delays due to the international nature of the competition (Nicky Palmer's European based National Games Club placed third with 9 wins). The two clubs split a $90 cash prize.

The son of ORCON, the third annual Orange County Simulations Convention, will be hosted by the Armchair Strategists Club January 5, 6 and 7, 1979 at California State University in Fullerton, CA. Admission is $8.50 if pre-registered and $10.00 at the door. A full slate of the usual AH tournaments are scheduled. For further information, write: Alan Emrich, 2922 Angler Lane, Los Alamitos, CA 90720.

INFANTRY ATTACKS—Potsdam, 1937. (Attacks, Inc., P.O. Box 2583, Laurel, MD 20811). 266 pages, plus many sketch maps. $14.95. This is the English translation of Rommel’s Infanterie Greift an, reprinted in the U.S. Infantry Journal in 1944. The main theme of the book, and the author’s personal observations and comments as to the proper tactics that must be employed when faced with the tactical situation just described. This is a rate small unit combat narrative, which even today can be useful in training troops and leaders. For the board gamer, infantry Attacks provides dozens of historical scenarios which can be translated from its pages to the mapboards of our SQUAD LEADER game utilizing practically all that game's terrain, infantry, artillery and infantry support weapon units.

For those of us with overactive imaginations, Contest #84 may well have proved to be a case of over-analysis. The answer is, of course, to hold tight and zap the M7 unit at 4-1. Note, however, that had the German units NOT been in a city, the correct solution would have been to march three of the German units up the hill to zap the light armored stuff while one infantry unit played fatal rear guard on the bridge. But the city means that the Germans can stay snug in the city with much less to fear from the Allied 1-2 CAT.

Only three readers were able to give viable solutions to the GETTYSBURG puzzle in Contest No. 83, although we also accepted three near misses. More than half the contestants committed the same error of putting the Jenkins cavalry unit into an attack rather than positioning it in hex 21 where it must be placed to maintain the isolation of all Union units. The major flaw in all answers was that the key to the solution was concentration of attack in order to force the Union units to eliminate themselves in costly counterattacks. At least five Confederate units were required in one attack and four others in a second attack to accomplish this.

Those who found the solution or were close enough to be judged winners were: T. Swider, Endwell, NY; P. Dennis, Lebanon, KS; M. Sincavage, Kernesville, NC; W. Carnes, Indianapolis, IN; S. Slingsby, Springfield, PA; and C. Barker, Kamloops Province, BC.

Would you believe a television series on wargames? Our British brothers in the wargaming fraternity have done just that according to a report in the June '78 issue of BATTLE magazine. They report that on February 23rd, Tyne Tees Television, framed wargaming and television history by screening the first of six 30 minute programs on the miniatures side of our hobby. The series utilized prominent English actor Edward Woodward as commentator, a dozen well known miniaturists, and a cast of thousands (11,000 to be precise—colorfully painted figures all). Two other British stations have already bought the series and hopes are high that other regions will soon enter negotiations to screen the series nationwide. Five months were spent filming the series and each minute of film represents several hours of judicious editing. In fact it is reported that the time and effort put into the series exceeds that of most TV dramas. The format for each show consists of a brief utilizing old maps of the battle and analysis of existing terrain and forces. The game is then replayed in front of the cameras with the aid of judicious editing allowing the forces to virtually fly across the games table. A concluding summary wraps the whole thing up very nicely with an analysis of how the latter day Wellingtons and Napoleonics fared. The six battles chosen for the series cover each commander's campaign in France, 1642; Battle of the Nile; 1821 when we request that garners send a postcard, 1877; San Francisco: 1977. 142 pp. Presidio Press, $12.95. This hardbound book is a study of Operation Goodwood, the British offensive of July 18, 1944, which proved to be a decisive factor in the battle of Normandy. The battle generated a barrage of recriminations between the Americans and British commanders, the Americans criticizing their allies' strategy and tactics, while the British just as vehemently defended their handling of the battle. Mr. Sweet attempts to look at the battle from all viewpoints and concludes that the commanders involved may neither be overly praised or blamed for the results of the operation. The major flaw in this work is its lack of depth and scope and the book's high price. All in all, the author gives us an adequate narrative of an important battle which does suggest some valid conclusions; but lacks the historical research which the subject demands.

When we request that gamers send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with their questions we do so for a reason. Namely, after paying an individual to answer your question (which more often than not is answered in the rules anyway) we feel that you should be willing to pay the postage both ways. While this seems insignificant on the surface, postage costs quickly mount up when you answer hundreds of such letters every week. Therefore, we must request your indulgence in honoring our request to pay the postage costs of answering your questions. This means don't send questions in our postage paid envelopes or expect them to be enclosed in orders. The people who work in the mail order department don't know how to play the games—they can't answer your questions. They must be forwarded to the proper designer for answers and by that time your order has long since left. In addition, it would help greatly if your questions are phrased into a “yes” or “no” format. This is often much more appropriate as our designers don't have the time to set up virtually hundreds of situations by grid-coordinates. Lastly, if you want faster service be sure to mention the fact that you are a GENERAL subscriber, as GENERAL readers get preference over non-subscribers.

Avalon Hill postal enthusiasts have not let the absence of pbm sheets deter them from engaging in pbm battles with their favorite games. Using any of a multitude of homemade, complicated systems to overcome the problems of multi-phase turns and confusion situations postal gamers abound in just about any game you care to mention. Recently two readers went out of their way to make their systems a little easier by having professional style pbm sheets made up for their favorite games featuring reduced rules for PANZERBLITZ PBOM kit. Walter Culp of 732 Newhall Ave, Burlington, CA 94010 designed such a 8 x 10" sheet for our PANZER LEADER game complete with type set tables on the back for resolution of combat and multi-unit hex capacity. Wayne Rice of 299 Main St, Rutland MA 1501 designed similar 10 x 14" printing job on our THIRD REICH mapboard. Both individuals have expressed an interest in supplying the sheets to fellow postal enthusiasts at cost, but give them a break and include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for their reply.
**Good News for Paydirt Owners**

**New Charts for Your SI Football Game**

**$7.00**

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**Opponents Wanted**

**OPPONENTS WANTED**

We're looking for opponents to play ourSI Sports Games. If you're interested, please contact us at the address below. We'll send you the latest news and information on how to get started. If you're interested, please let us know.

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Contest Number 85
Air Assault on Crete

It is a crucial turn in a CRETE game. The German player has just captured Retimo Airfield but now he must hold onto it to “get something going” since he is bogged down at Heraklion and Maleme. It is the German player segment and the German player fully expects an all-out attack on the Allied portion of the turn. If this were the seventh turn of an Advanced-level game of CRETE and you were the German player, what would you do, using only the two German units pictured on the mapboard? Simply indicate your choice for a course of action below:

☐ 1. Retreat towards Retimo.
☐ 2. Stand pat on the airfield and do nothing.
☐ 3. Attack the units in hex A.
☐ 4. Attack the units in hex B.
☐ 5. Attack the units in hex C.
☐ 6. None of the above.

Contestants are limited to one entry. In the case of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine ten winners.

Ten winning entries will receive certificates redeemable for free AH merchandise. To be valid an entry must be received prior to the mailing of the next GENERAL and include a numerical rating for the issue as a whole as well as list the best 3 articles. The solution will be announced in the next issue and the winners in the following issue.

Issue as a whole: (Rate from 1 to 10; with 1 equating excellent, 10 terrible)

Best 3 Articles:  

NAME
ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP
BLACK SEA
Axis: 1 POC  Allies: 1 POC
After turn 3 Italian ships may enter if Mediterranean is Axis controlled. British not allowed.