Aside from being late again, this issue comes to you notable both for what is in it and for what is not. The way of new games will finally find an advertisement for our BISMARCK game which has been overdue since last July. Scheduled for release at ORIGINS 78 and long feared lost by those of you who placed advance orders last July, BISMARCK pulled off the assembly line and alongside the quay of our advance mail order customers about March 20th. The game advertised in this issue is now available and not just a figment of someone's hopeful promised deadline.

The last statement is a prelude to what you won't find advertised in this issue. Yes, MAGIC REALM is once again among the missing, having missed its umpteenth consecutive deadline. This game has been a considerable embarrassment to us—having supposed to have made its first appearance at GEN CON '77, then Christmas, then the Hobby Show, then last month. Back at ORIGINS 78 we broke from a long-standing policy of not accepting pre-publication orders with good intentions of filling advance orders for this game and BISMARCK last fall. It is now almost a full year after our first optimistic deadline and a production model dragon has yet to be slain. This misrepresentation, albeit unintentional, to our loyal customers of promised delivery times should be a source of considerable shame to our

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The past year I've been toiling on a game called THE RISING SUN to be difficult but I was supremely confident that I could take Larry's basic design and develop it into a hell of a game. Within a week or two, however, I began encountering small problems such as the fact that the prototype design each Game-Turn (which represented two weeks) had approximately fourteen Naval Movement Phases and seemed to require an entire day to play (and here I use the term "play" loosely; I meant to require an entire day to play and here I use the term "play" loosely; I meant "play-test even the shortest scenarios!") I soon discovered a host of other problems (for example, the designer had used counters representing small groups of six aircraft and due to the overall playing counter limitations imposed on the game, the U.S. Player would not even be provided with enough counters to represent the carrier compliments after 1942) which eventually convinced me that the game required an almost complete redesign.

Now, to try to make a long and painful story brief, and to emphasize the fact that I am not trying to pin the blame on Larry Pinsky, I must admit that my own arduous effort to redesign THE RISING SUN was less than a complete success (much less). I made a host of changes; I redesigned the counters (air, land, and naval), reresearched and corrected the Order of Appearance, changed the Turn Scale to one month, developed a new and simpler simultaneous movement system, added an interesting code-breaking and naval intelligence system, reduced the number of required counters from almost thirty to six, totally revamped all of the scenarios, changed the game from top to bottom and everyone who was familiar with these changes considered the result a vast improvement over the original, unplayable monster. Unfortunately, about two months ago, I came to the sad realization that these improvements were insufficient. We definitely had a better, more elegant monster but it was still a terrifyingly hopeless unplayable monster!

At that point, I decided to take a leave of absence from the company and activities. I spent several weeks wrestling with my conscience. I knew I had created a Frankenstein and I decided I could not allow Avalon Hill to release it on an unsuspecting public. When I finally returned to

*Canada only: Avalon Hill, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214

*For all that, MAGIC REALM has been small potatoes in Avalon Hill's stew of troubles lately compared to the trials and tribulations we've faced with THE RISING SUN. Despite a year and a half of in-house development and one of the most comprehensive, beautiful & expensive mapboards produced to date, we are no closer to publishing this monster than we were in 1978. The details of this sad state of affairs is perhaps best explained by the project developer, Frank Davis.

"Most of us who play wargames have occasionally suffered the humiliating experience of total defeat, and most of the time we recognize the playing errors which led to this defeat. Ironically, most of us who design these games usually assume our efforts will always be successful. Well, after nine years of designing and developing games, I've suddenly made the embarrassing discovery that I'm not infallible! For the past year I've been toiling on a game called THE RISING SUN designed by Larry Pinsky, THE RISING SUN is an ambitious attempt to simulate the entire war in the Pacific Theater during World War II on a rather detailed, operational level. Thus, we knew from the start that this project would be considerably harder than Avalon Hill's popular but play-testable VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC. As a matter of fact, when we first received the prototype here, the staff people who reviewed it concluded that nothing short of a miracle would be required to turn it into a moderately enjoyable game. Even Larry admitted he had barely been able to play-test even the shortest scenarios!

It was at this point that I naively took over the responsibility for developing the game (December, 1977). I was fearless. At SPI where I formerly worked, I had either designed or developed eighteen games on topics ranging from the Punic Wars to World War II. I expected THE RISING SUN to be difficult but I was supremely confident that I could take Larry's basic design and develop it into a hell of a game. Within a week or two, however, I began encountering small problems such as the fact that the prototype design each Game-Turn (which represented two weeks) had approximately fourteen Naval Movement Phases and seemed to require an entire day to play (and here I use the term "play" loosely; I meant "play-test even the shortest scenarios!") I soon discovered a host of other problems (for example, the designer had used counters representing small groups of six aircraft and due to the overall playing counter limitations imposed on the game, the U.S. Player would not even be provided with enough counters to represent the carrier compliments after 1942) which eventually convinced me that the game required an almost complete redesign.

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Back in Volume 14, No. 5 of TAHG, an article of mine subtitled "An Introduction to Squad Leader" appeared. In that article I tried to give the reader some insights into the basic character of this fascinating game of WWII tactical combat. In the following pages I hope, this year, to give you one some insights into the basic character of this addition of the first significant ways in which roots: a year's additional experience with SL itself, the opportunities I've had to read what others "blind" written, and the chances that have come along to experience with SL, known hereafter as COI. The inspiration for the first article rested exclusively upon my playtesting experience with SL. This article, too, draws upon playtesting experience, but also has some other roots: a year's additional experience with SL itself, the opportunities I've had to read what others have written, and the chances that have come along to discuss various matters with a great many informed wargamers.

This article covers three major points: the significant ways in which COI both changes and adds to SL in the area of the AFV rules; basic aspects of the play of the armor game as it now stands; and a look at all of the COI scenarios. The major nonarmor related additions to the system will be described as they appear in the scenarios. As was SL, COI is a programmed instruction game, with new rules being fed in with each new scenario. In addition to comments about the play of the scenarios, I'll attempt to relate a bit of how they evolved since, and presumably as a result of, the "blind" playtest which I and others were involved in.

Most of what follows should be intelligible to someone who is familiar with SL, but, as yet, doesn't know much about COI.

A letter in Vol. 15, No. 3 commented upon the playing times for the COI scenarios. In truth, they are not short. In any game playing time is affected by three principal considerations: the complexity of the rules; the amount of time required to execute the game's routines and procedures; and the complexity of the play of the game. More complex the rules, the more time one spends trying to find that elusive piece of information you need. With familiarity, this time cost goes down. COI does introduce some new time-consuming routines as well. Finally, even if rules complexity or game mechanics don't stretch things out, complex play decisions can. Chess is the obvious example of a game where that's the case. In writing this article, one of my major hopes is that you, having read it, will be better able to identify and absorb the added complications COI introduces. A second hope is that the hard data given will help you become more comfortable about the decisions the game requires. After all, nobody needs to play a game in order to become frustrated.

In looking at the basic aspects of play when AFVs are involved there is, of necessity, discussion of probabilities. These numbers will not tell you what to do in every situation. Rather, I hope to give you some sort of broad feel for how the AFV game plays.

THE EVOLUTION OF ARMOR

When you open up COI and look over its contents your first impression is likely to be that COI is all about armor. The vast number of AFV counters, representing the entire WWII range of German and Soviet vehicles, is impossible to ignore. In truth, however, less than 35% of the COI rules is devoted to AFV rules. Having said this, though, it must be pointed out that this portion of the rules is by far the longest one with a common theme, and almost all of these rules appear at the beginning of the rules. What follows now is a survey of how the armor portion of the rules has changed form SL, and of the additional aspects of AFV reality that the system now encompasses.

Changes

In terms of length of rules, the AFV portion of COI is some 15% greater than that of SL. If you like those bad news/good news stories, that last statement might well be the bad news. The good news is that the basic nature of the AFV rules is unchanged.

To see what has changed, let's first look, in Fig. 1, at a pair of AFV counters, the MkIVP2 from SL, and the STGIIIIG from COI. The latter counter displays two numbers below the movement points value, where the SL counter has none, and has places for three MG factors, compared with two on the MkIV. It's hardly a secret that the SL AFVs were pretty much middle-of-the-line vehicles. Since it is the intention of the series of gamettes to present all of the armor of WWII, the rules must allow for the range of armor arrangements that saw combat. With separate TO KILL values for front, side and rear hits, SL had a reasonable representation of the armor distribution for the vehicles included therein. The two numbers below the movement points value are the front and side/rear armor DRMs (dice roll modifiers). While SL does have armor DRMs they apply uniformly to all TO KILL rolls. Of necessity COI expands upon this. For example, the German JagdPzVI, as did many of the tank destroyers, possessed much heavier frontal armor, compared to that carried on its rear sides, than did a typical tank. As a result its two DRMs are +5 and +1. The game use of such a vehicle would be greatly distorted if the game system were to be incapable of presenting such facts.

If you look carefully at the two numbers on the STGIIIIG you'll notice that the upper one has a box around it. This means that the DRM of any frontal shot TO KILL roll is increased by 1 when the vehicle is hull down. The boxes appear when the vehicle in question possessed turret and upper body armor proportionally greater than that of the hull armor upon which the normal DRMs are based.

These two changes in the counter information are the result of indicating the size of the vehicle. If one of the numbers is on a circular white background, the TO HIT roll gets a +1 DRM; if both values are so printed the DRM is +2. On the other side of the size coin, one or two numbers in red mean a TO HIT DRM of -1 or -2, the latter modifier being reserved for such behemoths as the Russian KV-11A.

In reality, tank mounted MGs come in three types: hull mounted, turret mounted along side the main armament, and mounted atop the turret in an AA mount. SL lumped the first two types together. COI separates them because separate turret counters are provided. No longer will you be able to change the vehicle facing of an immobilized tank when you fire the main gun. Now there's a turret to be moved.

These two changes in the counter information do not require you to forget much of what you learned in SL. A careful look at the mechanics of movement, attack, and the interaction of AFVs with their environment shows that the SL structure is still there. With the possible exception of the changes introduced by the appearance of turret counters, the alterations are those necessary in order to reflect the total range of WWII armor.

Other changes appear in the areas of vehicle immobilization, overruns by AFVs, the Crew...
Exposure rules, and infantry Close Combat against AFVs. These points will all be considered later on, in some detail, when we take a look at how the rules and dice rolls combine to dictate the probabilities of success or failure. With the exception of the changes concerning vehicle immobilization and Crew Exposure, these changes were also dictated by the requirement that the system encompass an extremely broad spectrum of AFVs.

Additions

Here is where the complexity really appears. But one thing needs to be made clear. The source of the complexity is not in the structure of the rules themselves. Rather, it is the decision making that arises from the rules that complicates things. Taken one at a time, the new play mechanics are rather simple, logical extensions of the original system in that they extend the things that your cardboard warriors can do and the number of factors that influence performance. The burden this produces is obvious. As their potentials are expanded the question of what they should be doing gets harder to answer. As the factors influencing performance become more numerous it gets harder to see how things are likely to turn out. And all of that explains why, when new rules are introduced, the old rules are not simply dropped. The division of the TO HIT DRMs into three categories is for the purpose of organizing all of the effects now present. GUN TYPE MODIFICATIONS are easily dealt with by noting that they do nothing but reflect the effects, particularly at long range, of the ordnance which existed during WWII.

Under the heading of FIRE MODIFICATION, and dice rolls combine to dictate the probabilities of success or failure. With the exception of the changes concerning vehicle immobilization and Crew Exposure, these changes were also dictated by the requirement that the system encompass an extremely broad spectrum of AFVs.

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Under the heading of FIRE MODIFICATION, A through F are from SL, with no changes in values. Of the others, H is self-explanatory. With F, G and I we meet some of the new sources of complications, the mechanics of Intensive Fire are simple: if you wish to add one more shot to the normal rate of fire you may do so. The cost is a +2 TO HIT DRM and a reduction of "2" in the Breakdown Number. The problem is that you now have a new option to consider. Deliberate immobilization is a similar sort of thing. The cost of the DRMs shown may attempt to immobilize an enemy vehicle. If you make the modified TO HIT roll then required, you stop the brute without any further dice rolling. However, you forego any chance you might have had of destroying the target. The added decision making is obvious. Modifier I is a fascinating one. Having met John Hill this past summer, I imagine that he's quite pleased with this one. As we shall see in the second major section, a number of factors must be considered when trying to decide whether or not your vehicles should be buttoned up as they go into action. You'll find that it's much easier to handle the matters raised in F and G.

Turning to the third category, TARGET MODIFICATION, entries J through L are original SL considerations with no changes in values. Of the other modifiers, Q has already been mentioned in connection with the counters. M is available for situations in which the gun in question begins the game in position, and represents the opportunity which would then exist for the crew to have bone-sighted one single hex. The eligible weapons and other restrictions are logical and easily stated.

With N, O and P we get, once more, into some things that complicate play without themselves being complicated. N deals with the situation in which a weapon that needs to use the TO HIT Table continues to fire at the same target turn after turn. The maximum allowable DRM, available for the third turn of fire, is -2. There are various rules that restrict the availability of this advantage, two of which are apt to increase the decision making time. To keep the advantage, or increase it if it is not yet -2, the gun must fire at the same target in each player turn's Defensive Fire Phase or Prep Fire Phase. In addition, even momentary movement of the target out of the firer's LOS eliminates any existing advantage as does movement of firer to a new hex. For the firer, the opportunity to acquire targets complicated the decision making process because it now costs you something to switch targets and there can be an added disadvantage to moving to a new hex. To list just one concern for the guy with the targets, there's the possibility that sending acquired targets off on brief detours will increase their survival probabilities. However, doing so may also cost valuable time.

0 and P represent the penalties associated with firing at targets you haven't had much of a look at. This sort of effect is certainly realistic, and I particularly like the way in which, practically, it reflects a difference between open and broken terrain. However, it must be admitted that this piece of realism is purchased at a definite cost. To apply it, you must know when a vehicle is within your LOS, and that can mean making a lot of LOS checks. Which means that one might try to exercise some common sense; otherwise, things can really drag.

The two KILL Tables shown in Fig. 3 contain much less that's new that hasn't already been considered. The expanded range of weapons is an obvious requirement of the expanded scope of the game system. Unlike the comparatively few changes in dice rolls required on the TO HIT Table, the new KILL Table has a number of changes. Overall, however, such changes have little effect.

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### Table 2: SQUAD LEADER GAME SYSTEM TO HIT TABLE EVOLUTION

#### TO HIT TABLE 33.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Type/Range</th>
<th>1-6</th>
<th>7-12</th>
<th>13-24</th>
<th>25+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infantry in bldg.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shellholes, entrenchments</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry in woods</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry in other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle is hull down</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle in woods bldg.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle in other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT Gun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### TO HIT TABLE 33.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Type/Range</th>
<th>1-6</th>
<th>7-12</th>
<th>13-24</th>
<th>25-39</th>
<th>40-59</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INF in bldg.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shellholes, entrenchments</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INF in woods</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INF in other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle is hull down</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle in woods bldg.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle in other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: MODIFICATIONS TO HIT TABLES 33.3

#### GUN TYPE MODIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range/Gun Type</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>LL</th>
<th>LL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7-12</td>
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<td>13-24</td>
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<td>25-39</td>
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<tr>
<td>40+</td>
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</table>

#### TARGET MODIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Action</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortar/gun</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortar/lsv</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortar/fire</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortar/bomb</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortar/burn</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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### THE GENERAL

...
Of the modifiers, B and C make the high ground (specifically, a two level height advantage) important. Coupled with the ability of only some vehicles to get hull down on a hill, this addition can drastically alter the actual value of certain vehicles in some situations. D is a possibility whenever an unmodified "2" is rolled. When it happens, it happens. This is a rule to be fatalistic about. The effects in some situations D is a possibility whenever an vehicle are resolved on the Infantry Fire Table.

Governing their performance replace the SL Crew from engaging in any activity for the balance of that commander and prevent the vehicle and its crew and the next player turn. In addition, all future TO the board, at its maximum speed, via the shortest path that leads it back to its own lines.

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Clearly, having a commander out there in the open has become a risky proposition. As if the above wasn't bad enough, Close Combat attacks now profit by a +1 DRM when the vehicle is not buttoned up. In most circumstances the only reason for having the commander out in the open are to avoid the +1 TO HIT DRM (33.31.1) and to give him the chance to use the AA MG if the vehicle is so equipped. However, not all tank commanders are just ordinary guys. Some of them possess morale and leadership ratings (from 8-1 through 10-3), just as do the infantry leaders of SL. The morale rating is used in connection with IFT attacks, while that leadership rating is applied TO HIT dice rolls, Overrun attacks and AA MG attacks. The ordinary joes come one per vehicle while the special ones are available as per the scenario O&I. In scenarios you construct yourself German armor leaders average around 7% cheaper than the corresponding infantry officers while Russians are about 4% more costly.

One of the things I liked about the SL system from the start was the way in which, in a number of situations, an increased advantage could be obtained at an increased risk. As a player, I find the question of balancing gain against risk both challenging and entertaining. Here is another one of those situations, and I'm glad to see it. Collectively, such rules go a long way toward reflecting the character of combat at this level.

The ARMOR GAME

Now that you've had a chance to learn something about the armor portion of the SL+COI system, or to see some things through my eyes, it's time to take a look at the numbers. As you might suppose, there would be no problem in generating a tremendous mass of numbers about the kinds of things that can happen. My intention in the following is to translate the dice rolls and their DRMs into information about results in some very basic situations involving armor.

Guns and the AFV

The basic information required in order to determine the probability of success for any attack that requires use of both TO HIT and KILL dice rolls is given in Table 1. While a thorough understanding of how these numbers are obtained is not really required, a little knowledge of probability never hurt any wargamer, and has helped quite a few.

Most of the rolls made in the SL system are made with two dice. Because the numbers used in the system are the sums of the spots, the probabilities of the different outcomes are sometimes hard to visualize. The chance of rolling a 2 is 1 in 36, the chance of rolling a 3 is 2 in 36, and so on up to 6 chances in 36 to roll a 7. After that the chances start falling; the chance of an 8 is 5 in 36, that of a 9 is 4 in 36, and so on, with a 12 occurring just once. The dice don't remember. Each time they're rolled the chances are the same. It wouldn't happen often, but a pair of ones could come up on all of those 36 rolls.

When someone talks about the probability of something they're referring to the ratio of the number of chances that something has of coming up to the total number of possible outcomes. With six-
sided die, each die can give up six different ways. With two dice there would then be six times six, or 36, if we add the combinations of having both one, both two, and anything from 1 through 6 on the second; or a 2 on one die and anything from 1 through 6 on the second, etc. The only combination of spots that you could get a total of 2 is 1 on each die. Thus, the 1 chance in 36 mentioned above. The probability of rolling 7 is 1 in 6 or 16.667. To do any damage, of course, both must be rolled, so that the probability of a successful shot is equal to the product of both probabilities, or .0167 or 1 in 60. So far, all of the other Tables as well, probabilities are expressed in percentages. Thus the probability of success is 30.09%, rounded to 30% in Table 1, reading down in column 8 and over in row 6. 

As would be expected from the discussion above, an attack involving TO HIT and KILL of, respectively, 6 and 8 will also be successful 30.1% of the time. However, there is one difference in the two attacks. The TO HIT rules provide for the possibility of immobilization of a non-Hull Down armored target whenever it’s fired at from side or rear. Under these conditions there’s a 50% chance of immobilization if the KILL roll is a miss: equal to the maximum KILL number. Thus, in the first attack, a KILL roll of 5 or less guarantees destruction of the target, an event which Table 1 informs us occurs 20.1% of the time, while a roll of 6 might just stop it. As a reasonably informed guess I’d say that non-Hull Down, rear or side shots occur no more than 50% of the time. Recalling that even a roll of 6 is such an attack yields an immobilization only half of the time, it seems likely that a shot that just stops the enemy will occur .201% of the time, or once in every 15 successful attacks. For the second attack the actual frequency of immobilization in this manner is about half of these values. Because the frequency of this result will always be rather low, this is the only mention it will get. It does cause an occasional player to nurse a random stroke really bothers you, neither SL nor CO is your kind of game.

If there’s one thing that is certain about this game it is that the TO HIT and KILL rolls will be subjected to DRM’s. With respect to use of Table 1, first locate the proper column and row using the appropriate numbers from 33.4 and 33.4. Then total up separately all TO HIT DRM’s and all KILL DRM’s. If the net TO HIT DRM is positive, move to the left the number of columns equal to the DRM. For a net negative DRM move to the right. To determine the effect of the KILL DRM’s, move up for a net positive DRM and down for a negative one. To make sure you get that straight, here’s an example. Suppose a German King Tiger is taking a frontal shot with its 88L gun at a stationary T-34/85 (+1 frontal armor DRM), at the same elevation in clear terrain and 25 hectares away. From 33.4 and 33.4 the TO HIT and KILL numbers are 7 and 11. The only (and, thus, the net) TO HIT DRM is +2 for the LL gun. On the KILL roll the DRMs are +4 for the armor and +1 for range effect, giving a net +5. So, from column 7 and row 11 we move two columns right and two rows up, finding that the attack will succeed 50% of the time. If the 88 hit the T-34, the armor would be considered a matter of cost relative to the mediums until you get out beyond the 24 hex range.

Many traps for the unwary. Whether or not that’s deliberate is, as they say, beyond the scope of this article. What I’m going to look at now are the two types of Intensive Fire and Deliberate Immobilization. From its earlier mention we know that Intensive Fire (hereafter IF) adds one to the rating fire at the cost of a +2 DRM and a reduction by two of the breakdown number of the firing piece of ordnance. The decision to elect one fire type over the other is never made lightly. If the normal rate of fire (hereafter ROF) and breakdown number are 1 and 12, respectively, taking both shots under the IF option will leave you with a broken down weapon 31% of the time, and 16% of the time you won’t even get that second shot off. However, the normal ROF is 11 or 12. If the normal ROF and breakdown number are 2 and 12, taking all three shots under the IF option (if you get them all off) will leave you without a functioning weapon a mere 6% of the time. Clearly, you must be prepared to see the end of your weapon when you try IF.

Even when the situation is such that you’re willing to gamble with the weapon, IF may be a bad bargain in that trying that option may actually lead to a reduced probability of a success. To show how this can be, suppose that, after all DRM’s, a normal attack would have the probability of success shown in column 7, row 5, of Table 1, i.e., 16.2%. The probability of success of each individual IF attack would lie in the same row and column to the left. The value there is 7.7%, less than one-half the probability of success of a normal attack. You don’t need to be a math genius to realize that trying two IFs is merely like doubling the odds. Superiority is reversed to a devastating extent, revealing once again that you have may not be more than a statistical fluke. Regrettably for the Soviets, reversal of the positions doesn’t nearly as much for the Russians. Because of their lack of sufficient gun depression gangplank tanks and enclosed SP Guns) cannot be hull down if they wish to fire at a vehicle at a lower elevation. If the T34/76 has the height advantage it gains about 10% of that of -1 DRM, but the PzKwIV loses nothing.

Before going on you should know that the previous results, and all those that follow, neglect the existence of critical hits. My justification for so grossly over-simplifying my scenario when I came to the contents of Table 2 taking critical hits into account. Out to 24 hexes, the probabilities of success suffer only one or two times the effect of the critical hits. Table 2. Beyond 24 hexes such hits become relatively more significant, but the difference between success and one of 2.8% just doesn’t excite me.

One of the questions that I had about the vulnerability of armor to the 88L’s shell which grew out of the armor or the guns? As the war progressed both grew, but, looking at the numbers, it wasn’t at all clear to me how they grew faster. Over the years my reading in the period has left me with some definite feelings about what had happened. To see how the game system told it I paired off the PzKwIIIE against the T-70, the PzKwIVF2 against the T34/76A, and the PzKwIV against the JS-1, Unlike what was done to obtain the results previously presented. I assumed a 50-30-20 distribution of frontal, side and rear shots. The results agreed with what I feel to be true. The earlier vehicles are noticeably less dangerous at all ranges than are the later models. Overall, I cannot see any significant movement relative to the mediums until you get out beyond the 24 hex range.
be in column 8, row 9, so that it would have a probability of success of 60.2%. If you elect to try for DI, there's a +3 TO HIT DRM, but that's the only roll you need to make. Thus, all you need to do is roll a 5, which happens 27.8% of the time, and that is the number at the bottom of column 5. Obviously, that would not be a bad bargain. Looking up the 8 column we see that the highest KILL number for which the value shown is less than 27.8% is 5, and that corresponds to the value in Table 3.

Personally, I am much more inclined to use DI than I am to use IF. My own rule of thumb is to, barring circumstances that require a try for a kill, go for a DI whenever I have a side shot and need to roll a 2 or a 3 to kill. As you can see from my own numbers, that's conservative, but that sort of rule is the only alternative I can see to playing a game like SL surrounded with charts and tables. If you're wallowing in numbers and think that that last sentence is totally inconsistent with what's going on here, I can understand the feeling. However, the proper use of these numbers is to help you develop reasonable doctrines for your square warriors. I, for one, derive little pleasure from looking up numbers in a table during a game.

The last thing we need to look at in connection with guns and AFVs is the matter of indirect HE fire attacks. Here we find the first place at which the question of should you or should you not button up your tank expands the range of play decisions.

Two things concerning this form of attack have changed from what they were in SL. First of all, the Infantry Fire Table equivalents of the 70mm through 120mm guns have been shifted one column to the right, thereby making them more lethal to everyone. Incidentally, this is the only change in the IFT. COI also contains a completely altered and expanded version of section 63, and one part of that, 63.39, modifies the SL routine for resolving indirect HE attacks. The Artillery Barrage vs Vehicles Modifiers of 46.54 are still in use, but non-open-top AFVs with positive DRMs get to add them in as well. Unfortunately, 63.39 does not tell you what to do if the vehicle has different front and side/rear armor DRMs. It has since been decided that the lesser of the two should be used so long as it is still a positive DRM.

Table 4 shows the probability that a vehicle will survive one, two, or three attacks from IFT-resolved HE attacks. Practically speaking, three attacks is the most one would expect to experience in a single Defensive Fire Phase. As the rules now stand, the lowest possible modifier, that for non-armored vehicles, is -3, so that's where the Table starts. It ends with +5 because IFT-resolved attacks can never destroy anything with a greater total modifier. The obvious moral of the Table is don't put your head down and charge through a Defensive Fire Phase artillery barrage unless there is something very worthwhile on the other side.

Any vehicle commander riding with his head out would, of course, be attacked by such HE fire with a +2 DRM, making his chances of being KIA'd as good as those of the basic SP Gun. However, MC results must now also be considered. I think, therefore, that Table 5 makes interesting reading. The ordinary commanders have the morale level of their nationality's crew counter, while the special ones have values up to 10, which accounts for the range of leader morales. In looking at these numbers, remember that a failed MC means the vehicle loses its commander and cannot move or fire for the balance of that and the following player turn. After that, it's still available, but it gets a +1 TO HIT marker, in addition to the normal +1 for being buttoned up, for the balance of the game. That +1 DRM for being buttoned up will tempt you to keep...
the commander out when he should be in. Resist temptation, and accept the game's (and history's) verdict: button up when the artillery arrives.

With the experience Tables I-VI and the words around them, we're starting to give you a reasonably complete look at guns as they are used by and against AFVs. As I said earlier, generating numbers is no problem, and a line must be drawn somewhere. Table I, however, supplies you all you need in order to work out things like the effectiveness of a 76L AT GUN versus your favorite AFV.

### AFVs versus infantry

A detailed, tactical level game must, of necessity, provide rules to cover a wide variety of events. When I first read through the original playtest version of the SL rules, that portion of them dealing with the interaction of armor and infantry struck me as being the most complex part of the system. That belief is still intact. Since then, I have also found abundant evidence to support the belief that this portion of the simulation generates the most complex play decisions. In this connection, I have witnessed, or heard of, examples of play that boggle the mind. After some twenty years of playing these games, that's just not easily done any more.

This and the third, and final, section of the examination of the capabilities of the various AFVs are devoted to a look at this aspect of the system as it now stands after the addition of COI. In the interest of avoiding too many useless generalities, while at the same time providing a basis for further study, no infantry carried and used anti-tank weapons are considered. Thus, what we're about to see is the best case for armor and the worst case for infantry. As you'll discover, if you haven't already done so, that best is sometimes rather poor, while that worst is sometimes pretty good.

Armor can go after infantry in two ways: it can shoot them up, or it can roll over them. We'll consider the possibilities in that order.

Looking first at the main armament, the attack resolution procedure is unchanged. The firer roll to see whether or not he hits; if he does, he rolls on the IF to determine the outcome: if the outcome is a HITS, the gunner looks up the roll in Table 6 to determine the resulting damage, and the roll of the DRM to see if the square is hit. The latter roll can be rerolled, however, if the square is hit by a second or third or fourth attack on the same turn. I think this is about as fair and simple as it can be made; if you feel that a different system is needed, let me know so we might be able to make some changes in this section.

### The General

Turning now to the column headings, four of what I consider to be representative gun calibers have been chosen. The first three of them also show the change in results when the main armament fire is coupled with some MG fire at the same target. For example, 40mm/2 refers to attacks by a 40mm gun and a MG with a firepower factor of 2 on the same target. As per the rules, all MG fire from a vehicle against one target must be combined into one attack. As with HE fire, this reduces the amount of damage you can inflict. The MG firepower factors are typical for the bow and coaxial MGs of vehicles carrying the guns with which they are listed.

Parts (a), (b) and (c) of Table 6 consider net TO HIT rolls of, respectively, 9, 7 and 5. These values were chosen because, statistically, they come up quite often as you should expect to do most of the time. As the numbers show, by the time you need to roll a 5 in order to hit, the MGs are carrying most of the load against all but well-protected troops. The value of the ability to acquire targets is clear from the general trend of these numbers.

Against fixed targets (e.g., a building) the AFV will normally be able to select the range of engagement. Because of the value of MG fire, even against +2 cover, I prefer a range of 8 or less. Getting this close to the target will cause not only the usual hazards, but if AFVs need to be used against such targets they need to close to within effective range.

In developing a feel for the effectiveness of the AFV HE fire against infantry, there is one observation I find most useful. With a required TO HIT roll of 9 or higher, use of such fire is about as effective as that of "regular" IFT attacks one column to the left of the column the gun uses. In other words, the necessity of having to make a 9 TO HIT roll comes close to costing the weapon one column on the IFT. The basis for this observation is contained within Table 7. The entries in it for the square of a 70-79mm gun goes from 63% down to 19%. The firepower factor (hereafter FPF) equivalent to such a gun is 12. If we now look at the FPF-of-8 column of Table 7, we see values of 68% through 15%. This observation should help you see what that extra dice roll does to the weapon's effectiveness. For the same gun class the values in Table 6(b) yield an average chance of success of 29% for the range of IFT terrain modifier shown. The average value of the numbers in the FPF-of-6 column is 32%, showing that the necessity of making a 9 TO HIT reduces the gun's true effectiveness below that of a heavy MG. Were you to explore the numbers for other guns, generally similar results would emerge. To me the lesson they teach is plain enough to justify the earlier conclusion about a range of 8.

Before going on to the next topic, a few words are in order concerning Table 7. Because of the number of factors influencing the outcomes of most types of attacks, obtaining a feel for what you can really expect in a given situation is not particularly easy. In connection with attacks against infantry that have a chance of killing the AFV, the figures in Table 7 is basic. The successful player of the SL system needs to have a fair grasp of these numbers. Without such an insight into how things work, tactics will be haphazard. Intelligent tactics require that you know what you're up against with your troops, so that you will be able to organize their activities in the face of the obstacles before them.

This is the primary reason for two of the above observations. The first of these dealt with the way in which the effect due to changes in troop morale could be quickly seen by thinking of it as a DRM. The second dealt with a look at the effects of TO HIT rolls against infantry. As mentioned previously, Table 7, we also see that adding enough firepower to an attack to shift it one column to the right has just about the same effect as a -1 DRM would have. For example, the probability of success of a 12FPF attack with a DRM of -2 is the same as that for a 16 FPF attack at -1.

With the basis for the discussion of Overrun attacks. As mentioned previously, this type of attack is another aspect of the rules that underwent changes to reflect the broadened range of AFVs now covered. In SL Overruns by AFVs are resolved using a FPF of 16 if both main armament and MGs are functioning. Either having malfunctioned the FPF falls to 8, the same value as that possessed by armed halftracks. In COI, all vehicles attack with a strength of 4, plus the FPF of all MGs used (and/or the inherent firepower of passengers in the case of halftracks), plus half the FPF equivalent of the main gun. AFVs get an FPF attack strength from some source in order to be able to Overrun at all. In going through the different vehicles listed, the Overrun champ looks to be the JS-1,攻击ing with a FPF of 24.

Overruns continue to be possible in every type of terrain that an AFV is capable of entering; however, COI now penalizes such attacks in woods, smoke or wheathyards by reducing their strength by half. In addition, the vehicle is immobilized if its Overrun attack roll is "11" or "12." That, coupled with the absence of MGs, makes the Overrun attack from covering terrain leaves me with the feeling that only reckless folk try Overruns in anything but clear terrain or, maybe, wheathyards.

The obvious question to consider concerning these two forms of attack is which do you use. The gun/MG combinations in Table 6 are such that vehicles having them would Overrun with strengths of 16, 15, 14, 13, etc. However, conditions of part (a), the first such vehicle (perhaps a Russian T26s) would, in clear terrain, do noticeably better making an Overrun attack. Our middle vehicle would have equal chances of success either way, while the third would be better off firing. The more lightly armed vehicles of the early part of the war will invariably do better Overrunning in clear terrain because that base attack strength of 4 means so much more to them. Once the conditions are such that the TO HIT roll required falls below 9, all AFVs do better Overunnings.

In finishing up this section it is necessary to take a look at the effects leaders have on the survival chances of a squad stacked with them. The matter is a complicated one and the decisions concerning the location of leaders can be among the most nerve-racking ones in the game. Some things, however, do stand out. The 8-1 leader is neutral as far as a squad's chances of surviving, alive and unbroken, go. As with any leader, its presence in a hex with a squad increases the chance that the squad will be destroyed. This follows from the fact that the TO HIT roll would be made to undergo two morale checks due to a single fire if the leader were to be broken as a result of such fire. If, then, an 8-1 is neutral, either a 7-0 or an 8-0 is a menace to the squad's wellbeing, while a 9-1 or better gives it an increased chance of survival. One good rule of thumb for the player that remembers that the morale level of a leader is worth, in terms of the increased chance of survival, about one-third of what an improvement of 1 in both morale and leadership levels is worth.

### Infantry versus AFVs

As was true in SL, bared infantry has two ways in which to go after armor. During the Defensive Fire Phase, squads and leaders in non-open terrain have a shot at immobilizing AFVs that move through an adjacent hex. In the Close Combat Phase, any infantry unit moving into the same hex with an AFV has a chance of destroying it. Both types of attacks require that the units involved first
The general

pass a pre-AFV attack morale check, to which any leader present may lend his leadership factor if he himself has passed the test. Only the second form of attack has undergone any changes from its original SL form.

In order to be successful in a Defensive Fire Phase attack, at least one of the units attacking must roll 2, 3 or less, or 4 or less, with the dice roll dependent upon the terrain in the hex occupied by the unit. Each squad attacks separately. Any leader present may use his leadership factor to modify the dice roll of one attack, including his own if he makes one, provided, of course, that he has passed the required morale check.

Of all the numbers produced for this article, those in Table 8 were far and away the most time-consuming to obtain. However, the results are extremely interesting (and have been checked carefully). Because the factors influencing the success of such attacks are limited, Table 8 gives us a very complete picture of this type of attack. Probabilities of success are given for one, two, or three squads attacking, either by themselves or with the aid of any leader having a non-zero leadership factor. Squad morale levels of 6, 7 and 8 are considered, as are the the three possible dice rolls required for success. In Table 8(a) the numbers represent that the leader attacks separately, as this is more effective than if he were to aid a squad's attack. Since a leader must always roll a "2" in an attack from any type of terrain, this case (infantry in a wheatfield) is the only one in which a leader should himself attack if there is a squad available.

The first thing to really strike me was the extent to which the results are independent of squad morale. In addition, compared with most of the events in the SL system, the number of squads present has little effect. For a given required dice roll the central factor in success is the caliber of the leadership. To illustrate these facts, two entries in Table 8(b) are of value: the probability of success of a stack containing a single, morale level 6, squad and a 10-3 leader is equal to that of a stack containing three, morale level 8, squads and a 10-2 leader. I can think of no other offensive situation in which two such stacks would have the same average efficiency.

Reading down in any of the columns of numbers quickly tells us that the leadership factor of a leader is immensely more important than is his morale level. This, by the way, is a rather generally valid conclusion throughout the SL system.

In the nature of things, the availability of such an attack is normally due to movement of the AFV. Earlier, in commenting upon Overruns, I said that I considered them to be reasonable only against troops in the open or, perhaps, in wheatfields. In Tables 7 and 8 you find the basis for such a belief. The other situation in which AFVs come adjacent to infantry is, of course, that of simple vehicle movement in which the vehicle's wish is to just pass by. In deciding whether or not to give infantry a shot at a vehicle by attempting an Overrun, the potential gain for the side with the vehicle is apparent: the breaking or destroying of the infantry.

The decision about risking a vehicle during movement can be considerably more difficult to make. At least, however, Table 8 provides you, the player, with a knowledge of the risks involved.

Close Combat Phase attacks are possible by infantry and/or leaders who move into the hex containing the AFV. Such movement requires that the units first pass the morale check referred to earlier. COI still requires that any infantry friendly-to-the-AFV in the hex with the AFV at the start of the Close Combat Phase must first be eliminated before the AFV can be attacked. An exception to this is made in the case of passengers aboard an armored halftrack. After an attacker has determined how many of his units may advance into the hex, some of them must be assigned to attack any hostile infantry present. If this attack eliminates the infantry, or if there were none present to begin with, the actual Close Combat involving the AFV is resolved.

Here the changes appear. Prior to COI the ability of an AFV to defend itself against infantry wishing to make such an attack rested upon the vehicle's ability to shoot them up during the Defensive Fire Phase. Now, however, some German tanks come equipped with a roof-mounted grenade projector. This weapon, or a manned AA MG, or the rear-of-the-turret MG possessed by some Russian tanks might get a chance to fire during the Close Combat Phase itself. The order of combat of all units (including the AFV if it has one of the above weapons available) is established by rolling the dice for each of them. Terrain Effects Modifiers
can be subtracted from the attackers’ dice rolls. The order of combat is from low roll through high roll. The grenade projector attacks on the IFT, while any eligible MGs use the Close combat Table, C02.3.

As before, a successful attack requires that the attacking unit roll its FPF or less. Now, however, such rolls might benefit from a –1 DRM against open-topped AFVs. The attacker receives an additional –1 DRM if the vehicle has no manned, functioning MGs.

The first thing that I was curious about was the extent to which an AFV’s newly acquired Close Combat Phase defensive ability really helped. The values in Table 9 were the result of this curiosity. Comparing the first two columns shows that the Nahnverteidigungswaffe, to give the weapon its proper name, definitely reduces the chance of a successful attack. Results reported in the last three columns show that the rear turret MG is superior to either of the AA MGs due to that –1 DRM the attacker receives because the vehicle is not buttoned up when the AA MG is available. From Table 9 it’s clear that this new Close Combat Phase defensive ability should not be counted on to add much to an AFV’s chance of survival.

The thing armor buffs always examine first is the AFV armor, which in CROSS OF IRON appears as ‘‘to kill’’ the roll modifiers (DRMs). Due to the above excuse, a sliding scale was created: 5-8mm armor was a –5 DRM, 9-13mm was –4, 14-19mm –3, 20-29mm –2, 30-43mm –1, 44-62mm 0, 63-87mm +1, 88-112mm +2, 113-142mm +3, 143-184mm +4, and 185mm or larger was a +5. Thickness was divided by the cosine of the slope angle for ‘‘true’’ thickness or bias, where 0° means a vertical angle. In retrospect a sliding scale and only a –5 to +5 range was perhaps too simplistic, but only a very few few have enough data to judge this issue for themselves. And those are surely aware that thicknesses vary so much, over all parts of the vehicle, that simple rules and procedures always present complex interpretative problems.

The ‘‘to hit’’ DRMs naturally represent vehicle size, which is primarily based on the height of the silhouette, those vehicles 66” or lower rated +2, 67-89” +1, 90-109” no modifier, and 110” or higher a +1. Especially massed vehicles got an extra –1, for pure bulk and target area.

On the other hand, few fanatics of WWII armor look deeply into mobility evaluations. The listed road speed for a vehicle is of very little help, and the “cross country” speed given in many sources is at best a guess, from a proving ground, at worst the author’s own estimate cooked up by a little numerical juggling and guestimation. Personally, I actually prefer the latter to the former, as anyone familiar with AFV design, proving, and acceptance procedures can understand! However, I like to do my own, and used a rather simple formula for COI. The movement system itself was basically simple:

\[
(\frac{R}{3.7}) + \sqrt{\frac{W}{100}} + \frac{G}{100}
\]

where R is the road speed in mph, H is the engine horsepower, W the vehicle weight in tons, and G its ground pressure on the tracks in pounds per square inch. To net result ranges to the H/W ratio and thus going over solid ground cross-country, with soft ground cross-country coming in second, and road speed taking a weak third.

Wheeled vehicles just used road speed divided by 1.45, as the special MP cost tables represented the speed problems of some armored movement. This is slightly unrealistic, as it does ignore suspension characteristics, transmissions, etc. However, one must draw the line somewhere, and in 99% of the cases consideration of these extra factors wouldn’t influence the MP value. Or rather, shouldn’t, in my opinion.

Footnotes: CROSS OF IRON

by Arnold Hendrick

You thought SQUAD LEADER was complex? Ha! CROSS OF IRON is here to prove you wrong, and provide the latest word in minutae. Perhaps Avalon Hill should mint a special Iron Cross for every wargamer who actually understands and remembers those hundred thousand words of S/COI.

Before an inquisition is begun, I wish to confess my various sins as one involved in the nefarious plot to curb your brains. True, I was only responsible for AFV and gun data, and then only in very late stages, but unfortunately accessories to a crime must pay full penalty. Right now, somewhere in this group of ours, John Q. Expert, self-appointed genius, is scrutinizing and badmouthing the data in COI. Indeed, if it weren’t for the snail’s pace of our illustrious postal service, poor old 451 Harford Road would have long since been buried in sacks of similar mail, filling the entire hollow occupied by the bunker and perhaps giving the softball team its first stadium.

First the excuses. When originally created, the AFV data had to fit into new defunct ‘‘to kill’’ tables, and a spectrum of modifiers already in use. Only later, at the last minute, was the ‘‘to kill’’ table revised to account for such details as gun muzzle velocity or shell weight, as opposed to strictly going by the bore diameter in millimeters and barrel length in caliber.

The following Table 8 is a reprint of the original table, with some emphasis on closer ranges due to the densely packed terrain found in S/COI. If the Germans are able to hold the fight at longer ranges for a significant period of time, the Russians will suffer much worse than just 5% loss! In short, the overall probability of getting the other guy must be examined, not just one or two tables that only compose a piece of the procedure. Since armor DRMs appear to distinguish between front and side AFV protection, it may seem redundant to have front, side and rear ‘‘to kill’’ numbers on the firing tables. Again, this is perhaps because of the existing SL system. However, there is some point to separate side considerations. Super-high velocity shot gets less advantages on side shots, compared to relatively larger rounds traveling at slower speeds, due to the increased probability that a big heavy round that fails to penetrate may do ‘‘fatal’’ damage to wheels, tracks, turret ring, periscope, etc. Furthermore, the side of a tank presents a greater area in the first place.

On the other hand, some weapons, especially in the 25-57mm range, fare poorly in the side armor sweeps, a few having no improvement at all. This represents the relatively lower rate of fire compared to lighter guns (which sometimes make up in luck from volume what they lack in physical power), and a light (three to six pound) shell compared to the 75-90mm guns (with 15 to 25 pound shells). The 25-57mm weapons were peculiarly anti-tank ‘‘can openers’’, and were already becoming obsolete in 1943. Although some marginal improvement for greater target area may be...
apparent, the numerics of the dice system aren't sensitive enough to show every minor variation. 

A few have commented on the spare fuel tanks carried on the outside rear deck or sides of many Russian AFVs. Given the mania for trivia of this sort in SL/COI, some are surprised that there were no external fuel tanks on the KV-11 or KV-12, even though they were designed by Konstantin Roslavlev, the designer of the KV-11. It is true that the KV-11 and KV-12 were designed before the KV-10, which did have external fuel tanks. However, the KV-11 and KV-12 were designed to be more formidable than the KV-10, and therefore did not need the external fuel tanks. 

For those interested, the main sources of AFV data were "GERMAN TANKS OF WWII" by F.M. von Senger and Ettlinger, and "RUSSIAN TANKS 1900-1970" by John Milson. Among the host of AFV books, these are the most 'scholarly' in the English language (in that the authors recognize their limitations, among other things). Additional sources are naturally useful, and a great many were used. The author, however, must be wary of the popular "war" history books, often published in serial form, that include tidbits of hard data, often badly scrambled and hopelessly interpreted. Accurate data for gun penetration is hard to find, and details on shell characteristics impossible. If anyone has ballistic coefficients for WWI armoured types, this author would be greatly indebted for the information. With that, plus muzzle velocity, shell weight, and bore diameter, one can use tables for fairly accurate penetration computation. Lacking all that, this author used a "short cut" formula used by the US Navy in WWI, which runs as follows: (2.259/10)^d (d) (w/d) 0.75047 + (v) 1.50814 to yield penetration in inches, where d is bore diameter in inches, w the weight of the shell in pounds, and v the final velocity in feet per second. 

Ballistics is a complex field, and before considering the above equation useful, one is urged to get a couple good texts, to appreciate the many limitations and inaccuracies involved in the above.

**Picking Nits & Sowing Discord**

The first edition (Origins IV Special Edition) of COI was rushed, and some technicalities escaped attention. The problem is this: wide tracks in bogs are not enough. They don't get enough friction, don't get enough grip, don't get enough traction, don't get enough pressure. This is the same reason why wide tracks are not desirable. 

Rule 75.83 regarding wide tracks in bogs probably came about when one of those mail sacks fell on someone's head at 4517 Harford Road, rattling things a bit. The problem is this: wide tracks increase the area, and reduce the ground pressure, but that is the ONLY reason why wide tracks are more desirable. Low ground pressure is a good thing in areas like soft ground, but not in areas like hard ground. For example, if you were to drive a tank over soft ground, including bog, mud, deep snow etc. The famous T-34/76 had a ground pressure of 9.1 to 10.2, the increase in later models as more armor and better guns increased weight faster than the track area (a frequent tendency in later models of any version AFV). If one takes 15.2 psi as the upper limit for rule 75.83 effects, a great many vehicles qualify. The list should not include T34/85 tanks, as if it does, just about every tank in the world would also qualify!

Another major simplification is the interpretation of real MP values and related breakdown possibilities when 2/3rds of the listed speed is exceeded. Actually, the original AFV data didn't use 2/3rds, but instead a specific value for each vehicle. For those loving such trivia, the original figures were:

- BT-5 or BT-7M: at 18-22 MP breakdown B12, after that decrease by 1/MP.
- BT-7-2: at 17-22 MP breakdown B12, after that decrease by 1/MP.
- PzKw V: at 11-15 MP breakdown B12, after that decrease by 1/MP.
- PzKw VI B and Jagd Pz VI: at 3-8 MP breakdown B12, as given in the game, is not unreasonable.

Speaking of speeds, my figures for the KV series are slightly different from those in COI. I arrived at 13 MP for the KV-1, KV-1A, KV-1C, and KV-8, while only 11 MP for the KV-IIA. All speeds are based on horse power/weight ratios, ground pressure, and maximum road speed, in that order of priority. 

Suspension characteristics are ignored, which accounts for disparity in views on the KV (or any other vehicle). However, things like suspension quality are difficult non-mathematical judgements impossible to make from dry facts and figures. For example, the game also ignores the poor quality of the PzKw III or IV suspensions, or the tendency of PzKw V and VI types to get stuck between their interleaved road wheels. One can also go into the quality of transmissions, gearboxes, and much more, until matters become so complex one might as well just roll a die to establish the current MP of a vehicle. In fact, random reduction of listed game speeds for all vehicles is not a bad idea, to take account of equipment in bad repair. This should be done on a vehicle by vehicle basis (suggest rolling a single die, reducing the result by two, and then subtracting the result from the original MP of the vehicle).

Finally, it is worth remembering that the hull-down armor bonus (64.35) is printed on the counter. Personally, I prefer writing up a file card for each vehicle type, giving all data from the counter and rules, for handy reference, especially when the vehicle is buried under CE, turret facing, target acquisition, and/or passenger counters!
COUNTING DOWN THE SCENARIOS
An Introduction to Squad Leader Plus One, Part Two
By Bob Medrow

THE SCENARIONS

Each of the scenarios in COI could profitably be studied at considerable length. My purposes here, however, are fairly limited. I hope to be able to give you some insights into the peculiarities of each scenario by first examining the forces available to each side and their objectives. In general, this will be accompanied by a specific setup and a discussion of what factors influence my thinking concerning how things might begin. After that you can expect to learn some things about how play could then proceed. The last thing considered will be how the scenarios changed from the original playtest version to what they are now. Mention will also be made of significant new units or rules where it's most appropriate.

That last paragraph contains a pair of weasel words, "might" and "could." However, they really belong there. Most of the COI scenarios offer a rich variety of courses of action. In addition, having determined a strategy for any tactical game scenario, a player must be prepared to make adjustments as the die roll and his opponent acts. My comments will reflect this fact. Part of the attraction of the SL system for me is that it requires a considerable amount of player reaction and adjustment as a game proceeds.

Most of what insights I have to offer were acquired during the playtesting of COI. Locally, that involved games with and among a group of interested players. In addition to playing, we spent several Saturday afternoons discussing what seemed to work and why. All together, I reported on the results of 79 playings of the eight scenarios. The principal players in this group were Tom Black, Bobby Carver, and Dave Quigley. Good playtesting requires players who both are interested in playing under playtest conditions and are competent players; this article gives me the chance to acknowledge their contributions.

Scenario 13—The Capture of Balta.
This scenario finds us back in August of 1941, 120 miles northwest of Odessa. Initially, the Russians hold the town of Balta, located just north of the point at which the Germans wish to build a bridge across the Kodyma River. The German force on the board at the start, aided by their turn 3 reinforcements must, by the end of turn 10, insure that no Russian unit occupies any of the road hexes marked with a V on Figure 4, or any hex adjacent to these hexes.

The main strength of each side lies in its infantry squads, of which each side has thirty, although twelve of the German's do not arrive until turn 3. Brightening the German player's prospects, four of his initially available squads are 8-3-88, who bring along four demolition charges and two flamethrowers. Three others, carrying one demolition charge, appear as reinforcements. His joy is partially balanced by the fact that six of his squads are Rumanians, at 3-4-7 each. As always, the German leadership is good, consisting of nine leaders, including two 9-2s and just one, an 8-0, with a zero leadership factor. The Rumanians are led by Captain Radu who, at 7-0, probably wishes he were elsewhere. To command his thirty squads, and five crews as well, the Russian player has about what you might expect: a 7-0, two 8-0s and a 9-1. The MG picture is also what we've come to expect on the eastern front: eighteen to four in favor of the Germans. In heavy weapons, the Soviets have a 77L AT gun and an 82mm mortar plus, on turn 5, one module of 100mm artillery support. Armor is restricted to four T26's (two of which don't arrive until turn 5) for the Russians and a STG11B for the Axis. Under miscellaneous, the Russians have the necessary radio, one roadblock and ten entrenchments, while their opposition's assault engineers have unlimited smoke generation capacity. Thus, the confrontation places the burden of attack upon the Germans, who are much the better equipped and led.

The rules introduced in this scenario include the new ones concerning artillery and almost all of those concerned with armor. Everything in these rules pertinent to this scenario has already been discussed. In addition, there is an optional infantry movement rule, use of which eliminates the infantry road bonus—except that a unit spending all of its normal MFs on a road gets to move an extra hex—and replaces it with something more elaborate. Using this option, any infantry unit can increase its MF by two at the expense of penalties concerning portage, Advancing Fire and Close Combat Capabilities. This rule is, I feel, more consistent with the general level of sophistication of the system and I recommend its general use.

Allied Troops, in this case Rumanians, also bring along some rules. The rules surrounding their use have the general effect of making leaders and support weapons of one nationality less useful to allied, but foreign, troops than are their own. Also, the rallying morale level of these troops in their broken state is one less than their normal value.

The last new rule introduced concerns a new type of terrain, Marsh. In this scenario, hill 547 in the southeast corner of the playing surface is considered to be not a hill, but a marsh. A marsh is a cursed wheatfield; that is, it's like a wheatfield except that it's out of bounds to all vehicles and
affects the movement, firepower and morale of infantry in it. Any nonroad hex adjacent to a marsh bogs down a passing vehicle one time in six. The other three hills on board 3 also vanish. The one north of the marsh becomes a wheatfield while the other two become clear terrain. Trees and a building on one of the hills are also ignored.

Since the Russians set up first we'll consider them first. The Russian player knows that the initial German force will be east of row H on board 3 while the Rumanians will be on whole or half hexes along the north edge of board 4. Unfortunately, the usefulness of this knowledge is reduced by Russian deployment restrictions. These are illustrated by the setup shown in Figure 4. Let's begin in the north.

Restricted to hexes 4 through 7 on board 4, this arrangement shows the entrenchments, each of them containing one squad, positioned toward the south edge of this limit. Their placement is vital to the Russians' survival because the German reinforcements enter the north edge anywhere west of row H, and the units deployed in these entrenchments are the principal force opposing their drive toward the western victory hexes. Initially, only Russian infantry in an entrenchment can be present on board 4. The setup rules require that each entrenchment contain just one squad or crew, in addition to any leaders one wishes to use. Here, in addition to the squads, there's an 8-0 leader in W4.

A number of factors must be weighed in connection with the problem of where the board 4 forces are to go. The two I consider most important are the ability of these forces to inflict damage on the attackers and their ability to survive once Axis forces have passed south of their original position. Part of the latter factor is the problem of rallying broken Russian units. Were the entrenchments to be located at the northern limit of the band of allowable hexes, the Russians could bring many of the possible entry hexes under normal range fire. Alas, as is the case with the setup shown, those hedges in the northwest would still cause trouble for the Russians. A careful look at ranges and lines-of-sight shows us that a good coverage of those possible entry hexes requires a commitment of MGs that the Russian player cannot really afford. In addition, the further north they start, the harder it becomes to get the survivors back. A common German tactic is to attempt to isolate, rather than kill, enemy squads by getting south of them and using MGs to cover open ground hexes which the Russian squads would have to cross. On balance, I prefer to position the Russians as shown, being willing to trade a better chance at chewing up the enemy as they appear for a bit more longevity. Occasionally this pays a bonus when the German player loses valuable time by too great a concern for softening up the defenders.

To finish up the discussion of board 4, positioning the entrenchments in adjacent hexes in order to have the option of combining the fire of adjacent hexes is a good idea. The three to the west are intended to slow down an Axis end run. Those lonely folks in N5 will, hopefully, provide a minimum flank guard for the central force. Once events render that unnecessary, they can wander south, hopefully worrying the German player. Finally, the unaccompanied MMG in X1 should help to anchor the second (very thin) line of Russian defense.

On board 3, the restriction on Soviet units of one per building guarantees that nearly every building will be occupied. This represents a poor defensive posture, so the initial setup on 3 is only a starting point. Competent Russian play requires that you know where your forces will head when it's your turn to move. Unfortunately, other than for his tanks, the Russian player, who moves first, can

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**Figure 4:**

Russian A = 4-4-7, HMG, radio, 9-1; German B = three 3-4-7s, MMG; C = three 3-4-7s, 7-0, MMG; D = 4-6-7, 8-3-8, 9-1, LMG, DC; E = 4-6-7, 8-3-8, 9-1, LMG, DC, FT; F = 4-6-7, 8-3-8, 8-1, LMG, DC, G = three 4-6-7s, 8-1, three LMGs; H = two 4-6-7s, 8-3-8, 9-2, two LMG, DC, FT.
move nothing during turn one. Most of the movements discussed below should be possible during turns 2 and 3, although the available paths do, in some cases, depend upon enemy positions after turn 1. As you will see, most units move, with one of the major exceptions being group A, which consists of one squad, the HMG, the radio and the 9-1 leader, upon the second floor of N2.

Here are the movements: O10 to O6, P2 to M2 (ground floor), P4 to N1, P6 to M8, R3 to O5, R5 to P5, R6 to O5, S1 to P4, T3 to R1, T4 to Z1, U6 to X1, V1 to BB5, V3 to R1, X3 to X1, Y6 (crew only) to 4X1, Y8 to 4X1, Z1 to AA1, and CCS to DD9. Now let's consider what concerns these moves represent. Movements given indicate a willingness to fight for N2. The dispersal of the five squads in or adjacent to N2 indicates respect for the flame-throwers that path is. I'm changes of the engineers. In general, dispersal into adjacent hexes is one of the Soviet responses to a lack of good leaders. The specific locations of these five squads should not be taken as hard and fast. They are a reasonable response if the German player starts some units in the north. If he does not, movement into such hexes as L2 and N3 is attractive.

The second center of immediate resistance is around the AT Gun in the stone building in O5. Any squads broken in this position retreat into P5 so that they'll have at least a chance to rally. Other immediate defensive measures include sending troops up to 4X1, DD9 and BB5, where the latter two are up to attempt to entrench as possible. These last moves are intended to help shore up the west flank of the Russian position.

Movement of two squads into both R1 and 11 is a more long term, if you can think of such a thing in a tactical game, move. These squads are to stay put and roll for entrenching until they make it. Their success is reasonable probably. There's only a 27% chance that four squads will entrench nothing in one turn of trying.

The remaining units, including the two tanks, are the Russian reserves. Given the time frame of the scenario, the mortar/radio combination stands little chance of great success, but one must be prepared to try. The 7-4 leader needs to be preserved for the rallying of broken units toward game's end. What to do with the remaining three squads is a problem. As they work their way toward the north having proved to be an unrewarding tactic, I have decided to use them as the second path is. Familiar to the engineers. As a player, I feel no need to labor beneath any historical doctrines concerning the employment of armor. I should like very much to do in the STG, but the tools are weak and the need elsewhere is great.

Turning now to the German player's problems, one of his major decisions concerns where on the north edge his forces should appear. Avoidance of an immediate confrontation with the defenders up north have proved to be an unyielding tactic. I favor an entry toward the western edge. The Rumanians' task is to survive until help arrives, while doing as much damage as possible to the defenders. One choice is that shown with groups B and C. Each stack consists of three squads and one MMG. The second captain is in group C. On the first Axis turn the leader remains where he is while the other squads move, along with their MMGs, to hexes T9 and U8. The reader can use the discussion of the previous section to determine whether or not the Russian player should send a tank up north to contest such a move.

To have a reasonable chance of success in this scenario, it is necessary that the German player maintain the initiative. By this I mean that he must seek to keep the Russian player responding to German moves. To this end, I prefer a brisk opening by the German forces on board 3. One possibility starts with what is shown in Figure 4.

Group D consists of a 9-1 leader, one 4-6, one 8-3-8, one 1 LMG, and one demolition charge. Groups E and F have the same structure, except that the leader in F is an 8-1 and group E has a flamethrower. The first group has the task of assaulting the Allies from hex M7, while E and F attack that squad in L4 from L5 and K5, respectively. Group G, consisting of an 8-1, three 4-6-7s and three LMGs, move into the woods at J4, from which it will open fire on building N2. Each of these advances can be kept within the wheatfield, and no two groups need pass through the same hex.

In support of these advances, the assault gun, unbuttoned, fires smoke at the hex containing the HMG. The last group, H, is the strongest of the lot, with a 9-2 leader, two 4-6-7s, each with a LMG, and a 8-3-8 carrying a demolition charge and the second flamethrower. Beginning in a marsh hex, this group can only move in the Advance Phase, when it starts HO.

In any game with just a few turns, the question of the proper tempo of activities is a vital one. The opening just proposed will almost certainly cost the aggressor some casualties. Delay, we found, cost more.

From this point on the action should be heavy and sustained as the Russians fall back, taking and inflicting losses. Perhaps the major Russian concern is to prevent any significant German breakthrough. The need to rally broken Russian squads probably runs a close second, however.

Against competent Russian play, the Germans advancing from the east should expect to fight a series of battles as they work their way toward the eastern victory hexes. Initially, the emphasis should be on clearing building N2. And, as soon as this has been accomplished, some forces need to be used to clear Russians out of the hexes north of the road running from 3S2 to 3M4. The northern attack force will find that large western wheatfield to be its best route south. Unfortunately for them, however, cover becomes more sparse as the advance continues. If the Russian player has kept his forces under reasonable control, this drive will even better be stopped, thereby, in all probability, costing the German player the game. On both fronts, the essential factor in keeping the drives going is the liberal use of smoke. For this reason the combat engineers should be kept distributed throughout the stacks.

In closing, the presence of those Russian tanks adds a very nice touch to the scenario. More than once they've turned the tide, but, even when they failed, the problems they posed for both players went a long way toward making this scenario one of our favorites.

Compared with some of the scenarios, this one underwent few changes. The Russians picked up that 7-4 leader while receiving a smaller caliber AT Gun. The good captain is in group C. On the first Axis turn the leader remains where he is while the other squads move, along with their MGs, to hexes T9 and U8. The reader can use the discussion of the previous section to determine whether or not the Russian player should send a tank up north to contest such a move.

Scenario 14—The Paw of the Tiger

The title may be a bit gandy, but it's appropriate. This time it's January, 1943, away up north near Leningrad, and everything we had to do much fun with in 13, particularly the wheatfields, is covered with snow. In fact, there's so much snow that all vehicles lose their normal road bonus, and all German forces are hidden at the start of the game.

The forces of mother Russia have the burden of attack in this round. Entering on turn one on the eastern edge of the mapboard arrangement shown in Figure 5, they must, by turn ten, exit four tanks from the western edge. On the player turn in which the last one leaves there can be no mobile German vehicles on board 3. In other words, the first squad of the AFVs. Against this the Germans have mustered but five AFVs: three PzKwIIFs and two PzKwIVEs, the dreaded Tigers of the scenario's title. Aboard one of the AFVs is Capt. Bolter, a 9-1 leader. Additional German forces consist of three squads, one crew and two leaders: an 8-1 and a 9-2. In terms of support weapons we find one MG and one 37L AT Gun. One module of 150mm artillery support is immediately available, for which a radio is provided. To improve the chances that this module will be used in a timely fashion, it can also be utilized by the armor leader through his vehicular radio. Rounding things out, there are three entrenchment markers available. Neither side receives any reinforcements.

This scenario introduces just two pages of rules, divided almost equally into two parts. The first portion concerns the last of the new armor rules. These, the essential features of those involving armor leaders, armor height advantage and bore sighting have already been mentioned. The other new rule opens up the possibility that your AFVs might immobilize themselves by going too fast. Excessive Speed Breakdown mandates a one-in-thirty-six chance that any vehicle will become immobilized if it utilizes its entire MP allowance. Alas, this not only slows down the vehicles, it also slows down the game by virtue of its mechanics.

Briefly (don't laugh), if you wish to use an AFV's full MP allowance you must so indicate before moving it; at the end of its movement, if you roll a 12, it breaks down. Should that occur, you then roll two dice to determine just where it broke down. The sum of spots, not to exceed the vehicle's normal MP allowance, is the vehicle MP allowance for that turn. This means that, in most cases, the vehicle is backed up to some location short of the hex it would have occupied had it not broken down. Any defensive fires that had been directed at the vehicle between the hex it truly reaches and the one you'd hoped it would reach are supposed never to have happened.

The drag that this imposes upon play is apparent. Players spend time counting hexes out ahead of time to see whether or not they'll need to announce a full movement effort. In moving any
such vehicle they then need to keep careful track of its exact route, in case it needs to be returned. It's a nifty rule, but you pay a price. If you find that it makes things drag too much for your tastes, the rule's effects can be approximated by rolling for breakdown for any eligible vehicle at the end of its movement, without having had to declare yourself ahead of time, and without a second dice roll to alter its final resting place.

Most of the remaining rules concern board 5 and its two new terrain features, gullies and forest-road hexes. All PANZERBLITZ veterans will recognize most of the gully rules. Forest-road hexes have an important effect upon movement. This becomes clear if you attempt to move a vehicle around another vehicle or wreck in such a hex. As always, you pay a 2 MP penalty; however, the other terrain in this type of hex is woods, not clear, as it is for the other type of road hex. This makes a wreck a much more serious proposition here. Fire into such a road hex is also quite difficult.

Now, let's look at the German setup, remembering that the Russian player will see none of this as he ponders the problem of where to enter and how to proceed once he's on the board. Since German armor is the big part of the defenses it gets first priority. In positioning the tanks, the first two factors of significance are those of armor height advantage and bore sighting. For offensive purposes, each is limited to a maximum range of 24 hexes, while the former's -1 TO KILL DRM requires a two level height advantage. The third factor is the requirement that the Russian AFVs enter the eastern map edge via road hexes. A quick check of board 5 shows us that the only ways to leave the board edge without risking a one-in-six chance of immobilization in the woods are via the bridges at Y8 and Z9. The German player's dream opening would be to wreck the lead two tanks on these two bridge hexes, causing a huge traffic jam upon which he would then dump his artillery fire.

Bore sighting Y8 can be done from a number of second level hexes on board 2, so that's not a big problem. The other bridge, however, is. Because the trees in the gully hex adjacent to the bridge are a LOS obstacle, any fire into Z9 must come from the southern end of board 2. Unless the Russian player is careless in moving, the only hex from which a side shot is possible is 2F7. Bolter, in a Tiger, has, from Figs. 2 and 3, and Table 1, a 30.1% chance of halting anything but the KV ICs. The decision as to whether or not to park him there is a biggie. The major argument against such a location is that if he fails to block the bridge, he is far south of where most of the action will probably be. The facing rules concerning AFVs make advancing along either the northern or southern edges much safer than is advancing across the center of the board. The early knowledge that the most serious German threat lies to the south will bias the competent Russian player to pursue the northern route, which is also the natural one. Bolter's location will be known early since the whole
These hexes were selected because a vehicle in either hex has a reasonable field of fire. Even though a vehicle stuck in either hex may have a poor chance of destroying a hull down German tank, it takes plenty good nerves to ignore them as they gain the -2 acquired target DRM. The lone tank making a try at crossing HD 9 will, if it's successful, prove vexing.

From this point on the advance should be pushed, with movement favored over fire. In closing with the Germans, use terrain to shield you and to break his LOS when he has a vehicle acquired. Movement out of the Covered Arc also causes DRM problems. Both sides should keep their vehicle commanders out in the open as much as possible. With care, the Russian player has a chance, but play is very demanding.

If one compares just the OBs of the published version with that of the playtest version, there appear to have been few changes, all of them minor. Combining such a look with an examination of the two versions of the AFV KILL TABLE and the relevant vehicle characteristics, however, reveals a collection of changes that, in total, improve considerably the chances of the Russians in what, originally, was a rather unbalanced scenario.

**Scenario 15—Hube's Pocket**

In this round we encounter a situation very different. It's the spring of 1944 and the First Panzer Army, under the command of General Hube, is seeking to break through encircling Russian forces. Elements of the 2nd SS Panzer Corps have the task of fending off a Russian force seeking to halt Hube's move. To win, the German player must get his T34/85s and a MMG-armed T34 to the board in two turns, if possible. Failure means a 10% loss to Germany's ability to face off in the next turn. This has the obvious effect of stretching out the time required for the convoy to cross the board if they encounter opposition.

The remaining rules cover SS units, Panzerschrecks, Panzerfausts, and anti-tank magnetic mines (ATMs). At 6-5-8, the Waffen SS infantry are first class troops. To further reflect the special character of their situation on the eastern front, they rally with 9 or better, and their Desperation Morale is only two below that. Interestingly enough, they are also subject to the same berserk rules that often plague the Russian player. As a slight change, a berserk SS unit can be returned to normal status after it destroys an enemy unit.

Panzerschrecks are only slightly below the US bazooka of SL in capability, to prevent nothing short of a direct hit to the SL player. Panzerfausts are also old hat as a support weapon. The change in COIs is that there are now four versions, representing models that appeared from late '42 through the first part of '44. Only the last of these has the three hex range of the 20mm. The rest are subject to the original in line of fire and to the TOR hit numbers are all greater. The first two types are significantly poorer, largely due to their one hex range. Scenario 15 gives the German a dozen of these useful weapons, but it's necessary to roll a die for each one in order to determine what type it is. The point is, the German player can only use the best of the ATMs only be used when the unit carrying it is in the same hex with an enemy vehicle. Successfully played, it's highly effective.

With that by way of background as to cast and capabilities, let's now look at how things might start, and what factors should influence your thinking. The major German problem is to prevent the Russians from seizing a position from which they can dig in and control the game before the very start. Depending upon where they enter and where they move, Russian armor, on turn 1, can reach the south edge of board 4 with a cost of as little as 9 MPs. As in an earlier scenario, board entry costs at each hex are sequential. Practically, this causes the Russian little problem. If not halted by the enemy they are able to occupy a strong position in the east, around the base of hill 538, in the first turn.

With the burden of sequential entry costs, the German player must plan carefully if he is to avoid holes in his initial deployment. The one shown in Fig. 4 serves to illustrate several aspects of thoughtful play. Beginning in the east, group of board 4 with a cost of as little as 9 MPs. As in an earlier scenario, board entry costs at each hex are sequential. Practically, this causes the Russian little problem. If not halted by the enemy they are able to occupy a strong position in the east, around the base of hill 538, in the first turn.

The German blocking force consists of 12 SS infantry squads, with four leaders, nine MGs, 20 anti-tank support weapons, five tanks and six halftracks. Three of the tanks are Panthers (one of which should have the 4/2 MG configuration); three are T34/76s with three Panther halftracks, two are armed with MGs. The opposition fields 18 other AFVs, consisting of two squads, the 9-1 leader, four PFs, two LMGs and a demo charge, entered there about those two nearby halftracks. The vehicle MPs being what they are, only German infantry has a chance of survival at this end of the line. Support weapons were selected so as to provide both anti-tank and anti-infantry capabilities.

To continue looking at the dismounted infantry, the group in R2 should give the Russian Player second thoughts about having his vehicle commands out in the open. In O1, a 5MG and M1 provide a measure of security for the nearby vehicles. Of all the infantry, only group B-two squads, the 8-1 leader, two PFs and a MMG—arm walkons. As is true with group A, one is to interdict possible exits from board 4 into the heart of the German position.

The eastern-most and western-most tanks have the same mission. The Panther at P1 would have moved the next turn to engage the Russian armor, had the Russians not moved as shown. Being what they are, the victory conditions prevent the Germans from running and hiding. Russian armor must be stopped. To this end, if the vehicle is not a major blow, unless it is accomplished at no loss to the Russians. Realistically, the German player can hope to do no better than to trade his tank force for the Russian. That leader-equipped
The General

Panther can reach O6 by the end of the next turn, ready to enjoy a considerable advantage over ground-level Russians.

Both armed halftracks still have squads on board. Given a chance, the one at O2 will try to overrun Russians, while the one at S5D7 has several options open. Like the IVH on board 5, it is moving to reinforce the eastern end of the line.

In response to all of this, the Soviets have followed one reasonable path. A major effort is being directed at the eastern end. In addition to providing flank security for this thrust, the three best-armored Russian tanks in the center form the tank hunter group. One of the impacts of the new rules can be seen in that, as a result of their entry at K1, these three tanks give the central Panther nothing better than a +4 DRM on its TO HIT roll in the Defensive Fire Phase. Some infantry support of this central group is necessary to guard against the very real possibility of a charge by German squads. Finally, the lone western tank also provides security for his brethren to the east.

Beyond this point, a great deal depends upon the outcomes of the initial fights. In my experience, this scenario can develop in a number of ways. Its present status is a tribute to the developmental procedure. Originally, the armor balance was 11 to 4, against the Germans, and board 4 was not used. Yes, that's right; after the Germans moved, the Russians popped up at the edge of the world for an extraordinary firefight. Unfortunately for the Germans, the Russian ability to materialize right next to them was devastating, leading to an almost unbroken string of Russian victories.

Scenario 16—Suwchos 79

In December, 1942, the Germans find themselves reacting to a Russian effort to thwart the relief of the Sixth Army at Stalingrad. Attacking across the board, Sowchos 79 demonstrates this in a way that is likely to be instructive.
the Chir River, Stalin's forces have seized the collective farm that gives this scenario its name. To win, the German player must have been the last to occupy any twelve of the buildings between rows L and V (inclusive) on board 3. These structures represent the farm. In addition, he must also eliminate at least twice as many units as he loses. In this case, "units" include squads, leaders, vehicles and crews. Both goals must be reached within ten turns.

As would normally be the case in this type of a scenario, the Russian player sets up first and moves second. The forces available to each side are varied, and reinforcements enter the map during half of the game turns. At the beginning, the Russians are located in two widely separated regions: Twenty-one squads, three leaders, a MMG, two LMGs and four anti-tank rifles (ATRs) are in possession of the farm, setting up between rows Y and L. Fig. 7 shows their deployment, along with that of the rather weak enemy forces stacked with Lts. Dubovich and Eastonov. The dispersed character of the Russian force is a reasonable response to the victory conditions and the fact that the artillery module that goes along with the German radio is a 100mm one. However, it may also become something else, a point I'll return to later.

Way up north, on the road hexes stretching from GG6 through Y3, four unarmed, lend-lease M5 halftracks and five ZIS light trucks start the game. On board are eight squads, two leaders, two LMGs, and one crew; in addition, one of the vehicles has a 57LL AT Gun in tow. This group's journey south, however, will be anything but peaceful, as the first of what's almost a flood of armor enters on turn 1, and it's German. Somewhere on the western edge of board 2, between rows A and Q, eight tanks, an armored car, and a gun-armed halftrack enter. While the snow rules are not in effect, road movement now costs AFVs 1 MP/hex. Even so, as the German deployment shows, this still allows German armor to reach the only road south.

Before continuing, let me explain what is shown on Fig. 7. The setups on 3 and 5 show positions at the start of the game. That's the information needed for the later discussion. Up north, however, what you have are possible positions just before the Russian Advance Phase. Hopefully, the insights into play discussed are worth the possible confusion.

To continue, trucks have improved their off-road performance since SL. Now it only costs 4 MP/hex. It's pretty obvious, however, that this will still prevent the trucks from detouring around the enemy by going off the road. A truck beginning at Y3 and leaving the road from S3 can get no further south than O4. A halftrack's chances are obviously better. One starting at Y3 could get all the way to column E. Unfortunately, that speedy little armored car in 4B3 is well positioned to get off a shot. Its Defensive Fire chance of success is 38.2%. However, come the German Prep Fire Phase of turn 2, it'll kill 89.1% of the time. Of course, the armored car would not be left all alone. For example, the tank at V4 could reach 4F5 without even running the risk of a breakdown.

A study of the possibilities shows two things wrong with a mad dash south by the Russians. First of all, not many vehicles will make it. In addition, south is the way the Germans want to go. Now let's look at some other aspects of the situation. Following, on turn 2, on the heels of the armor, come the panzer grenadiers: five squads, as many MGs, three leaders, and one radio, good for another 100mm module. All of them ride in style aboard five MG-armed halftracks. A light truck tags along with a 76L. AT Gun and crew. Any anti-tank capabilities are welcome by the Germans, because soon it's the Russian's turn: six T34/76Cs on turn 4, three T28Cs (three turrets each!) and three KV1s on turn 5, followed by another KV1 and four 76Bs on turn 8. These all appear on the east edge of 3, from Q10 south.

One Russian response to all of the above is shown on boards 2 and 4. Instead of running, he's fighting. As you may have guessed, the squads in 4L0 will try to Close Assault the halftrack, while the forces stacked with Lts. Dubovich and Eastonov will advance into hexes 2U1 and 2R2, respectively.

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Figure 7:
Until the force in U1 is removed, running a halftrack past that hex will be dangerous. The best of the entering leaders, a 9-2, will get himself and his squad past in good order less than 22% of the time. The 8-1 leader will do about half as well. Then, too, there is the matter of what might happen to the halftrack itself. Exposed tank commanders are now also in danger. To cap it off, having delivered their passengers, all surviving trucks and halftracks will flee east/northeast. While they can be pursued and destroyed, that will take time, as will dealing with the Russian infantry, and the German player has a tight timetable.

To return, as promised, to the south, think about what could happen if the Germans run into trouble in their initial effort, that of clearing the two story building. Should anything happen to that stack in S5, a sudden Russian push south is not impossible. The usual psychology of “I’m the attacker, you’re the defender” sometimes causes players to overlook the true potential of the situation. The territorial victory conditions require that German squads be conserved. In addition, the artillery module is so important to ultimate success that neither the radio nor its accompanying leader should be risked. That’s the reason for their initial location in SQ5. Only after the squads in Q4 have dug entrenchments should the radio be moved to the tree line.

With an opening like this one, a large number of directions for subsequent play are created. The terrain and forces available normally lead to a very dynamic situation.

New rules for this scenario fall into two groups. The first group involves new hardware: armored cars and ATRs. For practical purposes, an armored car is like any other AFV, except that it can neither tow nor carry passengers, and has its own MP cost column. From the point of view of usage, an ATR is just like any other AT Gun in its offensive capabilities, except that it has no effect on anything but vehicles and guns, and has a maximum range of 12 hexes. In terms of movement and usage capabilities it follows the same rules as do, for example, MGs.

The second group of rules expands the scope of the simulation. Under the heading of increased capabilities, it is now possible to take prisoners, and the whole matter of the use of captured weapons and vehicles has been expanded to include just about everything. Motivation for the taking of prisoners is provided by the rule that has a captured unit count twice as much toward victory conditions as does a destroyed unit. The attendant mechanics of the prisoner rules are not essential pieces of information here, but I’d suggest that you read through them carefully. Personally, I think they are among the cleverest, in the SL system, in the net effect they produce. The last new rule simply states that infantry subjected to direct fire from a lower elevation enjoy a +1 DRM unless they are higher up by virtue of being in a building.

Other than a vehicle here and a leader there, this scenario emerged from playtesting almost unchanged. My feeling is that balance is particularly difficult to judge in this one because of the variety of options available, and the scope of possible responses.

Scenario 17—Debacle at Korosten

The nearby town of Korosten, in the rear of the German Sixth Army, provides the name for this August, 1941, scenario. Here, as twilight falls one day, the industrious members of a map depot are suddenly attacked by a horde of Cossacks. In this case, that amounts to 18 squads, led by four leaders, and carrying three LMGs and one MMG. To be...
victorious in this scenario requires that the Russian player destroy any 11 of the 13 German squads and crews who begin on the board. In addition, at least five mounted squads must exit the south edge of board 5. Any prisoners carried off count as two units destroyed.

These map depot folks are a far cry from what we've come to expect of the Wehrmacht. True, the three squads and the ten crews do have seven leaders, but only two of them, a 9-1 and an 8-1, have useful leadership modifiers. Befitting a place like this, the 6 + 1 leader (Col. Rosenberger, not Lozgony) heads up things. However, help is on its way, sometime. Six halftracks, carrying five squads and a 9-2 leader arrive turn 4, or later, depending upon a roll of the dice.

Only two rules sections are added, both of which have considerable impact. The first, and by far the longer section, running to over a page, details the mechanics of using cavalry. In plotting tactics for this scenario, it is necessary to know the capabilities of this new branch of the service. At 5-3-7, cavalry squads are, except for their morale, an exact average of the two previous types of infantry squads. Practically, they are slightly inferior to a 4-4-7 in a firefight because a stack of 5-3-7s will do no better than will an equal stack of 4s, and their range is less.

Defensively, dismounted cavalry has an advantage in close combat over a 4-4-7. If the 4-4-7 gets a grade of "C", the 5-3-7 gets a grade of "C-", as an infantry squad. But, of course, when you think of cavalry, you think about the combination of man and horse. Mounted cavalry has 12 MPs, and it pays for terrain as does infantry, except that a woods hex costs 4 MF. While mounted, it suffers a -1 DRM with respect to incoming fire, enemy Close Combats, and enemy Overruns. Its own fire and Close Combat strengths are halved. This leaves us with Overruns to consider. To execute such an attack requires that a charge be declared at the beginning of movement. This ups the MFs to 18, but does prohibit changing direction in the last four hexes of a charge. The attack strength is doubled and the Overrun receives a 2-DRM. Defensive fire is executed during the Movement Phase, but has a twist. If the defending unit waits until the cavalry is adjacent, it must pass a normal MC; if it passes, the MC roll is used to determine the outcome of the Defensive Fire. The problem the defender faces is when to shoot, the problem for the guy with the cavalry is whether or not a try at riding over the enemy is worth it.

Because it's the situation of interest in this scenario, let's look at an attempt at Overrunning either a 2-4-7 or a 4-6-7. From the movement restrictions in a charge it generally follows that the defender will have a choice about whether or not to wait until the cavalry is adjacent before trying his luck. The crew will break or destroy a cavalry squad 50% of the time if the crew waits until it's adjacent; shooting earlier is successful 51% of the time. For a squad the corresponding values are 54% and 60%.

Assuming that these numbers don't dampen your saber rattling urges, here are the outcomes against a prudent crew: 51% of the time the cavalry breaks or dies; the crew gets its 53% of the time; and everybody's okay 16% of the time. For an attack upon a squad the corresponding percentages are 60, 27 and 13. If you are bound and determined to ride over someone, a minimum of two squads, charging through different hexes, is required. Even so, you determine the outcome of the loss of a cavalry squad as a consequence.

The second rule covers the decline in an entire side's morale as it accumulates losses. Subject to modification due to armor and AT Guns, the basic rule says that all morale levels drop by one when the losses reach 40%. They then drop an additional 20% loss. These percentages are based upon the point values of all leaders, squads and crews. The obvious effect of such a rule, in general, is to magnify any advantage gained. In this particular scenario it makes those weak leaders quite dangerous to their own side.

Returning to the scenario, let's take a look at the Germans in Fig. 8. Specific placement hexes for the 10 crews, the trucks and the armored car are all dictated. The squads must set up in buildings without other squads and crews being present. Leaders, the MGs, and the two kubelwagens go where one wishes. No special rules reflect the shock referred to in the scenario sheet's description of events, so all of these forces will function normally throughout the game, until losses reach the morale drop value. Since the Russians must set up on board 5, I prefer to position the squads as shown, each with a MG. The best leader goes into N2 where, along with the MMG, he hopes to make considerable trouble. The general idea of the initial placement is to prevent easy Russian movement around all of those tempting targets.

From the Russian placement shown, we get to witness a pair of charging units. To start, the cavalry squad in I10 charges 3V5 after first moving to 327. Should they survive, they exit 3V5 into U8 and then head back south. Their chances of surviving the Defensive Fire from the crew in V5 are enhanced because it must take an adjacent shot. Assuming that the crew survives, Cohenov leads his squad out of M10 and charges from V6, exiting into W6 and ending in V7. Together, these two charges have an 80% chance of at least breaking the crew. The second squad in M10 rides, with the LMG, into U7 and dismounts. If they survive, they move in the Advance Phase into T6.

You may be wondering what the Germans are doing to interfere with all of this. Well, hopefully, they are firing away. In particular, the Russian player should shed no tears if the forces in N2, Q7 and R6 bang away. If they do, the Germans will have problems. If N2 fires, the group in CC10 rides up to 3K7 and dismounts. If N2 does not fire, prudence suggests that dismounting take place in K8, followed by Advance Phase movement into K7. Should Q7 and R6 fire, the stacks in V9 and U10 move into Q8 and R7, respectively, dismount, fire, and Close Combat the adjacent enemy. If Q7 and R6 remain silent, such movement is foolish, and the stacks head northeast. The one with the leader finishes the turn in 3P8.

In hopes of being able to take a prisoner, the three squads in G10, taking a slight risk, advance and dismount in 3X4. The remaining Russians ride to Y1, with the long range purpose of swinging around north of the defenders and making escape that way a little harder.
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From the victory conditions, it's clear what each side will try to do thereafter. Because of the variable arrival of the German reinforcements, this is no scenario for people who have to win. You play this one for grins, with the Russian player getting to bellow all sorts of blood thirsty things when his cavalry charges.

I would imagine that, because of the variable arrival of reinforcements, that this is a hard scenario to judge as far as balance goes. For whatever reasons, it changed little from the original version.

Figure 9: Group A consists of a 9-1 leader, 4-6-7 squad and an MMG on the second level, with another 4-6-7 squad on the first level ready to move up to the second floor to man the MMG should the other squad faller.

13 German squads, led by six 8-1 or better leaders, and provided with eight MGs, form the infantry portion of the defense. Six crews serve six weapons, ranging from 20L to 50L. As a correction, this force should contain two 37L AT Guns and two 50L AT Guns, rather than the indicated three and one. The 20L and one of the 37Ls have some valuable characteristics because they are AA weapons pressed into emergency use. However, the unique character of this scenario is really shaped by the use of Hidden Initial Placement (hereafter, HIP). Compared with Scenario 14, HIP causes much more uncertainty here. As he looks at the board, all the Russian player knows is that the enemy is south of row K on boards 3 and 4.

The invasion force is a hodge-podge. In terms of infantry, it's normal Russian: 39 squads, only four leaders, six MGs and an ATR. But the armor, ah, that's something else: two T26Cs, three T40As, three T26s, two BT72s, a KV1A, and a T34/76A.

To put this force into proper perspective, the German 20L AA gun, if it hits, has at least one chance in thirty-six of killing eight of the twelve vehicles out to a range of 24 hexes. And that's against frontal armor. A 50L has at least that good a chance against any Russian AFV present all the way out to 39 hexes. That's not to say that all the armor must or should cower in a corner, but it should make us all realize that this is a situation in which some caution is required.

With just over a single column of new rules, there's not much new to learn. Twelve of the Russian squads are 4-3-6 militia. In general, such counters are used to represent inexperienced infantery. Rules for their use fill about half of a column. Their major flaws are that they have a basic MP allowance of only three, and have a rally level of five. The remaining rules describe sustained fire by MGs. Now, at the expense of a reduction by two of the breakdown number, a MG can get a one column shift on the IFT. While the new rules are rather short, it's a good idea to review everything back in the new section 63 before playing.

Bearing in mind that the Russian player will see none of this when he starts the game, let's take a look at what the German player can do. With 39 counters under his command, he is required to have at least some units on each board. No more than twelve may begin on any one board. Thus, a defense in depth is necessitated by the special rules. Even if it were not, however, the relative strengths of each side and the psychology of HIP would dictate something similar.

In trying to hold back the Russian hordes for thirteen turns, the German player requires uncertainty as an ally. A major Russian goal is the rapid development of information concerning German deployment. In contacting an enemy force this is the first requirement of the battle. Here, HIP goes a long way toward recreating one of the facts of war at the tactical level.

Uncertainty can be produced in various ways. All have in common the goal of keeping the Russian player cautious. When he's cautious, he searches trees and buildings, looking for the hidden foe. His armor does not advance boldly, and his precious leaders lag behind the advance.

A defense in depth, however, is just one of two major tools used to create uncertainty. The other involves the timing and composition of German units. By this I refer to the idea that the first available target need not be the first one attacked. Fire at the second or third one to pass by does bad things for the Russian player's concentration, forcing him to wonder about what else might be lurking somewhere behind his most advanced units.

The German deployment shown in Fig. 9 reflects the words above. To start with some overall observations, neither boards 3 nor 4 contain the maximum allowable number of pieces. Group A on board 3 consists of a 9-1 leader, one squad and a MMG on the second floor, and one squad on the first floor. If a dozen counters begin the battle on either 3 or 4, an intelligent Russian player (i.e., one who's keeping track of how many pieces have appeared on each board) will be very pleased when he's found the twelfth counter. Any deployment should bear this in mind. As a matter of good manners, the question of how you count pieces located on a pair of half-hexes belonging to two different boards should be known to both players before the game is begun.

Of the six available AT weapons, four are located well back and only the one on board 4 is really up forward. The goal is to keep the Russian
player guessing. Good play on his part will force a reasonably cautious armor advance while his infantry feints for the enemy positions. Experience shows that a successful Russian campaign in the streets of board 1 requires that some Soviet armor survive to do two things: function as a taxi service, and provide direct fire support against enemy infantry positions. Unless strongly supported by friendly infantry, AT Guns located near the northern edge of the allowed hexes will be quickly discovered and destroyed by Russian infantry. Providing such support will delay the outcome, but, particularly on board 3, has two undesirable aspects for the Germans. First, unlike the situation in board 1, the German infantry will almost certainly be cut-off and destroyed. The second is that a force large enough to be effective will exhaust enough of the 12 counter limit to give even a careful opponent a quick passage the length of board 3. In addition, the AT weapons the other significant concern is fields of fire. German forces are too thin on the ground to allow one to be very cute in picking spots. However, there is an area, during play of the game, where you can try something that is generally not done in the game. This time, if you want to use this strategy, it is by taking a shot. The second would be attacked. My purpose in so doing would be to establish my willingness to wait. Infantry positions in 3M2 and 3S5 are pretty obvious, and I'd fire M2 at the first attractive target I had. However, would wait a bit. When part of your defense is psychological, you can't afford to be too predictable. Moving over to board 4, the L9 squad is intended to infiltrate back into the village after the Russians have been immobilized. This is an unlikely possibility because of enemy search parties, it takes off and heads south. Those forlorn souls at T9 will be revealed when they advance to 3T1, which they do as soon as any kind of Russian effort on that board becomes clear. Maybe he'll think that there were already 12 pieces on board 3. The last force on the northern boards, at Y9, is there because I just couldn't bear the thought of leaving the road west of there uncovered.

On the southern boards, the HMG positions are strong ones with good fields of fire. BH should open up as soon as targets appear, but you might want to wait a bit with AA7. The three squads on board 5 closest to board 1 will move west as the situation dictates. So too will those in V5, but their initial purpose is to provide some security against a Russian assault on board 1 from the east. The invaders are bobbled in the use of their armor by a special rule requiring that one die be rolled for each multiple of six (or fraction thereof) AFVs still mobile. What you roll equals the number of vehicles you can move to new hexes that turn. Only those are immobile from this restriction.

The intent of the rule is to reflect the confused nature of things on the Russian side. In order to prevent a very unrealistic ability to react to initial German fire, all Russian forces must be positioned adjacent to their entry hexes before things begin. What you see at the northern end of the boards is one way in which the Russians might begin if the dice rolls allowed just five vehicles to enter. Infantry positions are those prior to the Advance Phase. Two T40As have been used to deliver squads to L8 and L9. Assuming no opposition, the squads will advance into M8 and M10. Such a procedure will flash any foe within those worst threat hexes or the building in M7. To complete the action on the western edge, the Advance Phase would see the squads in F9 advance into G9, while the 8-0 leader and the squads in D9 all enter E10. During the Movement Phase of turn 2, two of the squads shown in F9 will board the tanks in row L.

Other tank-transported units are in L5 and K5. Each will advance to the southeast, one to gain cover and one to scout building L4. The infantry along the road hopes to explore building M2. Movement of the KV11A into H5 would be my response to fire from that location. Even in the absence of any German response it's not a bad move. Similarly, a Russian MG4 in 3H2 by the end of the second Movement Phase makes sense because of its fine field of fire. As was the case in the west, the leader joins a second group during the Advance Phase. The same thing also happens on the other side of the hill. I used leading squads to be placed in a position to be risked without a good cause. Following second turn movement, the trio of squads seen in F10 will be in J9, ready to split up and start exploring possible concealed hexes north and east of M2. As an alternative, they, and the three behind them, might form a fire group if M2 turns out to be held.

The six militia squads are going to continue southward along board 4, looking for enemy positions. The need for intelligence is greater than the need for six militia squads. That T2S2 is also on an intelligence gathering mission. Complete with squad, it will head south as long as it's able to move. Two other vehicles, a second T26S and a B772, each with a militia squad on board, are waiting for a chance to enter at 4A6. They too will go south, on the same mission. Collectively, they pose the Russian player a pretty problem. To maximize their effect, they should be kept well separated.

If the enemy is found, the cleanup group consists of a T28C with a LMG—carrying 6-2-8 on board. Its armor means the tank has nothing to fear from a 3T1, from which are adjacent to the T2S2. The formation is immobile and has two formidable anti-infantry weapons. On this board, however, the destruction of enemy forces is secondary to the task of determining where and what they are.

The main effort will be on board 3, and everything else the Russians have is adjacent to 3A6, waiting for the chance to enter. Enough vehicles are available to transport the remaining infantry and their support weapons.

From this description, my ideas of sensible Russian play should be pretty clear. Basically, it's a matter of gaining information without paying too great a price in pieces or in time. The advance must be kept concentrated enough so that, along the main line of advance, heavy fire can quickly be brought to bear. Some squads must always be mounted up, available for rapid movement.

Even after this length of time, I am still uncertain as to the ultimate balance in this scenario. However, of one thing I am certain: it's one of my favorites. From the time playtest began until now, such changes as were made generally favored the Russians. The KV11A was added, as were three T40As and a 7-0 leader, while only one T26S was lost. In addition, the game length was increased by one turn.
squad and no more than two leaders or LMGs. The Russian player selects a drop hex for each group, subject to the restriction that they must be at least five hexes from one another. The rules provide for a 50-50 chance that the drop hex selected will be the location of one end on a string of paratroopers. The other half of the time the drop hex is displaced to the same hex on a different board. Once all such hexes are located, the parachutists are strung out from them along parallel hex grains, on top of their chute counters. Each such counter (and there are separate ones for each leader and each LMG) then rates a pair of dice rolls for scatter. One die gives direction while the second specifies distance. If you'll take a look at Fig 10 you'll see what scatter can do. In this case the drop hexes were 4AA6, 321, 3Y7 and 5x2, and the strings of jumpers all ran north from these locations. Leaders and LMGs are shown on top of their chute counters. The 6-2-8s have been removed from theirs for the sake of clarity.

At this point in the proceedings, enemy Defensive Fire takes place. After that, all unbroken units get to shift themselves one hex in any direction and land. This ability to shift is to be prized because landing in a building, forest, or forest-road hex costs a normal MC. Other rules cover Close Combat in the turn of arrival and the procedure followed for units that happen to drift off the map.

For the pyromaniacs we have a new weapon, the Molotov cocktail. At your request, it can be used in an effort to torch buildings as well as vehicles. Except in bulk, it is not an effective weapon. To have any real chance in a Defensive Fire application you need to be in the same hex with your target, and even then all you'll get is a 17% chance of success. That's the same chance a 6-level morale squad has of a successful Close Combat with one of the things. These chances reflect the favorable modifications due to the halftracks being open-topped vehicles.

Because the special rules require the retreat of all partisans into forest hexes on board 5 as soon as five such squads are lost, their initial deployment is close to board 3, but in terrain where they are quite safe. As you might imagine, the variables in this scenario make play balance calls quite difficult, but the German deployment represents my feeling that just sitting there and waiting for it is an excellent way for the German player to lose.

The force in W5 has a comparatively good field of fire, and will be free, since the Germans move first, to try entrenching on turn 1. Such a force is well-placed in the event of a drop either across the town, or to the west. The cavalry arriving on turn 1 will receive the attention of the force in N1, or that in W5, and the two southern halftracks. Prior to the horsemen's arrival, the vehicle in G3 moves down to 4C7, while his partner goes to 4H7. Once the cavalry appear, they are to be attacked by every possible means in an effort to reduce their numbers to the point at which they do not form a major independent threat. Meanwhile, the other halftrack keeps an eye on the woods to the north. Leaving two of the victory condition buildings unoccupied is a temporary measure. Movement of the T4 force depends upon the entry area of the cavalry.

In response to all of this, the snipers have been positioned to try their luck against the squads on hill 522. My ideas about cavalry entry and the airdrop are based upon two observations: that the number of positions around the vital hexes on board 3 that have good fields of fire is limited; and that the German force is small for its assigned task. From this, it seems best to attack from two directions. Thus, the cavalry enters toward the eastern end of the south edge, with the goal of reaching the woods southeast of building M2.
While this is going on the partisans move to the tree line and bring the halftrack under fire. This will normally cause its retreat. 357 is a nice location. If the paratroopers arrive within the first three turns, I'd drop them as indicated earlier, with an eye toward developing pressure from both east and west. A later arrival pretty well eliminates a tidy fight, forcing the drop hexes further east. Once the paratroops have landed, a general assault must follow within three turns. After that, it's a wide-open brawl.

A much happened to this scenario, from start to finish, in terms of the forces involved. One of the special rules, however, did change. Originally, the entry turn of the paratroopers was determined by special rules, but now it is not as revealing in this scenario. For these reasons I've chosen instead to spend time on matters of force composition and strategy.

The German infantry consists of 24 squads, six of which are MG-plants. Among them they carry 14 MGs, a flamethrower, and three demo charges. Leaders are handled in a unique way in this scenario. The German player picks up to ten regular infantry leaders whose total leadership modifiers do not exceed 11. Since the unnamed leaders of the Sl. Campaign Game can be used, I like two 8-8s, two 8-1s, three 9-1s, one 9-2 and two 10-2s. Other nonvehicular ground forces consist of three crews and their AT guns: two 28LS and one 30L. One of the new elements to appear (maybe) in this scenario is what I think of as a Stuka module, but more about that later. Three radios provide access to four 100mm fire missions.

No less than 20 vehicles accompany this band, 10 of which are halftracks of four different types. Four are the unarmoredSdkfz 7s. Of the six SPW251s, three are MG-armed and a fourth has traded its second heavy for a 75mm gun. This vehicle has been added to increase a needed capability is handled considerably by the presence of three heavy trucks. Six of the remaining vehicles provide the main gun capability: a PzKw IVF, three IIIEs, a PzKw 38T, and one assault gun, the reliable STGIIIb. Speed is what the last vehicle gives one. It's a PzS222 (20L) armored car. The lone 8-1 armor leader probably belongs with the F1.

Against this we find arrayed no less than 54 Russian squads: 36-4-7s, and six each of 6-2-8s, 5-3-7s, and 4-3-8s. In terms of support weapons they are not all that badly equipped, having nine MGs and five ATGs. For a Russian force, it's pretty good shape with respect to leaders: no more than eight with a total modifier of seven. I would select two 8-0s, two 8-1s, three 9-1s and a 10-2.

The remainder of the Russian force consists of a dozen AFVs. Seven BTs, BT2s and T26s. Two T28s, a KV1, a KVIIa and the lone T34, a 76A, round out the lot. That rule back in scenario 18 limiting armor movement by dice rolls also applies here.

Two minor rules make their appearance. One concerns being by a squad's marked leader. Obviously, they have to land somewhere, and here is where you learn how to handle the situation. The second permits some previously forbidden acts (e.g., firing a panzeraust from inside a vehicle) at various costs. Airpower, or more specifically, Stukas, provides the biggest part of the new rules. On the other hand, support is available, the owning player rolls a die during the initial Rally Phase of each turn. On a 1, the first time it's rolled, he gets it, subject to a second die roll that determines how much he gets, from one to three aircraft. In this scenario the chances of getting a high number on the second roll are minimal (less than 2%, 4%, and 14%). In almost all cases any air support received must be used during the turn of its appearance, and that appearance cannot be delayed once the die says that it's time for air power. As you might suppose, these rules provide for misses and 11 times in 36, the chance of mistake attack, which in case the German player may well end up blowing away some of his own forces. Close air support is a chaney thing in COI.

Starting fires has always had an appeal to some Sl. players, and in the past they've been forced to rely almost entirely upon flamethrowers. Now, however, things are different. Matches have been issued to all troops so that every unit now has at least a chance to set everything but clear terrain ablaze. Environmental conditions (in six categories, mud-snow through very dry), modified by time-of-year (five categories) adjust the chances. Wind direction and velocity influence the spread of a fire.

There is, at each Rally Phase, a small chance that one of the scenario's two conditions will change. In the ten turn scenario there is a 57% chance that the wind conditions set prior to starting the scenario will remain unchanged. The easiest thing to burn is a wooden building, while the hardest is a woods hex; stone buildings and wheatfields fall in between. Depending upon the wind, the players may need to retreat the other day scenario, wooden buildings go up to 42% of the time, per try. The numbers for a woods hex are 17 to 58%.

These numbers speak to the possibility of using fire as a weapon. I have found its most reliable use to be defensive in character. It can be used to deny territory to an enemy or to block his LOS. There are problems with this, but offensive uses of fire seem too have more. In any event, the potential produces additional problems for the game player.

I'm sure that all of you are aware of those old sayingsthat plans do not survive the first contact with the enemy. As with a lot of catchy slogans, this one tells something less than the total truth. Both players have enough in the way of units to carry on well without the fire. But I would wish to avoid participating in a rather dull brawl. That what you devise will undergo modifications is certain, but that's a poor excuse for not looking ahead.

The first thing to consider is how victory is determined. The possibilities include controlling three boards and ignoring the other two, and holding two boards while keeping two more out of the other players control. Winning with just one board under your control is a bad bloodbath. In my experience, barring a rout of one side, most games are either draws or go to the last player controlling two boards. In this connection, control of hill 498 and the region west of it on board 3 will not insure victory, but it is hard to win without having it. From this area it is possible to interdict north-south movement across board edges.

The German advantage in mobility, while the disadvantage lies in numbers. For the Russians, things are reversed. Because his superior mobility will give the German player at least a chance to hold the initiative during the opening turns, let's first consider what he might try.

The nature of the terrain will make German chances for control of board 3 quite poor should the Russian player make a major effort on board 4. German hopes for a victory do require that such an effort fail to reach board 1. Thus, a German player moving first is forced to dispatch troops into board 3 with an eye toward controlling east-west passage across it. Control of hill 534 in the northern sector is essential. The 50L AT Gun, supported by squads, at least one MMG, and a radio-equipped leader dug in in hexes such as 36-30-3K77 prevents any significant investment in the area. While none of this will get there in turn 1, the potential must be established by how forces enter. They can always be diverted elsewhere. The bulk of the German forces should be divided between Q10 and Y10, with tanks leading the advance. True, they are slower, but the German halftracks are essential to success and ought not to be risked for a few extra hexes.

Because of the terrain, the favorite Russian entry is along the edge of board 4. If that course is chosen when the Russians move second, the first priority is to get the Russian major force on board 4. The technique of shifting leaders back and forth, during the Advance Phase, between two stacks is useful. Congested terrain with good cover is of greater
THE GENERAL

value to the Russians, and board 3 offers this.
Russian cavalry is well-equipped to go after
building 3M2 and/or the woods around it, while the
main force drives across the center of board 4. If the
Russian player is lucky with the dice, some infantry-
transporting armor can head toward hill 498 at the
southern end of board 3.
No such adventure is reasonable when the
Russians move first. If board 4 is the entry area, the
armor needs to be kept close. Against such an
opening the German player will be able to occupy
the village in the center of board 3, but should
probably avoid the buildings and trees along the
seam between boards 3 and 4. In the long run, the
restricted fields of fire tell against the German
weakness in infantry.
Tactically each side has the aim of reducing the
other side's mobility. For this reason it is impracti-
cal, over the long run, for either side to separate its
armor from its infantry. The AFVs weaponry and
the terrain are such that infantry support is required if
the AFVs are to survive.
With an opening such as the one above, the
battle will be concentrated in the northern portion
of the playing area. A Russian entry on both sides of
the eastern boundary between boards 4 and 5
seems to produce a much more mobile situation.
Here the Russian player seems to isolate the
southern boards by using armor on board 5 coupled
with an infantry advance across 4 in the area of the
large wheatfield. I feel this to be a risky opening, but
it has proven to be successful when the Germans get
himself tangled up with conflicting efforts and splits
its own force.
This scenario is the second to have a board
change during playtesting. Originally, a second
board 1 was to be used in the southwest. Its removal
restricts the German advantage of greater mobility.
In a further move to strengthen the Russians they
lost a T35 and received the KV's in its place, along
with the six second class infantry squads. The
biggest change, however, came in connection with
the limits on the total leadership modifier. Originally
it was set by dice rolls, using three dice for the
Germans and two for the Russians. If ever the dice
declared a game, it was under that special rule.
Some Final Remarks
I consider this system to be the major event in
tactical games. The system has withstood the COI
additions and changes with considerable grace,
demonstrating the caliber of the basic game
mechanics. Twenty scenarios displaying consider-
able variety are, of course, a major aspect of the
game, but the open-ended aspect of the system and its
components are a real plus. And just think,
there's more on the way.

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THE ASYLUM, No. 2

THE PICNIC

By Allan Moon

You've turned a Sunday at the in-laws into a
gaming session with your buddy, by covering it with
a day in the country with the wives. You are such a
cheerful man. Your smug reflection almost cracks the
rear-view mirror.
"We shouldn't have left the kids with Dad and
Mom", says you, "we could have brought them along."
"They'll be fine", you reassure her, "your folks
love them, they're never any trouble."
"Well, what about my hay fever?", she whines.
"You brought your pills, didn't you?"
"Yes." You speak doubtfully, but gives up the fight.
Your only fears, wind and rain, are gone too, as
the sun and sky are motionlessly clear. You can
smell victory in the air. You find a spot near the
Prezels. The wives begin to sunbathe and lay there
half asleep. You break out the game.
Branches hang over you, looking on expectantly.
The lake is as glassy as your eyes. The grass limp
to your desires. Even the ants have chosen another
field of battle. The ground is flat and the set-up
proceeds without a hitch. Just have to be careful of
the green units.
It's all set. But, there's no die. Not in the box.
Didn't fall in the grass. OH NO! No randomizer
chits either.
You wake up the wife. Your die? She doesn't
know. "What would I be doing in your silly games?"
she asks. "Maybe the children took it", she suggests.
"Why do you let them touch my games?", you
ask horrified, as you shake her violently.
"Well, can't you use something else?"
"What? Cut off fingers and label them one
through six? Find six different size rocks? Use sugar
cubes? A sugar cube; that's it. You have one, don't
you?"
"Yes, you know I do", she says in a meek voice,
"but you can't have it."
"I need it."
"It's for my coffee. I hate coffee without sugar."
You plead, she refuses. You beg on one knee, she
cries. You yell, she slaps you. You cry, she gives you
the cube, and runs off towards the lake.
Unconcerned by her flight, you begin to dot the
cube. It is a delicate operation. Your buddy claims
you put the "one" on the slightly crumbled side. A
chronic complainer. The game begins.
Screams are heard off in the distance, from the
direction of the lake. Obvious, you begin the
advance on the enemy positions. His flanks look
weak. The cube has turned out to be lucky for you.
How sweet it is!
There is a lot of commotion down by the lake.
Lots of people milling around. A couple of guys
with long poles and nets. Meanwhile, you have
advanced within range of the enemy capital, your
objective. But you are overextended and failure to
take the city could mean the game. The critical die
roll; the cube breaks in half.
"It's a one!"
"It's a six!"
The picnic is over.

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Aside from my bitter disagreement with the author’s caustic remarks reference WAR AT SEA being a “horribly imbalanced parent game” and U-boats being only of “nuisance value,” the following makes interesting reading whose timeliness cannot be denied in light of the recent publication of the WAR AT SEA Variant counters which he discusses. All of the counters alluded to in the following article are either in the respective games or available from our Parts Dept. for $2.00 plus usual postage charges.

One of the most fast-moving, playable, and aesthetically pleasing games to come out in recent years for WWll enthusiasts has been VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC, a much improved evolution of WAR AT SEA, a good game in its own right, though much less realistic. Richard Hamblen is to be (and duly deserves) congratulated on making such an enjoyable contribution to the realm of playable wargames, and the crowning achievement, published in the Nov. 1977 GENERAL was the excellent VICTORY AT SEA, a combination which saved the horribly imbalanced parent game from my discard shelf and reversed my opinion of one of my favorite games to the top of the rather cumbersome heap, which covers a footlocker full of them going back to 1964. However, this game’s very appeal led me into considerable research which has produced some minor corrections and suggestions which will enhance the realism without affecting the playability.

LET’S START THIS THING OUT RIGHT

In the full scale VICTORY AT SEA, having done away with the silly rules about having to roll a die to see if American or Russian forces can play this turn, and utilizing the extra forces available, including American obsolete battleships diverted from the Pacific (where they are less useful), the Germans no longer have the lopsided advantage of the original W.A.S. This will be even more true if the board extension with the Black Sea is being used, since this is (realistically) an extremely difficult place to deny the Allies an extra point per turn. Therefore, include the only two German capital ships which are omitted from W.A.S., the Schlesien and the Schleswig-Holstein. These two venerable old tubs were already obsolete when the High Seas Fleet sailed for the battle of Jutland in 1916, though they were only eight years old at the time. They were about the tonnage of the pocket battleships, and also mounted eleven-inch guns, two forward and two aft, but these were older, less powerful, variety, with less than half the range and fired at only 60% of the rate. They were also slow, the only slower capital ships in the war being the Lemnos and Kilkis, American pre-dreadnoughts which had been purchased by the Greeks and were sunk in harbor anyway. Therefore, give these ships the attack factors of 1-1-3. This will insure that they will be useful for little more than Baltic patrols, and this is precisely how they were used. This can be a quaint piece of nostalgia, because the Schleswig-Holstein fired the first shots of WWll at Danzig harbor on Sept. 1, 1939, and this is when the German fleet was at its peak. It is only through picking up that free Baltic point and allowing your better ships to sail in greater strength against defended waters.

In August, knowing that conflict was imminent, Hitler sent the pocket battleship Deutschland to sea in order to get the jump on allied shipping. In V.A.S., when the German surface raiders are placed (in any sea area, after all else is set up), also place the Deutschland in any sea area where German forces are based. This will prevent the loss of prestige if so named a ship were sunk, Hitler ordered her name changed to Lutzow in mid-voyage.

ABOUT THAT GERMAN ATTACK BONUS

While there is, perhaps, something to legendary German efficiency with arms and armament, the attack bonus blows some of their ships out of proportion (and many an Allied ship from the water!). While this bonus is justified on the Bismarck-class battleships, it is probably not on the others. The German high command itself ordered the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau not to engage any enemy capital ships, even obsolete ones. Together they faced poorly against the old Benyon in the Norwegian campaign, and the only other clash with a battleship, against Duke of York in the Battle of North Cape, was the end of Scharnhorst. The pocket battleships were even more vulnerable, losing the only engagement with a ship powerful enough to reach it. When the German battleship River Plate in game terms would have been allies 1-1-7 vs. axis 2-2-5 with attack bonus. Actually, the fight was nearer even. On the other hand, the argument for the attack bonus is that without it the Germans will seldom have situations on the high seas where they can risk their fleet. While this was already the case, it makes the game much less interesting, so this compromise is offered. Don’t give the attack bonus to the Schleswig-Holstein and the Schlesien because their armament was inferior, older guns. Also, don’t give the attack bonus to the surface attack factor of the Graf Zeppelin, which, like any aircraft carrier in the game, receives its strength from a proliferation of small-caliber weapons and had no big guns in its design.

CAN QUEEN ELIZABETH OUTCLASS JULIUS CAESAR?

The answer to this one should be an emphatic yes. The Andrea Doria and Conte di Cavour class Italian battleships (the latter including Giulio Cesare) were built during WWll to counter the Austrian Viribus Unitus battleships, and it was probably much the Italians’ good fortune they never met. Like many of the period, these ships were extensively refit and rebuilt during the period between the wars, but in every respect except speed were considerably inferior to the Queen Elizabeth class, five other famous German built in the game as 4-4-4. These British relics of Jutland had been built from the deck up new, and like other ships in the game which mount eight fifteen-inch guns (e.g. Hood, Royal Oak, Richelieu, Bismarck), has a gunnery factor of four. The obsolete Italian battleships represented as 4-3-5, having had their center turret removed in rebuilding, mounted a triple and a superfiring double turret both fore and aft, for ten 12.6 inch guns. This is far more comparable to a couple of the ships added to the combination game, the obsolete U.S. Arkansas, mounting twelve 12-inch guns, or the French Lorraine, mounting ten 3.4 inch guns. Since both of these ships are assigned a gunnery factor of four, it seems reasonable to represent these four old Italian battleships as 3-3-5. Although there are any number of places you can logically argue for a factor here or there, the purpose of this article is not to nitpick, but in order for the British to cover their area of responsibility all the way from Iceland to Ceylon is a big order, and the only way they were able to manage at all was to hold the Italians in check with qualitatively superior forces. In any event, if you are using the expanded order of battle for the Italians suggested in the same article as the addition of the Black Sea Fleet for the Russians and the Greek navy, they get three of the four lost points back.

One thing is certain—even though the Italians had a sizable navy with some of the best battleships at the start of the war, they never really seized the initiative in the Mediterranean. Thus the way the British (and for a short while the Germans) did. Therefore, in the combined game have the Italians move with the Japanese patrolling forces, before the allies, with only the Germans getting the drop on the British. This might make the Italian more realistic to risk them fleet.

THE ERRATICALLY TIMED TURN RECORD TABLE

Never in one of Avalon Hill’s games can I ever recall a more time obfuscating turn sequence. Since turn ending dates are given for V.I.P, and the surprise attack that starts that game is the end of turn three (unless using the optional Japanese early attack rules from the Nov. 1977 GENERAL, which are given in this supplement) we have that we dates for the fourth through tenth turns of the combined game, as well as the ending date for turn three. These turns vary from four to seven months. Therefore, using four to seven month intervals, we should be able to work backwards and come up with the time reference frame to which we history lovers are so hopelessly addicted, and which was so baldly omitted from W.A.S. Since the game begins with Norway and Denmark already in German hands and ready to be used for a jump off into the Barents Sea and beyond, the game must begin later than April 1940. Since France is not available as a German port on turn one, we can assume that turn one begins earlier than August 1940. This narrows it down fairly well. Since the Italians are in it from the start we can also assume it goes past early June, too. The absence of the French fleet on this turn is no problem, since the political turmoil of impending capitulation would have kept their navy off balance. Since the Russians are available on turn three and not before, we know that summer 1941 must occur during turn three (which ends in December 1941). Hence, the following track:

Turn 1. May 1940/Dec. 1940
2. Dec. 1940/June 1941
4. Dec. 1941/May 1942
5. May 1942/Sept. 1942
8. June 1943/Jan. 1944
9. Dec. 1944/May 1945
10. May 1945/Oct. 1944

WHEN TO PULL A SNEAK ON A GREEK

In the aforementioned article in the GENERAL (Vol. 15, No. 3) which added the sea area of the Black Sea and beefed up the Italian Fleet, the Greeks’ small navy appeared, two 2-2-3 American pre-dreadnoughts, and were made available for turn four. The article stated that since the Germans attacked Greece and Crete on turn three with considerable air support, it was mandatory for the Greeks to place their air strike in the Mediterranean that turn. A quick reference to the preceding chart shows a conflict between

THE GENERAL

By Kurt Kimball
THE GENERAL

analysis and that much esteemed author’s. Even in
accepting placing this mandatory air strike south
in the same turn as the jump off against the Soviet
Union (the Barbarossa campaign was delayed by
the Balkan campaign, remember?), to stretch turn three
to cover the attack on Greece (Kikis and Lemnos
were sunk in April) and Pearl Harbor both would
seem to be a bit hasty. For example, this where
the average turn length is just over five
months. Also, the sinking of the Greek fleet in
battle predated the cruise of the Bismarck
and Prinz Eugen (which become available on turn two)
by about a month. Since the entrance of the
Bismarck and Prinz Eugen in turn two were com-
parable to the attack on Crete, and since both these
events fall neatly into turn two on the preceding
time record track, try the following rules for use of
the Greek fleet in the Mediterranean:
The Greek fleet must remain in harbor on turns
one and two. On turn two, to symbolize the massive
air attacks that were made in conjunction with the
Balkan campaign, the Germans must place their air
strike in the Mediterranean, and they receive the
attack bonus for their air strikes on turn two only
(on turn one they were too involved in the Battle of
Britain, and turn three, they were caught up with the
attack on Crete, and since both these
events fall neatly into turn two on the preceding

with one example of German warships doing so in
February of 1942. The Scharnhorst and the
Gneisenau, back from one of their famous raids (in
which they avoided combat with anything larger
than a cruiser), and the Prinz Eugen, awaiting
new assignment since parting ways with the
Bismarck, were all based at Brest, at the tip of the
Brittany peninsula, and they attempted to enter the
Atlantic (an option available to them in the game).
They were ordered to return to Germany by the
most direct route, and for that ordre all were
equipped with considerable additional A.A.
ammunition. They came under heavy air attack, as could
outnumbered, and the British normally
receive, and the ships are attacked by these air strikes
before (and may be attacked additionally by)
air strikes from carriers in the area they are
attempting to enter. Disabled ships still arrive in the
area they attempted to enter, but must then put into
harbor before any combat of any type is resolved in
that area. If attempting to enter the South Atlantic,
disabled ships go to France, not Neutral. If France is
not an active port, they must return to Germany.

CLEAR THE HARBOR, HANS,
I'M BRINGING HER IN
ON ONE BALLAST TANK

As mentioned early in this article, the combined
game of Victory at Sea has an overall unfavorable
advantage on the German player, mainly, which
is aggravated by such things as the easy point
for the Black Sea, and even more so making the
Italians move before the British. Here is an optional
rule that is unnecessary but quite amusing, which
can be incorporated with such things as the easy point
for the Black Sea, and even more so making the
Italians move before the British. Here is an optional
rule that is unnecessary but quite amusing, which
can be incorporated with. In the ASW game, in the areas in which I disagree with the
factoring of warships I refer the reader to my
primary source materials, Fighting Ships of World
War II by J.N. Westwood (Follett Publishing,
1975), and The Encyclopedia of the World’s

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result in considerable savings for you.

However, for my fellow gamers frustrated with coming
to the end of turn eight of VITP (turn ten of VAS)
and seeing the battle results in which you often
get to use kamikaze attacks and the giant carrier
Shimono (1-9-5, converted sister to Yamato and
Musashi) try this last desperate gamble before
committing hari-kari:

If the Japanese player is losing at the end of the
turn ending on October 4, 1944, he may still obtain a
draw by holding the Japanese Islands only in the
optional turn, regardless of the score. Kamikaze rules,
of course, are in effect. If the Japanese player is ahead
in October of 1944, then only the Japanese Islands
count for points, and they count for either side. In
either case, on turn 9 of VITP (turn 11 of VAS)
the Americans must control every sea area on the
VITP board to win. If the kamikaze option is used
for VAS the WAS score is unchanged by the
additional turn, although allied forces may be
transferred from that game to VITP by the usual
methods (basing to Pearl Harbor from N. Atlantic
or Caribbean, or to Ceylon from Cape of Good
Hope or Mediterranean at the end of turn ten, or
patrolling from Cape of Good Hope or the
Mediterranean into Bay of Bengal starting turn
three, etc.) In such a case ships may be transferred
unless the allies have won WAS.

TAKE THAT, ANGLO-
IMPERIALISTS

Having just tried the first incorporation of all the
rules above with the Greeks, Russian Black Sea
fleet, German WWI leftovers, and no disablement
of U-boats, the results after ten turns was a German
victory by three points, and a Japanese victory by
one point, in which the Japanese were twelve points
ahead at the end of nine, meaning a defense of the
home islands would just win it. In the optional
kamikaze turn the arrival of four land-based air
units lost on turn nine took out four big American
carriers, giving Shimano and friends enough air
power to hold the islands one more turn to insure
victory. Ah, if only all games could be so closely
balanced. Of course with U-boats being disabled on
a five roll that side of the picture would have
probably swung about an equal length the other
way. I think that rule just evened out with the Black
Sea points (where the Italians never managed
to venture.

In all an enjoyable game made more
enjoyable, and my hat will be forever off to the
honored Mr. Hamblen for creating this gem, and
doubly so for his excellent graphics of the two
graphs. The two graphs are a very welcome addition
to my research files, providing me with
a record of the warship game, in the areas in which I disagree with the
factoring of warships I refer the reader to my
primary source materials, Fighting Ships of World
War II by J.N. Westwood (Follett Publishing,
1975), and The Encyclopedia of the World’s
Situation S-7, El Al
(and what the Israelis can do about it)

By Richard Boughton

The other day a friend of mine came over to play THE ARAB ISRAELI WARS. It was decided that he would play the Israeli side and it was agreed that I would select the situation to be played. I suggested Situation S-7, El Al. My friend began to show immediate signs of discomfort—shifting nervously back and forth in his chair, small beads of sweat appearing on his forehead. It was easy for me to sympathize with his reaction, as I had played this particular situation once before, solitaire, and I knew that the Israelis, in situations S-7, are up against a formidable task. The game turned out a Syrian substantial victory which, I suppose, might have been predicted, though one must, perhaps, take into account the lethargy and/or the hint of a defeatist attitude with which my friend approached the situation.

I got to thinking about the situation in terms of what the Israelis could do to produce a more favorable effect and I finally sat down and played the situation several more times, implementing different strategies for the Israelis. I was surprised to find one strategy that altered the course of the situation significantly.

First, however, a word on the deployment of the Syrians, and how that deployment, in my opinion, tends to direct the actions of the Israeli opponent.

The Syrians are allotted three improved positions and I have found that an effective placement of these are on hexes Q-8, O-4, and O-3, where they will block the northern and southern roads on board D and where the units in them will benefit not only from the +2 die roll effect of the improved positions but also, in most cases, from the die roll additions for hull down positioning. Manning the I.P.'s should be the infantry, the anti-tank, and the mortar units, and they should remain there throughout the game. Although they will eventually be destroyed, they will also slow the Israeli assault to some degree, take some of the Israeli fire off the Syrian armor force, and generally, be a thorn in the side of the Israeli player. The Syrian armored force itself can be set up in hull defilade positions with good fields of fire (assuming they started the game with four or five T-55's in reserve) and the Bdrm-Is function well behind crest hex-sides.

The popular (and enticing) practice of an armored assault is not to bother with infantry units in prepared positions, if at all possible—to simply by-pass the improved positions and engage the enemy armor in dazzling shoot-run-shoot style. This is what I mean when I say that the Syrian position tends to direct the Israelis actions. It seems to be extremely enticing from the Israeli point of view, to move right up the middle of board D, forget about the improved positions, (let the armored infantry take care of them) defeat the T55's with your superior tanks and, at least tank for tank, fire power, and then skip onto board C and off the east edge for three points a unit.

But the Syrian player could wish for nothing better. He's got 19 T-55s, 3 Bdrm-Is (which need only to attack a couple of times each to prove very costly against the Israeli effort) and the movement up the center for the Israelis proves to be slow, considering the many ridge hex-sides, the slopes, and the threat of opportunity fire. Not only are the Syrians able to put down effective firepower, but the rows of ridge, crest, and slope hexes allow for good depth in their position. Adding to their problems in this situation is the lack of Israeli off-board artillery or air support. If the Israeli takes the center course—Voila!, the trap is sprung and they have made a fatal mistake.

The next obvious course of action for the Israeli player is to take the north and south roads and knock over the improved positions. Surprisingly, for me, I found this strategy to be much more effective. If the T-55s attempt to move up and defend the I.P.s they quickly become sitting ducks for the superior Israeli armor, which is neatly gathered together on and near the roads. Once the Israeli approaches the improved positions he can knock out or disperse the anti-tank guns with his armored infantry units, thus clearing the way for a rather easy overrun of the I.P.s by the tank units.

The improved positions, when the Israeli implements this strategy, become priority targets, along with the Bdrm-Is, which are always priority targets. Once the I.P.s are out of the way the Israeli player can begin to look ahead to board C.

If the Syrians committed their tanks for the direct defense of the improved positions then, after those positions fall, the Israeli player will probably find very little left to hinder his progress onto and off of board C. But if the Syrians laid back, then that's another thing altogether. This is where the fight will truly begin for the Israeli armored force as he is faced with penetrating a layered defense consisting of T-55s and, if the Syrian player was not careless, two or three Bdrm-Is. It is unlikely, in this case, that many (if any) of the Israeli tanks will ever get to board C, but it will still be a close and heated armor fight, and the Israelis have a good chance of pulling out a victory. So do the Syrians for that matter. Thus, the situation becomes quite exciting. I have played the situation twice, solitaire, using this strategy for the Israelis (and laying back, sacrificing the units in the I.P.s for some time with the Syrians) and the results have been two Israeli victories—one "marginal" and one "minor". The victories are nothing spectacular (in terms of the degrees of victory possible) but they are far more acceptable than the catastrophic nature, in this particular situation, of the 'down the center of the board' course.

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 301-254-5300. Ask for Clo Newton or ext. 34 and 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 problem with variants based on variations is that they presuppose the reader is familiar with the original variant. This one makes reference to such new features as neodogs, breachers, and heavy tanks which first appeared in Richard Hambler's variant "Saga of the Bug War" in Vol. 11, No. 6. The latter is no longer available but for those late subscribers in love with STARSHIP TROOPERS who feel they must have it, our customer service dept. will provide xerox copies of the article for $2.00. Address your inquiries to Ron LaPorte, c/o Customer Service.

After events related to Scenario 4, the Terrans, believing all of the Arachnid garrisons destroyed, resumed the offensive against the Arachnid home planets. However, unknown to the Terrans, or even the Skinnies who negotiated the peace treaty, the large numbers of Skinnies to rejoin them. Soon all that was needed was that all Humanoid planets were locked in civil war, which forced the Terrans to dispatch platoons to various planets. This scenario portrays a Terran relief force landing on the capital home planet where the Master Brain who started the uprising is located.

Rules Additions for Skinny Civil War
1. Neodogs have an attack strength of 2 against workers.
2. K-9 Corps (Neodog units) were actually attached to platoons and as such were separate units. Therefore Neodogs will not land with marauders but will drop with these units, 3-3-10. They may drop with 9 man sticks or alone. If a specified Neodog's man counterpart is WIA or KIA it may not return to its own unit but may still be spotted workers. If a man's Neodog is killed a die is rolled. If it is 6 it is rolled. He may not attack the rest of the scenario and must go to the retrieval area, any other result and he may still function as a marauder.
3. After the devastating effect of the M.1 on the loosely organized Skinny infantry, Humanoid Scientists went to work and developed an armor piercing grenade which proved to be very effective against the M.1 armored suits. At the start of the scenario each Skinny unit carries one armor piercing grenade. Warriors may exchange these in the same manner as Terran SW & E. Each Warrior may carry two grenades at a time. A Warrior may fire a grenade during either the ranged weapon phase or close combat phase or one each phase. Each grenade has an attack strength of 6. This attack strength is used instead of the usual attack strength and the range is the same hex as the firing unit. The target receives no benefit for terrain. Grenades can be combined with each other in attacks, but with a -3 penalty. Grenades and Engineer Squads are not affected by grenades. If a Warrior is eliminated, a die is rolled on the Terran SW & E chart, using the WIA table. If he does not lose his grenades the unit is invented and remains that way for the rest of the game, even if it had no grenades at the time of elimination. Terrans and Arachnids may not use Skinny grenades.

Strongpoints are supply depots as well as fortifications. Warriors who move into or through strongpoints are immediately carrying two grenades no matter how many they had before they entered the hex. Workers may act as "grenade carriers." Each worker may carry one grenade per strongpoint visit to any Warrior. They may not use the grenade themselves or carry more than 1 at a time. Humanoid workers lose any carried grenades when eliminated.

Humanoid players keep track of number of grenades carried on a piece of scratch paper in a similar manner to the Terran control sheet.

AVAILABLE FORCES:
Terran:
Force A: 2 commanders, 14 marauders, 2 scouts, 4 DAP, 2 DAR, 4 HE launchers, 1 K-9 Corps unit, 1 Neodog, Pro-Terran Skinny: 10 Warriors, 4 Heavy Weapon-Beams, 2 Heavy Weapon-Missiles, 6 strongpoints, 2 workers.
Force B: 4 commanders, 28 marauders, 4 scouts, 1 Sp Talon, 8 DAP, 6 DAR, 4 HNG, 4 I.D, 3 CE, 3 air cars, 9 HE demos, 2 NUC demos, 3 K-9 Corps units, 1 Neodogs, 4HE launchers, 3 NUC launchers, 1 Borer, 1 Heavy Tank, 1 Artillery, 1 Breacher
Arachnid:
35 Warriors, 35 workers, 7 Heavy Weapon-Beams, 8 engineers, 1 repair engineer; Pro-Arachnid Skinny: 15 Warriors (Nos. 11-25), 7 HNG Weapon-Beams (Nos. A-G), 4 Heavy Weapon-Missiles (Nos. A-D), 8 strongpoints (Nos. 7-14), 9 workers (Nos. 3-11), 2 COMMS, 8 decloys, 25 Demo points.

SETUP: Terran Force B enter any turn after turn 3. CEs and Heavy Weapon land by soft landing. Terran Force A and Pro-Terran Skinny set up second, move first. Pro-Arachnid Forces set up first, move second.

GAME LENGTH: 15 turns.

SPECIAL RULES:
1. Pro-Arachnids and Pro-Terrans can stack and attack together regardless of race. Pro-Terran Humanoids may not be inverted.
2. There are two Arachnid complexes. one was largely destroyed by Skinnies and Terrans and has only 3 functional brain cells. One has full complement of Warriors, Workers, and Heavy Weapon-Beam, another has only Warriors and Workers, and the third has only a Heavy Weapon Beam. The 3 functional brain cells must be adjacent in the complex and other tunnel systems in the complex cannot have more than 4 hexes of uncollapsed tunnels in a row.
3. The repair engineer is a mutation produced by the Queen before she died. During the course of the game the repair engineer can connect the damaged tunnel systems to the others in the same complex as part of their tunnel systems. The units in the complex must still return to their respective cells upon entering the tunnel system however. The repair engineer may build 5 tunnels and make a breach or repair 2 tunnel segments. Only the repair engineer can connect the tunnel systems and only to the damaged complex. Other engineers must still remain in their respective tunnel systems.
4. C.E.s and Heavy Weapons Brigade must be retrieved before the end of the game.

VICTORY CONDITIONS:
Terran: Accumulate more victory points than the Arachnid Player at the end of the game. Victory points are awarded as follows:

Arachnid player receives points for the following:

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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breacher</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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These binders are ruggedly constructed in attractive red leather finish vinyl, with gold embossed logos of the THE GENERAL and the Avalon Hill Game Company located on the front and spine. Each binder measures 9" x 12" x 1/8" and holds twelve (12) copies of THE GENERAL. Spring-steel retaining wires hold the issues firmly in place, yet your magazines are not damaged in any way, and can easily be removed from the binder at your desire. The binders are available from Avalon Hill for $5 plus 75¢ postage. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR PANZERLEADER, 1940

by Ronald A. Bell

WE WANT YOU . . .

to write for the GENERAL. If you can string words together into an interesting article format on any Avalon Hill wargame, there’s a good chance you’re just the person we’re looking for. You can supplement our literary staff with articles of strategy, game analyses, Series Replays, commentaries, new scenarios, or variants.

All articles should be type-written, double-spaced and accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing first class postage. Otherwise, rejected articles will not be returned. Articles should be supplemented with illustrations and/or charts whenever possible.

Commencing with the January, 1977 issue the GENERAL will pay $5 per running 10" column of edited text. Letters to the Editor are not subject to remuneration. Alternatively, authors may elect to take their remuneration in the form of Avalon Hill products, paid at the rate of 150% of the cash remuneration. Note that illustrations and decorative type faces are not subject to remuneration except by prior agreement with the editor. It is generally expected that articles will be accompanied by sufficient illustrations as a requirement for acceptance.

At the end of each calendar year an EDITOR’S CHOICE article will be selected. The author of this article will receive a $100 honorarium and a lifetime subscription to the GENERAL.

MAGNETIC GAMES

Now you can convert your favorite game for vertical display or secure in-play storage with magnetic tape, unmounted boards and just an hour of your time. All you’ll need is a metal surface and an unmounted gameboard. We supply the magnetic strips with self-sticking adhesive already applied. You just cut the 1/4" x 1' strips into half inch squares and apply them to the unit counters which came with your game. The result is a 1/8" thick counter which will stack six high even when the mapboard is mounted in a vertical position for display purposes. Never worry about that pile moving being jostled again between turns.

Naturally this magnetic treatment will be less valuable for counters with two-sided printing, but that still leaves them with a multitude of uses. NOTE: it will be necessary to be sure that the top portion of all unit counters are uniformly applied to the top half of the magnetic strips. Otherwise, the polarity may be reversed and the counters will actually repel each other rather than attract. Therefore, it is wise to mark the back of the magnetic strips uniformly across the top so as to be sure to apply the top half of the counter to the top half of the magnetic strip.

Magnetic strips are available from Avalon Hill for 90c a foot or $7.50 for ten feet. Unmounted mapboards are available upon request for $8.00 apiece. Usual postage charges apply, as does the 5% state sales tax for Maryland residents.

Variants, such as Panzerleader, 1940 by Ramiro Cruz (THE GENERAL Vol. 15, No. 2), are an invaluable and inexpensive aid in renovating and expanding what are proven game systems. Coupling this with Mr. Cruz’s previous variant, Panzerblitz, 1941 (THE GENERAL Vol. 13, No. 3), gives the gamer the ability to tactically simulate almost any situation from 1939 to 1945. The more recent of the two, Panzerleader, 1940, gives us some very good background and organizational material and for an outlay of $2.50 by mail, we get a full set of counters as well. It also includes a few special rules to “backdate” the game system to 1940 standards. But there are a few flaws which I’d like to correct and a few possible additions that I would like to make.

First, a few corrections are in line with regard to the counter sheet.

The PzKw Mk. I should not be an “A” class weapon, but rather an “I” as indicated in the article. It was armed with only two machine guns.

The PzKw Mk. III counter should be the Ausfahrtung D type with a 37mm gun. This is the same weapon as in the 37mm AT gun piece, except that there are five tanks but only four AT guns. This could account for the difference in offensive value, 6 vs. 5, but this does not hold up if we compare the British tanks with their 2/1.2 AT gun. Both had the same weapon and there were five tanks and four AT guns in each piece, just as in the German pieces, but there seems to be no difference in strength. Since the two pounder was a marginally better gun, I suggest revaluing the PzKw Mk. III pieces to 5 vs. 6 to bring them in line with the PzKw. III Aus. D pieces of Panzerblitz, 1941.

During the course of this struggle the French employed their obsolete WW I 1975mm field gun in an AT role, albeit with limited success. Included in the counter sort are two pieces, one a 1975mm howitzer and one a 55mm AT gun. As far as I have been able to discern, the French never had a designed AT gun larger than 47mm. What Mr. Cruz must be referring to is the 1975 1897 field gun in an AT role. This would not appear to be the best approach to follow in this situation.

Finally, besides being one short in the counter mix, the Panhard 178 armoured car should be an “A” class weapon as it was armed with the 25mm gun as the 25mm AT gun piece. These armoured cars were so respected by the Germans that they retained all of them and used them as the Pz. Spähwagen P 204 (f). (Ed. Note—Not entirely true. Many Panhard 178s were armed with two coaxial MGs instead of the 25mm gun. It is indeed possible that the Panhards in Mr. Cruz’s scenarios were so equipped.)

There are three changes that can be made to the already existing Panzerleader variants and that is in 1940 variant that would better reflect the tactical situation in 1940. 1. When infantry CAT an armoured unit’s they receive no die roll modifier. The presence of engineers in a given combat still raises the odds by one column, but no CAT die roll modifier is used. If there are any other types of units present in the target hex the attacker receives the CAT modifier but only against the non-armoured units. All other CAT rules apply.

Due to the virtual non-existence of man-carried anti-tank weapons and the lack of anti-tank training, infantry was severely limited in its ability to affect armoured targets. It takes a hardy, and well-trained man to run up to a 20 ton, armoured, lead striking, leviathan even when he has an effective weapon, never mind when he does not. 2. When an armoured unit that is unaccompanied by infantry or engineers is close assaulted in a woods or town hex, from a woods, town, or slope hex, the armoured unit does not get the +1 terrain modification to the die roll.

Terrain modifiers to die rolls are a reflection of the greater amount of protection offered by “cover”. This “cover”, however, can work against an armoured unit. It was common practice not to send tanks into a town until it had been cleared because one man with a grenade behind a wall can immobilize a tank. It is easier to be brave with a foot of brick or a tree between you and the enemy knowing that he cannot see you. Rumble makes matters worse, as the Germans found in Stalingrad, and the Allies at Cassino. Buildings and trees also limit the field of fire of a weapon, reducing its effectiveness. With the presence of unsuppressed spencers, vehicular units must operate “buttoned up”, either constricting visibility and tactical flexibility. This rule change would reflect this situation.

3. Armoured units may over-run all non-armoured type units in woods, slope, and woods, and slope, hexes, but may be subject to Special Opportunity Fire. This fire may also be carried out at the moment the over-running unit first comes adjacent to the target hex, provided the target unit has not already fired. This does not prohibit the target unit, or other units, from using regular Opportunity Fire instead. In this type of over-run the attacking unit’s do not receive any odd’s column shift or die roll modifier. All other aspects of over-run combat and terrain modifiers remain the same.

This rule reflects the helplessness of “F” class weapons and artillery and some of the lesser calibre anti-tank guns. There were many incidents of German or French tanks just driving through infantry or gun units because there was literally nothing to stop them. The close terrain would keep the attacking vehicles from having any particular advantage, but the “F” class weapons and light AT guns just could not stop them.

As is, the Panzerleader, 1940 variant is a good expansion, but it does not quite reflect the material and psychological differences between 1944 and 1940. The inclusion of the three changes that I suggest will better simulate these differences and will allow a whole new range of tactics to be employed. The engagements will be much more fluid with the infantry playing a relatively small role in any action, as was true in 1940.

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THE GENERAL

A.H. Philosophy . . . Continued from Pg. 2, Col. 3

the office, I confessed everything and offered to resign. Instead of canning me, Avalon Hill looked deep into its corporate soul and came to this magnanimous decision. First, the public must be protected! THE RISING SUN game has been indefinitely postponed and will not be published until the monster has been thoroughly tamed. (The game is now being returned to Larry Pinsky for revision which may yet succeed where I have failed.) Second, instead of standing in the unemployment lines, I am now enthusiastically working on an extremely well-designed prototype which will bear the auspicious title WAR AND PEACE.

This game which was designed by Mark McLaughlin is an extremely playable design which simulates all of the major campaigns of the Napoleonic Wars from 1800 to 1815. There will be a total of 10 scenarios encompassing the entire campaign: Austerlitz, Jena, Eylau, Borodino, Leipzig, and of course, Waterloo. In addition, there is a Grand Campaign game (suitable for from two to six players) that recreates the entire awesome struggle which was named after history's greatest general, Napoleon Bonaparte. . . . Frank Davis.

That's probably a trifle overstated. The game was no more "unplayable" than several already on the market, but turning now from TRUE CONFESSIONS, let's look at the bright side. Despite the above horror stories, we will not appear at ORIGINS V this June with an empty vendor's stand. We do have some excellent games in the works and expect to have at least a few of them done by ORIGINS thoroughly tested.

THE LONGEST DAY heads the list of hopefuls and we feel that it, our first attempt at the so-called "monster game", will set a standard for accuracy and detail by which all others are measured. And unlike many monsters, it should be quite playable if anything with 2,000 counters can be considered playable. Designer Randy Reed, who first optimistically hinted delivery for ORIGINS 78, now has his sights set on ORIGINS 79. Given the recent record of our staff for meeting such self-imposed deadlines, we'll say "maybe", but don't hold us to that.

Two games which will definitely appear at ORIGINS '79 (knock on wood) are DUNE and WIZARD'S QUEST . . . a pair of fantasy titles by outside designers now under in-house development. Both games came to us in relatively good shape and are ready for "sun", quick play, multi-player games in the genre of a RAIL BARON. The former features an exceedingly exquisite artwork treatment and is based on Frank Herbert's famous fantasy novels of the same name: DUNE, designed by John Foote, and is the only one of his projects which did the very popular COSMIC ENCOUNTERS, is actually a refined variation of that system.

WIZARD'S QUEST which we formerly referred to as TREASURES OF MARDON is a clever variation of RISK and COSMIC ENCOUNTERS in a land beset by orcs and dragons. Both games are great fun to play and come highly recommended by the entire R & D staff. They are our RAIL BARONs of 1979 with the added advantage that they feature a fantasy theme and relatively short play time.

CRESSENDIO OF DOOM, the second SL gamete, was originally scheduled for release at ORIGINS '79, but due to an attack of overproduction on yours truly, will be delayed until Christmas. The game is experiencing no problems other than my own intentions to include as much as possible. Boards, rules, scenarios, and counters have all doubled, presenting us primarily with the problem of how we're going to stuff it all in the box. The added scenarios and rules require additional playtesting—thus the delay.

Other projects such as the new BULGE game, TRIREME, & GUNSLINGER will not see fruition in 79, but should provide us with the basis for a good year in 1980.

On a more immediate note, this issue also contains a 4 scenario COI insert which we think you will like. The COI rules which will be made available in ORIGINS, are especially tailored to a quick play format. Featuring limited turn length and low piece density, Robert's creations are ideal for full application of the COI rules. Making them a special insert, separate from the magazine, allows you to store them with your SQUAD LEADER materials without defacing your copy of the magazine and is also a gesture to those not having the game in that it takes no further space from an already gigantic feature presentation.

At this point, I'd like to publicly acknowledge the services of various members of my SL playtest team who worked so hard testing not only McNamara's scenarios, but also in whole or in part those of Courtney Allen, whose "Series 100" scenario package is advertised elsewhere in this issue. My warmest thanks to Jim Statner, Jim Baker of IGB, Bill Farone and Bill Edwards of AHKS, and primarily to Jon Moshon, Joe Suchar, and John Kenower. Without their help, there is no way, these projects could have been completed and made available to you. Many of these same people, plus others, have been active in an elite by-mail playtest group which recreates the entire awesome struggle of the Napoleonic Wars, including many famous battles such as Leipzig, Jena, Eylau, Borodino, Leipzig, and of course, Waterloo. In addition, there is a Grand Campaign game (suitable for from two to six players) that recreates the entire awesome struggle which was named after history's greatest general, Napoleon Bonaparte.

In all cases, prizes will be awarded to those not having the game in that it takes no further space from an already gigantic feature presentation.

WIN, PLACE & SHOW returns to ORIGINS for its second straight year. A limited field of 36 can play in this one round, three hour event where players buy their own thoroughbreds, ride them to victory, and bet on the outcome. No prior experience necessary. Sports editor Bruce Milligan calls the clubhouse line $2.00. FOR SPEED CIRCUIT, our popular grand prix racing game returns for its third ORIGINS competition. Up to 60 people may participate in the initial round with the place finishers moving on to another grand prix track and the second round where the field will once again be narrowed for the final round which will be conducted on a specially printed scale course of the Grande Prix de France. All entrants will receive a free copy of the new track. No prior experience necessary. Jim Skinner is the starter. $2.00 Sunday 10 A.M.

WAR AT SEA returns for its third year in a row with a maximum field of 128 in single elimination 2 hour round robin format. Its effect: All tie games are Allied wins; American reinforcements enter on progressively lower die roll as game continues. Jim Skinner will officiate with a special panel to adjudicate games over the time limit. $1.00 Friday 11 A.M.

CROSS OF IRON makes its first appearance at ORIGINS in a five round, single elimination event for 32 players. A strict time limit of 3 hrs./round will be enforced. Each round will use a different quick-play scenario. Don Greenwood handles any necessary adjudications. $3.00 Saturday 10 A.M.

RICHTHOFEN'S WAR Demo Derby is one of our most popular events and is back for its fifth straight year of drawing over 100 pilots. Entrants will be divided into teams of 3 and placed on a board from which there is no escape against a similarly matched team. Only one team may survive and only those members of the team not shot down may move into the next round. Pilots will be given credit for kills gained along the way so as to be able to gain ace status. Random rules the aerodrome. $1.00 Sunday 10 A.M.

FOOTBALL STRATEGY is another of our original tournament offerings with a seeded 64 player field of single elimination. 1 hr. rounds. Will anyone be able to break the Tom Shaw/Don Greener/Carl McNamara trio of ORIGINS? $2.00. For football the last three years! $1.00 Friday 7 P.M.

DIPLOMACY is another 5 yr. veteran of ORIGINS which traditionally draws over 100 participants. Run by members of the postal Diplomacy hobby in conjunction with DIPLOMACY in letter. Prize for winning this event, $25.00. This year, but may follow past guidelines of a 2 round event with 7 best country performance plagues given out on the basis of 1 game in addition to the overall winner based on both
NEW KINGMAKER EVENT CARDS

Are your KINGMAKER games getting a bit dull? You can spice them up with the new Event Cards described in Vol. 14, No. 3. Avalon Hill is making available in a special expansion kit a new deck of 48 Events cards including 25 printed Allegiance, Catastrophe, and Royal Death cards as well as 23 blanks for use in your own variants. The entire deck is backed by the same rich KINGMAKER design which makes the game such a joy to play and cards from the two decks will be indistinguishable from the rear. This special card deck is available for $2.00 plus postage. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax.

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Did you get to your favorite hobby shop too late to get the last issue of THE GENERAL? Why take a chance—subscribe now and have each issue mailed directly to your home—and at a considerable savings over the newsstand price. By opting for the 2 year, twelve issue subscription you save over the $1.50 single issue cost. Charge your order over the $1.50 single issue cost. Charge your order to your favorite hobby shop for its 4th year of existence. In the form of a 2 round, single elimination event for a field of 36. Each round to last 4 hours with the winner advancing to the finals. Mick Uhl is again the conductor. $2.00 Saturday Noon.

WS & FM is always a popular event and this year has an expanded field of 56 to accommodate a new format which will emphasize team play. Players may pre-register individually or in teams of 3. Those without teams will be assigned to a 3 man team at the start of the tournament. Winning teams pass complete into the next round—each player commands one ship with multi-player communication rules in effect. Wes Coates leads the boarding parties for the 4th straight year. Reed will lead a participatory discussion about the research and design methodologies and conclusions. Participants are urged to bring any books, notes, materials and questions that they may have with them. $1.00 Saturday Noon.

PBM EQUIPMENT

Each kit sells for $6.90 postpaid and includes enough materials (4 pads) to play virtually dozens of games, including addendum sheets which list grid-coordinates for those games not already possessing them. Half kits consisting of two pads and all the pertinent instructions sell for $3.50 postpaid.

Kits are available for the following games:

- **AFRIKA KORPS**
- **KRIEGSPIEL**
- **ANZIO**
- **LUFTWAFFE**
- **BLITZKRIEG**
- **PANZERBLITZ**
- **BULGE**
- **STALINGRAD**
- **D-DAY**
- **RUSS CAMPAIGN**
- **WATERLOO**

**AREA TOP 45**

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letters to the Editor ...

Dear Sir:

You make the comment in the December 78 GENERAL that "plans for future games will be held secret pending further notification." I take it that this means your sales aren't up to date.

I know of nine club members locally who would buy a copy of COH if they could find it. Our local wargame seller has been trying to obtain 25 copies since ORONS was over without success.

I realize that direct mail sales bring in more cash to you, but you'll sell many more COG games if you'd let the retailers have a few to sell. Locally, we can buy your games with a 10% discount (COG: $21.25 for you by bringing it to them), save the $2.50 most people choose to wait—thus your sales are sluggish. I suggest you fill the retailers orders as fast as possible and I believe your sales will be surging.

Good luck with your games going with SF and COH but you may just screw it up enough to ruin it for good. Please don't speed up the production of the games and the scenarios in THE GENERAL (which you haven't done) and you'll make yourself wealthier and a lot of gamers happier.

Michael Mahoney
Shreveport, LA

First sales for CROSS OF IRON are not disappointing. Rather, they have exceeded my fondest expectations. The serials will continue until all of the games have been published to four by including more in each individual game.

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CROSS OF IRON was the 42nd game to be rated and posted the best cumulative ranking yet attained in the RRQ by topping THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN by 07. It should be stated at the outset, however, that CROSS OF IRON's fine rating is somewhat biased solely because it is a new game based on a pre-existing game. This was due to the original S1 game system which would have no reason to purchase COI. Consequently, a form of natural selection was at work in eliminating a high proportion of those models with sales that inevitably fall. For the most part, COI was sold exclusively to a mail order audience which had already approved of its game system. Despite this, the number of reviewers was quite high and the numbers achieved most flattering.

The game fared strongly in almost all categories, ranking in the top 10 in all but "Ease of Buying" and that would have undoubtedly been improved by the 2nd edition rulebook which is now available. The strong "Components" rating was surprising in light of its price. German vehicules carriers were printed in a dark blue a full two shades off the specified color making them quite difficult to read. This error was further compounded by a distasteful tendency for the letters to be distributed "backwards" so that the side was face and the front bore the brunt of the weathering. A Full two German cars was surprising in light of its price. The production quality of the game was quite high, and features a 2.0% for the most part. The board was rated 2.09.

NEW SQUAD LEADER BOARDS

Although production of the SQUAD LEADER game sets has lagged behind schedule, we do have three additional boards completed which will be used in future game sets. Those S1.CO enthusiasts who can't wait for additional terrain can purchase these boards separately from our Mail Order Dept. (at $20 each plus the usual postage charges for parts orders (10% of the dollar amount for American, 20% for Canadian, and 30% for overseas customers). The boards can be ordered under the title SQUAD LEADER boards 6.7.8. Board 6 is scheduled for use in the next game set in the series, CRESCENDO OF DOOM, and features a large French chateau surrounded by broad expanses of orchard—a new feature to the game. Boards 7 and feature wide rivers (on average of five hexes across) with accompanying marshland and urban settings.

The boards will come with any directions pertaining to the new terrain types not will any questions pertaining to them be answered. The boards are being offered for sale on a "no return" basis for those individuals who can't wait to add new terrain to their S1 board and don't mind making their own rules as they go along.

THE GENERAL

1941-45

The General's Rolls Rating Chart

The games are ranked by their cumulative scores which is an average of the 9 categories for each game. While it may be fairly argued that each category should not weigh equally against the others, we use it only as a generalization of overall rank. By breaking down a game's ratings into individual categories the game is able to discern for itself where the game is strong or weak in the qualities that are most desired. Readers are reminded that the Game Length category is measured in multiples of ten minutes and that a rating of 18 would equal 3 hours.
The solution to Contest #87 was strictly tactical but could not be arrived at without giving due consideration to the strategic situation. To guarantee sinking at least 16 points of Japanese ships, the American player had to sink the Yamato with both light ships on fire before the Yamato and sink both the Mutsu and Nagato as well as the two lighter vessels.

Given competent application of the heavy AA armament of the three battleships, this was not possible if one attack did not lead to the availability of 8 ships for screening purposes and only 10 torpedo planes in the attack force. Three ships could definitely be sunk in an all-out attack, but not the Yamato, and thus only 14 points could be gained.

The trick, therefore, is to make two attacks and thereby take advantage of the American preponderance of dive bombers by holding back sufficient bombers during the 1500 attack to enable a follow-up attack during the next (and last daylight) turn—after the two light vessels, Hosho and Sendai, have been sunk and the Japanese screening possibilities accordingly reduced. Due to the Japanese location on the search board and the American four area search capability, detection on the 1700 turn is certain and Japanese CAP will still be far away to intercept the last shokkai. The American player will now have 15 D and his 10 T bombers for a second strike, trusting in the remaining 26 dive bombers to sink the lesser targets by hitting each of the five vessels with enough dive bombers to sink them. Hosho and Sendai, by any ship which attempts to aid another is therefore automatically sunk by a 5-1 attack. Ten dive bombers are needed against the Yamato to prevent the two light ships from concentrating their fire on the Yamato—thus freeing the battleships to sink the carrier. Only 3 more dive bombers are necessary against the lesser vessels which are sunk regardless of die roll by a 3-1 attack.

Thus deprived of two screening vessels, the battleships for all their awesome firepower, may now only defend against three concentrations of 5 or more bombers. By saving his torpedo planes for the second attack, the American guarantees elimination of the Yamato unless the Japanese player sacrifices both the Nagato and Mutsu to save it as all ships are once again "pinned" by 5 A& 10 D factors, leaving no one to take on the two groups of 5 T factors attacking the Yamato on both beams.

Only one person was able to give an entirely correct solution to the SUBMARINE contest in Vol. 15 No. 4. Congratulations are in order for Clark Ochikubo of Walnut Creek, CA. It took a lot of work to come up with the correct answer so we gave him a double prize. The remaining 9 winners were contestants who sent in partial or correct results: Jim Heard, Evansville, IL; Warren Auryong, Los Angeles, CA; Charles Blomquist, DeKalb, IL; Bob Lathrup, Hagerman, NH; David Townsend, Hampton, VA; John Rimmel, Union, NJ; Francois Moreau, Laval, Que.; Richard Logue, Lancaster, CA; and John Dollerschell, St. Louis Park, MO.
**CONTEST NO. 88**

It is the last player turn of a scenario in CROSS OF IRON utilizing all rules. To win, the German player must clear the road entrance hex Q1 of the LOS of all enemy units, both good order and broken, at game end.

It is now the German Prep Fire Phase. Basing your turn on the assumption that all German dice rolls will fall within the "56% spectrum of most favorable results" and all Russian dice rolls will fall within the "72% range of least favorable results" plot your turn on the following chart. All entries must rate the issue as a whole as well as list the three best articles in order to be considered valid.

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**THE GENERAL**

**EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARDS**

This issue concludes Vol. 15 of THE GENERAL, meaning it is time to vote once again for the best articles of the past year. The winner receives a lifetime subscription to the magazine plus a $100 bonus.

At last year's awards issue, we received a lifetime subscription to the magazine plus a $100 bonus for the editor. Please vote for only one of the nominees and vote only if you have read all of the nominated works during the past year.

The nominees are:

- **PANZER LEADER, 1940** By Ramiro Cruz Vol. 15, No. 2
- **CREATING A PARATROOPER'S HELL** By Mark McLaughlin Vol. 15, No. 3
- **INVASION OF MALTA** By John D. Burtt Vol. 15, No. 3
- **MORE SUBMARINE SCENARIOS** By James A. Wirth Vol. 15, No. 4
- **PANZERBLITZ SITUATION X** By Robert Chiang & Tom Olson Vol. 15, No. 4
- **PACIFIC THEATRE VIA MIDWAY** By Alan R. Moon Vol. 15, No. 5
- **ANOTHER AFRIKA KORPS GAMBIT** By Stephen S. Packwood Vol. 15, No. 5
- **CROSS OF IRON: FIRST IMPRESSIONS** By Robert Meddrow Vol. 15, No. 6

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**Opponent Wanted 25c**

1. Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on this form or a facsimile and must be accompanied by a 25¢ token fee. No refunds. For Sale, Trade, or Wanted to Buy ads will be accepted only when dealing with collector's items (games no longer available from AH) and are accompanied by a $1.00 token fee.

2. Insert copy on lines provided (25 word maximum) and print name, address and phone number on the appropriate lines.

3. PRINT - A duplicate your ad will not be printed.

4. To win, the German player must clear the road entrance hex Q1 of the LOS of all enemy units, both good order and broken, at game end.

5. 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 three best 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)**

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<th>Order of Attack</th>
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BISMARCK

She was the mightiest warship afloat, the crowning achievement of German military expertise, Hitler’s pride and joy. She symbolized the invincibility of the new reich and was the instrument by which Germany hoped to finally defeat its only remaining enemy—Great Britain. At 50,000 tons of fighting trim, the battleship Bismarck was indeed the greatest single threat to Britain’s survival. What happened in that final week in May, 1941 is still being discussed and analyzed. That the loss of the Bismarck ended Hitler’s ambition to gain control of the Atlantic is not disputed. Yet the very closeness of the operation pointed out how near victory Germany really came.

BISMARCK has been organized into three games of increasing complexity. The Basic Game is rated Intermediate Level II on the Avalon Hill complexity scale and can be played within 2½ hours. The Basic Game concentrates on the British attempt to locate, track and finally corner the Bismarck. Each side is able to use the ships and planes historically available. All movement is done secretly. Search patterns and patrols must be organized to locate the enemy ships in the far reaches of the Atlantic. When enemy ships do meet, battle is conducted with each ship rated individually in accordance with its actual capabilities.

The Intermediate Game builds upon the Basic Game with a series of optional rules designed to incorporate every significant factor that influenced the BISMARCK operation. Players now must plan convoy routes and submarine attacks. Fuel conservation becomes a critical factor in keeping ships at sea. Weather plays a significant role in a ship or plane’s ability to search. Carrier operations are handled realistically as all planes must process to take off. Destroyers can attempt to penetrate an enemy ship’s defense to launch torpedoes, and much, much more including, among other things, attempts by the Luftwaffe and U-boats to aid the hard pressed Bismarck.

Expanded orders of battle including ships which were available and could have participated in the action make for an endless assortment of hypothetical naval engagements. These are incorporated into additional scenarios which speculate upon alternate but still probable situations that could have occurred at the time. For example, what would have happened if the Free French or American navies entered into battle? What if Iceland had remained neutral? What if the Scambors and Gneisenau were able to sortie with the Bismarck as planned? In all there are eight additional scenarios which can be played.

The Advanced Game is a miniatures-oriented approach to naval combat. Every ship is rated according to the number and size of its guns, the strength of its armor in all critical areas, its compartmentalization, fire control and special capabilities. To score damage, a shell must be able to penetrate the armor in the area hit. Movement is conducted on any flat surface using special maneuver gauges. Special counters are also provided to use in the Advanced Game. These give a detailed overview of each major ship provided in the game.

BISMARCK is packaged with two 11” x 14” search boards of the North Atlantic and a special 22” x 14” Battle Board on which the battles are fought. Also included are multicolored counters representing every ship, plane and submarine that was available, over 300 in all; a Hit Record Pad on which players record damage, fuel and ammunition expenditure for their ships; a set of six player-aid cards which allow the game to be played without reference to the rules plus special gauges to move and determine range of ships in the Advanced Game.

BISMARCK is now available for $12 plus 10% postage charges (or GENERAL postage coupons) from Avalon Hill. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

Bismarck Counters
HILL 253.5

Scenario B

40 MILES NORTH OF KURSK, July 9, 1943: Operation Citadel had begun, but instead of the desired lightning breakthrough, the fighting had taken on the characteristics of World War I trench warfare. In four days of grueling combat, the XLI Panzer Corps had managed to penetrate the defenses of the Soviet 13th Army to a depth of only about five miles. The Corps, now being slowly forced onto the defensive by increasing enemy pressure, needed to secure a strong position on which to anchor its left flank and free its mobile elements; such a spot was the commanding height of Hill 253.5 near the village of Ponyri, where some of the most intensive fighting of the entire Eastern campaign was taking place. On July 9th the Germans stormed and captured Hill 239.8 and to exploit this success an assault on Hill 253.5 was ordered.

Board Configuration

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Germans win if at the end of the game they solely occupy, with unbroken squads or functioning AFVs, four of the level 3 hexes of Hill 621 and there are no Russian unbroken squads or functioning AFVs on the remaining level 3 hexes. "Functioning" is defined as having an unbroken, unstunned crew and any working armament. Russians win by preventing the German victory conditions.

TURN RECORD CHART

Elements of the 307th RIFLE DIVISION set up south of road Q1-Y10:

Elements of the 18th PANZER DIVISION and the PANZERJAGER BATTALION 653 set up north of road Q1-Y10:

SPECIAL RULES

B.1 Wire and mines may be placed in the hexes which contain road Q1-Y10.
B.2 Both sides have one 80mm artillery module.
B.3 Both sides receive random air support.
B.4 German engineer units may make unlimited smoke.
B.5 The German player may not inspect the contents of entrenchment counters prior to his initial set-up.

AFTERMATH: The German units, decimated and exhausted by five days of incessant fighting, attacked doggedly but didn't have the strength to seize or hold the hill. The panzergrenadiers were soon actually on the defensive as continuous Soviet counterattacks forced the Germans to employ their last reserves merely to hold their own positions.
Scenario A

Scenarios

Scenario A

BURZEVO, 27 MILES S.W. OF THE KREMLIN, Dec. 2, 1941: By the end of November, Operation Typhoon had broken down; resolute Soviet resistance, exhaustion, and sub-zero temperatures had almost completely halted the Germans. Along the Minsk-Moscow highway, the fastest and most direct route to the Russian capital, von Kluge's Fourth Army made a last desperate attempt to dislodge the defending Russians by an encircling attack from the south. The only real progress was made by the 258th Infantry Division, whose spearheads managed to capture the village of Burzevo on the afternoon of Dec. 2. The 3rd Battalion of the 478th Regiment was ordered to hold there, its men anticipating a brief respite from the -30°F. night. But at 200 hours the Russians counterattacked . . .

Board Configuration

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Russians win by eliminating three 4-6-7 squads and destroying or immobilizing all German vehicles and the 88 or keeping them out of the confines of the village (rows I through Y inclusive) at game end.

TURN RECORD CHART

Elements of the 3rd BATTALION, 478th REGIMENT, 258th INFANTRY DIVISION: set up first, between hex rows L and Z inclusive. All infantry units must set up in buildings, one squad maximum per hex (or level per hex). Leaders and crews may stack freely.

Elements of the 20th TANK BRIGADE: enter from any east and/or west edge hexes.

SPECIAL RULES

A.1 There is no road movement for any units.
A.2 Night Rules (49) are in effect.
A.3 All buildings are considered wooden. A burning wooden building illuminates all hexes within a two hex radius as per 67.5.
A.4 All hills are considered flat open ground. Woods/hills hexes remain woods.
A.5 STG's may not set up in woods or building hexes. AFV's may not enter bldg. M2.
A.6 Russian tank commanders may use starshells (49.6) if the tank is CE.

AFTERMATH: Amid blazing buildings and tanks the infantry tackled the T-34's with demo charges and grenade bundles, and by dawn the attack had been defeated, but with heavy losses to the defenders. That same day Fourth Army suspended the offensive and ordered its units to withdraw back across the Nara River. The trials of its men however, were far from over; the Russian Winter Offensive was only days away.

QUICK PLAY CROSS OF IRON SCENARIOS

Printed as a special insert for Vol. 15, No. 6 of THE GENERAL; $2.00 if ordered with or separate from the magazine.

SCENARIO DESIGN: Robert McNamara

PLAYTESTING: Jon Mishcon, Joe Suchar, John Kenower, Jim Stahler, Jim Baker, Bill Farone, Bill Edwards

Copyright, 1979 The Avalon Hill Game Co.
**DELYING ACTION**

**Scenario D**

**WESTERN LITHUANIA, the end of October, 1944:** After failing to halt the onslaught of Bagramyan's 1st Baltic Front, scattered units of the Gross Deutschland Division were ordered to fall back to the northwest and regroup. One evening during the course of this retreat some three hundred of its men were surprised by a cautiously advancing Russian infantry regiment. After a short firefight the Russians decided to dig in for the night and initiated their attack at dawn by advancing a column of tanks from a just arriving armored unit. The Germans however, seeing the tanks, immediately withdrew, leaving only a small delaying force to cover their rear.

**Board Configuration**

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    N
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**VICTORY CONDITIONS**

To win the Russian player must exit all seven tanks off the North edge road. Each German unit eliminated counts as a tank successfully moved off the board. Germans win by avoiding the Russian victory conditions.

**SPECIAL RULES**

D.1 There is no road movement bonus for any unit.
D.2 Treat wheatfields as open ground.
D.3 Hexes E8 and U8 are marsh (75) hexes; U8 does not contain woods.

**AFTERMATH:** The delaying force set up three ambush points and straight into them rumbled the tank column, without supporting infantry. Each ambush group knocked out several tanks but there was never any doubt as to the ultimate outcome of the encounter, as each was successively and literally overrun and wiped out. (A few terror-stricken survivors were shortly thereafter rescued by a counterattack led by two S.S. armored regiments against the Russian flank, which inflicted heavy losses and recaptured the immediate area for a few days, after which the retreat was resumed.)

**TURN RECORD CHART**

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Elements of the **GROSS DEUTSCHLAND PANZERGRENADIER DIVISION:** set up north of hexrow AA, using Hidden Initial Placement (42). During the Advance Phase they may maintain this status if the hexside they cross touches a woods or building symbol (note hex changes on scrap paper).

Elements of the **5th GUARDS TANK ARMY:** enter via south edge road on turn 1:
50 MILES S.E. OF KIEV, Sept. 24, 1943: In mid September 1943 Manstein's Army Group South initiated a full scale retreat along the entire length of its 600 mile front. The plan was to fall back to the west bank of the Dnieper and redeploy for defense before the Russians could form any bridgeheads across the river. One spot where the race was won by the Red Army was near the village of Bukrin, where the Third Guards Tank Army with the help of partisans crossed in company strength, during the first hours of Sept. 22; reinforcement of the bridgehead was begun forthwith. The Germans immediately rushed the advance elements of the 19th Panzer Division down from Kiev to seal off this dangerous foothold. On the 24th the Russians pressed their attack in an attempt to break through the weakly held German defensive line and link up with a simultaneous paratroop of three Airborne Brigades further to the southwest.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS**

The Russians win if at the end of their 10th player turn there is no unbroken enemy squad or AFV with functioning armament within normal range and clear LOS of the Russian objective hexes. The normal range of infantry squads may be extended by functioning MGs. See Special Rule C.3. The Germans win by preventing the Russian victory conditions.

**TURN RECORD CHART**

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<td><strong>German sets up first</strong></td>
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**Board Configuration**

![Board Configuration Diagram]

**Elements of the ARMORED RECON BATTALION 19 set up west of road 5A6-5Y10-5GG6:**

![Armored Recon Battalion Diagram]

**Miscellaneous reinforcements enter on turn 6 via any one west edge road hex:**

![Miscellaneous Reinforcement Diagram]

**Elements of the 51st GUARDS TANK BRIGADE set up on any whole or half hexes of board 2:**

![Guards Tank Brigade Diagram]

**SPECIAL RULES**

C.1 No infantry units may make smoke.

C.2 Germans have one module of 80+mm offboard artillery commencing on turn 5; the Russians may use their radio only to direct on-board artillery.

C.3 After the Germans set up but before the Russians do, the Russian player must determine his objective by inverting, mixing, and randomly choosing one of the artillery chits which is kept secret from the opposing player and set aside for end of game verification. The chit drawn determines the objective as follows: "1": 4A5-4A6-4B5; "2": 4I1-4I2-4I3; "3": 4Q1-4Q2-4R2; "4": 4Y1-4Y2-4Y3.

**AFTERMATH:** The combat troops of the recon battalion were hard put to contain the Russian push but by throwing in the supply and repair units and anyone else who could be scraped up, a near disaster was averted and the situation restored. The line had held, and although the Russians attempted for several more weeks to effect a breakout, they had become effectively bottled up. They would have to turn elsewhere to crack the Dnieper line.