Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 75

With Christmas and the end of 1979 just one issue away, it seems appropriate to address this Philosophy column to the progress of our current design projects and what you can expect to see from us in time for Santa's big night.

With luck, we should have a few new titles to put under the tree for local visitors to our Game Emporium but it is doubtful whether any of them will receive wide retail distribution until next year.

First out of the chute will be WAR & PEACE ... a grand strategic game of the Napoleonic era—which, for want of a better description, will be a cross between 1776 and DIPLOMACY. Playable in both a two player and multiplayer format, it promises to offer something for everyone with an interest in the period. It is an eminently clean design by Mark McLaughlin with capable AH development by Frank Davis. With any luck, you may find an advertisement proclaiming its availability in the next issue...

THE LONGEST DAY has seen two ORIGINS come and go since it was first promised. It is our fervent wish that it doesn't see a third before release. The game's physical components are finished and now undergoing by-mail playtest.

The sole occupation of Randy Reed for the last two years, THE LONGEST DAY has been given lavish art and design preparation. Only the pure size and price of the game leave us with any doubts as to how our first "monster" game will be received. The December GENERAL probably won't reach you until Christmas, so look for THE LONGEST DAY in the spring.

CRESCENDO OF DOOM is also in by-mail playtest now and although we won't be able to advertise its availability until the December GENERAL, we will be accepting mail orders effective December 1 in hopes of filling at least a few December subscriptions. If you wish to order CRESCENDO OF DOOM and/or WAR AT PEACE before they are formally announced, you may do so on December 1 for $15 each and the customary postage coupon. We make no promises about delivery by Christmas, but will do our best. Otherwise, you may wish to wait for the formal advertisement in the next GENERAL. CRESCENDO OF DOOM will eventually be followed by two more gamettes—one featuring the Americans and Italians entitled G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY and another on the Japanese approximately a year apart.

TITLE BOUT is the name of our statistical boxing game which will enter our Sports Illustrated line in the spring. With any luck, you'll find a mail order advertisement for it in the next issue. Like all of our other stat games, TITLE BOUT will feature hundreds of cards representing the great and near-great ring performers of the past and present. Although wargamers in general may find this less than thrilling news, the Sports Illustrated line is nothing to be scoffed at. This summer's past release, MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL, is currently leading the entire line—wargames included—in sales.

Further down the line you can expect the 1978 private label hit, SOURCE OF THE NILE, in AH packaging come spring. Currently undergoing AH development by Mick Uhl, this recipient of two Charles Roberts awards should be greatly improved in both visual appeal and rules comprehension. Mick is also developing Bruno Simaglio's revision of BATTLE OF THE BULGE which we hope to release at ORIGINS next July.

That brings us to the "whatever happened to..." department. THE RISING SUN has been returned to designer Larry Pinsky to be cut down into more manageable proportions and remains unscheduled at this time. We have invested heavily in mapboard art and development time, however, and are loathe to dismiss the project altogether. We still have high hopes that it will eventually see publication. FOR- TRESS EUROPA, the western front equivalent of RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, designed by John Edwards, has been under contract for over a year, but we've uncovered many problems with it and the developer has been unable to work on it due to other projects so that we've had to relegate it to the back burner until the recent addition of game developer Alan R. Moon to the staff.

KESSEL-SCHLACHT or STREETS OF STALINGRAD as we renamed it, was only under evaluation here. The designer didn't care for either our evaluation the time we'd require to produce it, so he decided to publish on his own. Scratch one project. Now that the MAGIC REALM odyssey is over, Richard Hamblen can return to work on his TRIREME and GUNSLINGER designs. We hope to have the former done for the next ORIGINS.

This is by no means all we're looking at for the coming year. We've had numerous prototypes on hand for evaluation for some time now but are not at liberty to discuss them at this point. We're also keeping an eye on the recent releases of the "Third World"—ORIGINS is not only a showcase for the consumer—it also serves to alert us to some of the finer designs by the hobby's smaller companies. Occasionally, one comes along which we think highly enough of to purchase, such as SOURCE OF THE NILE. With added AH development time and improved artwork, we can sometimes turn a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Naturally, such evaluation and negotiations are completed, any further discourse would be more conjecture than fact.

This installment of the Philosophy wouldn't be complete without a few words on the missing MAGIC REALM feature. We'll make it as few as possible. Put simply, the article was plagued by the same problems which delayed the game past one promised deadline after another. In an attempt to right all the game's minor problems, the designer is hoping to provide us with a super comprehensive feature which will address all the questions you may have on the game system. Thus, the Designer's Office can offer an issue of the Philosophy without the 40 page filler we will try again next time. In the meantime, the PANZER LEADER theme has given us a chance to add to our list of playing aids the sample PANZER LEADER parts sheets provided in this issue's insert. Our thanks to Walter Cullen who designed, printed, and submitted the sheet for the enjoyment of his fellow PL enthusiasts.
THE GENERAL

PANZER LEADER: AN OVERVIEW

By Jeffrey Paul Jones

It is not too early to tell that PANZER LEADER will survive the test of age; in this demi-decade in which conflict simulation has undergone such a tremendous upheaval in terms of scope, production, and theory, four years plus is a long time. With more than thirty games a year assaulting our pocketbooks, it is always pleasant to note that some games remain almost timeless, the novelty never seeming to wear thin though other games come and fade as ghostly apparitions, having a brief, fleeting existence before they are filed away to gather dust. PANZER LEADER is not doomed in this manner. It remains one of the finer examples of our hobby, despite its brooding beginnings until it was finally sewn together into a workable mesh. Granted it has rough spots, I don't believe there is a game that doesn't, but it has enough quality to overcome them.

This article seeks to analyze that quality in terms of specifics: game boards, rules, units and unit capabilities, and the scenarios themselves; then offer a series of tactics for PL to show what ingenious actions can come from such a simulation. There is a reason why some games survive whereas others fall, and I hope to show what it is about PL which makes it such a success.

THE PLAYING SURFACE

In keeping with European terrain, the boards of PL are relatively passable in all areas. There are a few natural barriers to inhibit movement, and for this reason the boards are necessarily porous. The primary physical barriers are the cliffs of board B and the streams running the widths of the other boards, rarely inhibiting movement along the grain of the mapboards. For this reason it is normally simple to predict an opponent's channel of attack: everywhere and anywhere he desires!

In most scenarios there are four to nine areas of penetration when an assault follows the grain. Then the blocking terrain comes in the form of green hexsides. For example, in "Elsenborn Ridge" there are nine or ten paths to German victory, but all of them, at least for vehicular units, end in two channels one or two hexes wide at the apex and narrowed by forest hexsides.

Obviously the intrinsic and innumerable possibilities of geomorphic boards will change the complexion of any mapboard discussion, so I have narrowed things a bit. There are some boards that are used more than others, and some positioning of boards used more than others, so that some terrain features take on a special significance. With this in mind, I'll develop the properties of each board.

Board A is the lightfooted board, for if one fails to walk softly and carefully, he will become an exposed corpse; this single board is critical in half of PL's situations. Fully 70% is clear terrain; the stuff opportunity fire is made of. Another 15% is forested and provides cover, but the most remarkable features are the city of Granceelles and the primary stream which runs from the northwest to the southeast, bisecting Granceelles. This city is the largest in the game and is critical to nine of the thirteen situations using this board. Victory often depends on total control of the city and even if it doesn't, he who controls Granceelles controls three-fourths of the entire board.

The second important feature is the stream passing through Granceelles, primarily because it can be crossed only through that city or the single bridge hex at J2. The veteran will realize the importance here after slogging through "St. Lo" or "Operation Garden: Anticlimax" a few times. The river line is pitifully easy to defend. Even in situations where the attacker has easy access, he must pay dearly to establish control of the stream and the city, as seen in "Operation Goodwood."

A final note on Granceelles at X-7, in the center of the city, there is a single hex of clear terrain. I assume that this represents a large town square or a city park of some sort. It also acts as a graveyard for units unprotected against overrun attacks. It has been my misfortune only once to misuse that hex, but I've used it to torment my competitors ever since.

Generally, board A is easy to control, but difficult to conquer. It is about as porous as any board, though, so in encounters that require only a crossing of the board, it is weak. For example, in "The Saar," German forces need only cross along the grain of the board and exit in one of four hexes at the center of the board. Even with opportunity fire used, the Allies can do nothing to prevent the massive German onslaught from dashing through comparatively unscathed. The Panzer Lehr triumph once again.

Figure 1 shows the most often used transit of the city board. Only on this board does a stream become such a vital feature, dividing the board not only in width, but also in length. The complete absence of elevated terrain gives cities and forests new impact, for each one is an obstacle that must be sighted around or into. At least twenty units are needed to sight all but the stream hexes because there are so many patches of hidden terrain. Despite the openness, the board can be troublesome to master.

Board B offers something new to the tactical gamer—sea and beach hexes. (I've often wondered why this was not lettered board A, since the Allied offensives covered by PANZER LEADER actually began on the beaches and moved inland; it would seem more logical to label the board in this manner. I've come to the conclusion that AH's graphics per-

Although it is easy to recognize the significance of Granceelles in controlling movement on the board, it is also important to note that despite the lack of hidden terrain, it is still difficult to actually "see" all hexes on the board. At least twenty units, placed as per the red dots on the board, are necessary.
sonnel felt that "B" should stand for beach. If that is the case, I'll go crazy trying to figure out what A, C, and D stand for.) Board B has a rather complex three-dimensional set up which was explained satisfactorily to many of us by Randall Reed in Vol. 12, No. 1 of THE GENERAL. The beaches seem to lead up slopes to hilltop hexes, which in turn slope ever-so-gently inland, so that invading units fire uphill from the beaches but on level ground that is treated as uphill terrain from the interior. This often causes sighting problems and weapons' effectiveness disagreements, which are put to rest by rolling a die, reading the rules, or choosing a different situation.

Board B has several points of interest. First, it has more hilltop hexes than any other board (40) and affords the defender a tremendously commanding view of Allied invasion channels. Second, it has many slope hexes to delay an enemy advance. Third, the roads serve to channel invaders into the enemy guns if they use the roads, or they provide solid communication lines for the defender in the early going. Fourth, cliff hexes present an almost impassable block in themselves, infantry units requiring a die roll of one to affect movement. And finally, all of this means something to only two of the twenty scenarios. I only wish there were more invasions provided in the game so that board B would gain some deserved importance.

This board is specifically designed as an invasion board and should be treated as such. As with all boards, it is laterally porous. With the forces provided in the scenarios it is adequately defended in spite of this. Thankfully, the two invasion situations that make any consequential use of the beaches further limit the amount of usable terrain by narrowing the playing surface to 70% of the printed area. This makes a coordinated defensive extremely tenable in the early turns, especially since elevated German forts, together with positions in the beach town of Rieux, can provide firepower to any invasion hex. These positions become weaker as the Allies move to the interior, but they have to get there first. The primary German problem is that there are always more units than they can fire at, it is a rare thing for the Allies to land only six or seven units at a time. Figure 2 shows how crucial invasion hexes can be controlled through careful fortification, block, and minefield placement.

Board C offers an almost unlimited number of possibilities. Esthetically creative, and having more sheltered terrain than any other (two cities amid a densely forested region), this forest board still offers at least seven attack channels, with alternate routes available. Unfortunately, only seven situations use this board to any effect.

It looks as if graphic's personnel were partial to green hexes, or there was a printing short-circuit governing mixed terrain and weaving spiderly roads, but the intricacies produced are a work of art in themselves. Figure 3 depicts the possibilities for a lateral offensive; much more limited are those which go against the grain — regretfully, there is only one scenario which uses the vertical aspects of the forest board and that is "Bulge: Thrust." Due to the special rule prohibiting German units the use of hex T11, the attack must follow the predictable lines: either through the forested hill at O2 or N3, or along the forest road connecting Wiln and St. Athan. The paths are almost too easily defended and the burdensome congestion becomes unbearable in the largest, most ludicrous traffic jam in all of PANZER LEADER. Once the German does achieve a breakthrough, he still has only one real pathway open to him, through St. Athan. When dealing with board C vertically, control of St. Athan can create just as many headaches for the enemy as the other areas to the north. (Note: "The Fortified 'Goose Egg'" uses this attack channel as well, but the assaulting armies have other easier avenues on the parallel board.)

With the other boards, four or five key positions will often control or contest control of the playing area; however, board C constitutes a whole new breed of animal altogether. The terrain is so varied and intricate that an adequate defense usually involves a vast number of units. Even then, the death rate often remains low on both sides because of the terrain benefits on the CRT. Yet there are a few hexes that prove useful in many situations, affording excellent positions for spotting or using opportunity fire. These are indicated by the red dots in figure 3.

Finally, board D loosely combines the features found in the other boards. More than half the board is open territory, but another fourth is forested in random clumps. Again, lateral attack channels are numerous. But where the vertical attack channels on the other boards were predictable, those on board D are predictably deadly. To make a point, 63% of critical movement in all of PANZER LEADER occurs on this board. 61% of that involves vertical movement; and 63% of the vertical movement focuses on a single hex near Artain, BB6, at some point in play. Thus, 25% of PANZER LEADER concentrates on control of a single hex!

Figure 4 shows exactly why DBB6 is of paramount import, as the only way to affect an Artain river crossing is through that hex. Also, on the K, L, M, and N files, the channel is only three hexes wide. Due to the tunneling nature of this terrain, board D is easily the deadliest board in the game, or at least the slowest. In "The Encirclement of Nancy," it is possible for a meager German blocking force to hold an Allied juggernaut at bay for five or six turns before the breakout at Artain becomes inevitable, and in "The Fortified 'Goose Egg,'" with movement going in the opposite direction, the Allies can gain a decisive victory before the Germans ever move past the Y file (see "The Solid Wall" in the tactics section below).

Finally, there are no real advantageous positions on this board that command a lot of ground. This board is simple to defend piece by piece, but very difficult to defend in its entirety. Where many players spend their time looking at the elevated vantage points in PL, as in most three-dimensional games, just as many ignore the most impressive terrain feature in PL, namely the streams. Since most of the scenarios involve some kind of a river crossing, special care must be taken to defend the bridges strongly — that is where quality play lies. I have never seen someone ignore a river line in RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN or STALINGRAD because the river lines double the defender. Slopes and hills have the same utility in PL, so everyone sends units racing for those positions. Often, though, a well-defended bridge hex will deny the enemy that advantageous terrain. A well-played game must be preventative as well as competitive, and all terrain must be taken into account.

THE GOLDEN RULES

The Golden Rule is not what most players will follow when engaging in combat in PL, yet the rules of the game are golden in the sense that they overcome many of the abiguities of PANZERBLITZ, still retaining a new slant on the game system by incorporating a fine battery of optional and experimental rules, and by increasing unit capabilities.

Overall, the PL rules allow a maximum playability (at the expense of some realism) in a fairly short amount of time. The game does not bog down as it does with many similar games, nor does the scope encompass any area to rival the recent behemoths, with the possible exception of the macro-game. The macro remains manageable, but to a much lesser degree than the individual scenarios; still, it is playable.

There are a few aspects of the game rules which allow PANZER LEADER to retain its excellence. The first of these is the sequential movement system. Although I've enjoyed simultaneous movement in several games, those games are now shelved because it is so difficult to find competent, interested P/T players. Thus PL has a solitaire value intensive fire hits invasion hexes M through Q when the amphibious arrival, Rieux will remain unspotted and unthreatened, a critical point since that city is the true weakness of the defense. German rifle lines in the city should be able to close assault survivors so that naval fire will not become a threat.
that these other games do not. PL's sequential movement has received criticism, for it does favor the second player—he gets a sort of defensive first fire that is never present in simultaneous games. Because defensive firing units are then pinned and subject to subsequent enemy attack, the second player advantage is of questionable value until the final game turn, unless the experimental Function Mobility for Turreted AFVs rule is used. More of this later.

The second quality change in PL is the addition to carrier loading and unloading capabilities as they combine with movement, allowing both of these functions to take place in a single turn. This is a very clean system and no special bookkeeping is necessary as it is in ARAB-ISRAELI WARS where the system is slightly more complex. The rules permit an offensive to speed up a bit; in PANZERBLITZ, some situations are lost because aggressive units haven't the time to load infantry in what is often a three turn process; in PL, they have the time to load and still make progress forward.

A third addition concerns stacking requirements, which are delightfully uniform, but which cause some problems in high unit density scenarios when one analyzes the specifics of a player turn segment. This is not a criticism; the rule just causes players to be more careful how they move units and it forces foresight: with the exception of overrunning units, a stack of four friendly units may not be entered at all. In the turn sequence, vehicular units are moved first, followed by non-vehicular units. Therefore, it is quite possible to have a stack of four non-vehicular units holding up all the vehicular units to the rear. I think that this fairly accurately reflects some of the logistics of tactical warfare: vehicles move faster and would logically have to pass through friendly forces at times to reach the forward positions. That they be held up for safety and unity reasons is also logical. Imagine twenty Panther tanks and their entourage weaving their way through the 250 men of four German rifle platoons in heavily forested or rough terrain in six minutes! That would be interesting indeed!

The fourth rule that gives PL some quality is the real line of sight, plotted from the convenient dots placed in the center of each hex. Some have commented that this ruins the esthetic beauty of the board; however after a short time, one really sees these dots for sighting purposes only. Though some actual sighting requirements may seem slightly questionable, they are decidedly uniform and quite manageable. I suggest a cut rubber band be used to determine sighting in place of the proverbial straight edge. It is easy to use and not subject to tangles and knots; in addition, pulling it taught does not sweep units aside on a congested playing area. It does have the disadvantage of the "whiplash effect," which sends units scattering off the field of play; but on the single occasion in which that occurred, my opponent insisted emphatically that the action was accidental, and in no way related to his decisive loss on the fifth turn of "The Saar."

And the fifth quality item in the rules is Indirect Fire. This is one of the four real strengths of Panzer Leader as far as making the game an adventure (the others will be developed later). Although the rules are rather abstract, their application is relatively simple. The adventure comes in trying to outguess or second-guess one's opponent: "Where does he think I'll put my IF to do the most damage, and should I put it there, or somewhere else less suspected? Or will he expect me to put it somewhere else and then move into those other hexes? I know I'll put it at 14, knowing that he'll think I'll put it there until he realizes it's too obvious a place." One attractive part of IF, corrected in AIW, is that an
empty hex can be designated for IF. It is always a pleasure to set up a barrage a turn in advance and watch the enemy walk into the shellfire unawares. In one game of "Goose Egg" 1 eliminated two infantry-loaded halftracks and a Panther with this ruse in a single barrage.

The rule's provisos provide an extremely workable framework for fair play; the rules extensions, the options and experimental, provide a method to expanding existing situations, or balancing some that are dreadfully imbalanced. What follows is a discussion of these extras by delineating their advantages and disadvantages.

**Infantry Quick-Time Speed**

**Rule:** infantry units may double their movement allowance in clear terrain.

**ADVANTAGES:**
1. QTing units gain an extra hex of territory in a turn and often perform an early attack on a static defense line.
2. The attacker can beef up a close assault to better odds 50% of the time, providing enough units are available.

**DISADVANTAGES:**
1. QTing units defend at half strength against opportunity fire attacks.
2. QT can only be used in clear terrain, leaving units open to overrun attacks on the following turn.
3. There is a 30% chance of disruption for each unit, which could nullify planned close assaults.

**NOTE:** I've often wondered why QT could not be used if units were descending a slope, having a die roll from 3-5 result in dispersal. I do not seek to change the rules, but players may try this one and find it makes a difference in a few situations.

**Opportunity Fire.** Rule: non-phaseing units may fire at enemy units which expend ¼ their movement allowance in sighted terrain.

**ADVANTAGES:**
1. Advancing units can be pinned in the open and subjected to subsequent indirect fire or overrun attack.
2. Units exercising this option can deny the enemy access to beneficial terrain or victory hexes.
3. Prevent overrun and/or close assaults.
4. Harass weak carrier units.
5. The greatest advantage is one of threat. Opportunity fire forces the enemy to move through protected, hidden areas, seriously effecting an aggressive forward thrust, unless a player has such superiority that he can push forward with impunity, as the Panzer Leader does in "The Safari".

**DISADVANTAGES:**
1. Friendly firing units lose their direct fire capability in the next friendly player segment.
2. Hidden units become spotted.
3. Units lose their mobility for a turn unless functional mobility is used.
4. Better targets will undoubtedly present themselves if one exhausts his opportunity fire capability. It is a terrible feeling to watch heavily-laden trucks race across open terrain without fear of attack.
5. Actual playing time is extended because of the continuous counting of hexes to see if an actual opportunity fire attack is permissible.

**Naval Support Fire.** Rule: off-board strength points are to simulate naval shore bombardment (Naval Artillery Strength Points or NASPs).

**ADVANTAGES:**
1. NASPs are very strong—they are always in excess of 100 H-class strength points.
2. NASPs can never be attacked or rendered totally ineffective, except by incompetent use.

**DISADVANTAGES:**
1. NASPs fire only in groups of fours.
   - This is a bother if one wishes to fire smoke, since that requires 25 factors; thus 40 NASPs must be expended for a single smoke shell concentration. This "overkill" is consistent with most naval fire.
2. NASPs are always fired at greater than six hex range, so they are always halted against armored targets, and are sometimes halved again when they are utilized in a direct fire mode against elevated defenders.
3. Indirect fire must be programmed two turns in advance of the usual one. The variables here often cause the fire to be wasted.
4. Finally, these NASPs usually belong to the other guy.

**NOTE:** Though the disadvantages seem to overshadow the advantages, Naval Support Fire is always a victory to the Allies. There are further disadvantages to that kind of power.

**Panzerblitz Assault.** Rule: German infantry units loaded on armoured may unload and assault enemy units that are being overrun.

**ADVANTAGE:** This provides a deadly one-two punch in which infantry advances and attacks like magic so that the Allies must always worry about a double threat to exposed units. The game opponent said, "You can use it if you want to, but you'll never get the chance to." On the final game turn, I did get the chance and it cost him the game.

**DISADVANTAGE:** None... for the Germans.

**Functional Mobility for Turreted AFVs**

(renamed "split-move" in AW) so that we could say it in one breath without becoming tongue-tied. Rule: designated vehicles may fire in the combat phase, then move half of their movement allowance.

**ADVANTAGES:**
1. Units spotted while firing become invisible once again by moving to an unspotted hex. Suddenly, targets become fewer.
2. Units may occupy a hex on the same turn they destroy the enemy units within the hex. This is very useful for taking victory hexes on the final turn of a game.
3. Exploit breakthrough hexes before the enemy can plug the hole—a true blitzkrieg effect.
4. The one-half movement point allowance expenditure for firing does not count toward the one-fourth movement expenditure required for opportunity fire spotting. If it did, much of the attack effectiveness of this rule would be lost, but there would be some delightfully brief and bloody fireworks.
5. Used in conjunction with opportunity fire, units may enable the disadvantage of #3 above in opportunity fire.
6. In a mobile defense or blocking action such as the Allies employ in "Bulge: Thrust" the second player's defensive fire last-move advantage can be exercised every turn, creating a deadly, mobile, firing blockade that retires a single hex per turn and is almost impossible to break except by massive close assault tactics or flanking maneuvers.

**DISADVANTAGE:** I can see none, unless they are applied to individual situations.

**Artillery Field-of-Fire Limitations.** Rule: artillery weaponry fires through only three of six hex sides, according to its facing.

**ADVANTAGE:** Due to the highly restrictive nature of this rule, there is no advantage to the owning player.

**DISADVANTAGES:**
1. Changing a unit's f-o-f may be a problem because the owning player may not be able to afford the time or units necessary to perform the function. Further, in a situation of high unit density, it is easy to change the facing of a unit inadvertently—we've found that a side record with written facings is sometimes necessary to avoid dispute. An interesting addition to this rule is to have the facings secretly recorded, to be disclosed when the unit first fires.

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2. It becomes mandatory to support artillery positions with infantry and to guard the flanks so that key positions will not be rendered ineffective by a fast-moving assault.

**NOTE:** This rule should be employed carefully, as it can seriously impair the balance of a scenario. In "The French Armies" only one type of German infantry have enough vehicular units to turn their guns once the Allies have overrun the artillery positions and moved to the interior. The heavy guns become virtually useless in the crucial closing turns. In addition to this, the facing requirements can create serious gaps in the invasion forces. Despite the obvious realism of this rule, it should be employed only after a careful scrutiny of the consequences. It can become a severe handicap to both sides, especially in a mobile offensive.

**Smoke Shell Concentrations.** Rule: (H) and M class artillery may fire smoke shells, which obscure vision for two turns.

**ADVANTAGES:**
1. SSCs can protect advancing units from all forms of direct fire.
2. Inhibit enemy spotting for indirect fire, thereby subjecting his indirect fire to scatter.
3. Protect units doomed to die in spotted positions.

This can only be used on rare occasions when a player has enough artillery to fire smoke without impunity.

4. This rule may be used with striking effectiveness in conjunction with "split-move." An alert player can create unspotted terrain for his units in open terrain. An opponent once used this combination to advance and eventually take Volle in "Omaha Beach," and I could never use opportunity fire as his armored units jumped from one SSC to the next.

**DISADVANTAGES:**
1. Generals are constrained by the number of factors required to create smoke (25) can often be used elsewhere to better effectiveness and more destructive purposes.
2. Graphically, a playing area cluttered with coins can upset the attractiveness of play as well as the conduct of play itself. At one time, my son took all his pennies back, and my opponent and I found a smoke-free board the next evening when we sought to complete play. It was almost as hectic as the cat eating the counters.

In summation, players should cautiously select the optional rules they employ for a given scenario, and carefully weigh the pros and cons of the consequences of what they have chosen. For example, "The Encirclement of Nancy" is a very even scenario if "split-move" is employed; if opportunity fire is used, however, German chances of victory are reduced to about 5%. Thus options can ruin the continuity of a situation just as easily as they can balance it.

**UNITs AND THEIR CAPABILITIES**

If the units represented in PANZER LEADER are not totally realistic, they do capture the flavor of the period and the opportunities available in a combined arms engagement in varied terrain. I do not seek to analyze weapon-target relationships or peruse the advantages of one unit over its enemy counterpart. Rather, I seek to compliment PL designers on the remaining three (the other being the Australians) for their use of the game, and to a certain extent reveal the qualities of the game which make it my favorite and which will allow it to remain a favorite to all of us.

The increased capacity of PL to cover engineering functions is a true strength of the game. The engineer units themselves are no longer confined to the close assault role, but can now clear minefields, engineer and destroy any minefield, and build bridges. Special engineering vehicles in the Allied force pool give some gleam to the game: the Sherman flail devours minefields, the Valentine bridgelayer makes its own road across streams, and
the Churchill Flame, the grandaddy of all amusement toys, allows the Allied player to toy with the German infantry as they creep forward to close assault.

**PANZER LEADER** also takes air power into account, and not since **RICHARD W. BARON** could we have a plane counter actually representing a single airplane, even though the rules suggest that their use is an abstraction. The part that everyone remembers about airpower is the big KA-BOOM!, the bombs or the rockets of the P47 or Typhoon that go off in a thunderclap. The fighters are real, remember the observation powers of the puny I.5 craft for spotting. Yet the forgotten force is the strafing machine gun, usable four times by each plane. All too often, players withdraw their aircraft after the bombing or rocket runs are over, the machine gun ammo saved for fighter-to-fighter combat that will never occur in the scope of the game. Five planes, especially the P-47's, can create a great deal of consternation within Nazi artillery positions, and a few Typhoons can effectively harass half tracks and weakly defended cities. This untapped wealth is another thing to grow to know a game well, and still another aspect of the flow of play, and they reflect to a degree the tastes of the player involved. These groups transcend the boundaries of size, unit density, time, etc. They concentrate more on what benefit we as players receive when playing the game.

**S&M** as you've accurately predicted, stands for sadism and masochism. One guy always butchers the other, and even when inept players are at work, the outcome is painfully the same. The first of these is "The Reichswald" (6) in which the Allies slog halfway across board D, being ripped to shreds by indirect fire, while trying to conquer Neese, which is strongly fortified and has some pretty nasty indirect fire and artillery f-o-f limitations; then the game is over; the playing area, due to terrain (board A) is often too narrow, since a normal German defense can make the Allied attack channel a single hex wide in places; the German's plethora of infantry promises a bloody defense of Granelles (a key to victory), so each force must take care to minimize losses in the early going. This one usually yields an Allied victory when I play, but the advantage sways back and forth in an exciting and nerve-wracking battle until the endgame. This is a fine situation.

The next is "The Encirclement of Nancy" (7). This one, another of my favorites, offers an end-to-end configuration in which Allied combatants must dash across all of board D and a third of board A to capture Granelles in ten turns. Where "St. Lo" offered a slow mobility that built in intensity, "Nancy" offers a massive charge through mixed terrain in which at least four hexes must be gained per turn, and there are four to six turns where the Germans can only move a single hex. Even though the order of battle favors the Allies, the terrain favors the Germans. This situation allows the use of several tricky tactics which I'll develop later. Further, for those who think the situation unbalanced, try using all options except opportunity fire, and the Allies are clearly at a disadvantage; then the game only slightly favors the Germans.

A third situation in this group is "Bulge: Thrust!" (14). Again the order of battle favors one side (the Germans), but the terrain the other. This is the only battle in which an army is forced to cross the board in its entirety. Yet there are several tricky tactics to be used in this one as well, yet the situation is a fair one with an Allied edge if players are willing to disallow the use of tricky tactic number 2 under "Defensive Action" below. In "Bulge: Thrust!" Panzer Lehr finally meets its match. Well, nobody's perfect.

The intrigue of the Mystery scenarios does not indicate that the outcome is in doubt. Instead, there is something in the setup or victory conditions that make play adventurous until objectives become clearly defined through the course of play. The invasion scenarios are a natural part of this group due to the pre-planning and inverting of units. **"Utah Beach"** (1) asks the Allies to record one of three objectives, before anyone sets up. This is a bit difficult for the German because he must defend all three, while the Allies suddenly magically appear

**ACTION: THE SCENARIOS**

**PANZER LEADER** is rich in that commodity which has been flooding the market of late: variety. Due to the wide range of orders of battle and missions involved, this situation should rarely become a bore, especially with the further opportunities inherent in the macro-game and Roy Easton's several General variants; the avenues really are endless.

It is a simple matter to sit down with a friend and play counters around good-naturedly; it is another thing to grow to know a game well, and still another to play it well. I am still a newcomer to the hobby (seven years experience), but I play two games well and I feel this is as many as any of us except those who "live" the hobby will ever do. To know a game well, one must develop an empathy for it without becoming fanatical. He must learn to participate with the game vicariously, but still look upon it as the simulation it is. In reaching this point with **PANZER LEADER**, I've made some discoveries and judgments worth mentioning.

Though some are highly slanted toward a single side, a sprinkling of optional and experimental rules may smooth things out a bit. There are enough scenarios and options available to offer something to everyone: the static defender, the mobile defender, the aggressor, the conditioner of whatever, with the sort of options you, yes, even the sadist and the masochist. Generally, some judgments can be made concerning each scenario and these are necessarily subjective in nature. By this time most players will have formed prejudices of their own toward the situations; I will add mine to the list, probably meeting disagreement at each step. This is the fate of the turtle; he sticks his neck out wherever he goes.

Far, Allied forces are doomed by any coordinated assault that actually took place during the real battle. "Operation Market: Arnhem" (10), too, captures the flavor of the river assault, depicts the idiotic order from the German high command not to destroy the bridge.

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**THE GENERAL**
four hexes away from the chosen objective with all their forces. The Germans then operate a clothesline defense in hopes that the other troops can arrive in time to save the day. It is like one of those classic John Wayne westerns with the cavalry charging into the foray in the closing moments of battle but (if) Officers and Custer-type ending.

"Omaha Beach" (2) and "Gold Beach" (3) have all the complexities of invasion covered elsewhere in this article. Both games are fun to play, though the Germans are slightly favored if they set up properly. (Pancrasfaust No. 72 gives some sound advice in this area). "Defending Omaha Beach." The other scenario of the Mystery group is "Turning Point: Celles" (17). This is a mystery scenario because there are so many variables in the victory conditions, all involving the elimination of units and the control of the two towns on board C. For example, it is possible for each side to end the game controlling one town, but the Germans would win with a tactical victory over the Allied marginal. Unfortunately, the battle represents the true turning point in the Bulge offensives and the German forces, though powerful, cannot stand up to the Allied pinching attack.

The final play, "Slaughterhouse Five," includes those situations that begin with a fairly high unit density but which suffer a great deal of attrition during the course of play. These bloodbaths are fun to play: it is nice to sit back and count attack factors until the dreaded 4:1 is reached; also, there is a certain majesty when replacing an enemy tank with a flamethrower. There is really a great deal to say in analysis of these situations because they are high-powered slug-fests in the tradition of PANZERBLITZ's "Kursk." As firefighters, they are unrivaled by other scenarios.

"Operation Goodwood" (5) is a massive armored engagement. Since much of the battle takes place on the clear board A, the death rate is high and quickly so, especially when the rocket-armed Typhoons come storming onto the board. It is difficult to balance the game, though. The Allies should win every time unless opportunity fire is available in before crushing him in a powerful counterattack is readily perceived by gamers of early experience. Yet there are about twenty tactics I've learned that may be of help. Many of these are applied to specific situations for purposes of illustration, but can usually be generalized to other applicable scenarios.

TACTICS

Of course no article of import of late lacks a section on tactics, either to demonstrate the obvious to those who "know" or to save others the pain of learning through experience, or to simplify shared ideas in the interest of fostering high quality competition. Much of this article is of a review nature, seeking to interest and compliment a fantastic game, but the play's the thing! What follows is a fairly complete set of tactics that could easily be called "making the rules work for you." Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes. Indeed, expert play often leans on loopholes.

I am ignoring many common sense tactics, since these emerge quickly to all players. Things like enhancing manpower by end game, charging. into the foray in the closing moments of battle but (if) Officers and Custer-type ending. "Omaha Beach" (2) and "Gold Beach" (3) have all the complexities of invasion covered elsewhere in this article. Both games are fun to play, though the Germans are slightly favored if they set up properly. (Pancrasfaust No. 72 gives some sound advice in this area). "Defending Omaha Beach." The other scenario of the Mystery group is "Turning Point: Celles" (17). This is a mystery scenario because there are so many variables in the victory conditions, all involving the elimination of units and the control of the two towns on board C. For example, it is possible for each side to end the game controlling one town, but the Germans would win with a tactical victory over the Allied marginal. Unfortunately, the battle represents the true turning point in the Bulge offensives and the German forces, though powerful, cannot stand up to the Allied pinching attack.

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"Operation Goodwood" (5) is a massive armored engagement. Since much of the battle takes place on the clear board A, the death rate is high and quickly so, especially when the rocket-armed Typhoons come storming onto the board. It is difficult to balance the game, though. The Allies should win every time unless opportunity fire is utilized, in which case the Germans win handily (see the same setup in TACTICS below).

"Operation Garden: Anticlimax" (11) can go either way depending on the quality of set-up and play, and upon how well the players keep track of the board. The Allied forces cannot merge until the enemy is outnumbered on a single board by a 3:1 margin. Generally, the Germans appear to have an edge, but to be honest, I have less experience with this situation than any other.

"The Fortified 'Goose Egg'" (18) accurately lives up to its name. I don't see how the Allies can lose this one (see Tactics below), but it is fun to play and rarely lasts beyond turn five unless the Allies use their AFVs to cover board C. In one game both sides reached four hexes away from the chosen objective with all their forces. The Germans then operate a clothesline defense in hopes that the other troops can arrive in time to save the day. It is like one of those classic John Wayne westerns with the cavalry charging into the foray in the closing moments of battle but (if) Officers and Custer-type ending.

Among quality players, though, it is rare that one finds the opportunity for this tactic.

a. The Old One-Two-Three—This is the most devastating combination of attacks in the game, and somewhere along the line, you should be assured a kill. The old one-two-three is a direct or indirect fire attack, followed by an overrun, and supplemented by a close assault. A series of these, even at 1:1 odds can be as effective as a simple 4:1. Among quality players, though, it is rare that one finds the opportunity for this tactic.

b. The Old One-Two-Three Sneak—This is a variation of the above that catches an opponent off guard and can be quite demoralizing to him. By plotting indirect fire to an empty hex that you feel fairly sure will be enemy occupied on the following turn, you can catch your foe unawares. After many playings of the game, I find more and more opportunity to use this in the place of the former tactic: experienced players just don't leave that many openings.

5. The Enemy-Be-Damned or Hell-Bent-for-Leather Offensive Option—In many situations it is a prime directive to capture territory rapidly, thereby opening up the table. For example, in the "Encirclement of Nancy," Allied M7s must barrel straight down the pipeline in order to rout German forces from Nece and to scavenge any infantry defense on the slopes outside Artain. Figure 5 shows such an effective indirect fire attack at that point. In one game both sides reached four hexes away from the chosen objective with all their forces. The Germans would lose a turn in clearing the vital pathway to Grancelles.
to do anything about it, it is suicidal. This option is not always advisable, but it can often scare an opponent into error.

6. The 88 as an Anti-Personnel Weapon—In the final analysis, the optimum use of any weapon may be something quite different from what you would think. This is an example of how one can use what he has at hand to give himself an edge. In "Bulge: Thrust" the Germans have two 88s that, by the time they are unlimbered, will be ineffective in an attack on Wiln. If they are carried on to St. Athan late in the game, there will not be enough to perform in lieu of destroying the bridges, slowing mored units in a road surrounded by green hexes. The rules prohibit the movement of any vehicle across a green hexside if the hex entered contains three counters. This is more effective than a block because enemy engineers cannot clear the wreckage away (a block would also be effective, but never as terminal). In "Bulge: Thrust" an Allied maneuver of this sort will assure him a win by severing the Wiln-St. Athan forest road. As I mentioned previously, it is best to either put this rule aside where wreckage is concerned, or agree that the Allies will not employ this tactic. It is the only way to ensure a fair encounter.

3. The Over-Stacked Dispersal Block—Sometimes a single hex gains paramount importance in the channel of attack, as CV10 in "Eisenborn Ridge" and DBB6 in "The Encirclement of Nancy." If the aggressive armies ever occupy that single hex with a stack of four units (or three units and a block, etc.), a disruption of those three counters will make the hex impassable to all forces for a game turn, unless a friendly overrun attack can be arranged as a welcoming committee. When the timetable is crucial, even a 1:1 attack is an excellent gamble to take, even a 1:2 is acceptable if the situation warrants it. It is always an error to leave oneself vulnerable in this manner; as the defender, you simply exercise your privilege to show why.

4. The Solid Wall—This defense is actually a double line of friendly units and blocking terrain which halts an enemy advance in the adjacent hexes. It is best exercised in hidden terrain so that direct fire will not reduce the wall to shambles, but sometimes there will be an opportunity to exercise the tactic in the open. There are two superb examples of this defense:

The first occurs in "The Fortified 'Goose Egg"' where an Allied static defense can be developed on the C and D boards, which can be extremely difficult to break because most defenders
A sure way to stall the German offensive in “The Fortified Goose Egg” is a solid wall defense on the reverse slopes of the Atrian hill and in the forest and slopes near Wiln. This figure represents the German turn two movement in a face-to-face game played at GLASCON II. There are many weaknesses on both sides which will not be discussed here, but the Allied wall can be seen to halt the enemy advance. The wall did last until the German turn five, when indirect fire blasted a hole in the Allied line at DX8 and DW8, with Wiln falling in the same turn; however, the Allies on the ensuing turn eliminated the twenty-fifth German unit, yielding a decisive victory, and the opponents called the game. Before the breakthrough, enemy units were successively and successfully pounded by direct and indirect fire; the latter in the form of three M7s, a 155mm M1 howitzer, and an 8 inch howitzer deployed far to the rear.

The second example of this is in the “Encirclement of Nancy.” Figures 9 and 10 show the Nece defense that the Allies will meet on turn two, and illustrate how the “solid wall” can become a mobile blockade to an alert player.

5. The Stream Sneak Blockade—Before discussing the block, it is necessary to say that the stream sneak is an offensive tactic of pushing infantry units across streams at non-bridge hexes to infiltrate enemy lines. The tactic can be easily countered by moving friendly units adjacent to the wet-footed sneakies. Since units in streams cannot attack, the infiltration is effectively foiled—no attacks, no exit.

6. The Fortified City—Only two scenarios use fortification counters. An excellent way to maximize the chances of German victory is to deploy the forts in the cities, since victory conditions depend upon the number of cities controlled at the close of play. A fortified city is very difficult to conquer because of the high defense factor, and only through repeated bombardment and subsequent close assault will a city fall.

7. The Fortified Bridge—A variation of the fortified city is the bridge. Since “control” of a bridge is defined as controlling not only the bridge itself but two hexes, one on either side of the bridge, it is very nasty to place a fort in an adjacent hex, especially if the hex is forested. PL aficionados will immediately know that I’m talking about hex BG9 in “Gold Beach.” It is not good to actually fortify the bridge itself (the title is misleading), for then the fort would be exposed to direct naval fire.

8. The Wagon-on-the-Fort Trick—In “Omaha Beach,” initial naval indirect fire can be devastating to an exposed bunker. There are 320 factors available that could hit a fort at 4:1, almost insuring a kill. But that first turn indirect fire must be programmed prior to any German unit deployment; therefore, if a single wagon is placed on top of the exposed position, Allied indirect fire will be
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cut in half as per the odds determination rules for indirect fire. In this manner, the wagon will be hit at a solemn 80:1, while the fort is hit with a liveable 2:1, having a single chance of elimination. This is really unrealistic, but no more so than the 3-3-6's in STALLINGRAD that hold an entire army at bay. We must learn to make the rules work for us.
9. The Empty Fort Play—It is always a pleasure to see an enemy blast away at an empty fortress, wasting his ammunition as well as his patience. The situation arises when artillery is deployed in a carrier beside the fort and out of the enemy line of sight. This way if the fort dies on the first turn, the carrier trucks the artillery off to a new location. Be careful with this one! In one game, my fort was only disrupted, and as my 88-loaded wagon slipped into the hex, it was annihilated by naval opportunity fire. There seems to be a sneaky counter maneuver for every dirty trick.
10. Understanding the Options—A good player always examines the victory conditions of a situation with a hawk’s eye. After much competition, new ideas will still continue to pop up and say, “Here I am.” In “Utah Beach,” the Allies get to choose from three objectives. Since the Germans cannot effectively defend all three, they can elect to gamble a bit by defending only two of the objectives, thereby giving themselves more of a defensive punch. The only problem is that the undefended hexes would be the enemy’s objective, which could be a bad surprise. If the German commander likes to take a long shot, he can almost assure a win if he defends a single objective and his guess turns out to be correct. How lucky are you?
11. Channeling—It is possible to force the enemy to move where it suits you best, to mold his attack and lead him into traps as if you had a hand in controlling his forces. There is always this factor in a solid defensive set up, but even a fluid engagement can be changed radically. In “St Lo” for example, the Allies have a choice of victory conditions. They must either capture all of Grancelles, or they must capture half of that city and all of the other cities on board A (Caverge, Kuhn, and Sambleu). Caverge can be easily conquered, but Kuhn and Sambleu lie well behind enemy lines. Since the Allies needn’t declare an objective, they can change their minds at any point, according to the opportunities which present themselves during play. It is, therefore, in the best German interest to choose his own victory conditions for him by channeling his attack and defending in force.

By beginning the game with the German engineer deployed on the single bridge hex at AI2, bridge demolition is almost guaranteed by turn four. A blocking action of any consequence will shield the engineer from attack, and just prior to blowing the bridge, blocking units can race to safety so they will not be snared in their own trap. The block itself grows simpler as time passes because the channel narrows considerably as it approaches the bridge. After the demolition, German units will reach Grancelles from the rear to bolster the city defense.

The effect of all this is that the only way the Allies can gain access to Kuhn and Sambleu, the rear area cities, is to blast through Grancelles. By blowing the bridge, the German has forced the Allies to satisfy one set of victory conditions before they have a chance to try for the alternative. Knowing the enemy’s plans can make the defense much stronger.

A similar rotten trick can be performed in “Turning Point: Celest” if all German units evacuate one city and dash off to defend the second in a ploy to win a tactical victory.

12. Increasing Defense Factors—Many situations involve city control for victory. The rules tend to favor units defending in a city because all defense factors are combined, and the units receive the plus-one die roll bonus. Thus a stack of rifle platoons could defend at 24-32 rather than at the individual printed factor. Unless the enemy can amass a tremendous armored offensive, the city is almost invulnerable. Assuming three German rifle platoons and an engineer occupy a hex, the Allies must muster 136 armored attack factors to get a two-thirds chance of a kill. Sometimes the task is attempted with indirect fire. Using the same four units as before, 240 attack points are needed to produce a series of 4:1s. This is one of the few times that high stacks can be dreadfully effective.

13. Minimizing the Air-Artillery Threat—Peshy fighter bombers can put a thorn in any German setup. Often the threat can be neutralized for a time by carefully plotting artillery “pockets” that are easily defended by anti-aircraft weaponry. “Bastogne: Siege” is a great situation to give this a try. Figure 11 presents a sample pocket from this scenario. It can be attacked, but it can also be defended.

14. Changing the Odds of Victory Through Stacking—Again, this is a gambit of questionable nature, depending on the course of play. In “Remagen Bridge” German units can be sacrificed so that the Allied close assaults and block removal threat can be better countered. The wrecks count for stacking purposes and can seriously limit the enemy attack threat within Artain. It is difficult for the Allies to mount a serious CAT threat when they can only muster two units in a single hex. Before the situation card was corrected to include only two German halftracks, it was possible to fritter away all three on the block on the Artain Bridge, thus making it impossible for the Allies to win because an engineer must enter the hex to clear the block, and he couldn’t do that since the stacking was already at max. At any rate, the technique is normally suited to a congested situation.

15. Shortening the Game by One Turn—This is actually not a tactic per se; it is more a perception of the definition of “control” as it works within a sequential movement system. Many scenarios, even the macro-game, determine victory by control, which is defined “if at least one friendly unit occupies, or is the last to enter or pass through . . .” It is normally the burden of the offensive player to capture these hexes, while the defender sits and waits for the attack to come. It should therefore be apparent after the first player’s fire phase in the last turn, that if a hex in question is still occupied by enemy units, the game is over. Furthermore, on the turn prior to that, if spotting units can be eliminated or disrupted, the game ends an entire turn in advance since no attack on the victory hex would be possible. Use of “split-move” will alter the finality of this somewhat in situations like “The Encirclement of Nancy,” but in those like “The Reichswald” there can be no reprise.

AN AFTERWORD

In trying to capture the flavor of PANZER LEADER, the qualities that will make it stand the test of time and continue to permit its system to be enjoyed by all of us, I’ve come to the realization that as a person settles into a favorite game, it becomes more to him than a simple simulation. I’d use terms like “empathy,” “understanding,” “participating with,” and “vicious” to describe the course of play. And now I add still another: catharsis. Though the term is usually applied to Greek theater, it can also be applied to the dramatic action of wargaming interplay when opposing forces meet in simulated battle.

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FIGURE 11—The artillery “pockets” can often minimize the threat of Allied aircraft. In this deployment, anti-aircraft weapons are positioned so that bomber attacks on the larger guns must be within half range, doubling the AA weapon’s attack factors. Units are also deployed one to a hex so that multiple eliminations will not occur in a single hex. Granted, some units are deployed unrealistically, surrounded by green hexes so that they are stuck until the end of time according to the rules, but this is necessary to keep the artillery in a concave group. There are two weaknesses to this setup: 1) Allied L5 observation craft can spot the artillery for indirect fire with a small chance of disruption (one in six); 2) in such a congested area, enemy indirect fire can be subjected to scatter and still do a great deal of harm.
THE SHIPS OF WAR AT SEA
A Look Behind The Names On The Counters

Kevin Duke's analysis of WAR AT SEA is different from others we've seen because he plays the game with the optional hidden movement. Besides changing the play balance quite drastically, I don't care for this version because it emphasizes luck far more strongly. "What?", you say, "he's talking about luck in Yatizze at Sea? For all its dice rolls, WAS is an excellent game of strategy for those who like to ponder probability. Adding the "fog of war" with Hidden Movement may be more realistic, but it reduces the German to playing a guessing game. Nevertheless, for those who disagree or wonder about the fate of the ships behind the counters, Kevin's article makes interesting reading.

WAR AT SEA may need only time to become a "classic". While very abstract instead of "realistic", it still combines ease and brevity with play of lots of excitement and may well be a gamer's most oft-played game. One of its attractions is that, though in a simple form, you have in your hands many famous ships to do with as you will. You also have many ships that aren't so famous. While we all know what happened to Bismarck and Hood, there are many other worthy stories involved with the ships of WAR AT SEA. While making a general appraisal of each ship's value in the game, I'll try to give a little flesh to the bones of an unfamiliar ship name.

It should be noted that I advocate using the optional rules concerning "hidden" British movement and U-boat replacements (but not the Bismarck reduction). With the German able to pick where the battles will be, the knowledge of exactly what is where is a large advantage. However, you will notice that, with the "Abandon Med" strategy, I think the British have the advantage. "Hidden" movement gives them yet more of an advantage, but, I still think it makes for a more interesting game. If you find the British win too frequently, you might drop hidden movement or up the Mediterranean POC to 3 (though definitely retaining the face-down British counters, for now their back will be to the wall.)

THE BRITISH

One of the oldest principles in British warship design was that a large number of good ships was better than a few outstanding ones. With an enormous amount of sea area to defend against enemies that could pretty much pick where they wanted to attack, numbers were the answer, for they could have some ships there to battle with the enemy, with the possibility of reinforcements. This fits the British in WAS quite well as a "T". While they have nothing "big and ugly" like the Bismarck, anywhere you stick your Axis bow you're likely to find lots of things that shoot with 4 dice. It's grim for the player on the right. For the British, while game mechanics do not allow the concept of reinforcements, this is approximately conveyed in the idea that anyone in the sea area will be in the battle. So you must follow your historical precedent. NEVER GIVE THE GERMANS A FREE SEA. Many new players, having been mauld by a skillful German, will try to marshal a respectable force in some areas and abandon others. Making exaggerated remarks about cowardly "krauts" will seldom draw them to you. You can expect them to take the freebie. Indeed, with enough strength, the Axis player may take the open area _and_ attack someplace else. The one exception to this is the Mediterranean Sea.

It will be pretty clear that I advocate the British using the "abandon Mediterranean" strategy. It isn't very historic, but then, neither is total Italian reaction, and WAS is a game of "What might have been" (in games where the German player is running amuck with the POC counter peaking on 10, it even seems odd to lose France to an "invasion" he has no opportunity to prevent). The British fleet spread over five seas (so, if perhaps minus the Mediterranean) has a "sticky wicket" indeed. Dividing his fleet four ways instead of five, and dodging six (eventually eight) Italian "4s" is pretty much worth giving up two POC a turn. If you successfully stomp Jerry and the RAF whittles down two or three BBs you may go down and reck with the "Eyties". Keep your eyes open for a chance to do it on turn three or four (like if the Germans have lost or damaged much of their fleet and aren't likely to go anywhere but the Baltic this turn) where you can either smash the Italians or at least deny them the four-in-a-row control of the Med they need to stay intact on turn eight.

THE SHIPS

Old BBs: the 4-4-3s

Keep them home. Their speed gives them only a 1/3 chance of making it two areas, and that just isn't good enough. You have lots to keep them busy in the North Sea and Atlantic so keep them busy, instead of sitting in port.

For ships that should have been retired before the war began, the "R" class had an exciting time of it. Royal Oak sank in Scapa Flow from Gunther Prien's U-47 in almost the opening days of the war. She still rests there, undisturbed, as a war memorial. Rambled lost a little Atlantic escort duty before being sent to bolster things in the Pacific, where it was promptly torpedoed by a Japanese midget sub near Madagascar. It managed to survive the rest of the war quietly. Resolution was torpedoed by a French sub and nearly sank. Revenge was commissioned in WWI (all but Jutland) and modernized into faster ships between the wars. Still obsolete, their WWII careers ran the gamut from fabulous to awful. Warspite took more battle honors then any British ship in the war, showing up just about anywhere there was action. Crippled by glider bombs at Salerno, it still made it back in time to shell the beaches at Normandy. Barham backed it up in the battle (more of an execution) of Cape Matapan but was sunk in the Med by U-boats, a fate Malaya nearly shared, though she managed to limp back to port. Valiant and the Queen Elizabeth both saw no major action and were sunk in the Med by German frogmen. Valiant was raised, but the Queen Elizabeth was too far gone.

The 16-inchers: Rodney and Nelson

These 5-5-3s are the "meat" of the British line. You'd like to park them both next to Bismarck and then next to Tippiez. In other words, where you expect the Germans to go, send these. Nowadays, we can give a little more attention to details. Built to strict treaty limitations these ships sacrificed speed and conventional layout in order to get hit ships on the grounds that 'A' ship threat is a "legal" ship. But speed is a problem. Too valuable to spend any time sitting in the harbor, these ships represent the "gutsiest" speed roll the British have, and one you might not want to try.

In action, the Rodney's pounding of the Bismarck is legendary. While the German ship looked nearly forever to sink, the 16 inch shells from the Rodney (with some notable 14 inch assistance from the King George) had reduced it to an armor-plated island long before then. Seeing everyone else torpedosing what was left of Bismarck, the Rodney remembered that it had one submerged tube on each side and went into Guiness as the only battleship to torpedo another battleship. Nelson had a less glorious career, finding a mine early in the war and an Italian aerial torpedo later on. Both ships used their 16 inch guns at Normandy, and survived the war.

If you're playing an unfamiliar opponent and have both old and new BBs in a fight, you might try to "sacrifice" the old ones where possible. Some Germans, faced with BBs doubling up on their ships, lose interest in exactly which BB they shoot at, as long as they're parked next to one of them. It's a slim chance, but costs nothing to try. Some may see it differently, however, for much of WAS centers on a ship's ability to "live" through one hit. You might want to put your "hit" ships in the danger spots, and the German might want to shoot at your "hit" ships. It's a situation that there is less chance he'll have to shoot at them again. This is pretty much up to player preference, but don't just be impressed with a "pretty face". Consider what's going on in this battle and what you and your opponent will need in future battles.

Old BBs: the 4-4-4s

Also too slow to do much travelling, but somebody has to do it. They have a 50-50 chance of going two seas, so it's a "Do you feel lucky?" situation. When Russia enters the game, you might "straddle" a couple of these on the Murmansk run, for the Barents tend to get pretty warm when the convoys come through (or try to).
**Roynl King**

and firepower, you never have enough of these. They have a good chance of surviving one hit. These trouble spots, and sent to relieve the “Barents Sea.”

**Atlantic convoy escort** and more than one V-boat. All three were sent to the Pacific eventually. Eagle was a sentimental favorite with many and a contemptible mongrel with others (mostly stung Germans). It was built on a hull intended as a battleship for Chile, which may somewhat explain giving it a fire factor for nine 6 inch guns. Still, it makes things interesting. Eagle did a lot of duty ferrying fighters to Malta before being sunk by U-73 in mid-42.

**THE GERMAN**

Why Hitler, land animal that he proclaimed himself to be, went along with building big expensive ships is a mystery. Obtaining the treaty to be able to was a diplomatic victory, but actually doing so may have been a blunder. Still, with the force he had the Germans posed a moderate threat to the “English lifeline” (though, historically, the English have regarded German canoes as threats to their lifeline.) Hitler claimed he couldn’t sleep when the capital ships were at sea, though you wouldn’t think he’d have lost much sleep as infrequently as that happened. Tirpitz tired its guns offensively only to bombard the defensive base at Spitzbergen. Mostly, the ships sat in port and had bombs dropped on them. As the German commander, you have to keep the British off-balance— if at all possible. Use oilers, France, U-boats, slugh-together and anything else you can think of to keep from spending the game blockaded, facing tall stacks of ships in the North and Barents Sea.

Many consider W.A.S’S to be balanced slightly (or more than slightly) in favor of the Germans. I disagree. Mind you, I enjoy playing the Axis (it being more interesting to direct the game rather than to “divvy” up the fleet and wait for “them” to come to you) but I think the Germans have to be lucky. The problem is, you’re playing an opponent who is only too happy to trade losses with you, ship for ship. You need to “dodge” his first salvo and blow him away with yours. If you can inflict casualties early, keep your fleet intact, and avoid being blockaded, you can indeed stretch the Royal Navy thin and defeat them in detail. But, you’ll undoubtedly note that a lot of “ils” you need an early lead, as the convoys represent some quick points for the British to gain from. The German that wins a sea on turn one at the cost of both BCS and a couple of others will have a rough time of it. Remember, the British have a history of losing battles and winning wars.

**THE GENERAL**

New BBs: 4-5-6s

The best British combination of speed, armor and firepower, you never have enough of these, while the German is certain you have too many. They have a good chance of surviving one hit. These are the British "marines" that can be rushed to the trouble spots, and sent to relieve the “Barents Sea Patrol” that got squashed last turn. Prince of Wales accompanied Hood when they met Bismarck and had to move to avoid what was left of Hood. Being heavily damaged herself, she remembered the bit about discretion and left. After repair she went to the far east with Repulse and learned what the Japanese thought about gunboat diplomacy. King George V fought beside Rodney against Bismarck, while Duke of York slowed a fleeing Scharnhorst down enough for that ship to be sunk with gunfire and torpedoes. Anson and Howe came along after things had quieted down and saw no major sea action. These ships were armed with ten 14 inch guns, dubbed “special” at the time to drown out questions about what seemed to be a step backwards in armor. Though adequate, they were modeled after WWI guns and little different.

As much as you may have a tendency to sail these fast ships together, there is reason to use some with the old BBs that patrol close to home. While POCs are the name of the game, sinking enemy ships and/or keeping your own afloat are a big part of that. The German may stick his bow into a sea of British and not like what turns over. Any things.

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**The BBs:** 3-3-6s and a 4-4-7

Not quite as powerful nor as well defended as the old BBs, their speed makes them highly valuable with the old BBs, their speed makes them highly valuable "broadside" in an inconclusive action with the German is left to wonder whether that stack of all cruisers or worse.

Cruiser speed is also useful when the German has decided he's had enough and chooses to leave. But, don't be too careless with your little ships. You have eight of them, but the German would be only too happy to reduce that for you. If you have several ships, it's probably a good idea to chase the enemy, but a cruiser to cruiser pursuit had best be considered for a long time, for your battle report is likely to read, "We chased the enemy, and, unfortunately, we caught them."

The "counties" show up a great deal in action reports. Exeter we all remember fought Graf Spee at River Plate, ending up out of three turrets. Despite its heroics at River Plate, the Exeter was not a very good design, to the point where it was said, "The Exeter looked like it was designed for Britain to sell to another country that they would immediately declare war on." It went down in the Battle of the Java Sea. Dorsetshire joined it about the same time near Ceylon. Kent and Cumberland managed to avoid any major actions, though Cumberland was on the "reception committee" waiting for Graf Spee. Norfolk served its time out on Barents convoy duty and joined Duke of York in sinking Scharnhorst. Devonshire managed some prestigious activity, transporting the King of Norway (and the crown jewels) to England and sinking the Q-ship Atlantis. Suffolk was the first ship to sight Bismarck and shadowed it the whole trip. Sussex was bombed during refit in 1940 and sat out the next two years.

The carriers

Carrier use in W.A.S is pretty straightforward. You always want some, but it's unwise to have more than you "need" (if the German has four ships left you and put 7 or 8 airstrike in one sea, you have 46 airplanes) and carriers that might be lost). Carriers are a thorn in the side of German players, always likely to disable (send away), sink, or damage (and thereby destroy the gunnery advantage) your ships, usually the most important ones before battle is joined. Little is more enjoyable to Axis players than the opportunity to send 4-5-6s of their own carriers home (though disabling one instead of sinking it will usually cause much profanity!), while the relief to Allied folk of removing Bismarck's 11 is far better than Rolands. Carriers mean death to U-boats, and even the Eagle gets three die (which, together with its air strike and gunnery factor make it a nice North Atlantic convoy escort) and more than one U-boat stack in the hidden game has swept upon a small stack of ships to "rob" a POC and found a multi-carrier trap.

Ark Royal is the best. It has the speed to get there and lots of airplanes. Use it where you can use all of it. Quite good for Barents support or if you swoop down on the Italians, but, beware. You can count on outranking airstrike and surviving submarines. In the war, it was Britain's only "real" carrier when the festivities began (Glorious and Courageous were conversions) and may be best known for the lucky rudder hit one of its "Swordfish" delivered on Bismarck that kept it from escaping. It was sunk in the Med by the same U-81 that almost sank Malaya.

Glorious and Courageous are slower and weaker but still quite handy. The low defense factor might reflect their bad luck, for Courageous was sunk by U-39 in September, 1939 (during the "phoney war") and Glorious had an even less glorious end as it actually was chased down and dispatched off Norway by Scharnhorst and Gneisenau. Illustrious, Victorious, and Formidable are a bit stronger and a bit faster and can team up with the carriers for interesting results. A few times, I'm told, what I was explaining giving it a fire factor for nine 6 inch guns. Still, it makes things interesting. Eagle did a lot of duty ferrying fighters to Malta before being sunk by U-73 in mid-42.

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THE SHIPS

**Bismarck and Tirpitz**

Bismarck and Tirpitz are the bogy men of *WAR AT SEA*. Some feel the nine defense factor is too high. However, despite countless torpedo hits and *Redeye* and *Kettergull* pounding away at 200 yards, there are reports that Bismarck was actually scuttled to prevent boarding. Either way, it took an enormous amount of damage. Tirpitz was the focal point of 22 planned attacks, including carrier planes, midget subs, and heavy bombers with special bombs. In game terms, these are your main special bombs. In game terms, these are your main

**Many German ships**

...say that their most ignoble end of all—she was the one that the least chance of making it two seas. Should you feel strong enough to attack someplace else and want to get a "freebie" POC for the Baltic, use one of these.

**CA: the 1-2-7s**

Good but overworked. They often end up having to plug it out with battlehips, a habit with dim prospects. Like the British, the Germans would love to have more of these (but, the Germans would love to have more anything).

**Historically, Blucher**

...was just as good as the British, though a little more... 

**CV: the 1-2-8**

Graf Zeppelin never quite made it, though why is a complicated matter. Much of it hinges on the fact that Goering demanded that anything that flew came under Luftwaffe jurisdiction. Hitler questioned the value of a carrier, but later ordered his capital ships to never sail into opposition if the British might have carriers. The Zeppelin was kind of an on-off-again throughout the war, and was perhaps 90% finished. The Russians took it as a reparation and loaded it so full of other "repas" that it sank in a storm on the way to Stettin. It is the fastest ship in the game, and needs to be. The British prove remarkably unwilling to let anyone else have carriers. One troublesome question that might arise is whether to commit the Zeppelin to asurface battle after the air attacks are over. If there are lots of British, you might not have to trouble long over this, as they will most certainly come after you. If you do have a choice, consider it carefully. You might try adding its shot to someone else's except that the British will most likely want to switch targets from your cruiser to your only carrier. What it boils down to is what part of the game you are debating. If it's the last turn, there is little cause for thought, for that is all or nothing, something to keep in mind the farther the game goes along. Weigh the point spread. Do your math carefully on the last couple turns. You may be able to let the convoy through and still win by denying POC with U-boats and sailing into the Baltic, for example. "Was" is one of the few games wherein victory is occasionally clearly predictable. Do your adding and subtracting, and grimly devilish if you can sail out of reach and win by one point.

**CA: the 1-1-7s**

These are the Italian "gnats" that can leave the often abandoned Med and give some aid to the Germans, who need it. They are gnats only compared to the German ships though, and they can be quite useful at "back-dooring" the British, but if they try it alone, there may be no more "gnats".

**The General**

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**Oilers**

...while protecting from damage when far from base, but they had little or no chance against a full battlehip, as the *Scharnhorst*'s demise demonstrated. *Gneisenau* had perhaps the most ignoble end of all—she was scuttled, with two turrets going to defend the Norwegian coast and one to Denmark.
after dark, and were found by Warpite and Barham at close range. Then there was one. Gorizia spent much of the war repairing torpedo damage. Captured by the Germans after the capitulation, it was sunk by Italian frogmen, this time on the other side.

Old BBs: 4-3-5s

These modernized WWI ships are a little hard to classify, for they come out like light battleships or slow battle cruisers. While not great ships, there are lots of them. Di Cavour was sunk and Cai Dullio damaged at Taranto. Doria Cesarea was the only one to see a major action, and that the inconclusive Calabria. Cesarea and Dullio were both surrendered. All had ten 12.6 inch guns.

New BBs: 4-6-6s

Excellent ships. The two that the Italians begin with are largely responsible for the British reluctance to tangle with the Med, while the two get late in the game can make the end interesting.

Littorio was sunk at Taranto but raised in time to see action in the second battle of Sirte. Vittorio Veneto was damaged at Cape Matapan and saw several small actions. Both, together with the not quite complete Impero, surrendered. Roma was commissioned just in time to surrender but, on the way to Malta, she was hit by a "mistleto" radio-controlled bomb and sank. In defense of the Italian Navy, the smaller vessels—destroyers, torpedo boats, and the like—fought with great gallantry, often against heavy odds. One foul-up for the Italians was Mussolini's insistence that the Med islands would be Italy's "aircraft carrier". As you can't sink an island, it might not have been a bad idea, had not the Air Force controlled all the planes. For Italy was mired in the same kind of bureaucratic rivalries that Germany was.

MINOR NAVIES

Referring to the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. as "minor" seems a bit odd, but in WAR AT SEA, such is the case. The U.S. ships have little or no control of. The Allied player is at the mercy of the die rolls, with his only options being the nearly inconceivable act of not sinking some of the American ships that have been "released". The American ships really do help, for they uphold their historic function of freeing British ships to go elsewhere. The Russians are good only for unpredictable nuisance raids. The Germans can steal the POC with a U-boat or two, or, if he's lying low this turn, may send ships in to "remove" the problem, though enormous cackling will take place should the Russians manage to sink (or even damage) a German ship.

AMERICANS

The Americans are, frankly, your most expendable ships. The Germans might not bother them at all in the North Atlantic, but, if they do, use them as much as you can. Put them in the front line of battle and give them every possible shot. It's likely to be rather late in the game, and this is no time for conserving people who may not get another shot. If you run the Germans out of the North Atlantic, pursue with anything you have. It may seem suicidal (and probably is) to pursue several Germans with Wichita, but it should be considered, particularly if German U-boat strength is weak (where the lost ASW attack would not be missed as much). That extra die roll could damage (or even sink) a ship when things are coming down to the wire.

The Washington was commissioned in 1942. It began escorting convoys in the Atlantic, and even went into the Barents a couple times. Modernized in 1943, it went to the Pacific and helped sink the Kirishina in Iron Bottom Sound.

Texas came out in 1941 and nearly became an "incident" in June, 1941, when it was attacked by a U-boat near Greenland. It escaped to be used for shore bombardment in North Africa and Okinawa, and now rides in harbor as a tourist attraction. Yorktown was one of the few American ships to actually fire on what was left of the French Navy during the North Africa landings, and also bombarded Normandy and Southern France. Wichita began in the Pacific, but came east in time to bombhard North Africa and became one of the few American ships to be struck by French shore fire. It then went back to the Pacific.

RUSSIANS

Dreadnoughts

The Murat and the Oktiabrskaya Revoloutia (now you know why they abbreviated the title on the counter) were old ships dating back to the days of the Czar, intended to be scrapped as unworthy of the soviet nation and kept only after it was noticed that there wasn't much of anything else that floated. They served primarily as shore bombardment ships in the areas around Leningrad, and did a good job of it. In STUKA PILOT Hans Rudel claims personally sinking the Marat, while the Russians, with their interesting idioms, list it as "damaged by aircraft and later raised." The Revoloutia played "one-man fleet in being" for the better part of the rest of the war, aided by some of the most concentrated anti-aircraft fire in history situated around Leningrad harbor, where every available space, including the concrete submarine net floats, had AA guns.

CONVOYS

Undoubtedly the most important pieces in the game, convoys represent a possible NINE Points of Control to an Allied player who normally gets points one at a time. Protecting them or sinking them will dominate the players' attentions the last half of the game. With escort carriers and other ships, U-boats seldom live long enough to get a shot at one, and it often fails to the Luftwaffe to succeed or fail, for, unless the Allies have been thoroughly mauled, they will mass unbeatable strength to escort

A SHIP BY ANY OTHER NAME

Some of the names of the ships of War At Sea are familiar as historical figures, places, etc., but many are not. Here they are the who, what, and where of the names (though I'll skip the Americans, since if you don't have any idea what Texas and Wichita come from you're beyond my help).

BRITISH

Most of the British ship names have been British ship names for a long time. It's part of the tradition. There was a Royal Oak at Trafalgar (the name makes more sense, doesn't it?) as well as a number of others in the game. The oldest name in the game is the Revenge, the tenth ship of that name going back to 1575. Eagle takes the prize for repetition (the 20th, going back to 1592) but that's only for W/A/S participants. During the same period there was a gunboat named Falcon, the 28th ship of that name, going back to 1212. Nelson, Rodney, Hood, Anson, and Howe were all admirals during the age of sail though Anson and Howe were originally named Beauty and Jellicoe. An Admiral Hood also died at Jutland when his inaptly named BC Invincible blew up. Fate has a grim sense of humor.

GERMANS

The German capital ships were all named after historical figures from all over Germanic (not just German) history. With little naval heritage, it isn't surprising that there were people with little or no connection to the sea. We remember Bismarck as the Iron Chancellor. Tirpitz created the High Seas Fleet, and might well have changed history had not Kaiser Bill decided he wanted to play with his ships himself.

Those who play Waterloo remember Blucher, the Prussian leader. His cavalry commander there was Lutzow (the ship was originally named Deutschland, but Hitler feared the morale drop if "Germany" was sunk, which rather explains why no ship was named Adolph Hitler) and August von Greisenau organized the Prussians' orderly retreat at Ligny (give him credit for the arrival of the 4th corps). Gerhard Scharnhorst organized the Landwehr and rebuilt the Prussian army after the collapse at Jena. Prince Eugene of Savoy (French born) served with the Austrian army and is credited with stopping the Turkish threat to Europe. Hipper, Schnee, and Spee were WWI admirals, Spee commanding (and dying with) the East Asiatic Squadron and the other two staying closer to home. Count Zeppelin we remember from the big silver cigars.

ITALIAN

The Italian old BBs were historical figures. Guilio Cesarea needs only his brain Julius Caesar to be familiar. Cai Dullio is better known as the Roman general Caius Duillus, who defeated the Carthaginian fleet by grappling the ships together and pretending it was a land battle. Andrea Doria was a ship captain, credited with inventing the submarine, and now rides in harbor as a tourist attraction. Count Zeppelin we remember from the big silver cigars.

For the new BBs, Vittorio Veneto was the site of the last decisive battle to drive out the Australians at the end of WWI. Littorio was Mussolini's first big land reclamation project (ANZIO players might remember the Bonifica Pontine swamp). Both Andrea Doria and Zeppelin were ports straight to forward. The cruisers are all towns in an Italian town that only took from Austria-Hungary after WWI, in what is now Yugoslavia.
the convoys to Murmansk. Keeping this in mind, the German player should keep open the options of attacking somewhere else when the tall stacks ride in the Barents, for control of any other sea will cancel out the convoy points. With the Med, possibly the Baltic, and U-boats robbing a POC somewhere else, the Germans may stay even or gain a point at a time when the Allies might well need lots of them.

LAND-BASED AIRPOWER

Probably the most cursed counters in the game. You curse your opponents when they are successful and your own when they are not. A curious thing happens when the British abandon the Med. The airplanes lose a large part of their significance. Unless the Germans stay in port, the RAF has little to do but try to whittle-down the Italians, perhaps with no purpose, while, the Luftwaffe has little place to go but the Barents, a place less attractive to the Germans because of its low point value. Often the airplanes end up with nothing but “turkey shooting” secondary to a major sea battle elsewhere. Knowing this, you might as well make the most of it. Many players attack the best ships in an area. This may not be the best idea. Best often means strongest, and damaged ships have a way of coming back later. British turkey shooting in the Med might better focus on the cruisers, which he may face elsewhere, or the old battleships, which he has a 50/50 chance of sinking with one hit. German Barents planes might focus on the battle-cruisers or, more enjoyable, the carriers, though once the British gets a revenge on the Murmansk run, that has to return where the repair facilities are poor, it might be humorous to give him a string of damaged ships.

GETTING IT OFF MY CHEST DEPT.

Are you one of many who enjoy War at Sea and tire easily of those who continually cry, “not realistic!” I am. Take the rules to one of these perceptive types and read him the introduction, placing added stress on the lines which read, “simple simulation… only in the broadest sense…” and dismisses much attention to detail… IS NOT REALISTIC AS A NORMAL… WARGAME… The result is a highly playable, and easy game which is fun to play.” Smile sweetly and ask, “Are you illiterate or do you just not believe Avalon Hill?”

I don’t mind attempts at variations about nearly anything, and we have seen a number of WAS variations on these same pages. But, most of them feel a need to justify themselves by saying, “The game is not realistic.” Richard Bauer’s “Tourna ment” game is an example of the end product, with a sequence of play with 9 phases and 26 segments. I rest my case. Those who insist in decrying an enjoyable game may go and tinker with chess, Monopoly, or crazy eights.

BISMARCK VARIANT SEARCHBOARDS

Readers wishing to play the Battle of the River Plate variation may order additional searchboards for the modest sum of $1.00 each. Merely send us your request for the “BISM ARCK VARI AN SEARCHBOARD” and your check for $1.00 per board plus 10¢ postage and handling. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax. NOTE: This variant offer does not include diecut counters.

DER FUHRER

By Alan R. Moon

“I’m leaving now dear”, she yells from the door.

“Okay, don’t spend too much money”, you yell back.

You listen. The car engine starts. She peeks out the window. She’s backing out of the driveway. You cringe as she just misses the garage can. Easy. Make sure. Watch till she’s out of sight. Wait. Gone!

The attic. In a dark corner, the package you picked up at General Delivery yesterday. Ahhh, General Delivery. The man who invented General Delivery must have been a man much like yourself. You can have your packages delivered there, pick them up in the morning, and bring them home at lunchtime while she’s at work.

The package seems slightly mussed, as if someone had moved it. Or opened it. Her? Nah. Must have done it yourself. Doubtful, though. Hmmm.

In the bedroom, you think of her, as you always do in this room. Not a bad wife. And so forgiving. That Christmas three years ago, when you were awakened to the Spike Jones record, “When the Der Fuhrer says we are the master race, Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil, right in the Fuhrer’s face”. Yet she still forgave you for slapping her and breaking the record. And her intentions had been good. She had thought you would like it. Anyway, she promised not to buy you any more records.

In front of the full-length mirror, you hold the shirt up to your body. It’s beautiful. The buttons need shining and the color is a little faded, but it’s beautiful. You undress.

Your fingers tremble as you button the blouse. Your knees quiver as you slip on the pants. Your lip begins to twitch as you feel the weight of the boots. You feel your strength multiply as you pull the laces tight. The hat is a crown.

You stand before the mirror. The runes are lightning on your shoulder. The black is the black of evil that lurks within. The black order. The skull and crossbones are the fate that awaits those who oppose you. The swastika is fear. The uniform itself is ruthless. Must remember to polish those buttons.

Now you shall have the respect you deserve. The Fourth Reich is coming. The boy from Baltimore. Abruptly, the door behind you opens. You freeze. Panic begins to set in as you stare at your wife through the mirror. You struggle for control.

You look at her. She is wearing a peasant dress. Austrian, maybe. Calmly, you turn to face her. “Sieg Heil”, you scream, as you salute.

She falls to her knees, arms raised towards you. “Mein Kampf.”

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 1/2 x 1” strips into half inch squares and apply them to the unit counters which came with your game. The result is a 1/4” thick counter which will stack six high even when the mapboard is mounted in a vertical position for display purposes. Never worry about that phm move 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 90¢ a foot or $7.50 for ten feet. Unmounted mapboards are available upon request for $6.00 apiece. Usual postage charges apply, as does the 5% state sales tax for Maryland residents.
TANKS, FOR THE MEMORIES
The Scenarios, with Notes, for the Origins II Tobruk Tournament by David Fram

The purpose of this article is to give those Tobruk freaks out in the Great American Heartland who couldn't attend the Second National Wargaming Convention a chance to see what they missed, and also give them some new, "official" scenarios to mull over.

First some comments on the tournament overall. When 3 o'clock rolled around on a sweltering Saturday afternoon at the convention, the tournament directors discovered that only thirty-two of the sixty-four conventioners who had registered for Tobruk had shown up. This conveniently made our first round cut, and shaved at least an hour off of the very long event. Even before we started we were getting visits from people who were lost, asking where this or that was. Randy Reed came in every once in a while to see how people were reacting to the game and the situations, but he was never around for long, as he was always checking up on everything, everywhere. Among the most interesting visitors, however, was Hal Hook, the designer of TOBRUK. Everyone should really have a chance to talk to him sometime, because he has literally megatons of information stored in his head, and he was able to defend all of the complaints and answer any question about the game system. He was even discussing unclassified information about high energy radiation weapons systems (you know, like lasers and that sort of thing). But he proved that being brilliant isn't everything, by walking around and singing, à la Bob Hope, "Tanks, for the memories!" which received the obvious moans and groans and suggestions that he find a moving tank on his mouth, hoping that might stop such pun and games.

The actual conduct of the tournament went smoothly, though slowly. It was arranged as a single elimination event. The players had a choice of four scenarios, and if they couldn't decide on one, then they had to play Scenario 4 called 'Bite The Bullet'. This scenario was constructed about one week before the tournament and was designed to prove that conciliation was better than chance, as you will see when you look at the set up. Each round was supposed to last about forty-five minutes but, by the end, they were taking about ninety minutes.

A note on the names of the scenarios: They all just happen to be Clint Eastwood western movie titles and are all Randy Reed's. This should give some indication of the easy-going attitudes prevailing at even a national convention. These tournaments—while providing tough, educational competition, are really fun.

So, play the following scenarios and see how you would have done when faced with new situations at a national tournament level.

SCENARIO ONE—'HIGH NOON'

**AVAILABLE FORCES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>British</th>
<th>German</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
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</table>

**SET UP:**

British: Enter on turn 1, on south edge of board section E.
German: Enter on turn 1, on north edge of board section B.

**GAME LENGTH:** 20 turns

**SPECIAL RULES:**

APCR Ammo Limit: German player is limited to 12 rounds of APCR ammo for each tank. Announce type of ammo before firing.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:**

The side which accumulates the most victory points by the end of the game wins. Ties will be adjudicated on the basis of nature of damage inflicted on opponent and general game situation.

Victory points are awarded as follows:

- Last shot needed a 'natural twelve', then "snakeeyes" and then a 'one through three' to destroy that last target and win the round. With about thirty awe-struck onlookers watching with mouths agape, all the prerequisite die rolls were thrown. The winner of that game, by the way, went on to win the tournament, which was only fitting since with that sort of luck, he had to be one of the Lord's chosen few. The favorite tactics employed in play saw the British advance and attempt to flank the Germans, who usually worked their way into a corner, and picked off Stuarts whenever possible.

- For each Pzkw-III h: 4 pts.
- For each Pzkw-III j: 9 pts.
- German player receives:
  - For each Stuart: 3 pts.
  - For each Grant: 7 pts.
  - *Note: Only one F-Kill per Grant allowed.

British player receives:

- K- Killed: 5 pts.
- F-Killed: 3 pts.
- M-Killed: 2 pts.

**NOTE:**

This scenario was the personnel vs. personnel type of game, giving the British a chance to attack, since they are always defending in every other scenario. As it turned out, it was played only once, and the hapless German was inundated by a force that we didn't think was as powerful as it was. This is the best example of a scenario we should have killed, or at least changed a good deal. So go right ahead and balance it as you like, if you feel the way that I do about it. The tactics used saw the British sit back and pound the Germans, wear them down, then wade in and use that fast truck transport to travel along the edges of the board.

**SCENARIO TWO—'THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY'**

**AVAILABLE FORCES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British</th>
<th>German</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
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</table>

**SET UP:**

British: Enter on NORTH, EAST, or WEST edge of board Section A.
German: Set up first, on board section D, NORTH of hex row GG. Board A-D is only one in play.

**GAME LENGTH:** 20 turns

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:**

The side which accumulates the most victory points by the end of the game wins. Victory points are awarded as follows:

- British player receives:
  - For each Hedgehog counter controlled at end of game: 5 pts.
- For Capture: F-Kill of 81mm Mortar: 4 pts.
- For Capture: F-Kill of MG 34: 3 pts.
- For Capture: F-Kill of Vickers MG: 3 pts.
- For Capture: F-Kill of 2" mortar: 1 pt.
- For each carrier K-Killed or M-Killed: 1 pt.

**DEFINITION:** For victory condition purposes, a side controls a hex if at least one friendly personnel or non-Killed, non-M-Killed vehicle unit occupies it, free of any enemy personnel units or functioning vehicular units.
SCENARIO THREE—
‘FORT APACHE’

AVAILABLE FORCES:

**British:**

- 2/3 (at 5-man strength)
- 1/1 (at 2-man strength)
- HQ: 1
- CREW for Grant: 6

**German:**

- 3/6
- 2/1 (at full, 2-man strength)
- CREW for PzKw-III: 5

SET-UP:

**British:** Set up first, anywhere on board section D.

**German:** Force A: Enter on turn 1, anywhere on north edge of board section A.

The fight at Fort Apache was always hard fought, but was only played in the first two rounds, apparently because the players felt that it was better to finish a game of Scenario One than to run the risk of not finishing with Fort Apache having an arbitrary decision on the part of a judge. It takes longer than forty-five minutes to play this one but I think it’s a lot of fun. Here the favorite tactics were for the PzKw-III’s to come on the board, waste the 2-pder, then engage the Crusader with everything that’s left. The PzKw-IV would close-in, firing smoke, if the Crusader still wasn’t destroyed. After that it was pretty much a standard move-in-and-muck-around-till-the-other-guy’s-had-it game.

**GAME LENGTH:** 25 turns.

**SPECIAL RULES:**

1. The bunker in DD6 represents a critical supply depot. Victory is largely determined by who controls that hex at the end of the game. The bunker may be destroyed by any direct hit with ammunition from a weapon of 75mm or larger.

2. The PzKw-IV is limited to EIGHT rounds of smoke ammunition.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:**

The side which accumulates the most victory points at the end of the game wins. Victory points are awarded for control of certain hexes:

- For each hedgerow counter controlled at end of game: 1 point.
- For each control of hex DD6 at end of the game: 2 points.
- For control of the board section A: 5 points.

(Use Scenario Two’s definition of Control.)

SCENARIO FOUR—
‘BITE THE BULLET’

**AVAILABLE FORCES**

**British:**

- Plus: These infantry units:
  - 1/1 (at 5-man strength)
  - 1/2 (at 5-man strength)
  - HQ: 1 (at full, 2-man strength)
  - CREW (for Grant: 6)

**German:**

- Plus: These infantry units:
  - 1/1 (at 4-man strength)
  - 1/2 (at 4-man strength)
  - HQ: 1 (at full, 2-man strength)
  - CREW (for PzKw-III: 5)

**SET-UP:**

**British:** Set up first, on hex CC12.

**German:** Set up second, on hex CC12.

Board A-D is only one in play.

With this scenario, people deserved what they got if they couldn’t agree on another scenario. It was only played twice, and only in the first round. In both cases, very young players were opposing men in their mid-twenties, one of whom went on to win the event. This game is really great fun if you only want to have a ‘best three out of five’ series because you can play to a conclusion in a very short time. Note, however, that luck plays a very large role.

Some clarifications are needed in this scenario:

a) To determine half-strength, take the number of men, cross index for the strength, halve that number, and then round down.

b) Running every other turn means walk one turn and run the next.

c) AFV’s in the oasis are not hull-down in this scenario. AFV crews must bail out to drink before turn 10 or there is a non-voluntary bailout. They can bail back in but that is a two turn operation, one turn to get in and one turn to get set-up.

The main factor in this game is to see who is going to stop first and try to kill the other guy. If one stops, the other could keep going to put three more hexes between the map edge and the tank. After one side is stopped, then the other tank can keep moving or it could try to machine gun the enemy. However, it all depends on who ‘draws’ first. Players will probably find that each side wins about evenly. A fun (but dangerous for tournament play) little game.

Those of you who didn’t attend the convention and missed the only officially sponsored TOBRUK event now know what you missed. I hope it has satisfied the appetites of the voracious TOBRUK fans everywhere looking for a short and sweet little game.

**GAME LENGTH:** 20 turns

**SPECIAL RULES:**

1. Use the AFV CREW Experimental rule, where appropriate. Crews may voluntarily bail out from the M-killed vehicles.

2. The M-killed vehicles may be destroyed by any direct hit with ammunition from a weapon of 75mm or larger.

3. Victory points are awarded as follows: Grant: 5

4. Use the AFV CREW Experimental rule, where appropriate. Crews may voluntarily bail out from the M-killed vehicles.

5. AFV Ammo Limit: Each AFV has only TEN rounds of ammo as follows: Grant: 5 rds/7mm AP and 5 rds/75mm AP

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The side which accumulates the most victory points by the end of the game wins. Victory points are awarded as follows:

- For each enemy AFV K-killed or M-killed, or non-voluntary bailout: 10 pts.
- For each enemy HQ casualty record box checked off: 2 pts.
- For each enemy crew or infantry record box checked off: 1 pt.

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Hours: AH Factory Outlet—Tuesday thru Saturday; 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

IGB Playtesting—Saturday; 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.
SNEAK ATTACKS
by Bill Farone

For those of us seriously addicted to the playing of wargames it comes as a rude shock when an opponent uses tactics based on a rules interpretation that doesn't coincide with our understanding of those same rules. Often, this occurs because of a difference of opinion as to how rules were meant to be combined when used for certain unusual situations. Those who buy games for their simulation value can easily dismiss these tactical "gems" but those of us who play the same game dozens or hundreds of times cannot do so. These tactical sneak attacks can sometimes be the key to a winning technique. Often they lead to arguments over the technical soundness of the rules. In all cases they must be viewed, at least, as part of "clever" gamesmanship.

Consider a nice simple game like AFRIKA KORPS. The first thought is that there could be nothing sneaky in this simple game. A close reading of the supply rules in conjunction with this attack rules will quickly dispel this thought. One sneaky play is to catch a German stack of three with one weak unit in it. Attack the weak unit with odds guaranteed to leave units up against both sides of the stack and soak-off against the rest. In his turn the German is forced to attack because he is in your zone of control but he cannot do so because he has no supply. He is thus eliminated. Of course, you must screen these units to some extent because one side of your "surround" might be attacked from outside allowing the surrounded units to be supplied at the time of their attack against the rest of the surrounding units. To the "hard core" AK players the first thought is that this is just another form of presenting a standard way of eliminating those 7-7-10 units and winning the game in the process. However, the first time one gets caught in that sequence it usually causes the "you can't do that" reaction and thus qualifies as a typical sneak attack.

Moving from the old-fashioned to the modern let us consider eliminating a bunker in SQUAD LEADER. If one looks at the weapons available the flamethrower is the obvious choice. If one fires it at the bunker the cratered area has no defense modifier to the attack roll. If we study the rules a little further we find that a flamethrower is equally effective from 1 or 2 hexes away. It also suffers no adverse effects from firing through smoke. Our sneak attack is now set. We drop smoke from artillery or armor into the two hexes in front of the bunker and advance our squad from the flamethrower into the second hex away. In order to attack the square with the flamethrower the squads in the bunker have a double smoke roll to contend with. The flavor of these rules twists would not be complete without mention of an "escape clause" as Tom Oleson calls it drawn from recent correspondence with him concerning ANZIO. For example, points out that in games I and II using the 2nd edition rules the Allies can win by simply maintaining a port in Genoa from which they can, at the end, place a line off the Northwest corner of the board. Since, in order to win the Germans must maintain a continuous line across the board, the Germans lose even if they have destroyed all other Allied units and control all of Italy outside this area!

There are quite a few players who do not look favorably on "rules lawyers", i.e. players whose interest in the semantics of rules when they are in a tough spot go beyond the spirit of the game. One of the best ways to avoid problems in this area is to be aware of the sneaky or ambiguous portions of the rules in your game of interest and to iron those out with your opponent before the game begins. For devotees of AH games this makes the Question and Answer pages of THE GENERAL must reading and collecting.

There will probably never be a perfectly written game. Therefore, to enhance our understanding of a game and to allow for revision if needed, the only remaining course is a friendly or "mature" approach to play. Discussion and documentation of the pitfalls in playing a game can make that maturity much easier to attain keeping it from getting lost in the natural competitive desire to win. It is unfortunate that so much of the wargame literature consists of reviews and articles of new games. We rarely get to read about the sneak attacks inherent in virtually every game.

Over the years I have known players to become extremely upset over this facet of our hobby and to thus lose enjoyment from their games. It would seem that this could be greatly decreased by an increase in the wargaming literature on the actual playing of games and the selection of "like-minded" opponents.

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CROSS OF IRON

German: Joseph Suchar
Russian: M. Jonathan Mishcon
Commentary: Don Greenwood

Scenario 102 is one of the ten new CROSS OF IRON scenarios first offered in Vol. 15, #6 of THE GENERAL as "SERIES 100". A brief description follows for those of you who have not yet acquired these new scenarios. The entire set of 10 scenarios is available from our parts department for $4.00 plus 40- postage and handling.

Scenario 102 is set in the Panikovo Forest on Aug. 17, 1941 during the advance on Leningrad. The 2nd Co., 1st Bn. 40th Infantry Reg.'s has been set upon by Russian infantry and armor emerging unexpectedly from the forest. Falling back, the Germans without anti-tank support, formed a hedgerow and waited for relief. That relief took the form of a random choice artillery module and three S21100's which enter on a special Rally Phase die roll. The Russian player wins unconditionally by eliminating the equivalent of 8 German squads in 6 turns.

All non-supplemental COI rules are in play including Battlefield Integrity. Wheatfields are considered open ground. There is no wind, but any that blows up will start blowing to the NE. Environmental Conditions are "Very Dry".

The players are experienced SL enthusiasts who played a major role in pre-publication playtesting of both COI and COD, as well as the SERIES 100 scenarios. Your neutral commentator is the developer of SL and designer/developer of COI.

PRE-GAME RUSSIAN COMMENT

My plan is to use my armor early on as much as possible. This includes, but isn't limited to, mounted infantry that unloads when a tank "Advancing Firing", multiple overruns of a hex and ending tank movement atop his entrenchments to force him out. I am willing to risk immobilizations early on to increase his early losses. It is notable that tank losses (as long as you keep one) have no effect on battlefield integrity so if I trade tanks for German squads, I not only approach my 8 Kill target but the expectation of scoring with that average I am in bad trouble. However, since I don't know the scenario intimately, I will experiment with an upfront fire wall. This is reinforced by my gut feeling that under the victory conditions of the scenario, the Russian has quite an edge and that I must hurt him early if I am to survive.

PRE-GAME NEUTRAL COMMENTARY —

The initial setups of both players shows a firm grasp of the problems they face. The Russian has correctly analyzed the situation as one in which he must "make hay while the sun shines". He must press his considerable initial advantage before the passage of time brings the equalizer in the form of the superior German armor and effective artillery support. That the Russian intends to push his initial advantage is obvious given the disposition of the six squads in the open at 5Y1-72. The Russian is obviously banking on his first fire opportunity with 15 factors plus more from SW1 to clear the 4H5-13 woods before the German can retaliate in his defensive fire phase. If the Germans do survive the initial prep fire unbroken they have a 20% chance for an outright KIA on the three squads in 5Y1 and a further 8% chance for the next three in 5Y1 with penetration from the LMG. Such a loss would not be catastrophic to the Russian cause as their moral level would remain unchanged and the Russian armor would still be capable of salvaging a win. Given their initial lack of armor causing them to suffer a moral loss a full 20% sooner than the Russians and the relatively higher value of their squads the German forces are far the more brittle of the two and subject to headlong collapse if things go badly initially. Considering the unlikelihood of both German squads braving the Russian fire successfully, the Russian gamble is a good one.

The German position is far more difficult to agree with even though he is truly on the horns of a dilemma. Like his historical counterpart, the German commander is outnumbered, outgunned, virtually defenseless against enemy armor and with no place to run. His position is not hopeless, however. He has a few advantages—namely being on the defensive and the superior effective range of his small arms fire—which he must take advantage of if he is to win. Although he is powerless to stop the incursion of the Russian armor, the T26's don't have enough firepower to win alone. The Russian infantry is necessary to mop up what the tanks dislodge. If the German can keep the Russian infantry at bay (hopefully 5 hexes away so as to halve their firepower) long enough for the Stugs to arrive, both his firepower and morale situation will mean a difference. If he can maintain fields of fire on the open ground which the Russian infantry must cross to close, the defensive fire DRM for moving in the open will enable him to give as good as he gets. Thus, the German has two contradictory goals—get the most possible and render Russian fire unimpressive to give as good as he gets. In trying to fill both he may accomplish neither and that appears to be about to occur here.

That the German intends to stay far away is obvious given his proclivity for positions as far south as the opening setup limitations will allow. The German intends to occupy the southernmost woods with half his force during his first move. Unfortunately, this will cost him his first turn's Prep Fire and he doesn't have as much firepower as he can afford to give half of it away on the first turn. This condition is further aggravated by the placement of the MG34 in the open at L8. Surely it could have started in M8 so as to avoid loss of its initial Prep Fire Opportunity! The forward elements comprising the other half of his force are exposed to an enemy, first fire opportunity & isolated from help. His first squad, once broken, is as good as dead with no chance to rally. The other two enclaves of forward fire (H5-1S and N5-0S) are being asked to hold back a flood virtually unsupported. In my opinion, the German would be far better off centering the bulk of his forces in the superior defensive terrain of the building at O6-P6 and the nearby woods. Strong forces in M8, N5, O5, P6 and R5 could put down mutually supporting fire on all of the approach lanes while offering good rally positions (O6 and R7) for any broken troops plus a possible retreat route to those same southernmost woods via P8 and N9. At a pause where it is he who has the upper hand. If he can maintain fields of fire on the open ground which the Russian infantry must cross to close, the defensive fire DRM for moving in the open will enable him to give as good as he gets. Thus, the German has two contradictory goals—get the most possible and render Russian fire unimpressive to give as good as he gets. In trying to fill both he may accomplish neither and that appears to be about to occur here.

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PRE-GAME GERMAN COMMENT

 Having played this scenario before as the Russian, I am well aware of the enormous advantages they have as a result of having five tanks at their disposal immediately. The probability of the German not getting their tanks during the first two turns is 55%. Since the Stugs cannot fire during the Advancing Fire Phase even if they come on in Turn 3 they are of no use till turn 4. Hence the Russians will have three full turns to use their armor for overrun. Additionally, the Russian tanks with bow and rear MGs can get, with proper placement; up to 10 MG shots per turn. Admittedly they are either one or two but the expectation of scoring with that many shots is quite good.

Hence I've decided on a forward defense hoping to survive the Russian Prep Fire with enough firepower to disrupt his initial position. Of course, this means that if his opening shots are better than average I am in bad trouble. However, since I don't know the scenario intimately, I will experiment with an upfront fire wall. This is reinforced by my gut feeling that under the victory conditions of the scenario, the Russian has quite an edge and that I must hurt him early if I am to survive.

RUSIAN TURN 1 POST PREP FIRE

Very successful Prep Fire—will use this break to thrust towards 4K9 through 4H5. I'm holding two
The tanks back on board 5 for infantry transport. His 150mm artillery is very imposing.

**RUSSIAN PREP FIRE, TURN 1**

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<th>DRM</th>
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<td>4H5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>16</td>
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**GERMAN DEFENSIVE FIRE, TURN 1**

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4, LMG 5WI</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>7, 10</td>
<td>5WI</td>
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**RUSSIAN ADVANCING FIRE, TURN 1**

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<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>SN</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
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*Claimed hit on basis of 33.32 (dice roll = possible hit regardless of DRM)*

**RUSSIAN POST ADVANCING FIRE TURN 1**

Flank thrust will start in Advance Phase move to 4R2 and 4Q2. This will force him to choose between dueling six squads or retiring. I'll try to keep to 4R2 and 4Q2. This will force him to choose between 5X10.

**RUSSIAN TURN 1, NEUTRAL COMMENDARY**

The Russian should be well pleased with his initial turn. The German attempt to dute it out with only half his force understandably got the worst of it. This move is an excellent example of the balancing effect of the luck factor in SQUAD LEADER. There are those who criticize the game for having too high a luck factor due to both the large number of dice rolls and the greatly varying effects any one dice roll may generate. I, on the other hand, prefer to refer to this wide range of results as the "uncertainty" factor—it seems much more offensive than "luck". Regardless of what you call it, however, this veritable deluge of dice rolls will tend to even things out in the long run. No one rolls consistently better than anyone else over a prolonged sample and although no one will argue that all dice rolls in SQUAD LEADER are equal (i.e., a "2"' dice roll on an ordinary rally attempt certainly does not equal a "2" fire combat resolution on a loaded hex), this very wide variance in possible results will right many an unequal contest. I've seen many a seemingly hopeless situation retrieved by low dice rolls at a fortuitous time and it is this very reason that the German is still in the game despite a questionable setup and good Russian start. Let's back up these statements with a closer look at the first player turn's dice.

The dice have already fallen in anger no less than 26 times. Analyzing the Russian's 16 throws we find an average dice roll of 6.38—good, but by no means spectacular. Within this good spectrum the Russian was quite fortunate to roll well in 2 of his 4 most important attempts (the three attacks on H5-15 and the unfortunate failure of Sahavitch to pass his MC) which all but wiped out the German left flank. The German had exactly even luck, averaging 7 on ten dice rolls. Although seemingly the recipient of poorer luck vis-à-vis the Russian, the German has little to complain about. His attacks did about as much as could be expected given their meager sustenance and overall the German should be thankful to have placed his artillery accurately, to have survived the lucky hit on K8 by the T26, and above all for the effective long range fire of the 7th and 10th squad which combined with Sahavitch's cowardly demeanor salvaged at least a partial blunting of the Russian drive and drew some, albeit not enough, Russian blood.

Moving now to specifics, the Russian move and German counterfire are well executed given their initial dispositions. I can find fault only with two aspects of the Russian's move—both pertaining to his overzealous use of armor. While he is quite correct to get the tanks into action as soon as possible, the situation does not warrant the risks, albeit miniscule, which he has taken in firing the main armament of the lead tank or moving at full speed in the rearmost vehicle. The chances of securing a hit at such long range and speed of approach are both minimal and exactly equal to the prospects of a gun malfunction. The extreme luck which enabled this hit to occur does not excuse the fact that such fire was ill-advised. Their numerical advantage gives the T26s an even chance against the German Stugs but their chances rapidly diminish alongside their lessening numerical advantage. To lose a tank in this manner with so little to gain in exchange for the risk would be criminal.

In retrospect, the Russian must have agreed, for he passed up similar shots with the next two tanks. Similarly, unless the Russian has planned his moves two or more turns in advance and knows of something down the road that I can't see with...
GERMAN TURN 1 PRE-PREP FIRE

Well, you can begin to appreciate what those tanks can do with that potshot at 4K8. Fortunately, I survived his lucky hit this time. My defensive fire was fairly effective but the loss of the center woods position is devastating. I had hoped at the very worst to have the leader survive so that I could at least run him back to the main position at the edge of the board. He will now be cut off by the Russian tanks and I have to, in effect, write him off.

My artillery draw was excellent and I hope to be able to do a number on the Russians tanks as well as his infantry with my four fire missions of 150mm.

GERMAN TURN 1 POST PREP FIRE COMMENTS

My plan now is to consolidate my main position. I am also going to try and get the squad in 4E5 to 4B7 to set up a line of fire across the open ground in front of my main position.

GERMAN DEFENSIVE FIRE, TURN 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire</th>
<th>Target FP</th>
<th>DRM</th>
<th>DR</th>
<th>Effect Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T26/E</td>
<td>4C7</td>
<td>2 - 6</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T26/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>T26/B</td>
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<tr>
<td>T26/B</td>
<td>4N5</td>
<td>2 +</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
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GERMAN ADVANCING FIRE PHASE, TURN 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire</th>
<th>Target FP</th>
<th>DRM</th>
<th>DR</th>
<th>Effect Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6, 7</td>
<td>5X0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GERMAN TURN 1 END OF TURN COMMENTS

The tank fire is just devastating. The loss of those squads is again a reminder of just how potent the tanks' fire can be. My artillery now remains my major hope.

GERMAN TURN 1, NEUTRAL COMMENTARY—

The Russian 10th squad has rallied despite being under the effects of DM—a bit of good fortune only partially evened out by the German's maintenance of its radio contact. Kelso failed to rally, and is doomed, but that's small potatoes compared to the rest of the German woes. It has taken exactly one turn for the entire German piecemeal forward defenses to be blown away.

RUSSIAN TURN 1—German defensive fire vs. the moving infantry in 4S2 is ineffective but long range fire from the German 7th and 10th squads eliminates one squad and breaks two others and a leader in W1, causing them to rout to 5X1. The Russian Advancing Fire from 4S2 and the recently arrived tanks is ineffective.

KEY: lines = Prep Fire; dots = Defensive Fire; Dashes = Advanced Fire; solid arrows = moves; hollow arrows = advances; Brown = Russian; Blue = German.

THE GENERAL

This has come about due to the combined effects of clever Russian play and good fortune, and a mistaken German setup which is being steadily compounded rather badly. Granted the ill-advised location of the 1st squad in E5 in the first place is still hard to fathom what withdrawing him would gain other than a slight spreading out of the Russian forces. Even had he made it, two tanks would have dispatched him just as easily there. It took a good shot to break him but considering what little there was to be gained perhaps he deserved what he got. Making the best of a bad situation, I'd have advanced to F4 in an attempt to pin down the Russian infantry for a turn, or attempted to entrench.

The move of the 8th squad back to N5 was an extremely poor choice for reasons totally divorced from its eventual breaking in N5. The German cannot afford to concentrate his infantry in the same hex for a lucky shot to eliminate all his eggs in one basket. More importantly, by forsaking the move to the better cover of the O6 building, there is absolutely nothing left to contest the advance of the seven squads to the east.

Even less understandable is why both of the remaining good order leaders have moved into the same hex. A second leader offers almost no advantages but is a great detriment when incoming fire arrives to threaten double breaks. The second leader should have moved to K9 to direct the MMG fire (which should have been firing steadily from M8 since the beginning) and improve, not detract from, the survival chances of the 2nd and 3rd squads.
The matter of whether the German should have used up a 150mm fire mission for a 28% chance of a kill or immobilization against a single tank is bound to be controversial. Normally, I'd condemn such an attack as wasting a vital resource but the German position is critical and he is fortunate in having four such fire missions. By using his artillery so frivolously he serves notice on the Russian that there's lots more where that came from—and thereby may serve to cause the Russian to spend more time dispersing than advancing. Given his desperate situation and the need to buy time at any cost the decision to fire was probably a good one which, nonetheless, was not blessed with luck. After all, had he knocked off a tank it would have been far harder to fault the order. Overall, however, we keep coming back to the original dice rolls to analyze. The Russian once again fared better than average with ten dice rolls averaging 7.56 while the German's luck dipped below average. Luck, or the lack of it, is contributing to the German woes but the inescapable conclusion remains that his trouble is of his own doing, i.e., a poor setup and a worse move. The Russian has only to advance & capture the already broken Germans to win (an option that the attack on the already broken occupants of N5 seems to have ignored) or failing that, to eliminate them, drop German morale and wipe the force out entirely. Barring either colossal luck, immediate arrival of reinforcements, or terrible Russian play, the German has lost this game on turn 1.

RUSSIAN TURN 2 PRE-PREP FIRe COMMENTS
Firing one mission of 150mm against one tank—looks like he has lots of artillery. I would have preferred my 8-1 leader to rally. I will cut off the German 9-1 leader with two tanks and destroy the broken squad in 4B7 by moving a tank adjacent. I was a fool to kill that squad in 4N5, but I will capture the remaining squad and continue my flanking move.

GERMAN DEFENSIVE FIRE PHASE, TURN 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firer</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>FP</th>
<th>DRM</th>
<th>DR</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Result</th>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4, 9, 6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>+1</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFE</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>KIA</td>
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RUSSIAN ADVANCING FIRE PHASE, TURN 2

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firer</th>
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<th>DRM</th>
<th>DR</th>
<th>Effect</th>
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<tr>
<td>T26/B</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>T26/C</td>
<td>4K9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T26/A</td>
<td>4K9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
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tions and prevailing winds should eliminate the Russian support weapons and lead the broken Russians in that forest a merry chase as they attempt to keep one step ahead of the advancing fire.

The damage has already been done far behind the German’s protective artillery fire however. The elimination of the first squad at B7 for failure to rout and the surrender of the 8th squad at H5 should soon cause a drop in morale. The German needs his armor immediately, plus his artillery back in the vicinity of P6 from its now too advanced position, and a major issue of colossal luck.

GERMAN TURN 2 PRE-PREP FIRE COMMENTS

I have beaten the odds and the Stugs came in this turn. However, with the equivalent of 6 squads lost and only two to go I can expect a massive Soviet rush to push me over the brink. I feel at this time reduced to a desperation attempt. So I am going to close range on the T26 in 4A8. If I ignore him and try to move by, he gets a rear shot in the Movement Phase and another in Prep Fire. So I’ll throw everything on the line in an attempt to knock out two tanks. I will also try to draw my artillery back towards me while I attempt to entrench for my ‘last’ stand.

GERMAN POST PREP FIRE COMMENTS

TURN 2

My entrenching attempt is successful. However, I must now rush the leader across the open ground in an attempt to avoid his loss (thus tipping over the morale drop number). If he isn’t killed, I still have some hope.

GERMAN TURN 2 END OF TURN COMMENTS

The loss of the leader really hurts. My hope is to survive the Prep Fire Phase with all three tanks and then possibly knock out two Russian tanks.

RUSSIAN DEFENSIVE FIRE PHASE, TURN 2

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<tr>
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<th>DR</th>
<th>Effect</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>448</td>
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<td>448</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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RUSSIAN TURN 2—The Russian foregoes his Prep Fire in order to sweep forward into the vacated German defenses. The stunned German forces are so far in the rear that the only defensive fire he can manage is an ineffective MMG attack on the rear of T26/B and another artillery barrage on SXX. The latter destroys one already broken squad and breaks another while setting the forest edge ablaze but the bulk of the Russian forces are already past what could have been a very ferocious bottleneck. Russian MG Advancing Fire with the three forward T26s is ineffective, but the very presence of T26s/A is enough to eliminate the broken German 1st squad in 4B7 which is forced to rout.
GERMAN TURN 2 — Although the German receives good news in the form of the arrival of his STGs he has no Prep Fire opportunities and entrenches instead. In the Russian Defensive Fire Phase, the withdrawal of the 10th squad in the Advance Phase is understandable given its failure to entrench. The Russian will soon own superior fire positions at O7, P7 and P8—thus the relative security of the entrenched units in L9 beckons strongly. But the German, who got into trouble initially by spreading out too much may now get the coup de grace by overreacting in the opposite extreme. Woods entrenchments are powerful positions but the Russian can dislodge them by pulling his tanks into the same hex—and then where will the German go?

The extra leader in L9 finally advances to K9 where it can be of some benefit without being a hazard to the other occupants of the hex. As to the Russian, I am mystified why T26/E did not fire on one of the STGs in the B row as it had a chance to at least acquire a target. The Russian armor advantage is numerical—not qualitative—and he should be bringing as many of his guns to bear as possible. Apparently he still wants to transport squads to the front with tanks D & E.

RUSSIAN TURN 3 PRE-PREP FIRE COMMENTS

Tank rotated so as to better duel the Stugs. Tanks will go for Stugs while the Infantry continues flanking through 4R6 and tank transported Infantry recently revived Sgt. Kelso survives the long range fire of the Russian 2nd squad but is gunned down in the open at 41B by the T26S/A machinegun. With his loss, the German morale drops a level. The try will go to close assault the MGless Stugs. It's easier now to kill a Stug & crew than dig out the German Infantry.

GERMAN POST GAME COMMENTS

Under the original scenario conditions, I think I would still use this defense although I would probably put a leader with the group in 4N5. I still feel that under the original conditions the Russians have an edge with the mobile firepower of those tanks. With the Russian shooting the way he did, I don't think anything would have made much of a difference.

RUSSIAN POST GAME COMMENTS

I went for the upfront kills, had good dice rolls, and the German simply never had a chance to duel. In my excitement, I forgot to take as many prisoners as I should have but did manage never to give the German a defensive shot at my infantry in the open. There are several lessons that might be derived from this new CROSS OF IRON scenario. Unlike SQUAD LEADER, where it's desirable to tie leaders to platoons, clumps of Germans here will draw tank attention. The Russians should be able to concentrate on any pocket of resistance and throw away tanks and squads in order to try and drop the Germans a morale level. So the Germans might consider dispersing broadly to obtain the following advantages:
1) The Russian must go after each squad individually as simply breaking Germans by fire doesn't affect integrity or victory; 2) You should be left with some infantry to protect your MGless Stugs when they arrive; 3) The further the Russian must move the more time he loses, 4) lots of interlocking fire. Consider the following setup: Sq + LMG in 4B8, Sq + 9-1 + Radio + LMG in 4J8, Sq in 4L8, Sq in 405, Sq + MMG + 9-1 in 4R7, Sq in 4T8, Sq + 8-1 in 4X8, Sq in 4Z8, Sq in 4FF7. This gives, in most instances, two connected cover hexes in case a T26 stops atop you and puts you out of Russian MMG range. Consider it an exercise to the student.

AFTERMATH & FINAL NEUTRAL SUMMARY

Turn 3 and the game came to a sudden and conclusive end when T26/B hit and burnt STG/C with total loss of crew—thus meeting the Russian victory conditions. The German's chances received a crippling blow even prior to this however when they lost radio contact with their off-board artillery.
Looking back, there is no doubt that the Russian played the superior game nor that he had superior luck (a 6.45 average dice roll compared to 6.93 for the German). Together it proved an unbeatable combination. In my opinion the German owed his loss to his initial setup and the clumsiness which resulted from it as the German was forced to adjust to the unfavorable events caused by the demise of his forward positions.

I still believe that a strong concentrated perimeter defense in the NS-RS-R8-P8 area to be the best course for the German to follow when meeting his admittedly tough victory conditions. The opposite extreme as illustrated by Mishcon's suggested setup is not without merit and may well be the best course to pursue. Sucher's problem was that he tried to embrace both strategies, i.e., a forward defense coupled with beating feet to the rear. The result was a piecemeal defense which fed itself to the Russian juggernaut in handy bite-sized pieces.

Considering the myriad of complex interlocking variables in COL, I find it hard to criticize either player. The result was a highly interesting and educational contest, albeit a short one. Mishcon's play might well earn a commendation were it not for his hot dice which tended to hide his fine play. It is a pity the replay did not continue further so we could see the outcome of his planned Close Assault on the MG-Iess STGs. As he points out, the STGs are vulnerable to Close Assault but the infantry would present an easy bonus target to the Russian juggernaut in handy bite-sized pieces.

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attacked by enemy naval units, nor can ANY enemy naval units move into the same hex. If a naval unit cannot get into a port, it cannot land any troops there, either. So by the simple expedient of starting your navy in a strategic port, (say, Charleston, for instance) you block the landings of any British forces in that port, forcing him to land elsewhere and assault the port by land. This at least buys you some time, because, whether or not your supply and attempt to break off combat. This will leave the unsupplied British forces facing a supplied American force, since the AC only used his supply once and therefore was not compelled to remove it. Needless to say, this is a very risky tactic to employ if you are not familiar with your opponent's habits. Of course, since the British supply rate is always constant, it is to his advantage to advance as rapidly as possible to cut your supply rate as quickly as possible. Remember, though, the BC will very rarely make a march as it always means he must leave behind his supply, thus forfeiting his numerical advantage.

THE MIDDLE GAME

This portion of the game corresponds roughly to the period after the British buildup in 1776 and extends to the period after French intervention. The BC will usually have succeeded in occupying the Deep South by the winter of 1777 at the latest. The main American concern during this period will be to hold the British advance to the relatively constricted area of the South Central states, as this area is very easy to defend. Actually you have two different courses of action during this phase: (1) either consume men and supplies to force you out completely or leave a large garrison which detracts from his wave. Your second option is to pull back before the advance to save men and supplies, entrenched and fortifying the Middle States. Note that the French are likely to focus on fortifying those towns which the BC must occupy to win. (These towns are: Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, and Savannah.) The BC will obviously have gotten control of some of these towns. However, you can protect one of these cities with the Continental Navy, (if it's still around) OR you may fortify one of these cities at the beginning of the game. The reason that fortifications are of any use to the American is that the BC cannot control a town in which there is a fort unless he has at least 1 BR or TM factor inside the fort. Conceivably then, the Americans can win by occupying a fort in one of the required cities for a British victory, and allow the BC to occupy every other town on the board! Admittedly, that is a tad unrealistic, but it can happen with the game's present victory conditions.

Personally, I favor the die hard approach for two reasons. For one thing, you do not do the British any damage by pulling back. If anything, you may be doing your client a favor by leaving towns without a fight. The second big reason is that the more areas that you can keep from falling completely under British control, the more you increase the chances of French intervention. And French intervention is what will turn the game around for the American, if the game can be turned around at all.

When you do get French intervention, I would not send the French fleet dashing off to the West Indies along with your reinforcements. Fleet for fleet, the French Navy is superior to the British. Discounting variable forces, the French Navy can count on a superiority of at least plus 2 in a combat situation. As astute BC can then use his navy in the same manner in which the Americans used the Continental navy by stationing a battle fleet or transport unit in Charleston, Savannah, Georgetown, and Wilmington. This blocks any attempt by the Franco-Americans to land troops in the Deep South. Any landing must then be made on a coastal supply point. Of course, use of this tactic does necessarily preclude use of the sea lanes to the French. Any attempt on the part of the BC to regain naval superiority must wait until the British navy is able to bring its variable forces into play. Of course, the same tactics used by the British in the face of superior naval forces can be applied by the French as well in a similar situation.

A word on your worst enemy, winter reduction. Using the variable reduction chart, it would be advisable to pull out temporarily from high reduction areas immediately before the onset of the winter with its accompanying losses, and returning after the reductions have occurred in order to cut your losses as much as possible.

THE END GAME

This phase covers the period from French intervention to the end of the game. The American should keep the French fleet massed with his transport to minimize British use of the fleet. If American makes the mistake of dispersing the fleet, the BC will simply mass his fleet and bushwhack anything within easy reach. The American would do well to take a hint from British strategy and keep a force of Franco-Americans at sea, always looking for an opportunity to pounce on the British fleet. If the BC is too prosperous for that sort of thing, and he happens to have his fleet guarding the important ports, the American can still create havoc by landing on the coast at a point FAR removed from British lines. (Such as Savannah.) The farther from the main British forces that the landing is made, the greater the eventual effect will be. Any force that is sent to deal with the invaders must be at least equal to it in size, and be able to have a chance of stopping it. Once a strategic town in the area is taken, the invading force must be strengthened at the next interphase due to the improved reinforcement status of the area. Another positive effect is that the British must detract from their wave, thus weakening the impetus of their main advance. The AC should not be satisfied with just invading once. He should probe with his fleet as much as possible, invading at widely separated points behind the British lines. If he ignores his invasions and tries to continue his advance, he will soon find himself losing control of formerly secure areas. Unless he has variable forces available, he does not dare risk attempting a counterinvasion, fearing he may lose his towns. He will only be able to temporarily pull out of commission by a French attack. (Using the fleet in a piecemeal fashion only guarantees its piecemeal destruction.) If the American executes this tactic properly, the BC will soon find himself in a position similar to that of a little boy attempting to plug up all of the holes in an increasingly leaky dike. The main "wave advance" will become stagnant as the BC pulls more troops from the main body to deal with the amphibious landings.

To sum up the overall American strategy, the American should combine standing fast with substantial forces in strategic towns with tactical avoidance of combat aimed at maximum expenditure of British supply. The American should destroy anything of possible use to the British, which includes forts, artillery units, and anything else which seems likely to fall into the hands of the BC. He should make maximum use of the French forces when they arrive by striking as deep as possible behind British lines and continue to strike as often as possible with the aim of creating the very situation the Wave advance attempts to avoid; a war with no discernible front line.

That about wraps it up, folks. And just keep in mind those inspiring words of Mrs. Cornwallis to her son, the general: "If you can't be good, son, be good AT IT!"
I’ve been a happy and dedicated wargamer since 1959, but ever since that first game of TACTICS II, one particular aspect of gaming has been bothering me. The certainty. Not certainty about the outcome of the game. Not certainty about the optimum strategy. But when I can look over and see exactly where the enemy is and know exactly what he can do, I feel like Mars must have felt while looking down from Olympus on the battles of mortals. As I know from military histories, this exactitude is a far cry from the confusion and lack of communication that reign on the battlefield. In actual battle—such as in North Africa or in the Solomons in WW2—surprise often seems to be the single most crucial element of victory, but it has been largely neglected in wargaming.

I don’t mean that I’m unimpressed by the various attempts to introduce the “fog of war” into simulations: simultaneous movement, hidden set-up, decy counters, unknown combat strengths, mechanical breakdowns. All of these are worthy attempts to introduce the “fog of war” into simulations: simultaneous movement, hidden set-up, decoy counters, unknown combat strengths, mechanical breakdowns. All of these are worthy efforts to make fewer decisions in a given amount of time, and to that extent they are used. Unfortunately, they also add to the amount of time needed to play. This means I get to see the results of my decisions in short order, and also that it takes longer to see the results of my decisions. In short, I get to see less of the game before I need to make a decision. More exciting—less certainty—more excitement—but I keep wondering if maybe I could have both.

The method which seems to give the most “fog” for the least investment of time is the double board system. The idea is to use two boards: one as a map, and one as a copy of that map on which the movements are made. The players can then look away from the board, make their movements, and then open their boards to show the results. This system is not without its problems, however, as the players must remember which movements they made on the other board, and also that they must keep track of which board is which. This can be difficult, especially if the players are not used to playing with double boards. It can also be difficult if the players are playing a large game with many turns.

The German appears to be concentrating defensively around Wilm but has a strong force (six AFVs and one 88 so far) in the woods on the other side of the woods. The scenario they were playing was one in which the German units came in from the woods on the right and the Allied forces were in the woods on the left. The German was able to put his forces on the hilltop before the Allied forces could get there. Al had reviewed these too. He had to make a decision: either attack or defend. He had no way of knowing what the German’s objectives were, but he had left himself the following reminder.

To me it seems clear that the next few years will see a massive influx of computers into serious wargaming. They will be there at last, I’ve got to my subject! As soon as the shouting dies down I’ll continue...
THE GENERAL

- ensure all set-up, movement and combat were legal and
- do all dice rolling and bookkeeping instantaneously.

The benefits of such a system would be fantastic!
1. There would be a standard interpretation of rules and terrain.
2. The computer would remind you of rules, making it easier to learn to play and less likely that you'd learn incorrectly.
3. Games could be automatically recorded-it would be easy to print out the moves, even maps, and the board would never get upset between playing sessions. (Erased maybe!)
4. Stacks, no matter how big, would never fall over.
5. You could play face to face, by phone or by sending a cassette through the mail.
6. In multi-player games there could be secret diplomacy by sending messages to a single terminal.
7. Simultaneous or hidden movement would be easy to handle.

The hardware to do all this sits now, it would cost roughly $10,000 for a two-player setup. It could be a lot cheaper if one were willing to forego the map display. A system which used hex numbers as references (you'd have to keep the game set up in front of you) would cost less than $2000. If this still seems like a lot then wait a few more years and there may be a PANZERBLITZ cartridge for your Atari!

A much more costly item would be developing the programs. Game design and testing would have to be much more thorough than they are now because an error or omission could not be resolved by agreement or a "friendly die roll." It would be most aggravating to have a game "crash" part way through. This is the electronic equivalent to knocking the board over. Errata, in the form of updated programs, would be easy to create but costly to distribute. It could make playtesting easier but publishing more than one version of a game would nullify the advantage of standardization.

As with any technological change, there is a seed of "future shock" here. Besides the changes in designing and testing techniques, computers would change the kind of game being played. Designers will be free to "design for effect." They wouldn't have to worry about how complex or cumbersome a procedure is because the computer could do it in the blink of an eye. All the gamer will see is the effect. Combat results: terrain effects: special morale and weather rules; ammo, fuel and supply conditions; all of these will become very sophisticated without affecting playability. Imagine a game with hundreds of different types/degrees of terrain and a TOBRUK-like combat system with more kinds of weapons, ammo, cover and possible results.

Other ideas which would be practical for a computerized wargame are:
- To require more positive actions to gain intelligence. (like sending scout cars forward first to make contact or spending BRPs in THIRD REICH to develop espionage.)
- To introduce factors unknown to both players, such as weather, replacement rates, neutral reactions and repair capabilities. (example: a search sent out in MIDWAY reports ten tenth cloud cover, no sightings possible.)
- To allow for counter-intelligence, false information, along with the possibility of true information leaking out.

To integrate strategic, operational and tactical levels. Changes in map scale and time scale are kept track of automatically. (example: the transition from MIDWAY to PORT LUDLOW.)

Of course, the real dreamers will still hope for a computer opponent, something they can match wits with anytime they're in the mood. So many gamers are playing solitaire that such a program would be immensely popular. But, having watched the painfully slow development of chess-playing programs, I'm not about to suggest that a program that will play PANZERBLITZ, and play it well, is right around the corner. I don't even think that it's likely. However, I do think it would be a good idea to try, because even a program that plays lousy PANZERBLITZ would have two very useful applications.

First, it could be used to teach the game by playing simple scenarios, perhaps even with programmed instructions. As long as it taught the rules correctly, it could make perfectly horrible moves—maybe even let the neophyte win a few to build his ego.

Secondly, two such programs could be set against each other as a playtesting tool. They could quickly (!) run through ten or a hundred games and test many unforeseen (they're stupid, remember?) rules applications. Instead of playtesting being longer, harder, and more expensive, computers might make it easier and cheaper. Having a "poor" program, one which doesn't stick to the best strategies, would be an asset.

And suppose, just suppose, that our program improved so that by Version 3 it could play an "average" game—good enough to beat about half of its opponents. I still don't think that such a challenge would be of more than passing interest to a strong player. But how about two "experts" playing a monster scenario where each had a program as a subordinate commander? A time limit on each move would force both players to delegate some responsibilities to the program and create a situation where the players make Rommel-like "dashes" to assume command where the fighting is most critical. Meanwhile, the mediocre second-in-command tries to follow orders ("Hold this town") or "Take that bridge"). This idea would not only be a step forward in command control simulation, it would allow gamers to do more playing by ignoring the dull and static areas and concentrating on the hotspots.

SQUAD LEADER T-SHIRTS

Yes, we are following up on the success of the PANZERBLITZ T-shirts with yet another offering on what has become our hottest game. Now you too can become a SQUAD LEADER whether you play the game or not. The back of the shirt is adorned with the same Avalon Hill logo you've seen before on the PANZERBLITZ shirts. Be sure to specify size: small, medium, large, or extra large. $5.00 plus 50¢ for postage and handling. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

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 Treachery, Gales At Sea, Refuge, Vacillating 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 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 $4.00 plus postage. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax.

RICHTHOFEN'S MANEUVER CARDS

Vol. 14, No. 4 of THE GENERAL printed a variant for RICHTHOFEN'S WAR which featured the use of a deck of 27 maneuver cards to augment the mechanical movement system and add a degree of uncertainty and excitement to the game. Not just a random luck element, use of the maneuver cards is dependent upon such factors as turning ability, attack position, and pilot skill. Using the maneuver cards one can more vividly execute the classic maneuvers of the day: Barrel Roll, Falling Leaf, Flat Spin, Immelmann, Loop, Nose Dive, Side-Slip, Tight Circle, and Vertical Spin in an attempt (not always successful) to get on the enemy's tail, rather than just trade shots. This 27 card deck is professionally illustrated and printed and available from Avalon Hill with instruction sheet for $4.00 plus usual postage and handling charges, woueurs. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax.
ADVANCED LEVEL MIDWAY

by Mark Dumdei

Though an early generation wargame, MIDWAY has some fine characteristics which make it one of the better Avalon Hill games: playing time is short, rules are fairly simple, and there's plenty of action. Yet, there are a few rules which seriously detract from the potential realism of the game. A discussion of each follows along with proposed changes to correct and enhance this otherwise fine game.

BATTLEBOARD PROCEDURE: Step 9.
Under the present rules, if a ship is attacked while alone by two groups of 5 squadrons each, it will be sunk—even the mighty Yamato succumbs to attack by not more than 30 aircraft! More than once a clever American commander has waited to attack the last Japanese reinforcement group alone, thereby sinking the Hosho, Sendai, and at least one battleship at a marginal cost in planes. Two new rules correct this situation and give the screening player more flexibility:

1. A ship can conduct consolidated screening if: a) no other ships are screening it; and b) the ship applies its screening value to defend itself; c) When using consolidated screening, total the number of planes which are attacking the target ship into a combined attack value. Compare this figure to the defending ship's screening value and reduce to basic odds; d) Each group of attacking planes now conducts its attack using the same odds column. For example, the Mutsu is under attack by two groups of five T planes and one group of six D planes. Under the present rules, one group would attack at 1-2 and two groups at 5-1 (sinking Mutsu). The consolidated screening rule combines all the attacking groups into a combined attack value: 5 + 5 + 6 = 16 vs. 8 (Mutsu) = 2 to 1. Now the US player conducts three 2 to 1 attacks against the Mutsu. With average luck, he'll score 5 hits.
2. Ships with a screening value of four or greater can split their AA fire equally into two parts. Screening value of 5 divides into values of 3 and 2 factors. When dividing screening value, the firing ship is not permitted to use its "arbitrary screening value of 1" against enemy aircraft. Example: the Yamato wants to screen two other ships with 5 factors each, but if the Yamato itself is under attack, other ships must screen it against all attacking planes—otherwise split screening is not allowed.

Step 10: When aircraft conduct attacks against the "arbitrary screening value of 1", they are not subject to losses. Keep in mind that the arbitrary screening value does not represent any AA fire, but rather a factor for battle odds computation only.

FIGHTERS: change to rule 7—Stripping off fighters can be used to attack enemy bomber and torpedo plane squadrons. When engaging D and T plane squadrons in fighter combat, the fighters do not change their strength for determining combat odds, D and T's which survive the combat proceed to conduct air attacks against enemy ships. Delete references to the use of fighters as extra screening value.

a. The interceptors decide how many enemy D & T planes, and of which type, they will attack.
b. Combat against D & T planes is fought separately from fighter vs. fighter combat.

With regard to fighter combat resolution, the results table was designed primarily to reflect losses in large scale fighter battles. In small battles, the losses are disproportionately high. To correct this problem, use the following rule: if the loser side has fewer than 12 squadrons involved in fighter combat, reduce all losses by half. In case of fractions, roll the die again: #1-3: round losses down; #4-6: round losses up.

Even when spotted by recon planes, air attacks often did not arrive on target, especially those launched from great distances. The Hornet's planes failed to locate the Japanese fleet at Midway; two years later, a large wave of Japanese aircraft went off course in the Marianas. Furthermore, the range of attacking aircraft would seem to be too short. To correct these problems use these rules:

1. If the target is more than 6 squares distant, roll a die; if the die roll is less than or equal to the number of planes flown to target greater than six there is no attack. Roll for each carrier and for each mission. For this purpose, planes based on Midway are considered as carrier planes.
2. The range of all planes is changed to 20 squares. Planes are not permitted to attack targets at any range which would prevent their return to base.

The rule prohibiting "Kamikaze" attacks has been added because at this stage in the war, the retention of veteran combat experienced pilots was crucial to both sides.

Midway Island itself had a formidable array of heavy AA weaponry. To reflect this fact, Midway gets a screening value of 20 or equal to the relative fortification strength, whichever is the lesser. The screening value is never less than 1. When Japanese planes bomb Midway to reduce its fortification strength, they must roll for AA losses using the Aircraft vs. Ship combat odds table.

During the war it was fairly common for both sides to launch search-air attacks into locations where enemy ships were suspected, but not confirmed. Therefore, anytime a player wishes to conduct an air attack against a square in which an enemy target has not been spotted by recon, (Midway Island itself is always considered to be "spotted") the attack constitutes a SEARCH-AIR ATTACK which is subject to the following rules:

1. At least four squadrons of D & T planes combined must comprise the mission.
2. If the mission destination is within 5 squares, the search also attempts to locate ships in adjacent squares. Beginning with the target square, the searching player calls out zones one at a time. Once an enemy force or CAP is contacted, he must stop calling out zones and engage in combat with all available planes.
3. If the mission destination is 6 or more squares, the search only flies and searches the target zone. Furthermore, the attacker must roll the die before searching in the same manner stated previously for air attacks at a range in excess of 6 hexes.

The use of this rule will prevent players from sending out a single squadron each into zones in a desperate attempt to find an elusive enemy task force; furthermore, this procedure requires fewer planes to do the same thing, but they operate in larger groups.

Badly damaged heavy ships often took many months to repair, denying their use to the fleet. Consequently, inflicting serious damage upon enemy carriers or battleships particularly would have some value towards victory. At the end of the game, each BB or CY (not CYL) which is within one hit of sinking results in 3 victory points.

Marine and Army aircraft were not trained to operate from carriers. As a result, planes based at Midway at the start of the game cannot land on US carriers. These counters should be marked to separate them from US carrier planes. Technical note: the Hosho had a capacity of 5 groups, so it can carry two more in addition to the 3 groups it starts the game with.

Up to now, only existing rules have been modified. At this time, we'll get into some completely new rules. The most significant change is the addition of an Invasion Force counter which represents six troopships. Each unchecked box is worth one screening value factor and one (defensive only) surface combat factor. Screening values can only be used in self defense. For each hit against the I.F. counter, Midway gains 4 fortification points and the US gets one victory point; if the I.F. counter loses five or more ships, then Midway cannot be invaded. Reduce the Atago to 3 hit boxes. Furthermore, during the four consecutive turns that Midway is being invaded, two battleships must be located at Midway concurrently for four consecutive turns.

Attached to the Yamato group are six supply ships which are represented by the Supply Force (S.F.) counter. Each unchecked box is worth one screening value factor and one surface combat hit box.

Continued on Page 34, Column 3
Fifty-five years ago, when Vladimir I. Lenin was at his peak as one of the most successful revolutionaries of all time, he said, "History is always richer in content, more varied, more manifold, more lively, and more 'subtle' than even the best parties." The hardcore wargamer, whose favorite board game is a slice of the past he is reliving, would be quick to agree with the old Bolshevik because the more historical information that is available about the game the more exciting and engrossing he finds it. (Whether or not it is better than a good party is open to question.)

The primary objective of this column, which will appear in THE GENERAL at irregular intervals, is to help make wargaming more enjoyable for our readers by identifying sources of the latest background information in concise, timely and critical reviews of books that feature history topics. Special attention will be given to titles that are of particular interest to Avalon Hill wargamers.

A secondary objective of the column is to provide the design staff members at AH with a research library of current military titles at the lowest possible cost. This objective is already in the bag because review copies are sent to us free of charge.

Publishers of military books have been solicited to send review copies of their most recent releases that cover all eras of warfare, famous unit histories, battlefield tactics, overall strategy, biographies of noted military personalities, equipment and armaments. Not all of the books that are received will be reviewed but each one will be listed in a section of the column entitled: "Books Received!"


Buchheim shot over 5000 photographs aboard two of Hitler's submarines in an attempt to capture the reality of war before it was irretrievably lost. He has been successful in culling 200-plus black and white "pictorial documents" to give the reader a feeling of the claustrophobia, the constrictions and the oppression that goes along with fighting aboard a 220-foot VII-C class U-boat in WWII. The collection of photos include the sighting, signaling and maneuvering together of two subs during a rare meeting in mid-Atlantic. Action episodes include the periscope-level attack and shelling of the hapless tanker, Clea, and the surface torpedo assault and subsequent burning of the tanker, Arthur F. Corvin, which brought on a thorough depth charging by an American-made, four-stacker destroyer. The violence of the near fatal attack is attested to by the blurred photos of the crewmen. Buchheim captures the exhaustion and fear in the faces of the crew from a stricken U-boat that has been pulled out of the sea by his boat but who must stay on the deck during the race to safety in the submarine pens along the coast of France. The narrative, which is written in theicle form, is adequate to support the excellent photography. The student of submarine warfare will be frustrated to see the pages are not numbered nor is there an index. It took 83 rounds from the deck gun to sink the halves of the Clea but the caliber of the weapon could not be found anywhere in the book. For the wargamer, who has an interest in the war at sea and especially in submarine warfare, this book is a must to read. For the reader who is interested in the courage and bravery that men can show under the most demanding conditions, do not miss reading this one.

... George O'Neill


In late 1942, German U-boats began to wreak havoc on Allied shipping in the Indian Ocean. These German submarines were being guided to their targets by a secret transmitter aboard a Nazi ship, which had taken refuge in the neutral harbor of Portuguese Goa, 400 miles south of Bombay, India. The dilemma faced by the British was how were they going to remove this thorn in their side without violating Portuguese neutrality. The answer was found in The Calcutta Light Horse, a part-time military territorial unit, which in reality was 95% a social and sporting club and 5% an auxiliary military organization. British leaders recruited 18 middle aged merchants, bankers, lawyers and accountants from the ranks of the Light Horse and sent them on a raid of the ship, that if it failed would have been disavowed by the British government as nothing more than a wild escapade of a few drunken civilians. The final product of Leasor's research is the true story of one of the strangest and funniest events of WWII. The quality of the writing is excellent with the excitement and frustration of the operation permeating the entire book, which makes it interesting general reading but nothing special for the wargamer who wants detailed historical data.

... Arnold Blumberg

Herman Goring"—From Regiment to Fallschirmanpferkorp, By Roger J. Bender and George A. Petersen. P.O. Box 23456, San Jose, California, 95123, R. James Bender Publishing, 1975. 208 pages, $13.95.

This book is billed as an organization and combat history of the "Herman Goring" military formation from its beginning as a Prussian police unit in 1933 to its demise as a corps in the fields of Saxony in 1945. Every reorganization is presented in great detail by citing official orders and tables of organization. Readers who are interested in the order of battle for companies and battalions will find the book useful. But beware. Most of the information is in German. That portion of the book that treats the unit history and which is potentially of the greatest value to a wargamer is very sketchy. There are some specific and interesting stories about the unit, such as how it saved the art treasures of Monte Cassino Abbey before Allied bombers blasted it, but there are not enough of them to make the book useful to the reader who wants more details of the life of the unit. The authors also have included details about the uniforms, insignia (color plates) standards and vehicle markings. The book is liberally illustrated with excellent black and white photos of the men and equipment of the "Hermann Goring." A hardcore wargamer might find this book useful and interesting but not the novice.

... Arnold Blumberg


While the eyes of Europe and the world were riveted on the dramatic events transpiring in the Belgian town of Antwerp, another equally important campaign was being waged behind the front to clear the port of Antwerp and the Scheldt estuary. Even had Montgomery's daring airborne stroke at Arnhem succeeded it is doubtful that the war would have been significantly shortened given the Allied supply quandary. Moulton goes to considerable lengths to back the prevailing theory that Monty erred badly in not first securing the approaches to Antwerp.

The book details the relatively easy advance of the 11th Armoured Division from the Seine to take Antwerp virtually without a fight. But here the British failed to press their advantage and although the port was theirs virtually undamaged, seaborne access to it was not, for the Germans still controlled the Scheldt with mines and coastal guns. Thus began a long struggle for mastery between the Canadian First Army and the German 75th Infantry Division in the flooded polders astride the Scheldt to the final assaults on
Walcheren Island by the 4th Commando Brigade, and the 52nd Lowland Division. Although the German defenders were 2nd line troops of low morale sarcastically referred to as the “white bread” division due to their ranks being filled with wounded veterans with stomach disorders, the natural defenses of the Scheldt were formidable and forced the Allies to new heights of amphibious warfare to avoid the channelizing effect of the flooded polders. Cut off any where that orange peel you throw overboard drifts past you three hours later. Suitable for ages 10 and up.


BOOK RECEIVED:


Combat Record of the 504th Parachute Infantry Division Compiled by Lt. William Mandle and PFC David H. Whittier. P.O. Box 3107, Uptown Station, Nashville, TN 37219, The Battery Book Shop and Press, 1978 (reprint; originally printed 1945). 172 pp., 447 photos, 3 color plates, soft cover, $12.00.


Full-color mounted mapboard

You’ll flip over this completely revamped revision of the old 3M game. All of the factors that are important in real sailboat racing can be found in Regatta—wind direction, tacking, blanketing, jibing, spinnaker tactics; even protests and flying jibs!

You’ll thrill to the tension of maneuvering before the starting gun. Rash with laughter at the spectacle of your opponents engaging in a luffing contest that takes them off the course entirely. Howl with agony as you discover that your careful plotting of the lay line has left you ten boat lengths to leeward of the first mark.

The game is designed primarily for players with some sailing experience, but the simple and carefully written rules allow any landlubber or sinkpocket to enjoy the thrills and excitement of sailing without enduring the hours of misery sanding the hull or looking for a crew that can tell the difference between a spinnaker boom and a boom vang.

Each player in Regatta (up to six) has his own boat to race around the colorful 22" x 28" mapboard on a series of courses that are only limited by the player’s imagination. Committee boat, course marks, and wind indicator can be placed about the map in various positions for common triangular courses, Cup-style courses, and others.

YOU make all of the decisions. True racing skipper has to make. YOU plan a pre-race strategy that will bring you across the line first. YOU decide when to tack, and when to put up your powerful spinnaker for the downwind leg. YOU try to take advantage of unexpected wind shifts, blanket your opponents’ sails, and much more—indeed REGATTA is so close to real sailboat racing that it is highly recommended for training beginners and even experienced sailors in tactics and racing strategy. All the facets of real sailboat racing are included in REGATTA, including Puffs, Wind Shifts, Spinnakers, Blanketing, Right-of-Way, Tacking, Jibing, and race scoring. And for neophyte sailors, there’s a helpful summary of the rules of yacht racing, along with a nautical glossary listing the most common terms used by sailors.

GAME INCLUDES:

- 6 multi-colored diecast yachts
- 1 Committee Boat
- 4 Course markers (bubbles)
- 2 dice
- 6 Spinnaker Cards
- Complete Rules with Nautical Glossary
- Full-color mounted mapboard
- Wind Shift Indicator

Regatta is the perfect game for family fun ashore, or for those absolutely dead days aloft, the kind where that orange peel you throw overboard drifts past you three hours later. Suitable for ages 10 and up.

$15 Retail
Dear fellow "classics" player,

I address this letter to the thirty or so players who have registered for the 500 in 1981 and all AH300 at Origins. If I philosophize at great lengths, I will waste paper and not get to the point. For those who are not yet in, then in brief, why I compete in the "classics":

1. I like to compete.
2. I like the games best.
3. Origins has become part of my summer, I renew a fellowship with the rest of you each year.

Since 1977, when we fulfilled our own prophecy that Origins would be where the action is, we have seen the 500 swell to a size where it is top heavy. Attendance fell off in the 500 this year while the RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN was over-subscribed in an expanded tournament, I would love to win the 500, but let's face it, we are now mostly middle-aged men. When Bruns says he used to play in 3-minute move Sparta tourneys in such a way as to make me believe the best is left to those games which are easily blown away by us in a perfunctory fashion in a few hours. Yet, something is awry. Attendance fell off while it may be expected too much for the general public to continue to arrive at tournaments after 1200 CDT to see the great number of events with which it must compete in present day ORIGINS, the size of the 500 has doubled, this year took the year's poor tournament facilities and the extremely late appearance of some entries to do a fair job. One thing I will try to state is that a category to the 100 + participant level in 1975. As for the prize list, we have adjusted the difficulties of 100% of the events in the form of prizes. We're willing to foot the bill for employee salaries and provide a few more games in which the most popular of the event determine the prize list. That is why some events which don't draw as many as the others can be played quite quickly. A good tournament might have four rounds, with each player having a chance to take the 200 and each player having a chance to take the prize. The overall winner would be the one who turned in the best overall performance in terms of objectives taken and/or casualties sustained or inflicted. Both games adapt themselves readily to this method of determining a winner. With proper scheduling and restructuring, it should be possible to arrange things so that a player could participate in both the Masters and a scaled-down Classics.

Gary Charters
Bloomington, IN 47401

Dear Mr. Greenwood,

I hope that upon reading my letter concerning new PBM kits you will give the issue the same breadth that those of the classics, the 500 this year while the games themselves. The question here is how things are going to hold up the entire German Army. If you don't think it premature to downgrade the 500, but so far no one has challenged all the other games and tourneys as well. Yet, something is awry. Attendance fell off while the classics have become the standard procedure to attract a maximum field of 128 players any more. The other reasons for the decline in popularity are these. First, the mix of permitted games in the tournament needs to be altered drastically, to reflect what people are actually playing these games.

I have pleasant memories of the halcyon days of Avalon Hill becoming like "The Other" game which is starting to diminish because of the越南 experience with a difficult game by a certain deadline. One of the reasons that I looked forward to the Halcyon Days is that I am saying that here is one approach to the design of variant articles (such as the scenario sheets for the recent Coral Sea variants) to keep with my games. The other difference is that you usually already know the basic rules and don't have to stop playing old favorites to enjoy something new. During the Avalon Hill miniatures and pay a few dollars more just to get thesophisticated player. Perhaps he can be encouraged to introduce in providing such photocopies to others?

William O. Rutherford
Menlo Park, CA

Dear Editor,

As a devoted follower of Avalon Hill for a number of years, I feel compelled, however, to express why I, and perhaps others, would like to see some new PBM kit ventures. You've mentioned in former replies on this subject that many wargamers have their own PBM kit, and you'd like to see a difficult game by Avalon Hill. To be held up to the closest waste basket. Although I've been a subscriber to The General for only a short time, I've already seen several letters with attachments for postal play of the classics he can, and will, readily come up with his own systems for postal play. Anyone selling such copies will be only too happy to turn out a book. If you don't think it premature to downgrade the 500, and provide the proper scenarios are chosen, perhaps the Avalon Hill becoming like "The Other" game which is starting to diminish because of the Vietnam experience with a difficult game by a certain deadline. One of the reasons that I looked forward to the Halcyon Days is that I am saying that here is one approach to the design of variant articles (such as the scenario sheets for the recent Coral Sea variants) to keep with my games. The other difference is that you usually already know the basic rules and don't have to stop playing old favorites to enjoy something new. During the Avalon Hill miniatures and pay a few dollars more just to get thesophisticated player. Perhaps he can be encouraged to introduce in providing such photocopies to others?

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William O. Rutherford
Menlo Park, CA
BISMARCK

BISMARCK was the 44th game to undergo analysis in the RBG and fared exceedingly well. This may be explained in part by the relatively small response which barely provided a statistically valid sample. We have observed that games with a smaller numerical following tend to have a more enthusiastic response per average owner because the rater is more likely to react favorably solely on the basis of the subject matter alone. Regardless of the number of naval enthusiasts, the sixth place rating of BISMARCK at 2.37 is both commendable and surprising.

The game showed fine balance throughout the ratings, bowing out of the top half in only the Base of Understanding category where several typos, and the complex charts and optional rules of the Advanced Game doubtless caused a ratings fiasco.

On the positive side, however, the 1.69 rating for Components set a new record for that category (THE RED QUEEN has a rating of 1.84). This almost invariables was the Realism score of 1.84 which took second honors only to CROSS OF IRON. Undoubtedly the game benefited from a comparison to its simple predecessor of the same name. The highly sophisticated and innovative search procedures of the new version add a great deal of realism while not subtracting excessively from the playability of the original. It is only when leaving the Basic Game for a venture into the plethora of options that the game boggs down in a sea of charts and complications. Naturally, the playing time is variable depending on the range of excess being utilized to increase realism and the attendant playing time.

The Question Box

Q: May a supply hex which is controlled for reinforcement purposes be used to supply Allied units not occupying the hex if the hex is in German zone of control?
A: No. The phrase in rule 16.12 stating "through any enemy zone of control" should be read to mean "through or to any hex in enemy zone of control."

Q: During the Supply Phase of Turn 3, the Allies control for supply purposes hexes R29 and Q28. They have 10 units on the continent being supplied by these two hexes. Does Rule 16.8 allow the Allies to bring onto the continent in that Turn the total of 7 new units in addition of those being supplied from Le Havre in Turn 4? At No. The phrase in Rule 16.8 stating "if not turn it would take the supply away from another unit on the continent" refers to supply available during the Turn 3 Supply Phase, before any movement. Even if it would be impossible for the Germans to regain control of Le Havre in their DO-DAY 77

Q: Which panzer corps can be withdrawn, what happens if one tries to withdraw by sea and is sunk?
A: Panzer corps must be sunk in its place. Furthermore, the panzer corps must be able to move off by normal movement, rail or sea movement. A panzer unit in an isolated pocket with no access to the sea could not be withdrawn.

SQUAD LEADER

43.61 Can a level 3 hex see a level 0 hex directly behind a level 2 cliff hexside of the same hill?
A: No. Note this is an exception to the case stated in 43.61.

The General

AVALON HILL 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 only as a general classification over rank. By breaking down the ratings into individual categories the gamer is able to discern for himself where the game is strong or weak in the qualities he values the most. The categories are outlined on the back of the game.
The worst possible situation that could possibly befall Britain is to know that a poor set-up could get into the Atlantic before he has a chance to have given the German a chance to escape into the Atlantic undetected. Does he continue to be able to locate the German ships free passage into the Atlantic. It is a situation which the British player must try to avoid at all costs.

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<tr>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Position at end of first move</th>
<th>Mode at end of first move</th>
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<tr>
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<td>B7</td>
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<td>2. Birmingham</td>
<td>D13</td>
<td>movement</td>
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<td>3. Manchester</td>
<td>E14</td>
<td>movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Suffolk</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arethusa</td>
<td>D12</td>
<td>movement</td>
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<td>Hood</td>
<td>G16</td>
<td>in task force</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prince of Wales</td>
<td>G16</td>
<td>movement</td>
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</table>

The solution for Contest 90 is as follows:

When distributing his forces, the British player must guard primarily against a quick German outbreak. He must make sure that a German ship moving at maximum speed does not get into the Atlantic before he has a chance to have given the German a chance to escape into the Atlantic undetected. Does he continue to maintain his Greenland to Britain patrol in the hope that the German ships are still east or does he give it up and send his ships out into the Atlantic in a futile hope of locating them before they can do damage? The longer his ships remain on patrol after a breakaway, the more difficult it will be to organize a search. Once the British discovers the German ships have escaped into the Atlantic, it is a situation which the British player must try to avoid at all costs.

The Aggressive Tightrope 41
The 1776 Thesis. 81
PANZERBLITZ Series Replay 73
The Asymmetry 26

The previously stalled FORTRESS EUROPA project is once again proceeding full tilt with the assignment of a new game developer here at Avalon Hill. Those interested in applying for a playtesting position for this game should address their inquiries directly to new project head Alan Moon c/o Avalon Hill. Experience with RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN is a prerequisite. Although by-mail testing is expected, preference will be given to those who can attend live sessions with the developer either during the week or on Saturdays during normal working hours.

While exact prices have not been determined yet, it seems a safe assumption that the New Year will bring a new round of price increases as we struggle to keep up with double digit inflation. The coming Christmas season may be your last chance to make that game purchase you've been pondering for so long before the prices go up again.

It was obvious that Contest No. 89 was based on a mail-order only game even without knowing the subject matter as the number of entries fell off dramatically from the previous issue's CROSS OF IRON contest. Hopefully the recent release of the 3rd edition of ANZIO to the retail trade will get this excellent game into more common usage in the years ahead. In any case, Tom Oleson's puzzle for the new Diadem scenario stumped all but four entrants. Those winners were: Philip Remert, Washington, D.C.; Claude Drong, Spring Grove, IL; Mark Simonitch, Concord, CA; and Carl Anderson of Peekskill, NY.

The problem for Contest 90 is as follows:

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You can tell a good company by the monsters it keeps

Avalon Hill's range of Sci-Fi and Fantasy games are designed for hobbyist and casual player alike. Simple enough to be fun to play, but also challenging enough to keep the most experienced player on his toes. Use your imagination — enter our realm of Fantasy and Science Fiction.

**MAGIC REALM**
The world where honour, valour and terrifying monsters walk hand in hand. Where the terrain can change in a flash. And where a keen eye will serve you well. You become one of the sixteen characters, Witch-King, Knight, Viking et al, and endeavour to survive and conquer. You will face other characters, mighty monsters, magic spells, in your challenge to defeat the Magic Realm.

$15

**DUNE**
The strange planet in a future time where water is more valuable than anything else — except spice. Spice, the miracle drug which alone holds together the tenuous threads of intergalactic flight, communications, trade and conquest. And the only place it is found is on Dune. Who controls Dune controls the universe. For two to six players who each assume one of the leading characters attempting to control the planet. But beware the Sand Worm. The horrifying gigantic creature that devours anything that moves. You have never encountered anything like the planet Dune.

$15

**STARSHIP TROOPERS**
The future war where mankind must fight for survival against a race who resemble only a ghastly travesty of homo sapiens, and an even more terrifying enemy — the Arachnoids. Anthropods whose appearance is like a madman's concept of a giant spider, but whose intelligence is highly developed and who organise themselves like ants or termites. Facing them is the Starship Trooper who, with his powered armour suit, has the speed, manouevrability and firepower of a whole platoon. A platoon of such men pack a punch like a panzer division. Winning will depend totally on skill and players will, using the programmed instruction technique, find themselves developing strategies to make optimum use of the features of each race. Even to making the best use of 'cell' and 'tunnel' complexes. Whether you play the 'Bugs', 'Skinnies' or 'Terrans', you will never forget Starship Troopers.

$12

**WIZARD'S QUEST**
The fantastic isle of Merton is the setting for a treasure hunt. A strange wizard has hidden the various treasure tweets; the one who finds them will become absolute ruler of this magical land. Only the frenzied orcs, evil warriors, and the great flying dragon, who can gobble up entire armies, stand in the way of your quest for treasure. Get it! Wizard! Quest!! Get Wizard's Quest TODAY!

$12

THE BEST IN FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION FROM AVALON HILL

All these games are available from your local Avalon Hill games dealer, or direct from us by mail at:

The Avalon Hill Game Company
4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214
CONTEST NO. 91

It is the Jan/Feb 43 turn of a RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN game. The Russians are counterattacking near Bryansk. State each unit’s move and final location, and describe all attacks specifying order of attack, defender/s, and odds of each attack. The die rolls for the three attacks are—first attack: 5, second attack: 1, third attack: 4. All Axis units must be eliminated by the end of the Russian first impulse. No rail movement is allowed.

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 host 3 articles. The solution will be announced in the next issue and the winners in the following issue.

ISSUE AS A WHOLE: _______ (Rate from 1 to 10, with 10 equating excellent, 10 terrible)

Mail it to our 4517 Harford Road address with your contest entry or opponents wanted ad. Mark such correspondence to the attention of the R & D Department.

The general contest is available for mail order postage only. Good for Complete Game Purchase Only. Valid Only in the United States.

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<tr>
<th>STARTING</th>
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<th>ATTACKS</th>
<th>ODDS</th>
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Opponent Wanted 25¢

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.
2. For Sale, Trade, or Wanted ads will be accepted only when dealing with contactor's items/games no longer available from AH) and are accompanied by a 50¢ token fee.
3. Insert copy on lines provided (25 word maximum) and print name, address and phone number on the appropriate lines.
4. PRINT if illegible your ad will not be printed.
5. So that as many ads can be printed as possible within our limited space we request that you use official abbreviations as well as the game abbreviations listed below.
6. Mail it to our 4517 Harford Road address with your contest entry or opponents wanted ad. Mark such correspondence to the attention of the R & D Department.
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Closing Transactions Date

Location of units (use this table when several units are on one square or when the code numbers are not legible)

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