Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 80

The post ORIGINS issue is traditionally my annual political harangue about what’s right and wrong with the hobby so why should this year be any different? The sixth annual ORIGINS national convention was an interesting mixture of highs and lows which will be reported on in sun-dry tones throughout the hobby press. As such, it appears to be fair game for this writer’s slings and arrows. What follows is admittedly just one man’s opinion of what transpired this year.

ORIGINS continued to grow with an estimated total attendance of between three and four thousand, attracting a record number of exhibitors (104 booths) with reports of several dozen others being turned away at the last minute for lack of space. Among them was GHQ whose miniatures stand had been a familiar sight at the first five ORIGINS. The fault here lies both in the inadequacy of the site to accommodate the industry and the wait-to-the-last-minute attitude of the various exhibitors to commit themselves to attendance. Unfortunately, the facilities were woefully inadequate to handle even this reduced number of displays. Despite reducing the square footage of individual booths spaces, the exhibits were packed in like so many sardines which, when coupled with the failure of the promised air conditioning, left exhibitors once again fuming about the conditions under which they had to operate. Very narrow walkways between booths left the exhibition area always crowded and sweltering. All in all, the exhibition area did not lend ORIGINS much of a boost in terms of impressing the public with a professionally run show.

Continued on Page 42, Column 1
June 1944.

For over two years, the Allies have been gathering their forces in England, preparing the final plan and its execution. Over three million men have been assembled in England and Africa. The Allied Strategic Air Forces relentlessly strike at railroads, road networks, bridges, and industrial complexes in Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland, attempting to soften up the German defense and slow German production.

The target is Hitler's Fortress Europa.

The Germans have a million and a half men to protect the Atlantic coast of Holland, Belgium, and France, as well as the Mediterranean coast of France. Believing the war will be won on the beaches, they have fortified much of the coastline with mines, bunkers, barbed wire, flooded areas, and gun positions: The Atlantic Wall.

FORTRESS EUROPA recreates the Allied campaign in Western Europe from D-Day to March 1945. The Allied player must select an invasion site and make a successful landing, break out of the beachhead, drive across France, and push deep into Germany. The German player must prevent the Allied invasion or else conduct an orderly withdrawal across France, constantly delaying the Allies, and then counterattacking in the winter. AN EPIC STRUGGLE.

FORTRESS EUROPA is the successor to the highly acclaimed THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN. And while the.mapboard area and the time frame are the same as those covered in D-DAY, FORTRESS EUROPA is a tremendous step up, both in complexity and historical accuracy from both TRC and D-DAY. In fact, the only remaining similarity to TRC in the AH version of FORTRESS EUROPA is the double impulse movement in the turn sequence.

The completely new air system is quite involved, though still abstract in concept. In most games, the decisions involving the assignment of available aircraft to specific air missions will be the most crucial factor in deciding the winner. Special unit characteristics cover commandoes, rangers, paratroopers, Volkssturm units, and partisans. Other rules cover restricted German movement, realistic but simple supply rules and restrictions, limited armor effectiveness in other than clear terrain, sea movement, rail movement, invasion areas, and the panzer reserve.

The basic game is thirty-seven turns long, but five scenarios are provided that cover parts of the campaign and range from seven to twenty-eight turns long. Sudden Death Victory Conditions (again, quite different from those of TRC) are included and will shorten most games if used, as well as increase the excitement throughout. But, no matter which game is being played, neither side has it easy and after a player has mastered the rules, he will have innumerable subtle strategies and tricky tactics to choose from.

The game includes two Allied OB Charts, two German OB Charts, an Aircraft Mission and Replacement Chart, a Time Record Chart, a 22" x 24" mapboard, 520 counters, one die, and a sixteen page rulebook. Available for $15 from the Avalon Hill Game Co., 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, Maryland 21214. Add 10% for postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

Complexity Rating—7 Playing Time—Six Hours and Up
CIRCUS MAXIMUS

Join us for a glimpse of the savage splendor and pageantry that was Rome as ordinary living rooms are vicariously transformed into one of the majestic arenas of the ancient world. Hark! Even now the blare of trumpets brings down a grudging calm upon the throng that fills the galleries thirsting for the thrills of the day’s competition. This is the CIRCUS MAXIMUS and assembled here from Spain, Thrace, Judea and the far corners of the Mediterranean are the champions of the ancient world to pay homage to the Emperor and vie for his gold. From your vantage point behind the matched grays of the House of Gaius you watch as the sultry image is broken by the clatter of late-arriving chariots approaching the starting line. To the extreme right is the veteran Phoenician who won his freedom last month in Athens but, like a moth to flame, is drawn back to the Circus in search of fame and fortune or a grisly end beneath the hooves of a following team. Next to the line are the chestnut brown Arabicans of the Egyptian and the sturdy whites of the Greek from Corinth. But of more immediate concern are the jet black beasts of Messala, the defending champion, but an arm’s length away. Renowned for both his prowess as a driver and his murderous attacks on those who dares contest a corner with him, Messala is both the favorite of the crowd and feared by all who drive in the Circus. And today the hubs of the wheels on his chariot glint in the midday sun. The Roman is using razor sharp scythe blades—a cruel threat to any wheel or horseflesh which ventures too near. You are all that stands between him and the favorable inside position at the far corner. The blare of the trumpets once again stills the crowd and signals that all is ready. The days of bravado, valor, and raw courage live again. CIRCUS MAXIMUS is about to begin.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS is a multi-player game of racing skill divided into three levels of play for players aged 12 and up. The Basic Game can be played with a minimum investment of learning time as one player can quickly explain the game to inexperienced participants. Yet, CIRCUS MAXIMUS is more than just a racing game. The drivers must choose whether to slow their teams in order to attack their opponents with whip and/or ram attacks, how to best defend against and evade such attacks by others, when to whip their own team into the stretch, or save their limited endurance to coax them through the all important corners. In the Advanced Game additional complexity is added in the form of wrecks, dragged drivers, and critical wounds. The Campaign Game version allows participants to build an entire stable of chariot teams and drivers for use in a racing season of ten different starts. Wounds and experience gained in one race will affect the outcomes of future events. You can amass large fortunes with astute wagers, or be sold into slavery for going into debt. From your vantage point behind the matched grays of the House of Gaius you watch as the sultry image is broken by the clatter of late-arriving chariots approaching the starting line. To the extreme right is the veteran Phoenician who won his freedom last month in Athens but, like a moth to flame, is drawn back to the Circus in search of fame and fortune or a grisly end beneath the hooves of a following team. Next to the line are the chestnut brown Arabicans of the Egyptian and the sturdy whites of the Greek from Corinth. But of more immediate concern are the jet black beasts of Messala, the defending champion, but an arm’s length away. Renowned for both his prowess as a driver and his murderous attacks on those who dare contest a corner with him, Messala is both the favorite of the crowd and feared by all who drive in the Circus. And today the hubs of the wheels on his chariot glint in the midday sun. The Roman is using razor sharp scythe blades—a cruel threat to any wheel or horseflesh which ventures too near. You are all that stands between him and the favorable inside position at the far corner. The blare of the trumpets once again stills the crowd and signals that all is ready. The days of bravado, valor, and raw courage live again. CIRCUS MAXIMUS is about to begin.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS is one of those games that comes along from time to time which is just plain fun to play. We know we have a winner on our hands when designers volunteer to stay late to playtest somebody else’s game. Such was the case with CIRCUS MAXIMUS. Like WS&IM, KINGMAKER, and RAIL BARON before it, there was no shortage of volunteers to play test CIRCUS MAXIMUS. In fact, AH developer Don Greenwood hated to finish it because it meant the end to his enjoyable Saturday afternoon playtests. CIRCUS MAXIMUS is one of those games that comes along from time to time which is just plain fun to play. We know we have a winner on our hands when designers volunteer to stay late to playtest somebody else’s game. Such was the case with CIRCUS MAXIMUS. Like WS&IM, KINGMAKER, and RAIL BARON before it, there was no shortage of volunteers to play test CIRCUS MAXIMUS. In fact, AH developer Don Greenwood hated to finish it because it meant the end to his enjoyable Saturday afternoon playtests.

Described elsewhere as SPEED CIRCUIT with dirty tricks, CIRCUS MAXIMUS indeed owes a great debt to the former as well as WIN, PLACE & SHOW in regards to its smooth playing and exciting mechanics. The combination of the former with the unique combat techniques of designer Michael Matheny has resulted in a game far more exciting than its predecessor’s in the AH “racing” stable, despite the blandness of the track itself.

CIRCUS MAXIMUS is best played with eight participants but can be played by any number from one to ten or more. Like most multi-player games it is extremely well balanced and easy to learn, yet challenging and exciting to play. The average playing time of two hours enables several plays in the course of an afternoon. In each game you get a mounted 16” x 33” mapboard, COI-style gamette box, 16 page rulebook, and 96 die-cut counters representing the drivers, teams, and chariots which do the racing and the Sesterces which are bet on them.

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Rated ‘2’ on the Avalon Hill Complexity Scale of 1 [Easy] to 10 [Hard], CIRCUS MAXIMUS is available directly from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 for $8 plus 10% postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
FIRST IMPRESSIONS
An Introduction to Squad Leader Plus TWO
By Bob Medrow

SQUAD LEADER enthusiasts need no introduction to Bob Medrow, but for those who do, the story goes further than that green 8-1 leader counter with the same name. Bob was instrumental in elimination of more problems than I care to remember in the initial SQUAD LEADER game for which he won the Royal Order of the MVP, my undying gratitude, and half a game store. Since then he's been more than just a little active in the gamette play tests and has battled relative newcomers like McNamara and Mishcon to the wire for later MVP honors. Having lost that title with the last two gamettes he's made up for it by winning the Annual Editor's Choice Awards for his first two "First Impressions" articles. By the looks of this fine piece of analytical writing he is sure to be among the nominees for a third.

This is my third article to be concerned with SQUAD LEADER and/or the gamettes which have followed upon its heels. The first of these appeared in Volume 14, No. 5 of The General and dealt with certain basic aspects of the SL system, with the emphasis placed upon the infantry. There was also a discussion of the first three scenarios. Volume 15, No. 6 contained an extensive discussion of the armor game as modified by the publication of CROSS OF IRON. In addition, each of the eight COI scenarios received some attention. As did the first two, this article rests upon a foundation composed of playtest experience, the writings of others, and discussions with other gamers.

This article covers three major topics: the most significant ways in which COD modifies or extends the SL-COI system; an in-depth look at certain aspects of both the old and the new artillery systems; and a look at five of COD's twelve scenarios.

Much of what you'll find here should be intelligible to anyone familiar with SL, and those of you into COI should have little trouble in following what COD has to offer, even if you've never seen the second gamette.

The treatment of the first two topics is generally a hard one, meaning that you will find lots of numbers. The genesis for this type of treatment goes back to the problems I first encountered during the playtesting of SL. By the very natures of the combat systems, many of the truths of how they can really be expected to perform are not at all clear. Oh, the mechanics are clear enough. However, particularly when two dice are being rolled, that doesn't mean that the outcomes are obvious enough to make a choice of tactics a simple thing. The very first SL scenario, The Guards Counterattack, contains a situation that illustrates this quite nicely (See figure 1). If the German player sets up a unit in F5 he would doubtless have found out.

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Figure 1: One of the basic dilemmas of SQUAD LEADER: is one hit attack better than two small ones? Had the German started a squad in F5 he would doubtless have found out.

Now, it takes little thought to reach the conclusion that once one starts looking at things like the relative probabilities of success of the options described above, enormous piles of numbers can be generated. The real problem is then to determine which of these numbers will be of benefit to the serious, but not fanatical, player. My personal objective in undertaking the types of calculations you'll be seeing here has been to establish reasonable doctrines for my cardboard commands. Pouring over a three-ring binder full of charts and tables during the course of a game is not my idea of fun, but I do prefer to play intelligently. Thus, as you'll see in the last section of the article, I'm perfectly willing in order to arrive at an initial setup, to consider the statistical nature of the effectiveness of a 37L AT Gun against a PzKwIIB with its -3 armor and its size modifiers. Without that type of knowledge it's awfully hard to decide where to position that AT Gun. Now, enough game experience can, if you remember it all, accomplish the same end. But, for many of us, both the remembering and the finding of enough playing time are beyond us. Hopefully, if you're interested in playing well, the kinds of information in these articles will help you handle the decision making required.
And, make no mistake about it, COD does add to the range of decision making required. It's probably fortunate that the roll of a pair of honest dice under COD is a smaller one than was the one from SL to COI. First, and probably most important, there is very little to unlearn. By my reckoning, less than 5% of the rules in COD alter previous rules of the type. Of these, the only significant changes are in connection with the offboard artillery mechanics. Secondly, only some 4% of the rules involve variable additions. By this I mean additions that are, if you decide to use them likely to find application in most scenarios. The majority of what's here will be used only occasionally. For the most part, this is because these rules consider specialized equipment or situations.

If COD does add to our burdens, it should also add to our awareness of two significant aspects of WWII. The educational aspects of this hobby we share have always meant more to some than to others. However, the contrast between the types and amounts of equipment and vehicles used in the COD scenarios and what we saw in COI is immediately obvious. This contrast, in a very effective way, demonstrates the escalation in both military technology and the dollars-and-cents cost of fielding an army in just a few short years. If one fails to maintain a clear vision of that aspect of war, one cannot comprehend either the larger picture of WWII or the world in which we now live.

As to the other aspect, I'm sure that we're all aware of various differences among the major combatants of WWII, but a study of the Allied vehicle lists is most enlightening. With all that's been written about the topic it's hardly a secret that France and England entered the war with Germany with a numerical superiority in AFVs and the rules preferred to their use helps us to see sometimes differences in philosophy between the opposing sides. As you look down the British list at what appeared as the war progressed, you will see that these differences continue. Note, if you will, the general lack of self-propelled artillery. Turreted vehicles are there instead. The British preference for tank heavy armor organizations can be seen in the absence of half-tracks. For those of you with the patience for it, a study of the entry dates of British, German and Russian AFVs provides some rewarding insights into the ability of each power to adapt to a changing battlefield. Yes, whether or not it pleases you to see war games as history-in-a-box, it's there in this series of games.

Before looking at specifics, it is necessary to consider some basic aspects of probability. An exhaustive knowledge is not necessary, but some facts are likely to prove useful, here and elsewhere.

Most of the rolls made in the SL system are made with two dice. Because the numbers used in the system are the sums of the spots, the probabilities of any given two dice combination are hard to visualize. The chance of rolling a '2' is one in 36, the chance of rolling a '3' is two in 36, and so on up to six chances in 36 to roll a '7'. After that the chances start falling: the chance of an '8' is five in 36, that of a '9' is four in 36, and so on, with a '12' chance only once in 36. Before going on, it's essential to stress that this does not say that the roll of a pair of honest dice will yield '2' just once, '3' twice, etc., in 36 casts. Remember, dice have no memory.

The probability of something is equal to the ratio of the number of chances this something has of coming up to the total number of possible outcomes. With two dice, there are 36 possible outcomes, 1 through 6, 1 through 6. With five dice, the number of possible outcomes is 36. Since the dice combinations (1,5), (2,4), (3,3), (4,2), and (5,1) all total six, there are five chances, out of 36, of rolling a six. Thus, the probability of such a roll, to five decimal places, is 0.13889, or 13.889%. In all of the tables in this article, probabilities are expressed as percentages.

In most cases we're interested in the probability of rolling a particular number. While the probability of rolling a six is 0.13889, the probability of rolling six or less is the sum of the probabilities of rolling two, three, four, five or six. That will happen, on the average, 15 times out of 36 for a probability of 0.41667.

Many of the game's mechanics require more than one roll but in few cases, there are the separate TO HIT and TO KILL rolls involved when on board ordinance fires at a vehicle. Suppose that a particular case requires a TO HIT roll of six or less and a TO KILL roll of eight or less. The probability that two dice will yield eight or less is 0.72222. Since both rolls can be considered to be independent, the probability of making such a shot is equal to the product of both probabilities, 0.30093.

THE INFANTRY GAME

In COI, the new armor rules seem to dominate most players' perception of what's in that game and the vehicle counters are among the most striking components of both COI and COD. As fascinating as I find the range of iron monsters spawned by WWII to be, however, the abysmal state of that terrifying conflict, for me, brought to life by the infantry. My opinions about SL and its children are hardly objective, but I feel quite strongly that the ways in which human frailties and strenghts are demonstrated by the system is one of its strongest points.

The Expanded Cast of Characters

The conflicts surrounding the start of WWII involved quite a variety of troop types. To reflect this, including the French, the British, the Finns and the Allied "Neutrals" (Poland, Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands and Norway). Of these, the troops of England (except for the Home Guard) and Finland escape the penalty of a broken side morale value a point or two below their unbroken values. Reflecting their justly-famed stoutness under fire, Finnish squads possess the unique (for squads) ability to self rally and are not subject to a Desperation Morale penalty. Since the troops of the other Allied nations were not the same as the hastily trained soldiers both the Soviets and the Germans sometimes sent into battle, they do not suffer the added Inexperience Infantry penalties of section 94. A totally new type of soldier, the scout, makes his debut in COD. Various parts of other rules also making their appearance here have the net effect of increasing the number of concealed and hidden units in play. As one would imagine, the function of a scout is to go looking for trouble. The mechanics of creating them are such that it is not possible to create a horde of skirmishes. While their introduction does add to the decisions a player must make, it also adds a useful flexibility at light cost. The prohibition against their production by Russian, French and non-Finnish minor country forces is but another way in which the system reflects the characteristics of the forces involved.

Leaders have received little attention in the rules since their introduction in SL. The two sections in COD concerned with leaders do not alter their activities or abilities, but, do, effectively, increase their number slightly. The first of these rules allows for the possible creation of a leader when a squad is in an stressful situation: either they are involved in an engagement adjacent to another unit or being fired upon during a Rally Phase. The frequencies with which leaders can appear under these circumstances (one in 12 times and one in 36 times, respectively) are low enough so that the inclusion of this rule will have little impact on play. Its appeal will be to those who delight in the sudden appearance of the unexpected.

Much the same thing can be said for the second rule. This allows for the wounding of a leader under certain circumstances which, previously, would have involved an outright elimination. The impact of this rule on a given scenario is limited to the possibility that an eligible leader will then pass a normal Desperation Morale MC (i.e., roll or less) and, having failed, thereby, have the option to remain on the board as a lightly wounded leader. This rule is probably more significant for those involved in campaign games.

New Dangers

As if there were not already dangers enough on the paper battlefield, we encounter some new hazards in COD. One introduces HE critical hits versus infantry. These are possible only when the defender is in normally favorable terrain (i.e., inside a building). The frequency of such hits is, for practical purposes, the same as that for critical hits versus AFVs. The effect is to reverse the normally favorable dice roll modifier (DRM). Units in woods are spared a critical hit of this sort are subject to a -1 DRM on all indirect HE fire and all direct mortar fire. The idea behind this rule is that at least some of the high angle incoming fire will be detonated by the trees, thereby producing more fragmentation damage than would be done by shells detonating upon contact with the ground. This rule may produce intermittent new leader bust in the war, over any terrain by proximity fused shells. I imagine that GI ANYVIL OF VICTORY will provide us with a rule for that.

A section entitled "Men Under Fire" introduces the hazards of grounding, pinning, and covering. In effect, these rules introduce an Infantry Fire Table (IFT) result other than no effect, the breaking of a unit, or its elimination. The first of these, grounding, occurs whenever troops moving on land and on foot are hit by defensive fire resulting in a morale check (MC) which they pass by rolling the highest possible number that leaves them unbroken. This "near miss" results in the unit ending its movement then and there. The effect is temporary and ends with the end of the current Movement Phase. Pre fire survived by an infantry unit by the same type of a dice roll causes the unit's inherent firepower factor to be halved during the immediately following Defensive Fire Phase, and the unit is said to be pinned.

My first concern about a rule like this is over the frequency with which it will have an effect. Because it forms the basis for much of what follows, the first Table to be presented shows the probability that a unit having the morale levels indicated will survive, alive and unbroken, the attacks indicated. The range of DRMs is dictated by this article's emphasis on artillery fire. The column headings under "Attack" are the same as those on the IFT.

A somewhat less extensive Table was discussed back in the first of these articles, so I'll be brief here. Most basically, a study of this Table is the starting point for gaining some systematic insight into what you can expect from attacks resolved on the IFT. Both offensively and defensively, this is the logical starting point for the development of tactics.

The immediate concern, however, is the extent to which these survival percentages are reduced by these new rules. A rather simple qualitative answer can be found by examining the values in Table 2. As you can see, the DRMs for which this effect is greatest go from negative to positive as the FFP increases. Thus, if we look at a single negative DRM we see that the incidence of grounding or pinning generally decreases for increasing FFP, while, for a positive DRM, they increase. Such behavior
is quite plausible given the corresponding values in Table 1. For negative DRMs an increase in the FPF leads to a much greater reduction in survival than that seen for positive DRMs.

The use of these rules is, of course, up to you, but, if one is used, so should the other. Together they are rather evenhanded, causing trouble for both attacker and defender. Overall, they should produce a noticeable, but slight, reduction in the tempo of events.

This same section provides for something called cowering. Its mechanics are quite simple. Whenever any IFT or Close Combat attack makes use of the inherent firepower of a squad or crew, rolling doubles causes the attack to be shifted one column to the left unless there is some kind of a leader involved in the attack. Table 3 shows how frequently such a shift will reduce the severity of a successful attack, where a successful attack is defined as one which causes at least a normal morale check (MC). This, then, has nothing to do with whether or not the attacked unit passes its morale check. From the structure of the IFT a one column shift doesn’t necessarily cause a reduction in the IFT result. For example, rolling a pair of '4's' in a 24 FPF attack with a zero DRM still causes the attacked unit to take a level 2 MC.

In Close Combat this rule is definitely prejudiced in favor of the player with the higher odds ratio attack. This situation is quite independent of whatever DRMs may be involved. As an example, for a zero Close Combat modifier, if you are attacking at 9 + 1, the only roll that would hurt you would be boxcars. At the other extreme, an attack at 1 - 6 can no longer be successful.

Overall, this rule favors the defender (in a tactical sense) over the attacker. It also works against the Russians and any other troops having a small number of leaders. The effect, however, is small.

“Chrome” is the word commonly used by many game reviewers to describe elements of a game which add to its sense of realism (or the amount of busy work) without, in most cases, having a great impact on how the game really works. On that basis, I think you’d have to call these rules chrome. Use them if they appeal to you. “Cowering” is my favorite of the group.

Ever since Scenario 9, minefields have posed a hazard to both men and vehicles. While COD does introduce anti-tank mines as a separate type of mine, the more extensive, and interesting, part of the new rules in this area deals with booby traps. Booby traps in particular, and minefields in general, help, I think, to interject a desirable amount of uncertainty into the proceedings. The latter over the amount of information a tactical game player has compared with what his real life counterpart had, has always been heard from those who seek after realism. These hidden menaces help redress this problem without any significant amount of mechanics induced pain.

Normal minefields attack both when you enter and when you leave, and they continue to do so as long as troops enter their hex. Booby traps, specifically, doorway and stairway mines, will go off just once, unless they’re successfully disarmed. If, however, one does go off, the normal terrain modifier for the structure is reversed. When an enemy infantry unit enters such a hex, or attempts to use a booby trapped stairway, the existence of the trap is announced. Disarming such a device is possible only if the movement in question takes place during the Advance Phase, or more than two MFs are utilized to enter the hex by the first unit to so move during the Movement Phase, or a leader with a negative leadership modifier is present in the hex when the attempt is made.

Most commonly, there will be no effort at disarming possible or there will be a one-third chance of success for such an operation. The probability of surviving in the first case can be read from the -2 and -3 rows in Table 1. Table 4 lists the probabilities of surviving in the second case.

When I first read this rule, one of my first thoughts was for the economics of these devices. A booby trap factor costs two normal minefield factor points. The MFs are nice, but you aren’t even guaranteed an attack even if a unit stumbles across such a trap. In order to pursue the matter I calculated the information in Table 5. To make a “bang per buck” comparison, compare the one factor attacks on Tables 1 and 4 with a two factor attack on Table 5. The probability of survival possibilities are about the same for a booby trap in a wooden building if no disarming attempt is possible, one in a stone building where the usual attempt is possible, and a normal minefield attack. The same is essentially true for the next strongest attack.
Thus, the decision for or against booby traps will not be made on economic grounds. This is as it should be. How, then, does one decide? The starting point is to recognize that these types of weapons are, to an extent dependent upon your opponent, largely psychological in character. By this I mean that they may make him nervous more frequently than they will blow away any significant number of troops. If any are to be used, they are probably best placed where they will be encountered by lucky shots, early in the game. If you can make him hesitate to use good shelter, or be cautious in entering a building, you slow his tempo. In any event, the exercise of exploring lines of advance from a foe's point of view should prove useful.

While on this same general subject, Table 5 also provides information concerning the effects of minefield density. As an example, which is more dangerous to attempt to pass through: a single hex with four minefield factors; two hexes, each containing two factors; or four hexes with one factor in each? From Table 5, for a squad with a morale of seven, the probabilities of survival are 58, 51 and 50%, respectively. These numbers are not radically different and constitute a general conclusion in all the cases considered. Thus, the logical conclusion is to use a larger number of low density minefields in order to increase the probable number of units walking into mined hexes. Unless you're dealing with a very cautious player, two factors per hex is probably a good, cost effective density. More hazardous fields should only be placed where there is an excellent chance of the enemy's entry into that hex.

**The Armor Game**

Here, the new things are mostly odds and ends. My objective is to bring up to date two of the sections in the second article.

**Infantry Versus Armor**

In this area AFVs pick up a little and they lose a little. The gain comes in the fact that pre-1942 Infantry and Inexperienced Infantry at all times are less likely to engage an AFV in Close Combat. Such an engagement is not that much better, but its greater speed and maneuverability increase the overall crossing survivability by more than enough to compensate for the greater cost. Also, while on the subject of purchasing, those of you who do your own scenarios, should certainly purchase board 8, the second river board.

**Over the River (and through the woods)**

About 15% of COD's rules are devoted to rivers and the things that go with them: bridges, boats, marshes and mudflats. That makes this general topic one of the longer ones in the rules, and a marvelous addition it is. I've placed it here because the most significant new tactical problem posed by COD's rules is that of the opposed river crossing. And when all is said and done, that's an infantry operation.

A bridged river also presents its challenges because of the drastic restrictions upon movement they impose. They also represent a wholly new type of objective. Wooden, stone, foot and pontoon bridge counters are provided, along with rules for their demolition.

The boats, however, are what most attract my attention. Each of the three types of boats has its own individual character. The only self-propelled one, the sturmboat, is twice as fast as the others, more durable, and its inherent drive can make round trips without imposing a drain upon one's troops. Both of the slower, pneumatic rubber boats are paddled and require a crew (for the small one) to move normally or a squad (for the large one) to move at all. As we shall see, passengers on board the larger model are in greater danger, but only the larger boat can carry more than three portage points worth of gear.

Direct ordnance fire holds little terror for boats. Treated as hull down vehicles on land, Case I (meaning a +2 TO HIT DRM) as well as at least a +1 size modifier also apply to a boat in the water. Even though any hit is an automatic kill, boats in the water are in very little danger from such fire.

Other forms of attack, however, are vastly more lethal. Table 6 contains information on just how lethal certain attacks are. Since boats fall into the same category as do trucks as far as indirect HE fire goes, even comparatively small caliber stuff is quite dangerous. The remaining entries in this Table show the effect of small arms fire. Realistically, even a single enemy squad can be a real hazard.

Remember, the values shown are for a single shot. If not suppressed in some way, that squad might well get off four shots in the time required for a kleinmannsack to cross the river. If the boat contained a morale level 7 squad its chance of surviving a four FFP attack four times is just about one in three.

Looking at these values and the purchase cost of the three boats, the sturmboat is definitely a best buy as far as passenger safety is concerned. Its per attack survival is not that much better, but its greater speed and maneuverability increase the overall crossing survivability by more than enough to compensate for the greater cost. Also, while on the subject of purchasing, those of you who do your own scenarios, should certainly purchase board 8, the second river board.

The dramatic impact (generally, a doubling of the probability of success) due to the presence of even a 8-1 leader is clear. So also is the fact that a leader's leadership modifier is much more important than his morale level. Contrary to the gut feeling I had before I began making these types of analyses, the morale level of the squad is also much less critical than is the leadership modifier. As the rule states, an AFV's armor modifiers and facing have no effect.

The same, as we see in Table 8, cannot be said for the normal MG versus AFV attack. However, such an attack is not influenced by any leader who might happen to be present.

As a basis for the construction of a simple doctrine, let's consider the normal MG present. The probability of a successful immobilization with a MG varies from 3 to 6%. From Table 8, a side shot by a MG against -1 armor is successful 5% of the time. Since the latter does not require Sustained Fire, let's say that this is a situation in which a normal attack is best. Looking further in the Table, we see that the same relatively cautious situation, I'd favor a normal attack against -2 armor if a -1 leader were present. So, we can say that, starting from the first case considered, one subtracts one from the armor level for each leadership modifier increment. Similarly, I'd subtract one for a front shot or if the weapon were a HMG, while I'd add one for a rear shot or a .50 cal HMG. In any given scenario the range of factors is normally narrow enough that the best attack can be worked out before hand.

Before moving on it wouldn't hurt to consider how much the chance of success for this new type of attack is increased if a second attack, using the squad's current armor modifiers, is also possible. While this is a function of terrain, it's a fairly reliable rule of thumb that such a second attack increases the overall probability of success by half.

**Guns Versus Armor**

Here, too, AFVs gain a bit and lose some. In the loss column, anti-tank rifles and all 40mm or less AP-firing ordnance get two hits when the TO HIT dice roll is less than or equal to one-half the final TO HIT value. Something called Partial Armor Penetration Shock is now possible whenever the AFV TO KILL roll is just one greater than the value necessary to destroy/immobilize the target. Should the crew fail a normal MC the vehicle is incapable of further activity for the balance of the player turn. The real hazard, however, is that the crew is liable to further, more stringent, morale checks if the AFV is hit again by kill-capable fire before a pair of Ral Phases have passed.

On the benefit side, for final TO HIT numbers of five or more, there is a 40 + % chance of any hits being turret or upper body hits. Since a number of tanks have superior armor there, this is to their benefit. So, too, is a rule that allows non-aquatic vehicles to be considered in motion during the enemy player turn. No movement then is possible, but the vehicle receives a 10% bonus during its owner's player turn. What's usually of more benefit, however, is the -2 TO HIT modifier.

**The Artillery Game**

Parts of the artillery game have been covered in other connections. The impact of the mechanics of offboard artillery upon the availability of Fire For Effect (FFE) missions is at the center of what's considered here. After one gamemaster in this general game might consider it, the net effect has been to diminish our certainty as to what we can expect, while also expanding the potential effect of offboard fire.

Perhaps the best way to begin is to review the mechanisms, both old and new, whereby a FFE mission is obtained. In almost all of what follows it is assumed to represent what is now, after all this time, a standard as many FFE missions as soon as he can. To some extent this reflects my own bird-in-hand philosophy. In general, once I begin calling, I have little use for the tactic of chasing enemy units with a spotting round. The results presented below serve...
to reinforce this view. Based upon these results, however, the very vital question of just when does one begin this process will be considered.

With that constraint, the procedure requires that an attempt to contact the battery be made during a Rally Phase. If successful, an Artillery Request counter is placed within the observer’s LOS. During the following Close Combat Phase this counter is inverted to show a blue Spotting Round (SR). After carrying out the accuracy routine, a red SR is placed in the hex determined by the routine, provided that this hex is also within the LOS of the observer. Then, in the next Rally Phase, provided that radio contact can be maintained, the red SR is inverted to show a FFE mission.

In terms of this part of the mechanics, COD introduces two additional dice rolls. Both before the Artillery Request counter is placed and before the red SR is inverted the player must roll at or below the battery access number. These rolls have nothing to do with maintaining radio contact. They’re still talking to you, but they’ve other fish to fry.

Unlike the situation we’ve had up to this point, the battery access number also controls the number of FFE missions available. Before this, this number was determined by drawing one of the eight “chit” counters numbered one through four. Thus, the player with the module knew the limit to what he had available. The basic battery access number is “eight”, modified according to the DRMs given in Table 9. Note that the first and last DRMs are permanent. In effect, then, one can think of beginning a game with an initial battery access number of seven, eight or nine, depending upon whether you have a scarce, normal, or plentiful supply of ammo back at the battery. This viewpoint is used here. Thus, unlike what existed under the original rules, the probability of getting the next FFE is a function of how much success you’ve had up to that point.

Unlike most other parts of the system, many aspects of the artillery are influenced by events over a large number of turns. This fact is the central problem in developing a feel for how some things work, on the average, based upon experience.

One simple calculation of some practical concern is the probability of getting a shot off in the minimum of two player turns. The results are shown in Table 10. As with all of the results presented, these assume that radio contact has not been made prior to the start of the first player turn.

Before considering the numbers, note that only three of the possible contact values are listed. Overall, the results for ‘6’ are essentially the average of those for ‘5’ and ‘7’. Depending upon the particular aspect of the business considered, the values are slightly one way or the other from this average. Field telephone results, practically, are the same as those for American artillery.

Clearly, the COD changes require that one anticipate more. Targets of opportunity can still be taken under fire, but, now, a normal ammunition supply halves the probability of getting off that quick shot.

However, the type of calculation just made is simply not practical if we are going to explore some very important aspects of the artillery game. The difficulty is that the chain of events keeps branching as the number of game turns increases. To briefly illustrate, there are three possible outcomes to the single event possible (an attempt to make contact) during the first Rally Phase: contact, no contact, and no contact with a radio breakdown. If we con-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attack</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>lx2</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>2x2</th>
<th>lx4</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>2x3</th>
<th>lx6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5**: The probability that a unit will survive, alive and unbroken, the minefield attacks indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attack</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Fire, All Boats</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squad Morale of 6</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squad Morale of 7</td>
<td>GF(1)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squad Morale of 8</td>
<td>GF(2)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6**: The probability of getting a FFE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Squad Morale</th>
<th>MG</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L None</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>9-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>9-2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>10-2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7**: The probability of successful, deliberate, AFV immobilization by MG fire alone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Side</th>
<th>Rear</th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Side</th>
<th>Rear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8**: The probability of AFV destruction or random immobilization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Contact Number</th>
<th>Squad Leader Rules</th>
<th>Crescendo of Doom rules</th>
<th>Ammunition availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 10**: The probability of getting a FFE mission in the minimum number of player turns.
As in many other situations in which the analytical approach becomes awkward or impossible, the answer is to turn to a computer. A pair of programs were written which in effect directed the computer to get as many shots as it could, as soon as it could. A random number subroutine rolled the necessary dice, modified the result as required by any DRMs, and then followed the result. The poor

dumb thing continued doing this until the radio broke down permanently, or it reached the maximum number of FFEs possible, or 20 player turns passed. In effect, it did no more than you or I could, but it did it a lot faster, while at the same time keeping track of what happened.

For each contact value, or combination of contact value and initial access number, the machine repeated this process 500 times. In effect, the program generated and recorded certain significant results of playing 500 games under each set of conditions. In terms of all of the possible outcomes this is not a large number. For example, in 500 tries as the American under the SL rules, it never took the machine more than seven player turns to get off its first shot in games in which it got off at least one shot before breaking down the radio permanently. There is, of course, a finite probability of going 20 player turns without either getting off a shot or breaking down, but the frequency of such a result is a lot less than once in 500 tries.

However, for the most significant items reported, this many attempts seems reasonable. This conclusion is based upon the fact that these items did not change significantly between 250 tries and 500 tries. Oh, after 500 tries something might be found to happen 26% of the time, whereas the figure after 250 tries was 29%, but that's not really very important.

The Original Game

One of the troubles with computers is that they can generate huge piles of numbers, so that, frequently, the trick is to find the ones that really tell us something. To me, the important questions came down to a matter of how much and how soon. If, for example, I was sitting there with a chit that read two, how frequently would I actually get that many shots and how long would it take?

Table 11 attempts to answer that kind of question by presenting the probabilities of getting the various numbers of shots possible within the numbers of player turns indicated. Five, ten, and twenty player turns were selected because they seem representative, respectively, of the short-, medium- and long-term game. Each entry consists of a pair of numbers. The first is the probability of obtaining the number of shots indicated if there is a 100% probability that the initial spotting round will land within the observer's LOS. The second is the corresponding probability if the spotting round will so land just 70% of the time.

Looking at the unperturbed numbers for a radio contact roll of 3 we see that, after five player turns, a player, if his chit read "four", could expect to have made no shots 55% of the time, one shot 24% of the time, two shots 14% of the time, three shots 5% of the time, and all four a mere 3% of the time. But what about that draw of "two" I mentioned earlier? Well, the number under the "2" column is the probability of getting two shots off. Thus, the probability of getting at least two shots is the sum of the entries under "2", "3" and "4", for a total of 22%. In passing, note that some of these sets of numbers, as in this example, add up to more or less than 100. This is just the result of rounding off to the nearest whole number.

Depending upon the type of scenario being played we do know that a particular radio might not be around for the entire game. For the player, the type of information in Table 11 lets you see something of what you can expect for a given chit draw.

Table 12 considers things somewhat more generally and is, therefore, the basic tool for comparing the worth of a single artillery module in both systems. The entries under the SL rules heading in-
corporate the equal probabilities of drawing anything from one through four. As before, the values in parentheses are for a spotting accuracy of 70%
.

If radios never broke down, observers never died, and games never ended, the average module would yield 2.5 shots, since that's the average of the eight chits. As we can see, only an American artillery module comes really close to being worth that much. Early Soviet offboard artillery is, as you probably already knew, a disaster. This Table shows just how bad it is in the short run. An average of less than one shot is depressing. Over 20 turns it is not, however, all that much worse than the standard German module.

If there's useful information in these two Tables for those who play the standard scenarios, the second Table is, hopefully, shown to those who utilize the point value charts to construct their own scenarios. Ideally, this kind of information would also aid those, both amateur and professional, who design scenarios for others to play.

The COD Game

Table 12 also contains comparable information, for the revised game. To understand these numbers it is necessary to know that the total number of shots possible in a single module is equal to the original access number, provided you're lucky enough to get the last two shots in consecutive player turns. Since, for that last shot, the net access number is only two, that many shots is, even for an American module, something like a thousand to one shot in any given game.

If, as Table 10 showed us, a COD module gets off to a slower start, it is, over the long haul, a more potent weapon for all but the early Soviets. For them, a plentiful module is only marginally superior to a standard SL module. The other two things which long term profit. Unlike the long term situation under the SL rules, a German module shows a two-to-one superiority over a Soviet one with the same ammunition supply. The difference between a German and an American module is a very interesting one, capable of being made large or small, or even biased in favor of the Germans by the ammo availability. All in all, the new system adds some useful flexibility to the artillery game. Hopefully, we'll all be able to figure out what to do with it. And that's the reason for Table 13. As I mentioned earlier, the theoretical limit for the number of FFE missions is the initial access number (seven, eight or nine). Questions of much greater practical concern are how many shots should you expect to get, and when, in a given game, should you quit trying for more. The principal value of Table 13 is that it tells us that the averages in Table 12 are close to being the answers. This is not necessarily true of averages.

To illustrate, consider the long-term prospects of an American module with normal ammunition supply. From Table 13, there's a 32% chance of getting less than five shots, a 30% chance of getting off more than five. Thus, the average, from Table 12, of 4.8 fire missions doesn't look too bad. It looks even better if one explores details of the computer runs in which more than five missions were obtained. In about half the cases the sixth shot was obtained on the turn immediately following the fifth. The moral, then, is, if you get the average number of shots, try for one more turn, unless there's nothing else for that leader to do. One of the things that it's quite easy to determine from Table 13 is that the contact value plays a major role in fixing the proportions of FFE missions to be had for a given access number.

Tables 10 through 13 provide the statistical basis for exploring the question of when, in a scenario, should one start trying to call down off-board fire. As with many other aspects of game-playing, the answer will vary with the personality of the player.

My approach is generally a conservative one. I normally stop playing whenever I have a reasonable LOS to a worthwhile target area. I prefer having at least a 50% chance of placing a shot to rest within my observer's LOS. What sometimes makes this a rather difficult problem has to do with the options my opponent has available. If he is on the offensive I must consider where he is likely to be by the time I can reasonably expect to receive a FFE mission. This should also have a very strong influence upon where I must try to make him. It is entirely possible to perform the artillery equivalent of baseball's throwing behind the runner.

When your opponent stands on the defensive, one must also consider this time lag. Particularly if you begin without any good observation points, being too quick to start calling may leave you without any worthwhile targets when the fire is finally there. If your opponent has the option of withdrawing from a location you threaten into one just as good which you cannot see you may be wasting your time. True, radios and observers move, but the necessary movement might also expose them to danger. While doing all of this, remember that the chance of a radio breakdown within ten player turns of continuous usage is just about one in four.

Once the fire starts coming in, I prefer to keep it coming, as best I can, as long as there are any worthwhile targets. Table 1 along with information in the second of these articles, should help you decide what damage you can expect to do with the artillery you have. Now, decide what chances you're willing to take and play accordingly.

In closing this topic there are two new rules added to those already in Tables 11 and 12. The other two developments in this scenario, which I'm particularly interested in, are offboard fire. Various simple rules revolve around the idea that such fire makes people think of the virtues of being small and inconspicuous. Thus, any such fire, regardless of other effects, will make the target harder to hit in the future, and penalizing its fire in its next fire phase.

Of more immediate interest is the rule that provides for the drop of targeted troops morale by one level after two consecutive game turns during which they've been hit by offboard FFE missions. Each additional, sequential, game turn of such fire lowers it another level. The question that occurred to me had to do with whether or not it was practical to attempt to produce this result deliberately. Since this morale level drop is purely temporary, with the victims regaining a level for each game turn during which they are not bombarded, I limited my look to what happened during the first five player turns. The results of that look are shown in Table 14. From those values it appears pretty clear that only well-stocked Americans can hope, intentionally, to produce this result with much regularity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Number</th>
<th>Initial Access Number</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. The probability of producing at least a one level morale drop, due to suppressive fire effects, within five player turns.

The last area of concern has a simple description, but leaves us with a difficult question to answer. Something called the harassing fire option is now available. When selected, it extends the blast area to include everything within two hexes of the FFE module. This option makes fire effective for up to 161% of its original access number, provided you haven't included two of my particular favorites, numbers 30 and 32. And, finally, the five finally selected are all variations on a theme. In each case the attacker wants something the defender has, but

The question of, how many additional targets does one have to reach in order to compensate for the reduced firepower in each hex. As one would imagine, the answer is a function of the type of target. Fortunately, after considering a lot of numbers, the answer's not terribly complex. Against unarmored vehicles (including boats) the option is worth taking if it allows you to increase the number of targets by 50% for guns of 100mm or less.

Harassing fire will turn a profit if it doubles the number of open top AFVs or infantry squads in the open or in trees that get chumped. The same is true for targets larger than this, but it allows you to increase the number of targets by 50% for guns of 100mm or less.

That, by the way, happens to be the reason why I haven't included two of my particular favorites, numbers 30 and 32. And, finally, the five finally selected are all variations on a theme. In each case the attacker wants something the defender has, but
the totally different natures of the play of each of these scenarios, and the factors which produce this variety, are part of the benefits to be found in learning to play a tactical level game.

Scenario 21—Battle for the Warta Line

As if, perhaps, to wean us away from COI gradually, the first three scenarios of COD are essentially front ones, but they are probably different from what you usually think of. In this scenario it’s 1939, Germany and Russia are allies, and this scenario has elements of the SS Liebstandarte Regiment trying to break through a thin line of elite Polish troops. These troops had been delaying the German efforts to encircle the Polish Poznan Army. The assault force is built around fifteen 6-5-8 squads, sustained by the efforts of seven leaders (8-0 to 9-2). Two MGs, a crewed 75* infantry gun, one of those soft Sdkfz71 halftracks, an offboard 105mm artillery module with plentiful ammo, and two PzKwIB tankettes support the effort. To win, the German player must get a majority of his squads across two board widths within eight turns. At 4-5-8, the 13 Polish squads do not represent a pushover, but it is the time available that proves particularly burdensome to the German player.

Reflecting the more limited changes of COD, just over three pages of new rules are required to get this first scenario underway. The major sections are those dealing with pre-1942 infantry, infantry bypass movement, and the revised artillery rules.

The setup rules allow Polish deployment anywhere but hexes on board 5 having a grid coordinate of 4 or less. Thus, the Polish player will fix the initial character of the game by his choice of a defensive position. Figure 1 shows a deployment intended to maximize the Polish capacity to shift forces. All the old sayings about who he defends everything defends nothing don’t really work here, at least initially. The nature of the victory conditions necessitates a defense stretching the length of the board, even though half of it might well be abandoned in the opening turn or two.

In developing this defensive plan, the emphasis was on good communications behind the Polish position, the availability of positions into which broken troops could retire, and, of course, fields of fire. The large forest mass at the south end of board 5, and the lack of any significant amount of natural features to aid a defense at the north end, encourage a position in the general area of that shown. Defense against enemy fire and overrun attacks suggest that the entrenchments go in forest hexes, while field of fire considerations argue that hilltops are best. The result is a compromise weighted heavily in favor of forest hexes.

Under the circumstances prevailing here, a PzKwIB poses a very real threat to an entrenched unit in clear terrain. True, an overrun has no chance of destroying a Polish squad and only a 10% chance of breaking one, but the AFV can elect to remain in the entrenchment hex. This will cause the displacement of the squad into an adjoining hex at the end of the Defensive Fire Phase, where its chances of survival are poor. While a Defensive Fire Phase attack against an AFV attempting an overrun is possible, there’s only a 6% chance of immobilization if the squad is without an ATR. With an ATR the chance of AFV destruction is 14%.

Against a squad entrenched in a woods hex the picture is radically different. The chance of breaking the squad falls to less than 2% while the chance that, one way or another, the AFV will be immobilized rockets up to over 40%.

All four MGs are on the line, as are two of the three ATRs. Capt. Reid and his two squad reserve in 3R3 have the last ATR in order to improve their chances against a marauding PzKwIB.

Wire has been deployed so as to inhibit movement at the extreme edges of the board and around certain of the defensive positions. While tracked vehicles can remove wire counters, be certain to note that the current version of 53.8 restricts that removal to one hex per turn, even though the vehicle may pass through many more.

You may have noticed the three entrenchments located away from the general line. The one in 3DD7 is there because insertion of a unit into that general area during play has proven difficult. Those brave fellows out in 5V5 and 5C7 represent the sort of positioning that will give a cautious German player some concern, while a reckless one might get a nasty surprise. If not destroyed, one or both of these will be on the flank of any enemy advance. With just a bit of luck, the elimination of one or both will cost the German player men and/or time.

Drawing upon the lessons of the past, the Polish leaders have been distributed with the hope that the two 8-0 leaders will have a chance to rally someone and/or speed the movement of troops to a threatened sector. From past calculations we know that an 8-1 leader is the neutral one in the sense that a squad stacked with one has about the same chance of survival as the squad has by itself. Thus, stacking an 8-0 leader with troopers who may come under attack is a bad idea.

Unlike the situation typical in later years, and involving other forces, this is one case in which the German player may be able to just put his head down and charge with his infantry. The defensive firepower is weak compared to much of what we’ve seen in past scenarios, and, of course, the SS have a high morale level and loads of officers. Because of this the advance along the northern edge has a chance of success. More conservatively, there is the advance along and in the southern edge of the main patch of woods on board 5, followed by an assault on hill 547. For the more tenderhearted there is the advance through the patch of woods itself. Each of these approaches is worth playing through, and each has options involving the use of the infantry gun, artillery fire and the armor.

A key ingredient in German success, in any case, is the manner in which the armor is handled. As a general rule I dislike the unsupported use of armor because the generally close terrain of the various map sections allow infantry to pose a very real danger in the Close Combat Phase. Here, however, the risk is reduced because of the initial dispersal of the Poles. Thus, it becomes practical to consider using the two tankettes in an effort to penetrate the defensive line and interfere with Polish efforts to reinforce the threatened sector.

From what I’ve said so far it is probably clear that I favor a concentrated assault. This is the case, and I have come to the conclusion that the infantry portion of the attacking force is best utilized in one area, without any detachments entering elsewhere.
Since the mobility of the German armor impresses me more than does its firepower, I do favor its use as indicated above.

Turning to the artillery, I use the infantry gun aggressively, and usually employ it, at the beginning, to fire smoke. My gun crews tend to have short, but glorious, lives. I attribute this to too much time spent with Napoleonic era games. For the Poles, the use of their artillery module is easy: start trying to use it as soon as possible. For the attackers there is the problem that, in general, they do not have many good observation points. It seems more efficient to save this fire until the opening moves have revealed something of the Polish positions and intentions.

When playtesting reveals imbalances in a scenario, the ways in which it's fine-tuned are frequently quite interesting. Here the changes made were to introduce six concealment counters and to give the Poles that module of 81mm mortar fire. For those of you interested in designing and developing your own scenarios, try to balance things by first exploring the specific ways in which one side exhibits its superiority. To simply add or subtract troops is not necessarily the elegant way to adjust balance. While the prohibition against examining the contents of an entrenchment hex has been with us from the start, just the height of the stacks gave the German player valuable information. In this, as in some of the other scenarios, a handful of concealment counters adds a little uncertainty to an attacker's life.

Scenario 22—The Borders are Burning

With regard to general type, this scenario has much in common with 21. Drawn from the opening days of the Russo-Finnish war, at a location in the north near Kuhmo, the victory conditions require that the Russian player exit a certain portion of his force across the western board edge road hexes. As in 21, losses to the defender are of no consequence. In both scenarios the defensive positions are prepared ones.

However, there are considerable differences to be found when one looks at the details of who's there and what they bring to the conflict. Among the new rules introduced for this scenario are those for Deep Snow, which expand upon what we were accustomed to. Since the scenario restricts Russian starting positions to hexrows east of and including hexrow T, six game turns represent the minimum time required for enough unencumbered squads, marching with tanks, to exit. Unencumbered infantry, without leaders, could still do it in eight turns. Because of the snow, however, off-road movement is not all that much slower. A column moving along the extreme southern edge would take only a turn longer, as would one moving along the center of the playing area.

The significance of these numbers is that any defense must consider a wide range of approaches, and this is what the Finnish position in Figure 2 attempts to do. Those of you who have the scenario card handy will note that a squad, the MMG, one of the Finn's grenades and one entrenchment are missing. All of that is some distance to the west in woods hex 2BS, adjacent to the northern exit road. In addition, the position has a clear LOS to the southern edge of the playing area.

The terrain on the northern board is much more open than is that in the southern one, with the mass of hill 621, however, serving to effectively divide the board into two parts. Thus, a position along the spine of hill 621 is quite attractive, although the absence of trees makes such positions vulnerable to enemy armor. Since the setup rules prohibit Finnish positions east of hexrow Q, it is impossible to position forces along the forward edge of the southern board's forest mass. Taken together, these factors form the basis for the Finnish position.

Although the position in 2Ps is quite exposed, the character of the troops keeps it from being a foolhardy one. The weaponry present is a considerable danger to both vehicles and men. Depending upon distance and target facing, the very lethal 20mm ATR has from a 6% to a 53% chance of eliminating a T26s. Since a threat such as that posed by the ridge formation also makes it an attractive target, the position should be supported. This, in part, is the mission of the forces in 2N2 and 2N10. Because of its control position, the force in 2N10 includes an extra squad as well as the second ATR.

The position at 5P3 is attractive because of the field of fire it has to the east and to the north, as well as its proximity to the forest road. An advance along the extreme southern edge is practical so the final position in 5P9 is intended to delay an enemy advance there. The whole southern sector has been allocated the lion's share of the mine factors the Finns have available. Because the field cannot be covered with fire it would, at this density, be no more than a nuisance, but it could reasonably be expected to cause some delay.

A similar rationale lies behind the positioning of the remaining mines, the wire, and the two roadblocks. For example, on board 2, any unit seeking to pass to the north of hill 621 must pass through the Q1, Q2 bottleneck. A very basic consideration of any defense is that both roads should be mined because of the threat posed to the Soviet trucks by even two mine factors. Prior to the start of the scenario, four separate Russian 120mm Harassig Fire EFs are resolved.

The arrival of the fire is certain, although it is subject to the usual accuracy considerations. Because of the newly-introduced rule concerning air bursts, units entrenched in a woods hex are more vulnerable to indirect HE fire than they would be in a clear terrain hex. From Table 1, however, for a unit having a morale of eight, the chance of surviving unharmed changes less than five percent so that such a unit, entrenched in the woods, has almost nine chances out of ten to survive unharmed. Thus, given the protection woods provide against direct fire and overruns, the air burst threat is not a decisive factor.

Since the location of the fire is made prior to seeing the Finnish set up, the fire should support the initial Soviet moves, but little should be expected of it. All locations specified should be at least nine hexes from any Russian infantry, to avoid the embarrassment of seeing friendly fire injure your own troops.

Figure 2. A Finnish starting position in Scenario 22. Each red dot equals one factor of unseen minefields.
Despite their numerical superiority and the length of the scenario, the Russians do not have an easy time of it. Despite the hitherto unheard of number of LMGs, this is not a German assault force. The small number of leaders makes the force a brittle one, and presents a strong argument for a concentrated advance, at least as far as the infantry is concerned. The Russian starting positions shown in Figure 3 show one answer to the problems posed by the defenders. Initially, those stacks at 5TI and 3UV are to remain there where they are in order to provide fire against the two southernmost Finnish positions. The five stacks between them are to advance immediately due west. Ultimately, the responsibilities of these squads include clearing the road and engaging any enemy squads they encounter. Their advance will be followed by the six Russian trucks which begin the game along road hexes to the rear of these squads. Even if these vehicles do not prove particularly useful in transporting squads off of the board, they do come in handy for getting rallied squads back up to where the action is.

In addition to what is essentially a frontal assault on the main enemy mass, there is also a secondary thrust provided by the infantry-carrying tanks. The direction of this thrust is to be to the northwest, with the specific tasks to be determined by circumstances. However, whatever happens, the primary responsibility of this force is to hamper the southward movement of the Finnish forces on hill 621 and to tempt some or all of the squads in 21/10 to remain where they are. A secondary mission is to position some infantry behind the majority of the Finnish troops. Rather heavy losses are to be expected, particularly if the force at 2PS remains where it is, but its failure to move south and west should give the main Russian advance an easier time of it.

In its original version, this scenario was three turns shorter and only the western road hexes on board 2 could be used. Our experience, which must have been shared by others, was that this made things extremely difficult for the Russian player.

In closing, it should be mentioned that board 5 seems to bring out the promaniac in many players, and indeed, setting the main forest ablaze is sometimes a very good idea. Under the Deep Snow condition of this scenario, however, one cannot reasonably base a strategy upon an attempt which will be successful only once in 36 tries.

Scenario 24—Action at Balberkamp

The six-month period of the "Phoney War", that pause in German activities following the fall of Poland, ended abruptly with the German invasions of Norway and Denmark. One of the key points seized in a seaborne assault in the assault on the former country was Trondheim, the key to central Norway. The action portrayed in this scenario is typical of what occurred many times as German forces advanced northward from Oslo. For the Germans it was a race against time as they sought to establish contact with their weak forces in Trondheim. These forces faced a grave threat posed by British landings, a week after the German ones, both north and south of Trondheim. The southern striking force, however, was delayed by the necessity of diverting troops into the Gudbrand valley in support of the Norwegians.

Thus, what we have is a five board scenario that begins with a poorly equipped Norwegian combat group deployed on board five, awaiting a German advance across board four. To win, the Germans must have a continuous road, connecting the north and south edges, no hex of which is occupied by or adjacent to an unbroken and unmeleed Allied squad, at the end of 14 game turns. While the previous scenarios only required a penetration of the defender's position, this one requires that they be contained and/or eliminated.

The scenario's most novel feature, however, has to do with the reinforcement: each side is to receive cunning creatures that they are, the Germans have dispatched a light flanking force which arrives on one edge of one of the three center boards, with the precise location to be specified prior to the placing of any pieces on the board. The defenders will receive a somewhat larger and better-equipped company of British troops at the north edge of board 6. What complicates things for both sides is that the time of arrival of these forces is dependent upon dice rolls. During each Rally Phase the player whose turn it is rolls the dice. For the Allies, a roll equal to or less than the current game turn is good enough, while the German player must roll less than the current game turn.

Any one who plays wargames is, of course, accustomed to the idea of having chance play a part in things. While I do not consider myself a highly competitive player, one of my personal quirks is that I normally dislike the games in which chance plays a role in determining the arrival of significant reinforcements. However, the nature of the randomizing process here is such that, in most playings, it introduces a degree of uncertainty that adds a very enjoyable and wholly plausible element to the scenario.

Before considering the statistical specifics of reinforcement arrival, let's look first at just what the scenario's victory conditions will require given the arrangement of the boards. Starting at the south edge, there is just one possible road for almost half the total distance. From the fork just south of the village in the center of board 3 to hex 2U7 there exists two separate roads. From this hex to 2U3, between the cliffs of hills 538 and 621, there is again but a single road. Since the road leading to Tinn begins there are, ultimately, three distinct routes across the width of board 6.

Comparing this scenario with the two already discussed reveals both similarities and differences. In all three situations it is necessary, initially, to defend across the playing area. Failure to do so will allow rapid enemy movement into the defender's rear area. Why he would wish to do so has already been discussed for the first two scenarios.

Some of the differences appear when one considers the motivation for such movement. In 21, all the attacker needed to do was get across the playing area. While Scenario 22 required exit via just two roads, the effect was much the same. In the current scenario, however, there is not necessarily a positional battle. Now movement through or around the initial defensive positions has two motivations. The first is to pin the defenders into an area in which they can then be destroyed. The second is linked to the existence of those British reinforcements. But the specific problem they pose depends upon when they arrive. If they arrive early enough they might well be able to manage to link up with the Norwegians. No matter when they arrive, that length of road between 2U3 and 2U7 will be a tempting target. In connection with both of these motivations the German player must consider what position his flanking force will be in once he receives it.

There are really two aspects to the reinforcement question. The first, of course, is the question of when it arrives. The second, which concerns the German player, has to do with the arrival of one player's reinforcements relative to the arrival of the other player's troops. This becomes particularly important if each player intends to have his force attempt to gain control of the board 2 bottleneck.

Just what this might involve brings us to the second statistical matter. As with the first one the British have the edge, but, since the Germans move first, in each game turn, it's not much of one. In 16.5% of games played the British will arrive the player turn immediately before the one in which the Germans move. While the Germans will repay the favor only 15.2% of the time. Taken together, this means that 31.7% of the time reinforcement arrivals will be in sequential player turns. There is a 27.1% chance that one player will get in a second player turn before his rival receives aid, and a 19.7% chance of a three player turn advantage. Based upon my own experience with this scenario and these numbers, I find that the random arrival factor is a controlled one. True, it might happen that the German company appears on turn 3 while the British one doesn't show up until turn 12, but, on the average, it won't happen more than once in every 2,500,000 plus games.

Turning now to the cast of characters present, the Norwegian force of 16 squads is evenly divided between 4-4-7s and 3-4-7s, and led by four (7-0 to 8-1) leaders. Their weapon support includes only two HMGs and a crewed 37L ATG. The British forces as many leaders for their twelve 4-5-7 squads, but two of them are 9-1s. They carry a half dozen support weapons, equally divided among LGMs, MGGs and ATs.

The infantry component of the northbound German force consists of 18 squads rather different led by six leaders, the best of whom is a single 9-1. Local artillery support is provided by two 50mm mortars and two short barreled 75mm guns. The five vehicles provided consist of a PzkflW, an MG armored SPW251/1, and three trucks. While the flanking force brings only three LGMs, its nine squads are better led with four leaders, including a 9-1 and a 9-2.
The first decision of any game is selection of the board and the edge upon which the last-mentioned German force will appear. My favorite is the east edge of board 2. After that the Norwegians appear. More accurately, one should say that a number of stacks topped by concealment counters appear. Restricted to whole hexes of board 5, the initial placement should be made with an eye toward how the game will develop.

The main possibilities are to stand and fight on board 5 or to attempt a retreat under pressure into board 3. My experience has been that the former is a poor choice. In its most extreme form it allows early German penetration into the village area, particularly by the AFVs. This places them in a central position from which they can intervene in either of the battles. Moreover, in a battle of attrition in the forest mass on board 5, the advantage is with the Germans. Since the only common terrain effects modifier will be a +1, broken units will be the most common adverse fire combat result. With a broken side morale of seven for the Germans versus five for the Norwegians, and the Germans having twice as many - 1 leaders, it's easy to see where that will lead.

The only way to improve that situation would be to inflict sufficient losses upon the Germans as they advanced across board 4. My limited efforts at that sort of thing proved to be quite ineffective. The scattered trees (remember, no wheatfields at this time of year) are numerous enough to block LOS in all too many cases, while the 75s are very handy for smoking the hexes with the HMGs in them.

Figure 4 shows what I've been trying lately. The idea is to encourage the German player to advance with some caution, or to cause him losses if he is rash. The AT Gun is located where it has a good field of fire. At this point in the war, this weapon should still command respect. In the three to six hex range against a small, moving target (i.e., seven or less TO HIT), a 37L kills the halftrack from 42 to 72% of the time, depending upon target facing. The corresponding figures for the PzKwlB are 29 and 56%, respectively. Trucks would perish 65% of the time.

The other stack with a large concealment counter on it, plus two of the eight infantry stacks, are dummies. One of the new COD rules that makes its appearance in this scenario allows a stack topped with a concealment counter the ability, subject to certain restrictions, to move without losing its concealed status. That potential, coupled with some low cunning, represents one weapon available for the delay of the German advance.

Because of the structure of the IFT it follows that the two different types of Norwegian squads should not be mixed together in the same stack. In order to get the most out of them, each HMG has one of the 8-1 leaders stacked with it. Hopefully, also, they will be around when it comes time to move. Taken together and mixed in with the number of concealment counters provided, the above considerations go a long way toward determining the number and composition of the stacks.

Where they go is much more of a problem. The HMG stacks have been positioned to cover the center and the east flank, but they do not have good fields of fire. Deployment further south, either initially or during the course of the game, will not help much, and risks their isolation. In general, the distribution of forces is based upon the idea of a withdrawal once the German player approaches the junction of boards 4 and 5 in strength. Prior to that time, if the dice allow, some rear guards should entrench in hexes along the perimeter of board 5's main forest mass, with preference given to hexes (e.g., 12 and P3) which are adjacent to the road. Other entrenchments are to be constructed by the stack starting the game in T5. Likely locations include SS10, 5V10 and 3R8.

The German player's advantage stemming from the superior caliber of his troops can be dribbled away by a sloppy entrance. A sloppy entrance is one which considers only the existing enemy fields of fire and ignores the potential ones. While, as I've just mentioned, I don't think much of Norwegian movement to the south, that attitude is based upon the supposition that the German player has not done something foolish. If, for example, he's left large numbers of squads milling about in that field around 4W6, consider what harm might be done if the stack at 5N1 were to move into 4W1.

Since most of the German troops will enter on foot, a thoughtful entrance will provide them with a reasonable degree of protection. This is best accomplished by using the halftrack and one or more trucks to position troops in commanding terrain. The lone tankette is also handy in this protective role. Figure 5 shows a possible shield for an advance along the eastern half of the playing area. Only the vehicles transporting troops, their cargos and the PzKwlB are shown.

Turning now to the conflict of the reinforcements, each side requires three turns in which to occupy the important hexes on both sides of the only road crossing the center of board 2. As we've
already seen it's quite likely that neither side would have that much time. Should the Germans be so fortunate, their best move is to occupy the relevant terrain of hills 538 and 621. By itself this will, of course, be insufficient since there are other points, north of the bottleneck, at which the roads can be threatened. The buildings at 2TI and 6X8 will serve quite nicely, and have the advantage that there is some cover connecting them. Defending a ground level position on board 6 against an attack across that board is a difficult task. Thus, I prefer to keep the Germans up on the hills, where they wait for help, rather than to place them at or north of a 2TI to 6X8 position.

If it's the British who get lucky one has a choice of trying to hold both sides of the road or of concentrating on one of the hills. The decision should be made in response to the game situation at that time.

This scenario was one of the original group accompanying the first version of COD, which makes it about two years old. In that time the changes made have been minor, except for the reversing of board 5. Such changes as have been made have been in favor of the Allies, whom I still see as having the more difficult side in what is, nevertheless, one of my favorite scenarios.

**Scenario 27—The Dinant Bridgehead**

When I learned that COD would contain one of the river boards, I made a bet with myself that the situation portrayed in this scenario would be one of those included. The crossing of the Meuse River was the last major German problem posed by an advance through the Ardennes. In evaluating this possibility the French thought in terms of a timetable based upon the assumption that the Germans would need to bring up a considerable amount of heavy artillery before a crossing would be attempted. As in other things, the French failed to recognize the tempo of events possible under the direction of the gifted among their foes. Thus, here, as at other locations along the Meuse, the stage was set for a confrontation between a force led by an aggressive commander and one not yet brought up to the strength really required to defend a vital natural barrier.

Playing this scenario a few times should give you food for thought every time, in divisional or corps level games, your units zip across a narrow blue line. To the extent that the approaches and the river itself can be observed by a foe provided with artillery or airpower, a river crossing is one of the most difficult military operations. The whole process is so very slow.

Because of the way in which the victory conditions dominate the scenario, they require careful attention. The objective for the German player is to secure a safe crossing point, defined as a contiguous band of five letter rows stretching from bank to bank. Such a crossing point includes the bank hexes on each side of the river. The crossing point selected is secretly recorded prior to any other activity in the scenario. There are three requirements for a secure crossing point. On the positive side there must be an unbroken German squad on each side of the river. The crossing point selected is secretly recorded prior to any other activity in the scenario. There are three requirements for a secure crossing point. On the positive side there must be an unbroken German squad in each of the two bank areas after ten turns. The negative conditions refer to those things which the German player must prevent. By game's end he must see to it that no French squad is within ten hexes of any crossing point hex unless it lacks a LOS to any crossing point hex, is broken, or is locked in melee. In addition, no French leader with a functioning radio can have a clear LOS into any crossing point hex. Smoke is dealt with quite carefully. It is considered to block the LOS of a leader, but is not a factor as far as squads are concerned. As befits the strategic importance of such a crossing, casualties are of no consequence, except that the KIA elimination of the 10-3 leader that represents Rommel leads to an automatic French victory.

**Figure 7:** Recommended German east bank starting positions for Scenario 27. A = S, 2LMG, SB, and 9-1 leader. B = S, LMG, SB, and 8-1 leader. C = 2S, MMG, HMG, and 10-3 leader. D = 2S, LMG, and 2KF. E = 3S, LMG, 2KF, GF. F = S, MMG, SB, and 8-1 leader. G = 3S, ferry, and KF. (S = squad, SB = sturmbat, GF = kleine flossacks, GF = grosse flossacks).
As the scenario opens, a weak German force consisting of three leaders, four squad leaders, and two LMGs is isolated on the west bank. On the east bank wait two dozen squads led by seven leaders besides Rommel. They carry a HMG, two MMGs and eight LMGs. In direct support they have two PzKwII IDs, a pair of PzKwIIHs, and two of those short gun PzKwIVs. Their lift capacity is provided by four sturmboats, four grosse flossacks, and six kleine flossacks. (I ask you, what other game gives you any kind of a flossack, let alone two big ones and little ones?) Finally, the offshore artillery modules are one of 80mm and two of 105mm.

Against this mass of men and matériel the French manpower consists of 16 of their 4-5-7 squads, four leaders, two crews and a 2 sniper. Their support weapons consist of a 60mm mortar, two MMGs and four LMGs. The onboard artillery is a pair of 25LL AT Guns. Offboard, the French have two more sturmboats and one module. To help protect them and/or confuse the foe, the French also have eight concealment counters.

The first question to be considered is, of course, the location of the crossing point. This area need not have any of the leading leaders, but the German assault crossing, but the latter must ultimately secure the former. Study of the victory conditions and the terrain of board 3 provides us with some useful guides to a sound German selection.

Practically, the first requirement, of a squad in each bank, is the easy one. Of the remaining two conditions, the need in one of them is quite pressing because the range is not limited. On board 3 the high ground consists of four hills and one two level building. A careful study of the lines-of-sight from each of these reveals that every possible crossing point is visible (from one or another of the top level hexes of the five locations in question) from at least four of the locations. This means that the German player must be prepared to eliminate the hazard posed by all French forces from well over half the area on board 3.

A number of crossing points at the south end of the board have no hexes visible from hill 498. In addition, there's a much narrower band less than half the range is limited. On board 3 the high ground consists of four hills and one two level building. A careful study of the lines-of-sight from each of these reveals that every possible crossing point is visible (from one or another of the top level hexes of the five locations in question) from at least four of the locations. This means that the German player must be prepared to eliminate the hazard posed by all French forces from well over half the area on board 3.

The deployment of forces opens with the placement of the German recon unit on whole ground hexes on the west bank of board 7. Practically, there are three possible locations, given that all units must be within eight hexes of each other. Figure 6 shows them occupying buildings close to hill 534. The other possibilities are the woods and building hexes around L9 and the woods hexes around C10. In either of these latter two cases some units might be able to fire on the French units on hill 522. Given the commanding nature of hex 318, that is a reasonable objective no matter what crossing point is chosen. Thus, this placement does not tip the German's hand. Of the other possible locations, I prefer that one around L9. This one can be seen as an effort to take hill 522 in order to secure a southern crossing point, or as an effort to produce a secure beachhead for a more northerly landing. French forces by this point should not be particularly sensitive to where the west bank Germans go.

The function of most of the French forces shown in Figure 6 is probably clear, but some aspects are worth mentioning. The stacks of squads with artillery modules on the other side are there to try and entrench. With three of them there's a 62% chance of success, even without aid from a leader. That stack in O10 is there because of the Germans in V9 and the fact that the opposite bank is one of the better places to get boats into the water when possible, I like to have something in the way of a surprise. Thus, the stack in W10 will be free to move into T9, L7 or T9, L7 or 7M10 depending upon German intentions as they are revealed by the German setup. Finally, the minor deception in D68 is not expected to last very long, but it might be worth something.

That leaves us with the French. Versus the boats, they have less than a 5% chance of doing any damage to them once they're in the water. They'll do too two five times better than that versus enemy armor on the opposite bank, so that makes them the lesser of the two evils if they're fired. Unfortunately, there aren't all that many good locations which don't also happen to be closer to other useful pieces of terrain. With four artillery modules on the other side one has to worry about things like that. Because of the favorable height modifiers, the one at K7 stays where it is. The one starting in R9 will move to R10 to improve its field of fire.

And now for the German side of things. First of all, will Rommel get out there and fight? Yes, say I, it is, after all, only a game. With that out of the way, one faces the questions of where do you go in the water and when do you do it. As with everything considered, I don't have much use for smoke as a means of wrecking a French leader's LOS. The wind this day is a mild breeze; according to the current weather rules there is a small chance that the breeze will increase to a heavy wind and completely eliminate all smoke effects. By itself, the chance that that would happen might not be small, especially for someone who has never used smoke... But when combined with the inevitable uncertainties of firing smoke or setting fires on demand, I see smoke as a last ditch effort, not as something upon which one plans.

Belief in that line of reasoning places the responsibility for dealing with the question of control up to the German infantry and artillery. Hopefully, for the German player, what one can't accomplish the other can. Given the time available, I don't see an alternative to an immediate rush across the river. One of the reasons I enjoy this scenario so much is because it's so much fun to pull the trigger. As you can see, I've split the German forces into two parts. You have probably noticed my tendency to advocate concentrations on the part of an attacker. In general, I do find that useful, but this is an exception, determined by three factors. Firstly, the objectives are dispersed. Secondly, not all enemy forces are conveniently reached from board 5 in one turn. Thirdly, dispersion reduces the effect on the enemy's offshore artillery.

Starting from the north, the ferry and all but the sturmboat can reach the river in one turn by moving straight west. The PzKwIIID is the ferry's passenger launch which is mixed in on the first turn. Because its trip across will probably take around seven turns, no other vehicle can possibly make it. This relegates the other five tanks to taxi service or a fire support role. The other two vehicles in this northern group are a reserved, intended for use at the water's edge as soon as the development of the scenario indicates.

The stack in M1 moves straight west to the river, where the squads will attempt to entrench while the leader tries to find someone back at the beach. Having dug a hole, these troops, like those attempting to dig in in B1, will, for the most part, head across the river. How they will travel depends upon how many sturmboats have managed a round trip back to the east bank. If too few of these are available when the time to cross comes, the boats left behind in 5H1 and 5H1 will be used.

The main German force is in the south, and most of what you see there is heading across the river as quickly as it can. All of the infantry units in B2, C1, D1, E1, G1 and H1 can end their first movement phase adjacent to a river hex, or, in the case of B2, can move into it. Thus, a stack in B6 can be able to launch during the Advance Phase of the first German player turn. In order to accomplish this, the MGs and the leaders are distributed as required, with a bias toward placing them in the sturmboats, in which, as we've seen, they are safer.

One kleine flossack and one LMG remain behind in H1, as do the large rubber boats in H1 and the 80mm leader in G2. Of the group in B1, the leader moves down to 7D3 while the two squads stop in 7E3, where they will attempt to dig in during the next turn, thereby giving that 80mm leader a better place from which to direct fire. Rommel's stack stays in F1 in order to place hex 318 under fire. This, initially, is the same mission to be undertaken, taken by the German tanks in G3, H2 and H3. I like to move that second H3D down to 7AA5; the IVs might stop in 7Y3 and 7Z3.

The German force available as the scenario now stands is weaker than the original one. Initially, the recon group had an additional squad and two more LMGs, while the Germans had twice the present allotment of medium and heavy MGs. The French have benefited to the extent of gaining those eight concealment counters. As one would expect of any scenario with this much artillery present, the dice with which this game is played determine the outcome of any particular play, but that doesn't bother me, and I hope it won't trouble you.

Scenario 31—Chateau de Quemnoy

To place this scenario in proper perspective, the decisive action for France was the date, June 6, 1940, is four days before the end of the evacuation of Dunkirk, and is the second day of the German offensive against the French line along the Somme and the Aisne. With perhaps a third of the original number of Allied divisions lost, the survivors had to defend a front longer than their original one. Off balance and short of time, men, and material, construction of a defense in depth was not possible. Some places, however, were, at least in part, prepared, and the chateau of the title was one of them.

To win, the German player, in command of a portion of the 25th Panzer regiment, must have an uncontested control of the chateau after 14 turns, while losing no more than 25 squads and/or crews. Since each crewed AFV counts as two crews, this means that the assault can cost the German player no more than 50% of his force. A victory that is smaller than that is the result of the caliber of the defenders, elements of the 4th North African division, and the weapons with which they are equipped. A dozen 4-5-8 squauds and half as many 4-5-7 ones are led by five leaders (two 8-0s, an 8-1, a 9-1, and a 9-2). The squad receives no support on the first turn from the 70mm HMGs, four LMGs, a 60mm mortar and a rather odd 37mm infantry gun. Given the numbers and mobility of the attackers, the above forces would be hopelessly outclassed if that was all with which the French player had to work. Fortunately for him, there are four of the famous French 75, a pair of 25LL AT guns, six crews, and 75 mine factors. In
addition there's a handful of trench, entrenchment, roadblock and wire defenses, plus some concealment counters. One extremely important aspect of the setup rules is that the six guns and their crews may use Hidden Initial Placement. The set up restrictions allow placement of the French forces anywhere on the southern three-quarters of the boards. Before deploying everything one must, of course, consider the German capabilities.

This German force is both formidable and reasonably well-balanced between infantry and armor. Ten leaders (8-0 through 9-2) direct the efforts of 29 squads and six crews armed with nine MGs and three 50mm mortars. The five tanks aren't bad by the standards of 1940: three PzKwIIIIs, a IVc and a IVD. Regrettably, for the German player, both of the IVs have the short barrel. What he's apt to find more regrettable, however, is that tanks with -1 armor DRMs must beware of the French 75. As any player of the SL system knows, the probability of killing an AFV is a function of several factors. However, when all of the modifiers are added up, one shot from a 75 will generally kill more than half of the time. Overall, in this scenario, the 25LL is about half as deadly as is the 75, against tanks.

But tanks aren't all that come across the north edge of the map. A half dozen assorted, armed, halftracks are joined by an interesting assault gun, the sIG IB, which sports a 150mm gun. While ideally suited for the role of building destroyer, it has two defects. First of all, it suffers the same longer range accuracy problems as do the early model PzKwIVs. Secondly, it shares the -4 armor DRM common to halftracks. Against this latter group of vehicles the one shot kill probabilities range from around 40% to 80% for common situations, for the two different French guns.

Finally, the Germans have a module of 81mm mortar support, four trucks and an unarmed Kubelwagen. Because of their vulnerability to all sorts of fire, the trucks should be held off of the board until the French position has been developed and, in some area, neutralized. One might be able to accomplish part of the first of those activities, and annoy your opponent, by sending the Kubel off on a glory ride intended to draw fire. Even if it doesn't draw fire, one can always park it adjacent to terrain likely to contain a gun, and go exploring with its passengers.

In the course of developing COD, this scenario underwent changes at least as significant as any I can recall seeing in the other SL, COII or COD scenarios. The most obvious change was that, initially, all French units were deployed using Hidden Initial Placement. I imagine that the reasons for dropping this had more to do with the problems of handling that many hidden units rather than with play balance considerations. In addition, the French lost both an 8-1 and a 9-1 leader, while the Germans gained three 4-6-8 sapper squads. In compensation, the French received a dozen concealment counters, a pair of 4-5-7 squads, and the two 25LL AT Guns, complete with crews.

This is one of those scenarios in which the terrain is particularly important. All of these boards feature close terrain so that, particularly when the wheat is up as it is in this scenario, the LOS problem is quite significant. Board 6, about which so much of the action of this scenario centers, is particularly bad in this respect. Only the chateau (6N4) and nearby building 6J8 are multi-story structures. Thus, each possesses an obvious military significance over and above the importance assigned to the chateau by the victory conditions.

One of the things that makes this scenario the enjoyable thing it is is the fact that the French player can win in either of two ways. It's been my experience that most gamers think first of denying the chateau to the German player. Since, to paraphrase H. G. Wells, cardboard soldiers leave no cardboard widows and orphans, we might be forgiven the (no doubt infrequent) times when the butcher's bill runs too high. Here, however, the casualty ceiling is a very significant factor since the scenario does not end merely because the German player holds the building at some point prior to the end of the 14th turn. He then must maintain control without losing too many units. This fact expands the number of options open to the French player.

Obviously, the chateau must be defended, but
possible French positions should also be examined with an eye toward the long term chances of making a German geographical success too costly.

My experience with this scenario has been sufficient to persuade me that a defense solidly concentrated about the chateau is probably a weak one. With Hidden Initial Placement restricted to the guns, an infantry concentration is obvious. Subject to no known danger, but that due to long range MG fire, it seems that German infantry and scouts will, one way or another, soon disclose any German player prevents movement into his rear area. The longer the peril goes unrevealed, the greater becomes the tension.

To close off the discussion of this scenario, what might the German player do? To begin with, I do not recommend a blind charge against some portion of the north edge in the hope that there would be nothing there. I would find that as disagreeable as I would the idea of stacking all of the guns in one locality and hoping that the German player would guess wrong and enter there. My playing time is far too limited for me to have any use for that sort of silliness.

Given what would be visible to an attacker here, I'd be inclined toward holding most of my force off the board while a limited force probed for the French positions. Such an approach costs time, but heavy, early losses will cripple the attack.

One possibility is to approach board 6 with an initial objective of determining what the tree line just south of the wheatfields contains. A single squad transported to 6AA8 on a PzKwI/ID and unloaded into 6Z10 should do the trick at that end of things. The other end is easily reached in two turns by infantry advancing via the buildings lying north of the wheatfields. If the woods were empty this might plausibly be followed by the movement of men and MGs by tanks and halftracks into the hole opposite the French position at 6X2 for the purpose of eliminating whatever might be there. With that accomplished attention would then likely turn toward the AT Gun in 6Y6. My enthusiasm for that plan would, of course, be severely dampened by the discovery of those minefields.

Some Final Remarks

By now it must be obvious that my enthusiasm for SL and its children remains high. I hope that what you've read helps you to be a better player at this, one of the most interesting games in our hobby. I hope you'll agree that the way I have approached the problem is the right one for your own enjoyment. The attractive white shirts with stylish black AH logo and red lettering (The Avalon Hill Game Company Staff) are sure to gain many closet wargamers are out there just waiting to hear an encouraging word before confessing their own interests in the games. Before you know it, you've found an entirely new circle of opponents without having to explain what you're doing walking around with a tank on your chest to the uninitiated.

The shirts are presently available only in two sizes, large and extra-large—and sell for $12 plus 10% postage and handling charges. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax. Be sure to specify size desired: L. or XL.

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We have available distinguished looking four button down staff shirts for sale to General Readers who have longed for a chance to display their wargaming preferences in a dignified manner. These shirts will allow the conservative adult gamer to advertise his interests in a discrete manner without having to resort to the t-shirt method which virtually shouts to everyone in sight that you are a wargamer. These attractive white shirts with stylish black AH logo and red lettering (The Avalon Hill Game Company Staff) are sure to direct the conversation among your casual acquaintances to gaming. You'll be surprised how many closet wargamers are out there just waiting to be encouraged to walk around with a tank on their chest to the uninitiated.

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Sorcerer, as presently constituted makes interesting software programs for Microcomputer Games as well as designing his own. His evaluation of the Microcomputer game software as presently constituted makes interesting reading for both computer enthusiasts and the mildly curious.

The exhibition of Avalon Hill's new microcomputer games (NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER, MIDWAY CAMPAIGN, B-1, NUKWAR, and PLANET MINERS) at Origins '80 caught many by surprise—a pleasant surprise for most. TRS-80, Apple, and Pet computers were in constant use at the Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games booth, as gamers of all ages and levels of computer experience, from first-time computer users to professional programmers, enjoyed learning and playing the games. In contrast to most conventional board strategy games, the basics of play of the microcomputer games are very rapidly learned. The computer asks for the information it needs to conduct the game and makes sure that all of the rules are followed exactly, thus allowing the player to concentrate on the important strategic planning without getting bogged down in play mechanics. An important feature of the games is that the computer plays one side and has programmed to give even experienced players a challenge.

Several questions were frequently asked about these computer games at Origins '80. Before going into detail about each game individually, it will be helpful to answer the general questions for the benefit of those who were unable to attend Origins.

1. WHAT COMPUTERS CAN THE GAMES BE PLAYED ON?

For now, the three most popular personal computers are being supported: TRS-80 (Level II), Pet 2001 CBM, and Apple II (Plus). All of these need at least 16K memory to run the programs. (By the way, in computer lingo, 1K = 1024 = 2¹⁰.)

Older versions of the Pet and Apple can also be used. In the case of the Apple II with INTEGER BASIC instead of APPLIESOFT BASIC, a separate cassette containing APPLIESOFT (provided with the computer) can be loaded in memory before loading the game program. You will need 32K memory for this (16K for APPLIESOFT, 16K for the game).

Older versions of the Pet will have a different style keyboard but will run the same program. (You will still need 16K memory.)

2. HOW IS THE PROGRAM LOADED?

Each game comes with one cassette which contains versions of the game program for each of the three computers. Each version is recorded twice (one right after the other) in case there is a problem loading the first one. The TRS-80 version is located at the beginning of side 1 of the tape. The Pet version is located at the beginning of side 2 of the tape. The Apple version is located immediately following the TRS-80 section of side 1, and can be found easily by listening for the “pure” sounding Apple calibration tone approximately two-thirds of the way through the tape.

Complete, step-by-step cassette loading instructions are provided with each game.

3. WHAT LANGUAGE ARE THESE PROGRAMS WRITTEN IN?

The five games above were all written in BASIC. Once they are loaded, the programs are available to be listed or modified if desired by the player. Any modifications are strictly the responsibility of the purchaser, of course.

4. WHAT ABOUT SUPPLYING THE PROGRAMS ON FLOPPY DISKS?

Many home computer owners have added floppy disk drives to their systems. On the other hand, many have not. While it is certainly true that floppy disk drives load programs more quickly and reliably than cassette tapes, no one can argue with the fact that all floppy disk users can also load a cassette, while not all cassette users can load a floppy disk! Therefore, it makes more sense to supply a cassette to everyone in the interests of efficiency.

If you have a floppy disk drive, then simply load the program from cassette and save it on your floppy disk. From then on, you can load it from your floppy disk. The cassettes were professionally duplicated using the latest equipment and have proven to be highly reliable.

5. WHAT ABOUT SUPPORTING OTHER COMPUTERS?

It is very disappointing, of course, to be interested in these programs but have a type of computer other than TRS-80, Apple, or Pet. During Origins, there were requests for support of the Atari, Sorcerer, Ohio Scientific, North Star®., and others. Our best indication is that these computers represent a small fraction of the total home computers currently in use. To add programs for them would increase significantly the programming and distribution costs without a proportional increase in sales. With limited resources, we feel that the special graphics capability of the Apple is the best money can buy. Although none of the graphics displays can be added without detracting from the mechanics of the game or adding an unsupportable cost burden to the player, by limiting ourselves to TRS-80, Apple, and Pet, we are able to produce programs with sophisticated design elements at a reasonable price. Unfortunately, one of the things which had to be sacrificed was the special graphics capability of the Apple.

This is not to say that Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games will not be producing programs for the Apple with graphics in the future. If you have an Apple computer, you can influence us on this point by writing to us and asking for Apple graphics programs.

Now that the preliminary questions have been answered, let's look at each game in detail.

THE B-1 NUCLEAR BOMBER GAME

The B-1 NUCLEAR BOMBER GAME has the deepest roots of the computer strategy games released by Avalon Hill. Its ancestor was originally written in 1970 on an IBM-360-50 computer under the title MOSCOW. As such, it has some claim to be the first recreational computer wargame (as opposed to those used by the Department of Defense).

The game places you, the player, in the pilot's seat of a highly automated B-1 bomber conducting a solo penetration of the air defenses of the Soviet Union. Perhaps a total nuclear war is underway, or perhaps this is a surgical retaliatory strike. The pilot of the aircraft—You!—wouldn't know. A message is flashed on the screen ordering the strike and assigning a primary target. A fail safe code, which you will need to know later to arm your bomb, is also displayed. You are informed of secondary targets and defense complexes. You must now pilot your aircraft to the target, drop your bomb, and return to base.

You must communicate with your airplane (also with your computer) by using two letter command codes. Any geographic location in the Soviet Union, as well as your home base, Thule AFB, is also referenced by the first two letters of its name. MO is Moscow, LE Leningrad and PS the Pskov Defense Complex.

Let's look in on parts of the adventures of a happy-go-lucky B-1 driver as he attempts to smear Leningrad off the face of the Earth.

First he finds the way to Leningrad...
COMMAND? NA
WHERE TO? LE
LENINGRAD BARS 142. IT RANGE 2815KM.
COMMAND? CO
NEW COURSE? 142.1
(If it may seem like the computer is doing a lot of talking, but it takes the computer almost no time at
all to print a one line message.)
Our hero flies towards Leningrad . . .
COMMAND? AU
TIME FOR AUTOPilot (S,M,H) 0.30
for thirty minutes, or until . . .
Pechenga Launches a SAM-6.
SAM-6 INTERCEPTS IN 144 SECONDS.
COMMAND?
Our hero elects to use electronics this time . . .
COMMAND? EC
SAM-6 SELF-DESTRUCTS.
Much later in the flight our hero arrives over the
target (hotly pursued) and decides to take care of
first things first . . .
MIG-27 IN PHOENIX RANGE.
LENINGRAD IN BOMB RANGE.
KONOSHA LAUNCHES A MIG-27.
ONEGA LAUNCHES A SAM-3.
PSKOV LAUNCHES A MIG-31.
TALLINN LAUNCHES A MIG-27.
VYBORG BASE IN PHOENIX RANGE.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 458 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 222 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 573 SECONDS.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 10 SECONDS.
COMMAND? PH
PHOENIX MISSILE ARMED. TARGET?
PHOENIX AWAY!
MISSED!
MIG-27 IN PHOENIX RANGE.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 433 SECONDS.
MIG-31 INTERCEPTS IN 217 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 196 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 658 SECONDS.
MIG-27 INTERCEPTS IN 5 SECONDS.
COMMAND?
As you can see, things are not breaking our
hero's way. Nevertheless he persists, and eventually
succeeds . . .
COMMAND? BO
TARGET? LE
CONFIRM DROP (Y/N)? Y
LENINGRAD DESTROYED.
KONOSHA LAUNCHES A SAM-6.
SAM-6 INTERCEPTS IN 299 SECONDS.
COMMAND?
Fighting off the desperate efforts of the Soviet
Air Defense Command to avenge the population
of what used to be Leningrad, our hero flies across the
north of Russia. At last, at low altitude, out of
missiles and with Electronic Countermeasures
rendered ineffective by the Russians, he attempts a
desperate evasion maneuver . . .
SAM-3 IN PHOENIX RANGE.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 1 SECONDS.
SAM-3 INTERCEPTS IN 420 SECONDS.
COMMAND? EV
B-1 CRASHES INTO HILLSIDE.
MISSION SUMMARY:
PRIMARY TARGET, Leningrad,
DESTROYED.
DEFENSE COMPLEXES DESTROYED:
Pechenga
VYBORG
CREW DEAD.
GO AGAIN (Y/N)?
And so our hero doesn't make it back to Thule
AFB. Still, he made it to the target. He'll probably
get the Air Medal—posthumously, of course—if
there's anyone left alive in Washington, D.C. to
hand it out.

**NUKEWAR**

The **NUKEWAR** computer game is a semi-
serious simulation of a nuclear arms race and hot
war between two hypothetical countries. 'Semi-
serious' means that the capabilities of the weapons
and the resources of the countries in the game are
not necessarily realistic. The human player—you—will act as the head of government of
one country, and the computer will act as the
premier of the other. Much of the fun of the game
comes from the fact that the computer has exactly
the same capabilities as you do, and is faced with
identical choices.

Each country is an 8 by 8 grid of 'squares'. Eight
cities are randomly distributed among the squares.
Each city represents eleven million people. The
remaining squares are considered rural areas, with
a population of one million each, making the starting
population for each country 144,000,000. Bases
may only be built on rural areas which do not
already have a base. Each player starts with one
bomber and one missile base. The starting year is
chosen at random in the range 1955 to 1985. At the
beginning, although the computer has the same
things in his country, you don't know where they
are. Conversely, the section of the program that
makes strategic decisions for the computer doesn't
know where your cities and bases are either. A
typical display might look like:

```
 Exxx
     xx  
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
```

where the 'C's are cities, the 'M' a missile base
and the 'B' a bomber base.

The game proceeds in one year turns during the
cold war period. Each year you (and the computer)
must decide among three options:

1. **Build two bases.**
2. **Spy (about three times as well as when building two bases) and build only one base.**
3. **Start the war.**

Each player then decides (if no one has started
the war yet) what kind of bases to build. In addition
to missile and bomber bases, starting in 1965 sub-
marine bases can be built, and starting in 1970 ABM
bases. The computer then updates the map and
reports what the spies have found in the enemy
country. In addition, nuclear accidents can occur at
bases in either country (and the effect may spread
up to one square). Late in the cold war phase the
map may look like this:

```
 Exxx
     xx  
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
     xx
```

with victory conditions evaluated below the
display.

Although the range of options is limited, the
number of strategies which can be (and have been)
used is enormous. To mention just a few, the
bomber strategy involves building huge numbers of
bombers with the idea that enough will get through
the enemy balanced air defense to trash his country.
The spy strategy involves building a lot of missiles, spying to locate enemy bases, then conducting a first strike. The idea is to destroy his forces on the ground, then pick off his cities at leisure. The game has resulted in every outcome from a complete wipeout of the computer by the human to the exact opposite. Having the computer handle die rolls, and "fog of war" effects makes this game tremendous fun to play.

NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER

NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER is a simulation of the battle of the Bismarck in the North Atlantic Ocean during May 1941. Opposing the Bismarck are the British ships Prince of Wales, Hood, King George V, and Rodney. These represent the battleships which actually contacted the Bismarck historically. For advanced players, there is a simple method for adding the Repulse, Renown, and Ramilies as well (just change "B=4" to "B=7" on line 10 of the program). The British also have convoys and air search planes.

As the simulation begins, the Bismarck is pulling out of German-controlled waters near Norway after having waited for foggy weather, the optimum conditions for attempting to break the British blockade and head for the open waters of the North Atlantic. The British know the Bismarck's approximate sailing schedule but do not have a good fix on her. The best they can do is sail in the general direction of Norway and hope to intercept when the fog clears. Meanwhile, the convoys have panicked and are fleeing west at top speed (which isn't very fast).

From this point, the player will assume the role of Captain of the Bismarck while the computer controls the British forces. The Captain of the Bismarck has two key decisions to make. When there are no British battleships nearby, he must choose a course for his ship, keeping in mind the locations of German-controlled waters (to which he must eventually withdraw) and the probable locations of British battleships and convoys. When British battleships are present, he must decide whether to attempt to evade them or turn and fight. While this may not seem like much to decide, it is not a trivial task to set the best course for the Bismarck and decide when to fight and not to fight.

The British strategy is fairly simple. Once they have located the Bismarck by spotting it with aircraft or ships, all battleships will compute interception courses and hold them until the Bismarck changes course while it is spotted. When the British battleships get close enough, they will open fire. Of course, the Bismarck will get to fire also, usually with unfortunate consequences for the British! Many one-on-one battles which result in the sinking of the British battleship can be false victories, though, if the Bismarck is slowed sufficiently so that other British battleships can close in and finish her off.

The Bismarck should happen upon a convoy and not have a defending British battleship within shooting range, it will automatically fire all guns at the convoy. The number of merchant ships sunk will be reported. Each of these is worth points when the level of victory is determined at the end of the game.

The game continues until the Bismarck is sunk or it retreats into German-controlled waters heading east. When the game is over, points are assigned for British battleships and merchantmen sunk. The British get points for driving the Bismarck back to port (depending on the state of the ship when it arrives) or sinking it. The computer will calculate the level of victory (or defeat) and display it on the screen. Remember that Hitler had very high expectations for the Bismarck, and so don't expect a victory if you simply sink the Hood and run back to port!

The computer keeps track of ship positions very accurately, but displays the positions rounded to the nearest 100 nautical miles on an abstract display of a portion of the North Atlantic Ocean. The Captain of the Bismarck is allowed to select any course from 0 to 360 degrees, and the Bismarck is assumed to travel at maximum speed all the time. All random events are handled "invisibly" by the computer. This saves a great deal of time and allows the player to concentrate on making the correct strategic and tactical decisions.

Serious students of military history will find that several aspects of the actual battle were abstracted or left out of NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDER. Specifically, cruisers and aircraft carriers play no part. (Note that this is not a computerization of Avalon Hill's Bismarck game, although it does simulate the same battle.) However, the game does capture the essential flavor of the battle and is quite easy to learn. For students of naval battles who crave a more realistic simulation, the MIDWAY CAMPAIGN computer game is for you (see below).

THE MIDWAY CAMPAIGN GAME

The MIDWAY CAMPAIGN GAME is the most complex of the computer strategy games released by Avalon Hill. It provides a realistic simulation of the capabilities and limitations an Admiral—more specifically, Rear Admiral Raymond A. Spruance—had to face in the carrier action called the Battle of Midway.

As the US player, you know as much about Japanese plans as Admiral Spruance did, and you have almost the same control over your forces as he did. Specifically, you can control where these forces go, and you have complete control over Combat Air Patrol and strike spotting and launching, including aircraft on the Island of Midway.

The computer operates the carriers and aircraft of the Japanese fleet. The complex, inflexible and awkward strategy the Japanese adopted lends itself well to duplication on the computer. The computer's style of play reproduces the decisions the Japanese Admiral could have made very satisfactorily. With the benefit of 20/20 hindsight, any student of naval warfare could easily crush the US fleet by concentrating all Japanese ships around the carriers and utilizing the superior range and speed of the Japanese aircraft. The computer, fortunately for the US player, is not that smart. It faithfully follows the original Japanese plan, with all its inherent weaknesses.

The mechanics of playing the game are about as simple for the human player. The computer keeps track of all positions and of the status of all necessary parameters. The computer invisibly rolls the dice, reporting only the results. The computer enforces the rules automatically. The human player is free to concentrate on the true command decisions: where to go, when to attack, when to launch and whether to keep the fighters or send them with the strike.

Tactical information is provided to you, the US player, in the form of a map of the part of the Pacific Ocean around Midway Island:

FLEET COMMAND:

On the map, TF-16 and TF-17 appear as the numbers '6' and '7'. Midway is the asterisk (**). Course information is shown adjacent to the map. Japanese forces, when and if spotted, appear as 'J's', and the Japanese carriers as 'C's'. Aircraft status is a separate display:

FLEET COMMAND:

VF, VB and VT are fighters, dive bombers and torpedo planes respectively.
Spruance as he sailed through the Pacific's chill waters on those warm June days in 1942.

Ysbd dauntlesses operating from the carriers split-second timing of the us attack which caught and programmed independently from the Avalon could have easily gone either way, and in this are rare. The actual battle was of course a strategic victory for the US, but it is well to remember that there were a few occasions during WWII when carriers managed to get under the guns of the opposition (horner at santa cruz, and tf-34 at leyte come to mind), in general surface actions were an insignificant part of carrier battles. Submarines were eliminated for similar reasons. Supporting ships—battleships, cruisers and destroyers—were abstracted as an AA factor 'buried' in the program.

With respect to aircraft, search was abstracted and buried in the program on the theory that admiral Spruance had no control over the operations of the PBY's which bore the brunt of the US search responsibilities. B-17's were discarded based on their almost total ineffectiveness in the actual battle and subsequent engagements. Because there was no room for more than three aircraft types per side, the number of each type based on Midway Island was adjusted to account for the difference in effectiveness between the obsolescent aircraft the Marines were flying, such as F2A Brewster Buffalos and SB2U Vindicators (also known as 'wind in­

dicators') and the more modern f4F Wildcats and SB2U Vindicators (also known as 'wind in­
dicators') and the more modern F4F Wildcats and SB2U Vindicators (also known as 'wind in­
dicators') and the more modern F4F Wildcats and SB2U Vindicators (also known as 'wind in­
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dicators') and the more modern F4F Wildcats and SB2U Vindicators (also known as 'wind in­

dicators')

As the game begins, each family has five spacecraft; a finesse or skill rating which reflects the crew's ability to stake mining claims, influence the mining council at earth, sabotage other ships, and jump mining claims. When the Council opens the solar system for mining concessions, each family must send its ships to planets in the solar system to claim them as mining concessions. At the same time, they will be attempting to thwart the other families by sabotaging their ships, jumping their claims, and protesting against the claims that can't be jumped. The Mining Council maintains a fleet of patrol ships to guard against such sneaky tricks, but they are spread thin and can't be everywhere at once.

A unique feature of the PLANET MINERS is that either the computer or a person can play for any of the four families. The game is usually played solitaire, with the player taking the part of one family and the computer taking the parts of the other three. It can also be played by as many as four persons, or even by the computer all alone! The computer has been programmed to take every advantage it can, and so winning is not an easy task.

The key to successful play of PLANET MINERS is to send your ships to the right planets. Since the number of available mining concessions at each planet (not known at the beginning, so is different each time), there can be no "perfect strategy" which will work every time. Generally speaking, it is best to keep the ship with the highest finesse value at earth to influence the Mining Council and send the others to planets with many available claims. Keeping in mind that the other families will be using a similar strategy, it is often a good idea to send one of your less valuable ships to a marginal mining location like Mars, in hopes that no one else will go there and you can grab all of the available claims with no opposition. Whenever possible, try to secure the planet and hold it there for many days, since ships in transit are useless.

In the dirty tricks department, the standard method for getting a claim away from your opponent is to protest its validity in the Mining Council. For this, you will need a good finesse value at earth compared with your opponent. If a protest fails, the worst that can happen is that the Mining Council will be unfavorably disposed toward you for the rest of the day. If it works, the claim will be made public again. In this case, it obviously helps if you have the only ship at the available planet that has been made public. Otherwise, it is very likely that someone else can get it after all the trouble you went through!

More risky dirty tricks, with better payoffs if they succeed, are sabotage and claim jumping. A sabotage is an attempt by agents in the crews of your ships in orbit around a planet to disrupt the controls of an opponent's ship and send it spinning out of control. If this works, the opponent's ship will be useless for a number of days while his crew repairs it and gets back in a stable orbit. The finesse values of both players will influence the chances for success. One of the hallmarks of successful sabotage is that the perpetrator escapes undetected, and so no one can be sure who did it. One of the best places to sabotage is in orbit around earth, because gaining a finesse superiority at earth will make influencing the Mining Council easier.

If the sabotage fails and the agent fails to escape, the consequences are quite messy. If there are patrol ships nearby, then the ship of the player attempting sabotage is escorted forcibly back to earth, where the crew will be held in jail a number of days before the family lawyers can get them out on bail. This will also displease the Mining Council. If there are no patrol ships, things are even worse. The crew on the ship which was the target of the attempted sabotage will be sabotaged by the agents of family secrets and thus gain one finesse point at the expense of the agent. After they release the agent, it will take him several days to recover, during which time his ship is useless.

Claim jumping is an attempt to tamper with the mining claim marker beacons of another player at a planet, then convince the Mining Council to transfer ownership of the claim to you. This is accomplished in two steps. First, the marker beacons of the other player are altered. This is similar to attempting sabotage and the results of failure are the same. (Nobody likes claim jumpers.) If the marker beacon switch is successful, then the Mining Council must be persuaded to change their records to transfer ownership. If this second step fails, the penalties are much less severe (similar to failing to protest a claim).

The computer is programmed to make its own decisions about when to use these "dirty tricks" on you. Other players. If you are getting ahead, the players controlled by the computer are very likely to gang up on you with a flurry of dirty tricks! The game ends when all mining concessions have been granted or the Mining Council gets tired. The nominal victor is the family with the most mining claims, but a solitaire player should only consider it
The universe of LORDS OF KARMA will contain enough clues to help you figure out what you should do—if only you will pay attention to them.

We must apologize to TRS-80 and Pet owners who are intrigued with LORDS OF KARMA but can't buy it because it only runs on the Apple. In preparing a BASIC program, all that is needed is a computer large enough to hold the program. Avalon Hill has a 16K TRS-80 and a 16K Pet, and so preparing a BASIC program on these computers is "simply" a matter of typing in the BASIC program lines and making any necessary modifications (each version of BASIC is slightly different).

Machine language programs are another story. First, the source program must be prepared. This is usually in assembly language, but in the case of LORDS OF KARMA, we used a special version of the Pascal language which we tailored to produce Apple machine code (actually, 6502 microprocessor code). All of this was developed on two computers (one of them an Apple) with floppy disk drives and fully expanded memories. In addition, the two computers were custom modified to be able to trade data and programs over a data cable. In order to be able to make LORDS OF KARMA available on the TRS-80 and Pet, the TRS-80 and Pet would have to be expanded well beyond their present 16K memory capacity, have floppy disks added, and also have a similar data transfer cable installed. Before we do this, there will have to be sufficient justification in terms of customer requests or sales. If LORDS OF KARMA is popular, we will probably be offering similar adventure programs that will fit in a 16K TRS-80, Apple, or Pet.

**IN CONCLUSION**

We hope that these brief descriptions have given you a good idea of what the new Avalon Hill microcomputer games are all about. What's in store for the future? Your response to the first games will help determine that. Computer sports games seem to be one good direction. If you would like to have a big influence on the development of this new field of strategy gaming, by all means drop us a note at Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games 4517 Harford Road Baltimore, Maryland 21214

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**THE ASYLUM, No. 9**

8:19, 25 December 1980, Mercy Hospital, Baltimore.

An eight pound baby boy is born. Joe Wargamer, the father, is not married. He has not impregnated a female (or so he says). The baby, to be named Joe II, is a clone. An experimental program, only recently opened up to the public, has made Joe a daddy sans mommy.

Joe's real happiness is somewhat more subtle than appears on the surface. Joe has been a wargamer for years and has hungered for opponents. As of late, in particular, for one competent opponent, who is readily available to play games with him anytime. Joe II is the answer to Joe's hopes, or so Joe hopes.

A nurse takes Joe to the window of the maternity ward where dozens of babies lie in their first beds. A sea of screaming flesh, seemingly all hands, toes, and mouths, waiting to be formed into bodies. The nurse points out Joe II.

Joe waves. Joe II is not crying or moving around much like the others. He looks puzzled. Pensive. Almost contemplative. His hand moves to his chin. The thinker. His mouth opens and he seems to speak. Joe looks around. Joe II mouthed "daddy". Joe melts. The realization hits him. He has spawned a son, not just a wargamer. Self-interest is no longer his only motive. Joe is a proud father.

Joe II does not speak for several weeks when Joe brings him home. He seems caustically quiet, checking out the surroundings. One day, Joe holds him in his arms and Joe II speaks the word again. Except this time Joe hears it. He is shocked as he realizes his mistake. The word is not "daddy", but "D-Day".

In the fourth week, Joe begins to spout forth a wargamer's vocabulary. In fact, he seems to know almost nothing else. Game titles, probabilities, strategy, historical unit makeup, battle plans, weapon specifications, rules pour out.

Joe begins to worry. There seems to be no sensitivity, no humanity, in Joe II. At five weeks, Joe II announces he is ready to play his first game. Joe suggests AFRIKA KORPS. Joe sneers and says he will skip the menial, basic stuff and start with THIRD REICH. Joe rigs up a special table that will be as high as Joe II's crib. They play. Joe II is like a machine at the table, alternately sucking on his bottle and doing computations out loud. Joe II wins...

Seven centuries later, Joe XI and his Joe XI clone-brothers plot to take over the world, and succeed. Joe, who has been rolling over in his grave since his death due to inferiority, gives up the ghost and passes on. His soul finally admitting he's been a dork.

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**BABYGAMER** By Alan R. Moon

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A nurse takes Joe to the window of the maternity ward where dozens of babies lie in their first beds. A sea of screaming flesh, seemingly all hands, toes, and mouths, waiting to be formed into bodies. The nurse points out Joe II.

Joe waves. Joe II is not crying or moving around much like the others. He looks puzzled. Pensive. Almost contemplative. His hand moves to his chin. The thinker. His mouth opens and he seems to speak. Joe looks around. Joe II mouthed "daddy". Joe melts. The realization hits him. He has spawned a son, not just a wargamer. Self-interest is no longer his only motive. Joe is a proud father.
CROSSING THE SAMBRE

Waterloo from the Beginning

On the right, the roads were narrower than anticipated and the orders of march for units got mixed up. Grouchy's column was delayed in its entirety, so that the first elements of the IV Corps did not reach the Sambre at Charletet until after noon. The reserve cavalry under Milhaud did not pass that point until the morning of the next day, the 16th.

The center column headed by the Imperial Guard advanced to Charleroi, attacking Prussian troops there and finally capturing the city shortly before noon. Vandamme's III Corps was close behind, along with Napoleon himself and two Cavalry Corps, and during the afternoon these forces pressed on from the Sambre to the northeast in pursuit of Zeitien's I Prussian Corps.

Zeiten began the day spread across the mapboard, with whole divisions as "pickets." Suddenly that morning, he found himself facing the whole French army, and only with difficulty managed to pull Soult's division of the Prussian and before Reille's advance on the left would have trapped them on the far side of the enemy host. Resistance was offered at Charleroi, though the result was a foregone conclusion. Some scholars maintain that this first sharp combat played a part in the slowness of the French advance for the rest of the day, but others point out that the French had already marched most of the night, and had to be ready for a major standup battle with Blucher as soon as he could be provoked to form up.

The Prussian II Corps moved west as soon as word of the French march was received, arriving around Charleroi in the afternoon. Shortly afterwards, the I Corps came marching back to join them, in the face of the advancing French. Blucher was as close to Wellington's cautiously dispersed forces as he would get; further movement wouldn't help. The III Corps was on its way (arriving on the morning of the 16th) having already marched most of the night, and had to be held where Wellington could most easily move to join the conflict. The stage was set; the initial day of maneuvers in Napoleon's last campaign had brought the combatants together for battle.

The fundamental question to be answered by replaying these events is simple: could you have done any better, as commander of either side?

RECREATING JUNE 15TH

The "At Start" positions for units from the I Prussian Corps and the I Anglo-Allied Corps reflect the location of the command of each unit at dawn on June 15th. Prussian reinforcements arrive also the same Turn (10). The II Corps entered the day, and on the morning of the 16th as well. The exception is Henkel, whose division marched up from a more forward, southerly position. Anglo-Allied units arrive from Brussels, where Wellington held his army's reserves, and from Braine le Comte, where the IV Corps had the bulk of its forces. The French appear in their three columns from the south edge of the mapboard (a turnpike should continue south from Charleroi.) All these details are included in the P-A-A and French Order of Appearance Charts.

Beginning from the setup shown for dawn on June 15th, "Crossing the Sambre" can be played as a variant opening for a regular game of WATERLOO. The movement option in this case, strategy is the same as in the full game. The French can drive for Nivelles to avoid the unpleasant terrain around Quatre Bras, try for Brussels straight away while screening off the Prussians, or follow Napoleon's own plan of defeat in detail of the two opposing armies before him. A few little tricks will emerge with repeated play, such as using the first French units (Reille's cavalry) to force Steinmetz to retreat north instead of east, bringing the Dutch units forward from Quatre Bras to defend the line of the Pioton. Players will be able to explore for themselves considerable new realms of campaign options which they never saw by starting the game a day later. In the full game, be sure to follow the revised order of appearance through 1 PM on the afternoon of the 16th. Further, the Prussian IV Corps can enter the game in two ways: on the Namur turnpike at 5 PM on June 16th, or on the road to Ligny from the east board-edge at 1 PM on June 17th. (Neither of these entrances correspond to the original game.)

MODIFICATIONS TO RULES

These rules revisions actually can be applied to any scenario or game of WATERLOO. They are suggested to improve the realism of play.

Rule 1. Automatic elimination of a defender means the eliminated unit's zone of control and presence is ignored by all the attacker's units not engaged in the attack itself, during the remaining movement portion of the attacker's turn.

Rule 2. Allow cavalry the option to enter any clear terrain square vacated by enemies as a result of combat involving that cavalry (whether as attacker or defender) in the same way units already occupy vacated squares of units doubled on defense. This movement after combat may be considered a "charge bonus."

Rule 3. No more than one infantry division (or two brigades) may occupy a square. No more than one cavalry division (or three brigades) may occupy a square. No more than one artillery battalion, horse or foot, (or three batteries) may occupy a square. Within these limits, the three different types of units may stack together freely.

Rule 4. Some unit strengths, originally based on simple totals of men, do not reflect the power of units. For the French Guards, change Friant (the old guard) to an 8, Morand and Duquesne (the middle guard) to a 7, and Gouvion-Saint-Cyr and the British guard battalions, including the Greys and the Coldstream Guards) to an 8.

Rule 5. Prussian and Anglo-Allied units which stack together lose one point of combat strength on attack and defense. This point is subtracted from the largest unit in the stack, before any doubling for defense.

Rule 6. Movement along a primary road counts as ½ movement factor, except when the road square is in enemy zone of control. This replaces the old four-square "extra move" rule.
**FRENCH ORDER OF APPEARANCE**

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**P-A-A ORDER OF APPEARANCE**

**AT START**

Fontaine

L'Eveque

Charleroi

Fleurus

Gosselies

Nivelles

Quatre Bras

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**Rule 7.** To reflect the time and care required to execute linear tactics effectively, add one to the movement cost of entering any square in enemy zone of control, except for horse artillery.

**Rule 8.** For "Elim" and "Exchange" combat results, affected players remove only one unit of their choice per result, ignoring the "matching points" rule. Others in "Elim" results retreat, but "Exchange" leaves surviving units in place to advance after combat if possible.

**Rule 9.** Whenever a unit retreats from combat, invert it and consider it "dispersed" for the next half-turn. Dispersed units may not attack, move at half speed and defend at half strength, both rounded down.

The use of any or all of these optional rules leads to a more faithful simulation of the way Napoleonic battles actually developed. For example, only two or three infantry divisions per side will now "fit" in a stand-up battle for the Quatre Bras heights (and that's all there were on the 16th) but the French Guard artillery could make a big difference, as it usually did. The old stacking rules made it common to find twenty or more divisions brawling over a battlefield a few squares wide, when in fact at Waterloo itself, something like that total number of commands fought in a continuous front stretching eight to ten squares from end to end, and still found themselves too close for combat. Uniform stacks of 15 factors also destroy the unique character and capabilities of the individual units so carefully recreated for us by Avalon Hill, but these optional rules bring out many new and fascinating aspects of this classic wargame.

**THE WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY**

Containing thirty-six pages of the best of *THE GENERAL* articles on the game plus previously unpublished material as well, this guide is a must for every fan of the game. Several official rules changes update the game and erase its few minor flaws. A tribute to one of the hobby's oldest citizens that has never needed a major revision. A game which has grown old gracefully, maturing by getting better.

Almost all of the reprinted articles are from unavailable issues of *THE GENERAL*, many from volume 9 or earlier. Included is the first major variant, "Leyte Gulf", and the most in-depth article on the game to date "The MIDWAY Thesis" by two of the game's experts, Harold Totten and Donald Greenwood. "The Pacific Theatre Via MIDWAY", the other major variant that spawned the MIDWAY Variant Kit, has been expanded to include many more optional rules (some applicable to the MIDWAY game as well) and an additional scenario, "The Battle For Australia", a previously unpublished article adds the ultimate with a hypothetical monster scenario using the components of both the game and the variant kit. Other articles deal with strategy, analysis, variants, and other hypothetical situations. The best of three Series Replays that have appeared in *THE GENERAL* is also reprinted, useful in itself as a fine example of the subtle strategies involved when experienced players meet.

*THE WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO MIDWAY* sells for $4.00 plus 10% postage and handling charges, and is available from our mail order dept. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax.
ARM: Frank, would you tell us a little bit about what you did before you began working for wargame companies?

FD: I became interested in wargaming before there was an industry, in the early 1950s. I began designing games with a friend of mine when I was only seven years old. In 1955, we finished a game called U.D.T. about underwater demolitions, sort of based on the Cockleshell Heroes. We sent it to Parker Brothers in 1956. They were very interested and sent us a contract, but our parents intervened.

ARM: Do you think your time in New York has stood them. I began developing in 1972, my first game being this point they began to concentrate on complete than they needed to be for people to understand them. I began developing in 1972, my first game being U.D.T. about underwater demolitions, sort of based on the Cockleshell Heroes. We sent it to Parker Brothers in 1956. They were very interested and sent us a contract, but our parents intervened.

FD: Absolutely. A person who works for any major company benefits from being in a designing community. The people are serious about their work and the interchange of ideas and design approaches is the only way to learn the craft of game design.

FD: Mark McLaughlin, the designer, brought the game in to Don Greenwood in February 79. Don thought it was a very professional job and gave it to me for a week during which I playtested it with Mark. I decided AH should do the game because it covered a broad subject that had never been covered before. In addition, the game had an all inclusive feel to it, and the rules seemed quite complete.

ARM: Where is the focus in WAR & PEACE?

FD: I did not design WAR AND PEACE, it was designed by Mark McLaughlin. It is, therefore, a different sort of game than I would have designed on the same subject. I think Mark's focus in WAR AND PEACE is on simplicity. It is an elegant design that takes into account leadership, attrition, morale, terrain, supply, and sieges; all the important factors of Napoleonic. It was unnecessary to change it. In particular, the treatment of leadership and morale ably demonstrates the absolute importance of those two factors.

FD: No. My favorite period is the era from 1790 to 1815, and my own game Wellington's Victory, Red Sun Rising (all SPI). Other Published Designs: WWI, Frederick the Great, TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD

FD: My favorite period is the era from 1790 to 1815, and my own game Wellington's Victory, Red Sun Rising (all SPI). Other Published Designs: WWI, Frederick the Great, TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD

FD: I recommend WAR AND PEACE because it is the only presentation of the entire Napoleonic periods from 1805-1815. The game has good play balance in all the scenarios and is extremely enjoyable to play. It is not as much a simulation as WELLINGTON'S VICTORY, but I strongly recommend it to people who are beginning to be interested in the period.

FD: I am very satisfied. To me the game is one of the most attractive and appealing games that AH has put out. I have certain reservations about some of the mechanics in the game, but the critics have not mentioned these so far, so I don't think it would be worthwhile to go into these. I would rather have people decide for themselves.

FD: My career there lasted from Sep 71 to Sep 77, and my own game Wellington's Victory, Red Sun Rising (all SPI). Other Published Designs: WWI, Frederick the Great, TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD

FD: I strongly recommend it to people who are beginning to be interested in the period.
said you do not play games for fun. Would you explain this and tell how this relates to your design philosophy?

FD: Anyone who is doing a job professionally has a different responsibility and a concern that is completely different from that of someone who is playing a game or doing any sort of work strictly for their own benefit. When I say I don't play games for fun, what I mean is that I try to transcend my own desire for enjoyment and concentrate on pleasing the mass audience, an audience made up of people with different tastes who want things other than what I want in the game. My primary concern is to find problems in the game, put them into final product, making sure the rules are understandable and the scenarios are balanced. I can't lose myself in winning or losing during the play of a game. I tend to take a very objective stance and usually I'm the chief critic of the game; my play testers having far less objections than I.

ARM: Is it hard for me to separate my job from my hobby and being an AH staff member has basically just involved me more than before; I haven't stopped playing games. Do you still play games for fun on your own time?

FD: Because I began as a designer and not a player, I have never played games for fun or competition. I am interested in playing games as a form of artistic expression. I'm more interested in sharpening my skills as a designer than as a player.

ARM: So, is designing games fun for you and is designing your hobby as well as your job?

FD: There's no simple answer to that. I have a continuing interest in the hobby particularly in what ideas are being put out. I try to keep up with all the literature and review as many new designs as possible. But I've never spent much time playing games for the competitive challenge or camaraderie involved. I have an avid interest in reading and writing, both fiction and poetry. When I read, I cannot read strictly to escape into fantasy or something like that. I read to learn more about the craft of writing and that is exactly the same reason I play games.

ARM: Do you believe designers develop a personal design style, and if so, what is yours?

FD: Absolutely. Any designer who has been working for awhile has a viewpoint and a manner of expression that is his alone. In my case, I think my years as a developer served as a training ground to form my design philosophy. My personal style is slavering through a historical topic to pinpoint the primary concerns of the commanders participating in the event. I use a reductive approach, focusing in on the one, two, or three most central issues. For instance, in Napoleonic battles the focus might be supply, and in Napoleonic it might be leadership or forced marches. My object is to whittle down the subject to get to the absolute core of what is important in that period of history and how the armies and the combat actually achieved the ends they did.

ARM: Do you want people who play your games to learn something from them?

FD: Yes. A person who buys a Napoleonic game should get an enhanced understanding about what was unique about that period. A person who buys a game on the desert war in North Africa should come away with some increased understanding of how that campaign differed from the campaign in France in 1940. The emphasis in the game should be on what is unique about the historical period.

ARM: So, is it fair to say that you are more interested in realism than playability?

FD: The subject of realism versus playability has been around for at least ten years. The way I feel about it now is that realism versus playability is a misnomer. The real issue is simplicity versus complexity, neither of which ensures realism or playability. The designer who stresses simplicity has no guarantee the game will turn out playable, unless he pays attention to making the rules complete and intelligible. And the designer who attempts to design a complex game will not produce a more realistic game unless he first ascertains what were the crucial aspects of the period. Many times complexity added to the game detracts from it. Many games used to be designed without supply rules. Then everyone got tired of that and started adding supply rules. But were the supply rules accurate? Accuracy does not mean realism. Merely adding supply rules to a game did not make it more accurate. The same thing is true with command control rules and the whole question of terrain. I don't think any designer can afford to ignore playability and pursue realism. If a game is unplayable, there is no way to determine if the game is historically accurate. Playability can be used to test the interpretation of history in a game; it is where the sense of realism comes from. If a game is unplayable, it is guaranteed to be unrealistic too.

ARM: Are there game designers you admire and feel influenced by?

FD: The designer I consider the most original is John Prados. I think that John always has a fresh approach to subjects that are often beyond the reach of other designers. In particular, both John and I admire Jim Dunnigan. He is an extremely innovative and imaginative designer who has a great range of experience and yet is always able to come up with a new idea. I think he's probably the best designer in the industry but he attempts too much. Unfortunately, although the overall number of designs he puts out is tremendous, many are duds. If he was able to work on fewer games, he would have much higher batting average; certainly the best in the hobby.

ARM: Have these two influenced your work?

FD: Not directly. The one thing I learned from both of them is to stay away from easy answers and to continually look for new and better ways to simulate historical events. I don't think there is much similarity between games by the three of us. Any good designer rejects more ideas than he accepts, and this is what I learned from John and Jim. I don't feel influenced by other designers mainly because ideas I see in games are many times ideas I have considered and rejected. I do feel that Jim and John don't overload their games with chrome and we all have the reductive, focusing approach.

ARM: It has been somewhat amazing to me that there have been so many developments in the hobby in the last few years. The explosion of fantasy/role-playing games for instance. What developments in the hobby interest you, if you?

FD: I am very interested in the tremendous growth of science fiction and fantasy. Fantasy games are very subjective, but are successful because they are very imaginative. I think the audience we are catering to is no longer adults, as the younger age group is not interested in historical perspectives. There is nothing we can do about it. It has to do with the changing generation and their attitudes towards history. Fantasy games appeal to people on an emotional level and it is hard to make any kind of intelligent criticism or comparative analysis about them, in that there is no hard data underlying the games. It will be hard for people to judge the design efforts in these games. AH began by publishing games that were more serious than games by companies like Parker Brothers. They built a reputation as a publisher of adult games. The advent of wargames gave an aura of seriousness and maturity to the industry. Now, after twenty years, we are returning to games that have no historical basis, in the pursuit of profit. I think the game industry is losing its interest in the adult segment of the public.

ARM: Do you think the hobby is running out of game topics?

FD: The days of the blockbuster titles are over. There have been too many games produced too quickly. The companies just can't keep up the same quality they did when the pace was slower. Fantasy and science fiction will continue to produce original ideas, but wargames will be more involved in subtle insights into topics already covered.

ARM: What are you working on now?

FD: At present, I am working on THE GUNS OF AUGUST, a World War I game.

ARM: What level is it on?

FD: It is a strategic game on the corps level that encompasses the whole First World War in Europe.

ARM: How much work has been done by the designer and how much is left for you to do on the game?

FD: The designer, Rob Beyma, is an old AH veteran and a well known classic player. His intention was to create a classic AH game similar to RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN. The design-development tasks are similar to WAR AND PEACE in that Rob has done a thorough job, and the main problem is with the combat system and the CRT. Other than that, my work on the game consists of developing short scenarios for both the eastern and western fronts. The basic game system will remain mostly untouched.

ARM: Can you tell us a little about the components?

FD: It will have a standard sized AH mapboard and the total number of combat counters will be between three and four hundred. There will be a number of additional marker counters used for supply and entrenchment.

ARM: Where is the focus of the game?

FD: Typical of other AH classics, the focus will be on combat. That's the reason I said my work will deal with the combat system and the CRT. People familiar with World War I will know that it is an attrition situation and both players will be fighting an attrition war. Since the game will revolve around the land game, the naval and air aspects of the war will be handled very abstractly with minor rules; there will be no naval or air counters.

ARM: I have always felt, and I'm sure I'm not alone, that World War I makes for a very dull game because of the stagnant trench warfare situation. How will GUNS OF AUGUST avoid this?

FD: A lot of people do view the war that way and that is unfortunate. However, GUNS OF AUGUST has the right scale for a World War I simulation and will make a very mobile and interesting game. The game will divide the war into the western front with corps size units and one month turns. The game will be similar to RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN on the eastern front, and this will involve two thirds of the map. The western front, historically, will be quite static because the front is short and the unit density is high. Players which are interested in the balance between the two fronts will find it an interesting situation. Most of their attention will be directed towards the eastern front while the western front remains relatively dormant. Most of their efforts in the game will center on how many units can be stripped off the western front and sent to the eastern front. It will be absolutely critical to fight an attrition war on the western front to engage the enemy and help produce victory, but the war will be won on the eastern front. The game will have a lot of tension and unique player decisions.
Those who follow the evolution of the SQUAD LEADER game system closely have, no doubt, wondered why what was once touted as being an easy to do extension of the original game is taking so long. COI took a year. COD took a year and a half. Carrying this chain of events a bit further can we expect G.I.: ANVIL OF VICTORY to take two years? The answer is an unqualified “maybe.” To say that I underestimated the work and time involved in the production of the SL gamettes has to rank as one of the biggest understatements of all time. Granted, the scope of the gamettes grew with the continuing popularity of the game and the projects soon left the realm of new board and a handful of new counters to major undertakings involving much more research and testing than was required with the initial game itself. Although the basic system was already done, every change or new piece of equipment had to be grafted into that system in such a way that wouldn’t foul up what work had already been done. With a set of rules as voluminous as the SL system has become, that is a major undertaking. Originally, if we wanted to make a change to, say, the smoke rules we just tack it onto section 24. Now any such change not only must jive with section 24, we must also cross check what happens to things like artillery, AFVs, weather (all kinds), different terrain types, aircraft, nationalities, mortars, etc., ad nauseam. In short, the more the system attempts to include, the more problems that can arise and these problems often have a multiplicative (as opposed to simple additive) effect. Not being very fond of answering “nutmail” inquiries from confused gamers, I’ve become a firm believer in letting the development process take its course with as complete a play test process take its course with as complete a playtest period as possible. It’s far simpler for me (and ultimately for the consumer) to answer queries from a few dozen “blind” by-mail playtesters, than from 30,000 confused gamers. This attitude paid immediate benefits in the release of COD which, up to this point at least, has generated approximately 10% of the errata and questions of it’s predecessor. As a consequence, I’ll be waiting even longer this time around for the feedback from COD to filter down before setting my team of trusty playtesters to work on G.I.

Following is a complete listing of the errata and questions of the 1st edition rules following the release of G.I. (…protracted sigh).

THE COUNTERS

Considering the immense amount of detail on the vehicular counters and the sheer number of them, COD came through the production gristmill in pretty good shape, but was not able to completely avoid the printer’s grienfil. The French counters will be a little lighter and the neutrals a little darker in the second edition (now available) counters.

These changes make them easier to read and increase the differentiation between the French and the incorrectly printed COI German vehicle counters. If you still have a set of very dark blue COI German vehicle counters you should probably order the lighter blue set (with white wreck backs) from our parts dept. I regret to report that AH will not replace these counters free of charge.

As far as actual counter data goes the changes can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The A22X should have a main armament breakdown number of XI+. The British 203 mm artillery piece should not have a breakdown number and the 152 mm pieces should be overscored to indicate lack of AP ammunition. The German SPW 251/16 should have a two factor AA MG. All these changes have already been incorporated in the second printing.

THE RULEBOOK

104.233 Add: “against infantry” to end of sentence.

104.51 Add: “in any scenario fought on Finnish soil” between “Morale,” and “they”.

109.3 Delete: “is adjacent to the target hex” substitute: “needs only a final To Hit number of 7 or more”.

109.6 Add: “Paratroopers receive a 0 DRM for a vehicle or unit in any scenario fought on Finnish soil” between “Morale,” and “they”.

116.2 Delete the last sentence. Substitute: “A side may never create more than four scouts in a scenario.”

123.42 Add: “Unlike most vehicles, motorcycles must be doubled to the same hex.”

126.6 Delete: “(not pond)”.

126.62 Add: “Ponds have no reverse slope effect.”

129.43 Add: “turret” between “malfunctioned” & “weapon”.

131.3 Delete: “is greater than the white die”. Substitute: “on the To Hit roll is a ‘11’.”

Add: “131.7 A shocked AFV loses any acquisition (69) benefits it may have previously had.”

Page 101 the “14” MP of the A15 Crusader III should be printed in red.

Page 103 Insert behind “Sappers” in the parentheses: “First line or Elite”. Add: “Glider … 12”.

Page 104 Change answer to “25.4” to: “No (25.5)”.

Page 105 Add answer to “53.8 & 53.9” between “each” & “per”. Add: “(the first one encountered)”. Page 106 Change answer to “112.41 & 112.2” “yes”.

Page 106 Change answer to “112.42” “Only the +1 DRM for infantry on foot beneath an AFV”.

Page 108 Add to list of references for “TT”: “66.3, 120.1, 136.83”.

THE SCENARIOS

There is no errata for the scenarios but those who value play balance in their games might enjoy a brief synopsis on how each of the scenarios evolved

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during playtest. Play balance in SL scenarios is a tricky thing; people seldom agree on which side is favored. Such things always sway back and forth depending on styles of play, but SL scenarios seem to be immune to that. In the end, they are just more a set of games. A certain amount of that is attributable to the luck factor. Few games have as many dice rolls with as wide a variety of results as SL, and a “snakeeyes” here or a “boxcars” there can really throw a wrench in the works of even the most balanced scenario, if full tours at a critical time. There is also the matter of the rules being utilized. No game that I know has as rich a multitude of “optional rules” to choose from as SL. Although my approach is to play with all but a few prior agreed upon advanced rules, there is no limit to the assortment of rules selections that various groups agree to play by. For example, a group which uses the Double Time rules will have far different results than a group which doesn’t. These problems plagued us as far back as the very first SL scenario. The overwhelming opinion of that first playtest group was that the Germans were favored in THE BORDERS ARE BURNING. As a result, I gave the Russians that lone squad in N2 to help balance things. Judging from public opinion since then, that squad must have been full of Hero of the Soviet Union medal holders because there is now a strong consensus that the Russians are heavily favored. The scenario still remains enjoyable because the vagaries of the dice rolls make a German victory quite possible, and it is a challenge to whip a numerically superior foe—a strong factor in what I attribute to be the relative appeal of the Russian—German scenarios. However, I’m afraid we haven’t gotten much better at predicting play balance in SL scenarios in the three years since then. As part of the testing procedure for the Quick Play scenarios found in this issue, we sent them out to two different “blind” groups for one final test. Each group was asked to pick the favored side after repeated playings. When the results were in, the groups had disagreed on four of the five scenarios! That seems to be the ultimate guarantee of play balance in these things.

BATTLE OF THE WARTA LINE was a pretty straightforward scenario and of course was primarily in regards to what effect PzKwIBs would have on unsupported infantry. The scenario was generally regarded as acceptable from a play balance viewpoint although it was felt that the Poles were getting the worst of it. Generally speaking, I like to see the “burden” of attack represented as such in a game so I love compensated somewhat by deducting a German squad and giving the Poles a field phone and a limited amount of concealment.

THE BORDERS ARE BURNING presented us with our worst play balance problem as it was generally agreed that the Germans were dished out punishment in pretty generous proportions. The combination of quality units, high ground, weather, and stringent victory conditions were just too much for the Russian armor. The Poles were left on the board from either west edge road. Initially, we had required Russian exit off the board 2 edge and this proved to be too much of a funneled factor on the Russian advance given the twin pressures of bad weather and the latter move was lessened by allowing the Russians to set up five hexes closer to the Finns and extending the game length by two turns.

SILENT DEATH was one of those love/hate affairs where half the testers thought the scenario completely unenjoyable and the other half thought it was the best of the lot. It certainly was different and a personal favorite of mine so it stayed, albeit with many changes. Scenario 23 is the ultimate solitaire scenario because the initiative lies almost entirely with the Finn. The Russian can do little more than mark the board and proceed to the next turn together the rudiments of a defense which will enable him to “win” by virtue of the Finn’s extremely difficult victory conditions while he is getting the hell kicked out of his force. If ever there was a pyrrhic victory in wargames, this is it. Because the Finn gets the lion’s share of the enjoyment in this scenario, all the changes were directed towards making his lot harder, while offering a potential Russian player some solace for seeing his units mown down in terms of “winning” the game. This took the form of increasing the Finn’s required conditions of victory. The Russians’ first turn sight opportunities for his leaders and sentries, and prohibiting the sissi from taking prisoners. These effects were softened somewhat by giving the Finns two more molotov cocktails to fire buildings, and allowing the pulkas to cart off broken units. The latter move was a great improvement as they were previously limited to a conveyance role for the MMG. Not only did this give them a valuable function to perform in play of the scenario, it closely mirrored their role in the campaign as transportation for the wounded and equipment.

ACTION AT BALBERKAMP was the consensus favorite scenario from the outset, although it was generally agreed that the Allies were getting the worst of it. I compensated for this with a variety of minor changes to the victory conditions, force pools, and special rules. First, the victory conditions were changed so that they couldn’t be attained until the end of the game or the complete elimination of the Allied forces. This prevented cheap German victories should they batter Group Ruge sufficiently before the arrival of reinforcements in the form of the Leicesters. Secondly, the Leicesters were given what amounted to a “1 DRM advantage. Because of the variance in arriving on the board it was found that if the German flanking company reached the heights on board 2 before the British, the latter would be in real trouble. Lastly, the Germans lost a 8-0 leader while the Norwegians gained three 2nd line squads and the Belgians three MMG. The scenario was shortened by one turn to increase the time pressures on the German player. This scenario is also excellent for three player play by dividing the Allies into a British and Norwegian commander. The resulting communications problems that occur are both realistic and highly interesting in their simple, yet important, effects on the Allied chances.

RESISTANCE AT CHABLEZHEZ gave us very little trouble as one might expect from such a simple scenario. The object of the scenario was to illustrate key elements of Axis tactics in a combat environment and in this it succeeds admirably. The “feel” of a highly mobile recce unit in a fluid front with only scattered pockets of resistance is captured nicely. This high risk/high yield type of military operation is a special situation one wouldn’t find in a stalemated front or on the Eastern front. The players have gained an appreciation of the fact that motorcyclists are not meant to be shock troops. The confrontation between a highly mobile but vulnerable force and a hidden, lightly armed enemy is classic and offers an interesting scenario. The object of the scenario was to provide something new besides a fluid front with only scattered pockets of resistance. The “feel” of a highly mobile recce unit in a fluid front with only scattered pockets of resistance is captured nicely. This high risk/high yield type of military operation is a special situation one wouldn’t find in a stalemated front or on the Eastern front. The players have gained an appreciation of the fact that motorcyclists are not meant to be shock troops. The Royal Dutch Grenadiers were given additional concealment and an extra squad while the 6th Jager Regiment was upgraded to 1st line infantry.

THE DINANT BRIDGEHEAD was one of the second generation scenarios in COD and as such received only one round of blind testing as opposed to the two rounds which most of the John Hill designed initial scenarios received. The river crossing assault was also a subject which had never been broached in the SL system before and therefore used a large assortment of brand new rules. As a consequence, the changes it underwent were considerably more than any of the others. When I designed this scenario I was admittedly impressed with the rigors of an opposed river crossing. Too much, so it seems because I gave the Germans so much firepower they blasted anything that moved and literally walked across the river unopposed. So we gave the French some concealment, practically halved the German MG support and reduced the size of the reconn team already across the river by one squad and a couple LGMs. The piece densities here are still a mite high for my tastes, but this is a special situation requiring a special reading of the appropriate sections of the rules and isn’t intended for light fare in any case. If one uses the optional Special Rules 27.8 & 27.9 in which French armor can appear, any attempt at play balance has been lost to the whims of the dice anyway and the game will become more of an adventure than a test of skill.

COUNTERSTROKE AT STONNE is really the only pitched battle relying heavily on armor in the COD package. As such, it was a favorite among the armor buffs. The piece density was still too high for my tastes and most of the changes made were more along the lines of playability than play balance. This time it was the Germans who were the prisoners of the unexpected counters for the German infantry’s HP (Hidden Initial Placement) capability and increasing their squads by two as a result. No one ever really beefed too much about the play balance, but I think that was because the scenario was too taxing for them to play it more than a few times.

IN ROMMEL’S WAKE uses a design element which I really appreciate in a game’s design. The German is working under rigid time pressures with various victory conditions depending on the force levels which are opposing him, but because the French use HIP he doesn’t know for sure just what is opposing him. As play progresses he’ll uncover clues which should allow him to figure out what he is up against but the longer the time he has to accomplish his task. Yet, if the opposing force is larger than he has reckoned on, the time is no longer a crucial concern—preventing his own force from being blown away in a too hasty advance is. Scenario 29 was swiftly declared balanced in an unflattering way; the Germans usually won when the French drew hits 1 or 2, and the French won or held their own when the Germans hit 3. Therefore, our changes were aimed at making hits 1 and 2 a bit more palatable for the French. This was done by giving each force an additional squad and increasing the time pressure on the German by shortening the game length by one turn.
AD ILOC AT BEAURAINS was probably the most controversial of the COD scenarios. Not only was opinion equally divided on which side was favored, but many hated this one with a passion while others declared it the best of the lot. The plodding, yet seemingly impregnable, Matildas certainly offered a new type of situation. As opinion on the balance of this scenario was so divided from the outset, changes were limited, for the most part, to increasing the types of action which could occur as opposed to helping one side over the other. To this end the Gen. Martel counter was added at the cost of a Matilda, and the German infantry was increased in expectation of some Close Combat action against the unescorted British tanks.

CHATEAU DE QUESNOY was another one of those scenarios for those who persist in their masochistic attraction for large piece densities. Those who delight in pitched battles loved this one, although even they admitted that the French HIP made things a bit tough to keep track of. The German players found it especially so. This was the first case in my memory where the German enjoyed both armor and infantry superiority in a scenario—yet he couldn’t win! Doing away with the French infantry’s HIP helped solve both the play balance and probability problems, but it wasn’t enough. The French were stripped of an 8-1 and 9-1 leader and given a pair of additional 4-5-7s so that their ratio of leadership to squads was more in keeping with their national characteristics—elite unit or not. The Germans, for their part, were satisfied with the addition of the sapper squads to help them wade through the prepared positions of the French.

REHEARSAL FOR CRETE paid homage to the tradition of concluding each game with a “monster” scenario. Scenarios which use opposed paratroop drops are usually more for “fun” than any attempt at realism or balanced competition, and this one is no exception. The main concern here was to avoid the possibility of sure-fire strategies that could circumvent the purpose of the scenario—to take the bridge intact. Under the original victory conditions, the German could purposely drop in a secluded section of the board, thus avoiding the bridge and its heavy defenses altogether, and just clean up on the isolated resistance in that area and still win. The “automatic win” tag on holding the bridge intact at the end of the game solved that problem. Now, the Germans must make taking the bridge their priority and the British must do everything possible to defend it. If destruction of the bridge is achieved, both sides can get down to the mundane business of counting casualties to determine a winner. The only real adjusting of forces with this scenario took place in deciding the mechanics for entry of the British armor. Initially, the number of arriving tanks was tied to the amount of German airpower it was tying up off the board. The less tanks which arrived the less available airpower the German had at his disposal. Eventually, it was decided to let the vagaries of the dice have their way and allow for a wider selection of events. Play balance here is an illusion—this scenario is to be experienced—not to be played competitively.

THIRD EDITION COI

The CROSS OF IRON rulebook is now in its third edition. The changes therein are restricted to those amendments listed in the CRESCENDO OF DOOM Rules Amendments section. Purists who would find it convenient to have a COI rulebook with these changes actually printed in the appropriate rule sections may find it worth the $2.00 purchase price plus the customary 10% postage charge.

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**TURN 1**

**NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER MOVEMENT:** Japan opens with a good distribution of force. Note the Tone class of CA's are placed in areas of relative safety. These jackrabbits are very valuable on turns two and three and shouldn't be lost on turn one. I do not agree with Chris on Indonesia. I would place the CA's and the Hosho in the Central Pacific. If an American CV shows up, (50/50 chance), the Hosho will get in with a day attack. Why do I feel this is a good gambit? I. The Hosho is expendable. 2. If day is rolled, the USN might hit a CA because the Hosho can't pursue. The loss of a CV rally hurts the USN. 4. The Hosho really has no other worthwhile use on turn one. The extra four CA's will assist the Imperial Fleet in obliterating the USN on a night roll. The four land-based air in Indonesia are more than enough to shoot down the 5th AF and get at least one BB. In the vast majority of games I've seen, the British never get to use their surface fleet anyway, so why sweat over them? The other area in which I question Chris is the use of his marine to take Dutch Harbor. This is a very difficult decision for the UN; one that Chris, Ron, and I have argued since 1977. Chris already invades Dutch Harbor, I prefer Midway. Admittedly both choices have advantages. The drawback to Midway is the possibility of losing the marine to an airstrike by an American CV. But the immediate fall of Midway is certainly more important than Dutch Harbor. On turn two, the Central Pacific was invaded by American land-based air, plus Dutch Harbor can be invaded by Sasebo. Another advantage is the very real fact that Japan could lose the Central Pacific on turn two, say in exchange for Hawaii, and the victorious USN will have nowhere to go but outside the perimeter! This strategy virtually forces the UN to place land-based air or CV's in the Aleutians on turn two. If they don't, and Japan takes Hawaii, the entire northern portion of the board is cut off. With the USN at least in part committed up north, Japan should be able to grab Hawaii and hold the South and Central Pacific. Basically Midway is a high risk, high yield investment, while Dutch Harbor is a no risk, lower yield move. Just a word on the USN as their options are extremely limited. Make sure the Coral Sea and US Mandates are patrolled by two CA's each, as Ron did, to provide cover points. If possible, send a CV to Australia as a threat to Indonesia on turn two. This will force Japan to place three land-based air units there on turn two, or risk certain disaster.

Although not well practiced with this particular set of play balance rules, I still find fault with a few of these comments. I agree that the cruisers don't belong in Indonesia and whether the Hosho should be there or in the Central Pacific is a moot point. But the Japanese should defend the Hosho if they feel, as many do, that the full offensive weight of the IJN should be focused on the Americans—he is foolish to let a trapped enemy off the hook. Rather than risk a cruiser in a night action, he should have at least four of the heavy battleships standing by to dispatch the British survivors. On the other side of the board, having agreed to the ten ship raid limit, there is no need for the Japanese to further hardcap themselves. The two possible screening vessels should be included, even though he has no intention to chance a third strike. In the Japanese player's turn when the first two strikes bottom everything in Pearl he may have cause to regret the absence of a few screening vessels which might give him the gumption to risk a third and fourth strike. Two more cruisers in the Central Pacific is just senseless overkill.

**TURN 1**

**BATTLES:** The Pearl Harbor raid focused on destruction of ships, The 7th AF was ignored. The CA's are prime targets and first to go. The BB's seem invincible as every shot missed! Fourteen dice and not one 5's or 6's! The second raid fares better but four BB's are left unscathed! Considering the ramifications for the IJN CV's under the 10 ship rule, discretion is the better part and the IJN withdraws. IJN dice in Indonesia are even worse and the 5th AF is barely destroyed and the Repulse and Prince of Wales left afloat. The British get a night action and sink two CA's with a slight loss or damage to themselves and withdraw to Ceylon. Finally, in the Central Pacific the Saratoga faces half the Japanese navy alone. The odds are with her to get a day action and she does, then pouncing on a sure kill, down goes the Kirakame. Obviously it's a good idea to withdraw. The Japanese pursues with CA's seeking the night action he should get about 25% of the time counting day/night. However the Saratoga does not oblige and sinks two more cruisers. After seeing his best chance of a night action (rolled a 6's) dashed by Sara's 8's, the IJN loses interest, (hope), and breaks off. The I-Boat scores a hit on Enterprise but only inflicts two damage points and it too gets away.

**ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT:** The results of my raids were the worst I've ever had! Why this game? My attempt to salvage it in Central Pacific backfired and showed me how the dice are falling today. I figured I had one in four chance of at least a day/night action and pursued only to lose more cruisers. After seeing his best chance of a night action (rolled a 6's) dropped my morale to zero. Losing five cruisers on turn one was disastrous! I already forgot my own game plan—I was reckless in attempting to salvage a bad raid. I must calm down. He wins turn one unquestionably. IJN gains 4 points, Total 4.

**ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT:** To say the least, I came out of this turn in good shape. It was one of the worst first turns I have ever seen from Chris. Unfortunately, the nemesis of the American player struck and his submarine damaged the Enterprise.

**NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COMBAT:** Chris has obviously either: 1. Not gone to church in six months, 2. Used all his luck against me, or 3. Improperly shaved the dice. The first turn can be called a disaster for Chris and left at that. Chris correctly points out the value of nailing the C's in Pearl and ignoring the air unit.
TURN 2
JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: I have no cruisers in reserve. My objectives are to take Hawaii, South Pacific, and Indonesia. Central Pacific is a gamble. I need those lost cruisers here. Aleutians is a pipe dream after he put his air unit there. The 26th Air Flotilla in the North Pacific is decided to reposition his US ships based in Atta if he takes a CV, CA force to the Aleutians. The Marshalls are abandoned this turn to be fought for next turn. The air units and CVL's in the South Pacific will deter his CV's—he can't afford their loss at this stage. By placing an air unit in Marianas he has a chance to seize Sasebo to join the Marshal to invade the Philippines. (A break—he didn't deploy an air unit in Central Pacific.) The Kaga will fight for the Marianas as it has four shots and can absorb heavy damage.

TURN 2
ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: Since the Allies have the disadvantage of being on exterior lines, the basing of the US fleet is quite important. I based every American, Dutch, and Australian ship so that they may move to the Hawaiian Islands during the raiding phase. Chris plans to capture Hawaii on turns two and three (I think this that is the best Japanese move also) so it is wise for the Allied player to be able to threaten to move to Hawaii forcing the Japanese to commit the bulk of his fleet there. I based two US CV's in Australia to force the Japanese to commit the bulk of his land-based aircraft in Indonesia, hopefully leaving the South Pacific and/or the Marshalls weak. If the Japanese player leaves Indonesia weak then the American CV's and the British CV's and US land-based air units can blow Indonesia, and the game wide open. I move three CA's to gain control of the Marshalls—the American CV's will follow by the US then Hawaii cannot be reached by Japanese patrollers from Truk on turn three. I patrol the Bay of Bengal, Coral Sea, and Mandates with "patrollers" enabling my land-based aircraft to be used offensively on this turn. The bulk of my fleet is on raiding status—the US player must use the advantage of mining last to the fullest.

TURN TWO
NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER MOVEMENT: I'll direct my comments to the USN first. I consider it vital that the USN conserve his land-based air on turn two in order to have all six ready to defend Hawaii on turn three. The only areas worth gambling them in are Indonesia and the South Pacific, and then only if success is virtually certain. If you gamble with your land-based air on turn two, and lose, learn to speak Japanese. The air unit in Marianas isn't a bad move but by placing it there you are exposing it to loss—a loss the USN can ill afford. However, since Chris only placed one patrol ship there I can see why Ron did it. I violently disagree with the USN move into the North Pacific. With Dutch Harbor gone, and Hawaii falling, these ships will have to go to Samea, or Australia. Ron is exposing his precious CV's to loss for virtually no return. Faced with the northern strategy employed by Chris, forget the northern areas. The move into the Marshalls is good, but I think two CA's would have worked as well three. Ron is correct in staying out of Hawaii and Indonesia this turn. I will not fault Ron for failing to go into the Central Pacific, because he had only two carriers which could reach it, and his edge although strong, would not have been overwhelming enough to risk loss of fleet carriers this early in the game. I will fault him for placing two much carrier strength in Australia and not using it. By placing his land-based air in dangerous areas, and piecemeal to boot, he is inviting disaster. Faced with this JIN move, all three land-based air units should have been held in safe areas such as Coral Sea, or US Mandates. This is assuming Ron didn't wish to exploit the Central Pacific. If so, one in Marianas and two in the Central Pacific and Chris would be very, very hard pressed. This violates what I have said previously, but my comments relate to a normal turn one, and this one was far from normal!

NATIONAL COMMENTARY: After Combat: The battles brought mixed results. My mission was certainly accomplished in the Marianas—one CA, two PCO, and an SNLF expended for the cost of a land-based air unit. However, I suffered a surprising defeat in the Aleutians and his submarine struck one of my CV's again—two hits in a row! I tried to escape from the lapsed battle in the South Pacific (I placed a land-based unit there only to draw his there) but managed to take down a CVL. Unfortunately, I am down three land-based aircraft. This will hurt me on turn three.

With Chris down to many CAs I seriously considered using this as a big turn for the US. I thought about placing an air unit in Central Pacific instead of the South Pacific to fight to hold onto Midway. Since he conceded me the Marshalls I could have taken my raiders and attacked the Japanese in the Central Pacific. If I sank or chased away the enemy ships the Japanese would be unable to patrol Hawaii on turn three (North Pacific and Marshalls in US control) and Pearl Harbor would remain in my hands. The move was tempting but I declined to make it because it is a "Series Replay" game. If the move succeeded Chris may have conceded and we would have to start all over!

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY, AFTER COMBAT: Japan does well in the Aleutians-North Pacific areas as a critical land-based air unit and CV of Ron's go down at minimal cost to Chris. The American land-based air in Marianas hurts the JIN but the Kaga's Zeros do their job and send the American land-based air into the drink. Ditto for the grossly misplaced 11th AF, which is flamed in the South Pacific. This was a big turn for the JAPAN as Midway, Attu, Lae, Singapore, and the Philippines all fall. Chris has very little remaining in the form of land-based air units and one CV killed, for one JIN air unit and one CVL. All the JIN needs to do on turn three is to hold the South Pacific, Hawaii, and recapture the Marshalls and the American will be hurting. On the plus side for Ron, Chris has very few POC for this point in the game.

TURN 3
JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: I must return to Hawaii to complete the capture move. The problem is I can only hold three areas and must fight for the Marshalls. Hence, either South Pacific or Indonesia must be abandoned. It has to be Indonesia. If I fight for it I will commit the British and the Enterprise and perhaps another CV—at least enough to make a point. Ron may have the USN holding the air units defending it. The air units will be better used making South Pacific and Marshalls too dangerous for carriers. Without bases in Indonesia his turn four options to exploit loss of the sea will be limited to raids from Australia while I hope to regain control of Indonesia next turn since I should have six air units and a secured perimeter and he will have to withdraw two British CV's. So, all Midway based ships were sent to patrol Hawaii. Both CVL's missed their speed rolls leaving my patrol
Turn 2: The Prince of Wales, Enterprise, and Arizona undergo repair in their respective ports. Not depicted in the illustration are the British fleet in Ceylon (three cruisers, three CV’s and five battleships) and the main U.S. fleet on raid in the Coral Sea (two carriers, eight cruisers, and five battleships) which will return to New Hebrides.
vulnerable to a night action. Heavy CV reinforcement joined this group as raiders. (Hiyo failed speed roll and remains in Japan). Marshalls were secured by all units and the South Pacific by an interesting combination of air units, CV's, and an SNLF to draw attention from Hawaii. Diversions were also sent to Mandates and Central Pacific. Marianas is patrolled by ships of high survivability and Central Pacific by two cruisers as bait—to chase them out will require a much larger force and divert ships will need to counter my main thrust. His response surprised me. I really expected a fight for Hawaii or South Pacific, but to pounce on my battleships full force seems a wasted turn for the bulk of his fleet. But there are no surprises elsewhere. He's still saving his strength by pouncing on exposed smaller forces. I should say my diversions worked, but if he sinks them all I will say I lost my ass.

TURN THREE

ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT: I based the bulk of my fleet at New Hebrides to give myself a "central position". From this base I can threaten Indonesia, the South Pacific, the Marshalls, Hawaii, the Central Pacific, and the Marianas. After observing the Japanese moves I decided to make the destruction of Japanese ships, with little loss to myself. I had hoped for the possibility of recapturing the Marshalls and thus two forward bases but Chris skillfully abandons Indonesia and concentrates land-based air units in the Marshalls to thwart my plans. Another major American objective this turn is to commit land-based air and surface units to destroy the Yokosuka SNLF unit and keep Guadalcanal in American hands.

TURN THREE

NEUTRAL COMMENTARY AFTER MOVEMENT: A very important point is brought out here. If Indonesia is held on turn two along with the South Pacific, the Allies have no bases in Indonesia. This means if things get tight elsewhere, the IJN can give up Indonesia one turn to secure Hawaii. This will cost Japan a few POCS, but by securing it with land-based air on turn four, the Allies would have been denied the use of it because the Royal Navy cannot get past Indonesia. The full value of this ploy is illustrated here. The IJN adventures into the Coral Sea and US Mandates are interesting, but are strictly diversions. Hyo should have gone to Central Pacific as the Allies placed no land-based air in Hawaii. The Japanese forces are very weak in surface ships in Hawaii, especially since the U.S. has nine BB's. However, since the U.S. committed ten ships to patrol, his surface superiority was greatly reduced. Except for the lack of air cover in Central Pacific, a good Japanese move.

The Allies are down, but not out. The question is, where to fight? If South Pacific, Marshalls, and Hawaii all go, the American will be on his knees. The Allied player should have anticipated hordes of enemy land-based air in the Marshalls and South Pacific. Five CA's in Marshalls are far too many; two or three would suffice. Three BB's in US Mandates? By placing two CA's each in Marshalls and US Mandates, the USN could have returned to Hawaii with nine BB's, four CV's, and 12 CA's. JUN would have five BB's, six CV's, and eight CA's. Admittedly, a day roll would have been the end of the USN's CV's, but Japan only has an advantage of three more ships in the battle. Turning C's to CV's with a lucky break or two, the JUN's CV's would have been battered too. Of course, if the Allies maintained their luck and got a night action, the USN BB's would have leveled the Japanese CV's. Even with a day action, the CV's would tend to balance each other out, leaving surface ships to shoot it out. The Allies certainly could have sunk or disabled all the patrolling ships and saved Hawaii, plus the marines. As I see it, this option is a big gamble, but one that was needed to game here. The Allied land-based air could have been placed in Coral Sea, US Mandates, and South Pacific. The only other option would have been to hit the South Pacific with all four CV's and all available surface ships. This would save Guadalcanal for sure and threaten the home islands and Indonesia. But more than likely, an air-attacking CV's would have gone down, so if the Allies had chosen to fight, it should have been in Hawaii.

[If too condemn the Allied move (or non-move) but for different reasons. The decision to fight for Hawaii on its own is foolish. The USN CV's would have gone down, so if the Allies had chosen to fight, it should have been in Hawaii.]

JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT: This turn I must reemphasize control of Indonesia. Four air units will assure it. The remaining air units are split between Hawaii and the Empire. His CV's in Australia could raid Japan and really embarrass me and cost me 3 POCS. So an air unit is spent here. If I had more, I should be more concerned with the Japanese. His reaction is still conservative as he pounces on weak areas and avoids decisive combat. He still has four more turns and will probably take it to the wire.
Turn 3: The Prince of Wales continues to repair in Ceylon. The Myō continues in Yokosuka Navy Yard due to failure of a raid speed roll.
for his cruisers, but not before they lose the Wasp, and the Hornet is wrecked. Finally, in the South Pacific, the US gets his choice again but his air units lose an SNLF get through to Guadalcanal and the action ends after two US air units are shot down.

**JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT:** Considering he won or drew every day/night determination roll, I was fortunate to sink two CV's and escape with the Hosho—a lucky ship. I'm mystified by his choice of targets here and especially so after Junyo damaged South Dakota before being invaded. Missing the chance to bomb the British was a disappointment. If I had sunk the four CV's going into turn five he should be able to open a hole for the flood on turn six. The Japanese move is a good one—any offensive moves by the Allies will cost CV's. Japan uses the tactic of "a wolf in sheep's clothing" in Hawaii. At first glance it looks weak, but attacking this type of defense is costly. I should know—I invented it (well, at least in Texas). Throw in the B-Boat and if the USN goes in with four CV's, he could easily lose three of them. Of course the control marker will go USA, but the beauty of this tactic is that the UN commits no vital and in order to attack it, the USN must commit its scarce and valuable CV's. Only use this when you control the area, thus your chances of getting burned in a night battle are small and the USN cannot place land-based air in the same area. I would say this is the best move of the game for the Japanese. The Allies must get all three SSN's with their land-based air or Guadalcanal goes. American CV's are going down no matter where they go. The Allied move is strictly a reaction to Japan's. Ron will hurt if Guadalcanal goes. Indonesia is definitely too strong for the Allies to even think about. The Enterprise should have been sent to Hawaii. He exposed his CV's to three more shots, none of which he could survive. The shiny new USN BB's can take a bunch of damage and they probably could carry Marshalls by themselves. Maybe a few CA's could have come along for the ride. Let's see how many USN CV's go down.

**TURN 4**

**NEUTRAL COMMENTARY AFTER MOVEMENT:** The Allies need to take advantage of the fact that most of Japan's land-based air is committed to land. I would like to use the USN as a shock force in South Pacific, but will hold him back in Central Pacific so he can push up in South Pacific, so I probably would place seven Allied land-based air in South Pacific and one in Coral Sea. Guadalcanal absolutely must be held. The Allies must guard against Japan placing marines in the Coral Sea and taking Guadalcanal from the back door. Since Japan has only 15 POC, the Allies must consider raiding Japan or Marianas if an opening is left. They must minimize the IJN point gain the next two turns and blow a hole in the perimeter turn five. The Allied player has done a good job of protecting his CV's. If he has three or four CV's going into turn five he should be able to open a hole for the flood on turn six. The Japanese move is a good one—any offensive moves by the Allies will cost CV's. Japan uses the tactic of "a wolf in sheep's clothing" in Hawaii. At first glance it looks weak, but attacking this type of defense is costly. I should know—I invented it (well, at least in Texas). Throw in the B-Boat and if the USN goes in with four CV's, he could easily lose three of them. Of course the control marker will go USA, but the beauty of this tactic is that the UN commits no vital and in order to attack it, the USN must commit its scarce and valuable CV's. Only use this when you control the area, thus your chances of getting burned in a night battle are small and the USN cannot place land-based air in the same area. I would say this is the best move of the game for the Japanese. The Allies must get all three SSN's with their land-based air or Guadalcanal goes. American CV's are going down no matter where they go. The Allied move is strictly a reaction to Japan's. Ron will hurt if Guadalcanal goes. Indonesia is definitely too strong for the Allies to even think about. The Enterprise should have been sent to Hawaii. He exposed his CV's to three more shots, none of which he could survive. The shiny new USN BB's can take a bunch of damage and they probably could carry Marshalls by themselves. Maybe a few CA's could have come along for the ride. Let's see how many USN CV's go down.

**TURN 5**

**JAPAN, AFTER MOVEMENT:** This is the turn of decision in most VITP games and it is especially apparent here. To win I must restore my perimeter and extend my lead beyond 20 POC. Otherwise I will be in serious trouble. Region air units, I capture Pearl Harbor, three POC, and can base much of my fleet there to threaten his inner perimeter on turn six. The POC count will be relatively low and the US will have an excellent chance to win the game. A secondary objective is to land a marine unit (if I get a night round) at Kwajalein to establish a forward base for next turn.

**ALLIES, AFTER MOVEMENT:** He has spread his power across the perimeter so that he can hold everything unless I get lucky. An air battle in Indonesia or the Coral Sea is looking inviting for the Allies but I decide to gamble and attempt to defeat his CA force in the Central Pacific and recapture the Hawaiian Islands. In Hawaii I control the sea—with a night turn I can blow away the Japanese CV and land the marines at Johnson Island if the enemy submarine does not intervene. With the land-based air units, I capture Pearl Harbor, three POC, and can base much of my fleet there to threaten his inner perimeter on turn six. The POC count will be relatively low and the US will have an excellent chance to win the game. A secondary objective is to land a marine unit (if I get a night round) at Kwajalein to establish a forward base for next turn.
The Prince of Wales completes repairs in Ceylon which also harbors the remainder of the British fleet (three cruisers, two battleships, and a carrier) which failed to raid after seeing the Japanese land-based air commitment in Indonesia. Tennessee and Nevada hold up in Samoa after failing their raid speed rolls.
The Allies again win the day/night roll but lose the battle as all Japanese CV's are sunk. The Allied player was definitely more efficient with his CV's.

**JAPAN, AFTER COMBAT: Shokaku and Soryu were indeed expended and Soryu with nothing to show for it. However, control of the South Pacific is certainly worth Shokaku. Losing the large cruisers in the Central Pacific, though, really expected them to get away in the daylight. Down two CV's and three CA's already, I'm shaken and questioning the validity of my move and my early confidence. I'm lucky he didn't raid the Marianas too. But after cold dice elsewhere the luck factor swings dramatically my way in Hawaii—where neither of us has the luxury to lose. This is one of those battles where all the dice go one way and both his heavy carriers are sunk and neither air unit is hit. To top it off, the submarine not only hits, but it sinks the marines. With this last straw the Allied player resigns the game.

Had the turn continued, Yokosuka would have been reinforced and this would have limited this critical area. Both players commit minor forces to Indonesia and the Americans, as expected, raid the New Zealand and Central Pacific. The U.S. raid into Hawaii will decide the game, and the odds are greatly with Japan. If only they had the Hornet.

**SUMMARY:**

JAPAN: Ron does not feel I got away with murder—and with some justification (the night action in Coral Sea turn 3; taking Guadalcanal turn 4; and the crushing victory in Hawaii turn 5). I cannot deny that I got lucky when I needed them. This game was won on turn two when he lost his three air units and did not oppose me in the Central Pacific. Be this a gift or not, the lesson of my narrow escape that turn should not be obscured by later events. Turn two was decisive as it left me in a position to hold Hawaii, and left him without sufficient air power to defend it. This game was unusual from the outset and clearly illustrates that in VTF anything can happen on each and every turn! Expect the unexpected!

**ALLIES: Hindsight reveals that I made errors in the game and I never seemed to win the crucial battles. I threw away my carriers on turn four and gambled and lost on turn five. All in all it was the worst game of VTF I have ever played as the Allies.**

**NEUTRAL COMMENTARY:** This replay does not present a normal game of VTF. The ridiculous luck on turn one threw the game into a very strange ending. The Allies stretched themselves very thin on turn two and got away with it due to Ron's generosity. By doing so, Ron placed himself under a barrel from which he never escaped. War is an unforgiving business, and by passing up the best move for the sake of a more interesting endgame, Ron has lost the heavy, but just, price. The critical event of the game occurred on turn four when Japan took Guadalcanal. If Ron had hit the Marshalls on turn five and won, the game would have gone down to the wire. Overall I felt Lady Luck was with Ron, but she failed him on the super-critical battles. I am surprised Ron kept it as I thought this was a very poor move. But three would doom him for sure. With just one more CV on turn five the Allies might have been able to turn the tide. Ron did well in protecting his CV's on turns one through four, except for the stop with the Enterprise on turn four. The USN must resist the temptation of committing carriers early, unless it's...

**NEUTRAL COMMENTARY:** If the Allies only had one more CV! They need to puncture Hawaii, Marshall, or South Pacific. Indoneisa is a side show. It would be nice to take three POC away from Japan, but a hole here cannot be exploited. Therefore, only British should be committed. Obviously, Japan must hold the previously mentioned perimeter areas and Indonesia, and Marianas if possible. Japan makes a tactically poor move. The Marshalls look very inviting. The Soryu would look much better in the Marshalls. With two land-based air and a CV in Marshalls and Hawaii, the Allies would be extremely lucky to pierce either. The South Pacific, while important, is over-protected with three CV's and two CVL's. The Ryujo would be much more valuable in Indonesia or Hawaii. The CA's committed in Central and North Pacific are asking for it. At least the Kuma and Mikuma can escape on a roll unless the Allied player sends CV's which is doubtful. Why do this at all? The US player has a bunch of CA's that certainly are spoiling for a fight. The Allied player decides to attack Hawaii, which is certainly understandable. If he holds it, the Allies take back Pearl and Japan will be pummelled the last two turns. Hendrix points out the South Pacific was a shock though. I really expected them to get away in the daylight. Down two CV's and three CA's already, I'm shaken and questioning the validity of my move and my early confidence. I'm lucky he didn't raid the Marianas too. But after cold dice elsewhere the luck factor swings dramatically my way in Hawaii—where neither of us has the luxury to lose. This is one of those battles where all the dice go one way and both his heavy carriers are sunk and neither air unit is hit. To top it off, the submarine not only hits, but it sinks the marines. With this last straw the Allied player resigns the game.

Had the turn continued, Yokosuka would have been reinforced and this would have limited this critical area. Both players commit minor forces to Indonesia and the Americans, as expected, raid the New Zealand and Central Pacific. The U.S. raid into Hawaii will decide the game, and the odds are greatly with Japan. If only they had the Hornet.

**ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT: What a disaster! The minor battles in the North Pacific and Central Pacific opened the turn auspiciously, but every other mission failed. Indonesia looked promising for a fleeting moment but ultimately remained in Japanese hands. My marine failed to land in the Marshalls. And then Hawaii! He destroyed all of my CV's and I failed to roll a single hit. His submarine certainly came through for him—he not only hit the US marine unit but sank it as well. So much for putting land-based air units in forward positions where they should lurk. My turn six defenses are completely useless and my turn six reinforcements are totally out of position at Samoa without a hole in the perimeter to exploit. As the Japanese player a few weeks ago I had an opponent in this fix and won the game easily. I know what to expect, especially against an able opponent like Chris.

**TURN 5**

**THE BATTLES:** Action begins in Indonesia where the Japanese player is anxious to know the status of his back door before resolving the battles on the rest of the board. The Allies again win the day/night roll but lose the battle as all Japanese CV's are sunk. The Allied player was definitely more efficient with his CV's.

**ALLIES, AFTER COMBAT:** What a disaster! The minor battles in the North Pacific and Central Pacific opened the turn auspiciously, but every other mission failed. Indonesia looked promising for a fleeting moment but ultimately remained in Japanese hands. My marine failed to land in the Marshalls. And then Hawaii! He destroyed all of my CV's and I failed to roll a single hit. His submarine certainly came through for him—he not only hit the US marine unit but sank it as well. So much for putting land-based air units in forward positions where they should lurk. My turn six defenses are completely useless and my turn six reinforcements are totally out of position at Samoa without a hole in the perimeter to exploit. As the Japanese player a few weeks ago I had an opponent in this fix and won the game easily. I know what to expect, especially against an able opponent like Chris.
Turn 5: Hornet is under repair in Australia.
The AH tournaments and seminars were once again well attended and much good competition was enjoyed by all. The response of the participants is always evident in their enthusiasm and the competitiveness of the games. The tournaments provided a chance for players to try out new games and strategies, and the seminars gave them the opportunity to learn from experienced players and the game designers themselves.

Many of the tournaments were run by the local organizers and the seminars were held in various locations around the city. The tournament winners were awarded certificates and prizes, and the seminars were taught by some of the most respected game designers in the industry. The atmosphere was friendly and competitive, and everyone seemed to be having a great time.

The AH tournaments and seminars were also important for the hobby as a whole. They provided a chance for players to come together and share their love for games, and they helped to promote the growth of the hobby. The tournaments also helped to promote the games themselves, as players had the chance to try out new games and learn about the latest releases.

In conclusion, the AH tournaments and seminars were a great success. They provided a chance for players to enjoy a great day of gaming, learn from experts, and connect with fellow hobbyists. The success of these events is a testament to the passion and dedication of the players and organizers who make the AH tournaments and seminars happen each year.
Follow the great 19th-century explorers in their search for the source of the Nile. Discover mountains, jungles, deserts and great lakes in the uncharted heart of the Dark Continent. Meet and deal with native tribes—survive animal attacks, disease, and starvation—overcome superstition, desertion and disaster to add your discoveries to the map. "Source of the Nile" is designed to be an educating and challenging game in which players compete primarily with Nature and with each other. Luck tends to be an element in the game but can be overcome by careful play. Because the game situation is forever changing, there is no single best strategy; however, players must weigh risks against gains with every decision they make and good judgment will pay off.

The game is played on a mapboard showing Africa from Khartoum to Capetown and Lagos to Mombasa. The periphery of this map, showing the territory known ca. 1820, is filled in: the center is blank. A hexagonal grid is superimposed on the map to regulate movement and to delimit territory discovered (e.g., negotiates with new natives for discoveries (e.g., negotiates with new natives for discoveries and donations). The mapping of unknown areas of Africa can now be accomplished quickly and easily by checking the result on the cards rather than by rolling dice. Disasters and discoveries can accelerate this process by publishing discoveries, which will allow them to draw additional bonus cards.

Before each trip to Africa, explorers will have to raise money to support their expedition. New explorers with no discoveries to their credit must do this by drawing chance cards for several turns until they feel their finances are adequate. Experienced explorers can accelerate this process by publishing discoveries, which will allow them to draw additional chance cards.

As there are over 420 blank hexagons to be explored, the game is not usually played to the bitter end at one sitting. Instead a reasonable time-limit is set, at the end of which all explorers retire and the player with the most points is the winner. The complete exploration of Africa—and the determination of the source of the Nile—can be the result of several games, each starting where the last left off. After all, the adventure is in the search for the source of the Nile, not in the finding of it!

In this updated version of the original Source Of the Nile game published by Discovery Games, several new components and rules have been added:

• A player aid pad which can record not only the current composition of an expedition but also the composition of caches, and the strengths of tribes encountered.

• Special discoveries which are secretly placed on the board. Players can now send their expeditions to search for Dr. Livingstone or King Solomon’s Mines.

• A simplified combat procedure which eliminates most of the dice-rolling now needed without changing the probability of results.

• Easy access to charts and tables now located on the map board or the player aid pad.

• An expanded set of 108 cards which includes more disasters and donations. The mapping of unknown areas of Africa can now be accomplished quickly and easily by checking the results on the cards rather than by rolling dice.

Each game contains:

• A full color erasable mapboard of Africa.

• One sheet of playing counters.

• A pack of 100 Event cards containing disasters, discoveries and donations.

• A player aid pad for maintaining the expeditions.

• One instruction folder.

• Four dice.

• Three erasable crayons.

SOURCE OF THE NILE is available for $15 plus 10% postage and handling charges from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
THE LONGEST DAY
The Assault, Build-up and Breakout from Normandy, June-August 1944

JUNE 6, 1944: The coast of German-occupied Normandy shakes with the pounding of thousands of tons of bombs and naval gun projectiles. Five thousand Allied ships unload a quarter of a million soldiers onto Hitler's vaunted "Atlantic Wall"! Now you can command each and every unit that fought on both sides of this most crucial of all battles in Western Europe.

The immense game package of THE LONGEST DAY includes five scenarios covering different phases of the campaign, along with a massive Campaign Game (87 turns in length and encompassing the entire struggle for Normandy!), plus many fascinating game variations which allow players to investigate alternative historical outcomes.

Scenarios include: Normandy Beachhead (June 6-June 8), which presents the critical landing and first few days of the campaign—the period when German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was convinced that the Allies would be at their weakest and susceptible to a smashing counterattack at water's edge. The Fall of Cherbourg (June 19-June 27) pits American forces against time and the Germans, in a race to capture the vital port of Cherbourg before its defenders reduce it to a useless pile of rubble. Operation Cobra (July 25-July 31) portrays the powerful American offensive that shook the Allies free of the Normandy bocage, and provides a unique challenge to the German player's ability to survive against overwhelming odds. Mortain (August 6-August 8) depicts the last German panzer offensive in France. The Falaise Pocket (August 17-August 21) demonstrates the ignominy of the German collapse in France. Finally, the Campaign Game (June 6-August 31) covers the entire period, from the initial landings until the final breakout from Normandy.

EACH GAME INCLUDES:
• Huge seven-section 55" x 44" full-color mounted mapboard of the entire Normandy campaign area, detailing over 2,000 towns and cities, as well as all major and minor road systems, ports, railroads, and the historically correct starting position for every German combat unit (down to company and battery level!) in Normandy on June 6, 1944, based on actual German situation maps for that date.

• Over 1500 two-sided counters representing every fighting formation present in the Normandy campaign, with the standard counter one battalion of German or Allied troops. Additional counters represent Allied air and naval forces, German railroad guns and rail repair units, Mulberries, troop trains, fortifications, and much more. Based upon the WWII German unit I.D. system, THE LONGEST DAY's counters yield a tremendous amount of historical information, as well as concise and easy-to-read game information. A typical artillery counter, for example, would show the size of the unit (brigade group, battalion or battery), its method of transportation (horse, half-track, full-track or railroad), the number of guns in the unit, the types of guns, their caliber, and their model number and nationality of origin, where appropriate. Yet with all this, the counters are designed so that the historical information is visually suppressed while the game information is highlighted.

• 48-page rules booklet containing complete relatively simple rules of play (this is definitely the easiest to play of any of the so-called monster games on the market, and requires no paperwork or mental gyrations). Booklet also includes completely indexed rules, optional "what-if" rules, historical commentary, voluminous designer's notes, annotated bibliography, and much more.
Dear Don,

Gratified as I was to see in Vol. 16, No. 5 such an extensive and specific discussion of tactics in my November article, “Guaranteed Bug Safety,” as PAGN, as provided by Mr. Jamieson’s article, “Tactical Alternatives in 1914,” I must yet point out a few discrepancies.

First, I feel the necessity of setting up a unit on F19 to prevent the Germans from retreating forward past the defenders on H30, or from permitting the units in the rear hexes on K18 to avoid a shelling of this hex, (which would put Leningrad in stuka range on the next turn.) J.K. Jamieson’s article suggests that it is possible to use one of the Landing Boats, by choosing 150 points from the Baltic. I recommend this setup: 11 inf, 1 arm on H30, 7 arm on F19, 8 inf on F30, and 2 cav on F19, with the Stuka AV on H32. This makes a connected zone of ZOC’s with the Riga garrison and the unit(s) on K20, ensuring that German units cannot attack.

Second, his method for preventing what he calls the “Kaunas stampede” (I call it the “superblitz” because it can occur in other places besides Kaunas, and it is a tactic specific for the German to use to prevent anyone they can, while adequate in standard games, will not prevent AGN and AGS and BATO from anywhere) in defeating the Kaunas area. If the Mediterranean Distraction vehicle is being played, which adds four combat factors to the KA-20, I suggest to Kaunas that the Mediterranean Distraction vehicle is being played, which adds four combat factors to the KA-20, I suggest.

The following setup in the Western Military District will prevent the superblitz even when the Flak Batteries are sent in: 3 cav on T21, 10 inf on K20, 5 arm on L23, 8 arm on L26, 6 cav on M21, 4 cav on O23. This works because in order to AV the 10 inf, units must be placed on hex K21, which is in the ZOC of the 8 arm on L22 necessitating a soak-off against the 8 arm. Even with the BA defenses of A62, A82, and A92, which is one combat factor to spare after AVing the Kaunas corridor, and there are no AGC units except for the M26 inf, the 8 arm on L22 has a three-factor soak-off against the 8 arm. The 4 cav on M21 and 4 cav on O23 have only one combat factor. Since the soak-off cannot be made, the final AV attack against the 10 inf cannot be made.

Third, he fails to accomplish his purpose with his Odessa and Kiev District setups, making it possible for AGS armor to move to W26 on first impulse. I fail to see why, as a previous Paxon reader, I cannot use my setup on W26 while using Paxon’s setup, and as a previous Paxon reader, I fail to see why I cannot use my setup on W26 while using Paxon’s setup. I fail to see why, as a previous Paxon reader, I cannot use my setup on W26 while using Paxon’s setup.

Also I noticed the gametext did not include any mental factor in the operation of the Odessa armor, nor did it indicate that the armor in the S27 placement was to be used. I fail to see why, as a previous Paxon reader, I cannot use my setup on W26 while using Paxon’s setup.

In the introduction to the British armor section of Paxon’s book, he mentions that there are usually six tanks, if any, that come into the playing area at the beginning of the game. As an alternative to what he states, I will propose the following setup in the Western Military District: 1 arm on W26, 4 inf on W26, 1 cav on W26, and 2 cav on W26, with these units to E11. This setup in the Western Military District will prevent the superblitz even when the Flak Batteries are sent in: 3 cav on T21, 10 inf on K20, 5 arm on L23, 8 arm on L26, 6 cav on M21, 4 cav on O23. This works because in order to AV the 10 inf, units must be placed on hex K21, which is in the ZOC of the 8 arm on L22 necessitating a soak-off against the 8 arm. Even with the BA defenses of A62, A82, and A92, which is one combat factor to spare after AVing the Kaunas corridor, and there are no AGC units except for the M26 inf, the 8 arm on L22 has a three-factor soak-off against the 8 arm. The 4 cav on M21 and 4 cav on O23 have only one combat factor. Since the soak-off cannot be made, the final AV attack against the 10 inf cannot be made.

Fourth, I must protest indignantly the very idea that the Bug Hive is the free line troops to complete the encirclement of Russian defenders, especially early in the game. Besides that fact is that this is unrealistic, filling the immensely valuable HQ units early in the game is to say the least, zany.

Larry Ludwig

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Dear Editor,

I would like to point out some errors in the illustrations of my Blood ‘N Guts Starspan Trimmers article in Vol. 16, No. 5. The Bug Hive is missing a hex secondary tunnel segment off of bug C’s primary. It should be running up between the two hexes and the Bug Hive is not adjacent to a tunnel, contrary to the rule.

Also, an AGE should be adjacent to Bug D’ to prevent the Bug Hive from being a sucker play to draw your M.1. into a trap. There are no adjacent units that are not adjacent to a tunnel, contrary to the rule. Of course, the Bug Hive is not adjacent to a tunnel, contrary to the rule.

I am not sure if this is a scale six demo rather than a scale six demo to be used in actual play. Such a scale six demo should be directed at being deployed upon destructive waves.

Vern Paxon

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Dear Don,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding a bug that I have noticed in the gameplay of the Blood ‘N Guts Starspan Trimmers article in Vol. 16, No. 5. Specifically, it appears that the bug hive is missing a hex secondary tunnel segment off of bug C’s primary. This is a critical error that could potentially affect the balance of the game.

I believe that this oversight is a result of an oversight in the design of the game. As a result, I am writing to express my concerns regarding this issue and suggest that the game be amended to include this hex as a secondary tunnel segment.

I hope that you will take the time to consider this issue and work to resolve it. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Vern Paxon

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Dear Editor,

This is a letter of appreciation for the diligent work that has produced such a consistent, high-quality monthly magazine. The dedication of the editorial staff to the subject matter and the format that has presented it over the past years has been evident. I have read your magazine with interest throughout the years and have come to appreciate the difference it makes to the readership.

I would like to express my appreciation for the dedication and hard work that goes into producing this magazine. The editorial staff has worked tirelessly to ensure that the magazine is of the highest quality and that it meets the needs of the readership.

I congratulate the editorial staff on the high-quality work that has been produced over the years. Thank you for your dedication and hard work.

Sincerely,

Larry Ludwig

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Sincerely,

Vern Paxon
46

CREScido OF DOOM

5.74 & 41 Can a crew which enters a hex containing an abandoned AT Gun or ATR during the Movement Phase fire that gun in the Advancing Fire Phase?

A. Yes, but cost D would apply.

8.5 + 106.51 Could two units in the same hex fire two separate attacks—one at the hex center and the other at the hex junction?

A. No.

12.2 If a leader fails a MC and immediately another leader in the same hex takes a second MC, can the first leader have to take a second MC also due to the failure of either of the two leaders' MCs?

A. Yes.

14.2 If there are two leaders in a hex may they both try to rally the same broken squad?

A. No—a unit may attempt to rally only once per Phase.

22.1 If a flamethrower is picked up and fired during the Advance Phase by an engineer that has moved into the hex during the just finished Movement Phase, is the flamethrower fired at full or half strength?

A. Half—provided the squad was not carrying 4 or more grenades at the time (5.74).

23.3 Can infantry debark a transporting vehicle into an adjacent hex and place a demoralized charge in a hex adjacent to the present hex during that Movement Phase?

A. Yes.

24. Does smoke in a first level building affect the higher levels and vice versa?

A. Yes.

The Question Box

24 & 31.5 Can a passenger over place smoke?

A. No.

25.3 May a unit already under a concealment counter "grow" another one?

A. No.

34.3 Can units in bunkers grow concealment counters?

A. No.

34.2 Does a direct fire hit by any piece of ordnance against multiple infantry units in the same hex affect all of those units equally?

A. Not necessarily. Besides the obvious cases of different terrain modifiers which could apply to the IFT for such things as infantry in and out of entrenchments, there are circumstances under which some units in the same hex would not even be hit and therefore not have their IFT at all. For example, a TOT hit might suffice to hit an acquired target but, due to different IFT modifiers might miss a moving or concealed target. In such a case the unit which is hit must undergo an effects roll on the IFT.

45.3 When rolling for British off-board artillery does a "100" result count as 84MM (12 factors)?

A. Yes.

46.12 If radio contact is established, but the original requesting leader breaks or moves away can another leader use the same radio without reestablishing radio contact?

A. Yes.

The Reader Buyer's Guide

Title Crescendo of Doom $15.00

Subject Tactical Gamette Addition to Squad Leader featuring British, French & Neutral TO&E's.

Crescendo of Doom was the 48th game to undergo analysis in the RPG and, not unexpectedly, scored to the top of the chart with a surprising cumulative 2.04 rating. It should be stated at the outset, however, that this apparent phenomenon is, in fact, that of CROSS OF IRON before it, was achieved with a biased test group. The very nature of the Squad Leader gamettes, requiring that players first have Squad Leader and the preceding gamettes before purchasing the latest addition to the series, ensures that the gamettes will be rated by a group which is favorably impressed with the game system before they even see the game. Those who didn't like the SL game system are obviously not going to buy the gamettes and thus many of the negative votes which would normally be registered by the inevitable percentage of those misguided souls purchasing a new game system for the first time are never scored.

Even so, there can be little doubt that the average SL enthusiast was anything but delighted with CRO. The game posted all time record scores in four categories (including an almost unbelievable 1.26 Realism rating), while managing a second-best score in a fifth. In fact, the game rated in the top third of all categories save Ease of Understanding where the new 1.128 page combined "rulebook" of the entire game system is starting to take its toll. However, our SL enthusiasts apparently understood it enough to rate it the most "existing" AH games—characteristic rarely associated with over-complicated games. Like all scenario format games, the playing time will vary considerably due to the variety on the scenario in play and the familiarity of the players with the system.

1. Physical Quality 1.93

2. Mapboard 2.31

3. Components 2.25

4. Ease of Understanding 3.40

5. Completeness of Rules 2.31

6. Play Balance 2.18

7. Realism 1.36

8. Excitement Level 1.86

9. Overall Value 1.82

10. Game Length 3 hr., 15 min.

COMING UP NEXT TIME

64.123 Errata: Delete the 2nd & 3rd sentence, substitute: If both the turret and vehicular covered area are changed, in relation to each other during the Movement Phase both Case A and B would apply in the following Advancing Fire Phases.

76.6 Does an armor leader's modifier apply to:

A. The main armament if buttoned up, and close combat order of attack and resolution?

A. Yes.

78.2 Assume two squads in the initial placement hex with a MMG and a rocket projector? Does the fire sting advantage still hold?

A. Yes, barring use of rules indicating possession of smoke weapons within a hex (see 5.7 on pg. 67).

81.1 - 102 Does a burning forest-road hex prevent units from moving into the hex along the road in that hex?

A. Yes, fire in an obstacle would also prevent bypass movement in that hex.

89.1 Does a leader receive Elan points for directing a unit which captures an enemy squad?

A. Yes—it does receive the normal allotment. However, if it is capturing the enemy, the leader receives a bonus of 2 (F for Combat Capture, 4 for Escape capture, 2 forourt Capture phase).

89.6 Errata—Change to read: The minimum guard is to cover the intersection infantry counter per hex. If the prisoners consist of two or more squares, the guarding unit must be a crew or squad counterv.
The latest bad news in our losing battle with inflation comes in the form of the following price increases which take place immediately. TACTICS II and WAR AT SEA go from $7 to $8, and MIDWAY, BISMARCK, LUFTWAFFE, TOBRUK, and IMAGE go from $13 to $15. MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL increases two dollars from $15 to $17.

DEPLOYMENT (Max #) FIRST SECOND ROUND (Max #)

GG Napoleon, Ldr B, 7, 3GI, 4C, 1GI HH7 GG7
FF7 Davout, Ldr A, 61 GG7
GGB Soult, Jerome, 46 HH5
C09 Ney
H101 II

The solution for contest no. 95 shown above generally follows Napoleon’s historical maneuver in 1815, but it has been strengthened by using Soult’s formation to attack Wellington at the English supply base at Antwerp—the very maneuver Wellington feared prior to Waterloo.

Briefly, the French maneuver is executed as follows. Beginning in hex EE6 with his original force minus Soult, Ney, and 11 Napoleon force moves to hex GG8 (2MP), where he is joined by the reserve cavalry from Rheims (2MP), and Leader B and 21 from Metz (3MP). Detached from Napoleon, Soult and 11 begin with Jerome’s corps at Amiens, and advance to hex GG6 to attack Antwerp (3MP). Marching from Paris, Davout joint Leader A in hex FF7 to attack Wellington (5MP).

During the first round of combat, Napoleon attacks Blucher at even odds; committing the guard, the die is modified by #3. The result forces Blucher to withdraw to Liege with the loss of four points to Napoleon’s two. In the center, Davout attacks Wellington at even odds, the die roll being modified by one in Wellington’s favor. This results in Davout and Wellington each losing one strength point.

In the north, if the British remain in the field, Soult attacks at 2 to 1. The die roll modification of #2 forces the British to withdraw. Conversely, if the British defend inside Antwerp, the even odds attack still leaves the British in an untenable position, since they will suffer losses not shared by the French.

During the second round of combat, after the Prussians have withdrawn and Napoleon has advanced into Namur, he will join Davout’s battle raising the odds against Wellington to 2 to 1. If Wellington attempts to disengage and turn on Soult, the battle becomes a general engagement between the French and English at 2 to 1 odds. By committing his remaining guard, Napoleon can ensure that the French will be forced to withdraw from both Brussels and Antwerp, leaving Wellington with no supply base until he recaptures a port.

At the end of the Combat Phase, the French should hold Antwerp and Namur with one strength point each. With five remaining guard, Soult should remain north of Brussels to prevent the Prussians from overrunning the French line. Napoleon and Davout should besiege the Allied garrison left in Brussels. Of course, the French will probably have to fall back to defend Paris against the Prussians and/or Austrians during the second Game-Turn, but the best Allied commander will be delayed at least one turn from being able to threaten Paris.

Note: All French forces which were not listed above, remain where they are initially deployed and do not participate in combat.
The number of articles about that game in that issue. Issues listed in red.

Objectives for a club, CSG, TRC, TB, and SC. Call 925-223-3816 or write SCS, Box 4000, Waterloo, IA 50704.

Estimate wants to catch a break. Check back in a few weeks. There are still a few more.

pirate, SL. SST, and TRC. Call 319-405-4021 or write PIR, P.O. Box 3851, Waterloo, IA 50704.

If you need a forfeit or wish to challenge a game, please call)

Jeff Wilder, RI. 6.

Jim Bittovitz, 266-405-1111.

S. Dicgo. EI Cajon 92021, 811-932-3407.

Size C, or any other game you play. Include your rating and time limit.

Above average skills. E-column, E. SST. PC 74, 570 King St., Naperville, IL 60563.

NAME: DR. R. X. FORD, M.D.

The number of articles about that game in that issue. Issues listed in red.

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CONTEST NO. 96

GOOD FOR POSTAGE CHARGES ONLY ON COMPLETE GAME PURCHASES

THE GENERAL

It is the start of the last turn for an extremely hard fought game. With the end of the board coming, the German player, Cpl. Uhl, is still facing the problem of how to best move to his goal. The most probable result is that the French player will take their turn, and then the German player will have to decide on his move. The French player on the other hand has to decide on his move and then move accordingly.

To aid in the design of new scenarios for this popular game system, we've created a survey to gauge the opinion of our readers. We have made a list of scenarios to rate in terms of minutes necessary to play each one. Rate each scenario on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 equating terrible, 10 equating excellent.

1. CRESCENDO OF DOOM SCENARIOS
2. CROSS OF IRON SCENARIOS
3. SQUAD LEADER SCENARIOS

**Instructions:** Rate each scenario in terms of minutes necessary to play each one. Rate each scenario on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 equating terrible, 10 equating excellent.

**SQUAD LEADER SCENARIOS**

**1. Most Likely Result:**
- German Victory
- French Victory
- Draw

**2. German Victory:**
- If you feel the German side is favored, circle the box in which you've made your rating.
- If you feel the French side is favored, circle the box in which you've made your rating.

**3. Components:**
- Overall Value
- Realism
- Mapboard
- Ease of Understanding
- Components

**How to Send in Your Contest Entry:**
- Contest No. 96
- The Summer 1943 Edition
- June 1, 1943 Edition

Mail it to our 4517 Harford Road address with your completed survey and a check or money order for $1.00. Include your name, address, and 4-digit code (Vol. 17, No. 2) and we'll notify you of the winners. If your entry is selected, you will receive a special gift. We will announce the winners in the next issue and include a list of the best three articles. The solution will be announced in the next issue and include a list of the best three articles.

**READER BUYER'S GUIDE**

To aid in the design of new scenarios for this popular game system, we've created a survey to gauge the opinion of our readers. We have made a list of scenarios to rate in terms of minutes necessary to play each one. Rate each scenario on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 equating terrible, 10 equating excellent.

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THE RHINE RIVER, March 24, 1945: “Operation Varsity,” the airborne phase of the Allies’ Northern Rhine crossing, was to be the last airborne assault of the war. Artillery units and fighter-bombers pounded the German gun positions in the vicinity of the drop zones lifting just prior to the arrival of the first flight of transport planes. The 17th Airborne Division’s first regiment to drop received little problems from ground fire, arriving so close behind the Allied bombardment phase. But the second regiment, the 513th Parachute was not so fortunate. With the Germans no longer deterred by the bombardment, the paratroopers received heavy small arms and anti-aircraft fire as they fell to the ground.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS**

To win, the German player must have undisputed control of the American “assembly building” as determined in special rule 1.1 at the end of the game or eliminate six American squads. Squads that have scattered off the playing area and have not reentered by the end of the game are considered eliminated for determining victory conditions. The American player wins by avoiding the German player’s victory conditions.

**SPECIAL RULES**

1.1 Before the game begins the American player must randomly determine his “assembly building” and secretly record his drop points. To determine the building prepare a special deck of playing cards consisting of four each aces, deuces, threes, fours, fives and sixes. Secretly draw one card. The number drawn indicates the “assembly building” from the following list: ace = 4Y9, deuce = 4P6, three = 4110, four = 2W9, five = 2M9, six = 4S2. The American player must reveal the building drawn in the German rally phase of game turn 4.

1.2 Hills 621 and 538 do not exist. Note that all woods hexes in these areas do exist.

1.3 AFVs may not enter any type of building hex.

1.4 All wheatfield hexes are considered “brushwood”. Treat exactly like wheatfield hexes except it costs infantry units 2 MFs to enter.

1.5 The German reinforcement entry hexes are determined randomly on the turns indicated. Each German reinforcement group must roll one die separately when determining its entry hex according to the following table:

   1, 2 = 5GG5/5GG6; 3 = 2QI; 4, 5 = 4GG5/4GG6; 6 = Grop does not enter this turn, roll again next turn.

1.6 The weather is considered “Moist” with no wind.

**AFTERMATH:** After a short but sharp fire fight, the paratroopers of the 513th Regiment were able to get the upper hand and finally assemble their battalions. With their regiments in order the objectives for the first day were all seized and linkup made by nightfall with the British ground troops assaulting across the Rhine River.
THE NISCEMI-BISCARI HIGHWAY

Scenario E

SICILY, July 10, 1943: During the initial invasion of Sicily many American parachute units were given the task of blocking German unit movement toward the landing beaches. One such unit, the 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Regiment, landed two miles northwest of Biscari. After gathering as many of the scattered troopers as possible the understrength battalion moved out toward the town of Niscemi. As they approached the Niscemi-Biscari Highway, they encountered and captured two Italian antitank guns. With the newly acquired guns to bolster their defenses, the paratroopers dug themselves in with covering positions on the main highway.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

To win, the German player must have uncontested control of any two of the following building hexes: 4X1, 4CC6, and/or 4Y9 at the end of the last game turn. The American player is considered to have control of all buildings at the beginning of the game. The American player wins by avoiding the German victory conditions.

TURN RECORD CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American sets up first</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>END</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>German moves first</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elements, 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, set up on any whole hexes on board "4" within playing area:

Kampfgruppe elements from Reconnaissance Battalion, Hermann Goering Division, enter turn 1 on hex 5Q6 or hex 5G5/5G6:

SPECIAL RULES

E.1 Building hexes may not be mined.
E.2 All building hexes are considered wooden.
E.3 The 47mm ATGs function as captured weapons (rule 90) for both the American and German player. For this scenario, both ATGs have gun shields (rule 63.5).
E.4 The German initial entry hex may not be fired on in the German player turn one.
E.5 No entrenchments may be constructed during the game.

AFTERMATH: Not long after the Americans had finished preparing their positions with mines, a German column approached, made-up of mixed elements of the Hermann Goering Division. Caught initially by surprise, the Germans soon recomposed and pressed the attack. But the German troops never fully recovered and the stiff resistance shown by the paratroopers proved too much for the Germans to breakthrough. With the armor support destroyed, the German infantry finally broke and dispersed. In repeated efforts such as this, the American paratroops were able to harass and block the German units from reaching the invasion beaches.
NORMANDY, June 6, 1944: With the invasion at Normandy underway, the first Allied troops to see fighting were the men of the airborne divisions. Most of the early encounters for the 101st Airborne Division occurred at the many German strong points and scattered villages located behind the invasion beaches. In helping to secure the southern beach exits for the troops on Utah Beach, a small combat group from the 3rd Battalion of the 501st Regiment set out to clear the village of Pouppeville at beach exit number one. By 0800, Colonel Ewell and his men had reached the village and begun the attack.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS**

The American player wins if at the end of any player turn he has uncontested control of two of the three multi-hex stone buildings on board "3" and has eliminated or captured both AA guns in hexes 3U2 and 3N7. The German player wins by avoiding the American player’s victory conditions.

**TURN RECORD CHART**

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<td>American moves first</td>
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**SPECIAL RULES**

F.1 The 37mm AA guns may not be moved from their initial setup hexes. Note that this does not prevent the guns from rotating within their hexes.
F.2 No units may start fires during the game.
F.3 All hexes of Hill 534 and Hill 547 are considered ground level "Marsh" (rule 75). Note that building 3110 does not exist.

**AFTERMATH:** With numerically inferior troops the American paratroopers fought their way through the village in heavy house to house fighting. But with the garrison losing contact with their battalion headquarters in St Come-du-Mont, the German resistance soon faltered with the local commander finally surrendering. Later that day, first contact between seaborne and airborne troops was made at the village of Pouppeville between Colonel Ewell's men and the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Division.
**DEVIL’S HILL**

Scenario G

HOLLAND, September 19, 1944: Although the airborne portion of the “Market-Garden” Operation centered around the seizing of vital bridges, heavy fighting occurred over control of the highway section leading to the bridges as well. While parts of the 82nd Airborne fought to gain control of the bridges at Nijmegen, other elements fought for control of the Kleve-Nijmegen highway. One of the major objectives in the control of this highway was Hill 75.9. Better known as “Devil’s Hill”, control of this high ground meant a complete overview of the highway below. Even though German security troops operating in this area were small in number, when concentrated in defense of a natural strong point such as this, these troops often put up strong resistance. Such was the case when Company A of the 508th Parachute Regiment moved out to take “Devil’s Hill”.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS**

The American player wins by being the last to occupy (with unbroken squads) the three entrenchments on Hill 621 at game end. The German player wins by avoiding the American player’s victory conditions.

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<th>+ German sets up first</th>
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**Element, 406th Landesschuetzen Division, Corps Feldt, set up anywhere on Hill 621:**

Enter turn 3 on any east edge hex(s) from 2Y1 to 211 inclusive:

**Co. A, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, set up on any whole hexes on board “5”:**

**SPECIAL RULES**

G.1 The German entrenchments *must* be set up on three of the seven “level 3” hexes on Hill 621. No other entrenchments may be constructed during the game by either side.

G.2 The Americans may designate one squad prior to play which may place smoke once during the game.

**AFTERMATH:** Covering some 200 yards, the paratroopers’ determined attack soon drove the Germans from the summit of the hill. But the Germans recovered quickly on the reverse slope and counterattacked repeatedly throughout the day. By nightfall the Americans had gained control of the hill, though by morning the Germans had returned and infiltrated the paratroopers’ positions. Once again the Germans had to be driven out from “Devil’s Hill”.

**QUICK PLAY CROSS OF IRON**

**AMERICAN VARIANT SCENARIOS**

Printed as a special insert for Vol. 17, No. 2 of THE GENERAL; $2.50 if ordered with or separate from the magazine.

**SCENARIO DESIGN:** Courtney Allen

**PLAYTESTING:** Steve Spoulos, Martin Anderson, Jon Mishcon, Joe Suchar, Bill Edwards, Bill Farone, Dale Wetzelberger, Don Greenwood

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THE ARDENNES, December 21, 1944: The key to the German Ardennes Offensive lay with a quick breakthrough and deep penetration. In the north the success of a breakthrough rested heavily with Colonel Peiper's Kampfgruppe from the 1st SS Division. But the quick victories which had taken Peiper's Kampfgruppe so close to the Meuse bridges also left it in a position of danger. The Kampfgruppe had outraced most of its follow up units and had almost completely run out of fuel. The back door to Peiper had not been kept open. On the morning of the 21st Mohne, the commander of the 1st SS Panzer Division, collected the remaining assault elements and launched an attack in an effort to reach Peiper's Kampfgruppe. The main German effort came at a point south of Trois Ponts on the Salm River. There a company of the 505th Parachute Regiment had set up a small bridgehead on the cliffs across the river.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

To win, the German player must exit 7 squads (an AFV counts as 2 squads) off the west edge of board "2" via hexes 2Z10 thru 2P10 by the end of the game. The American player wins by avoiding the German victory condition.

TURN RECORD CHART

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**SPECIAL RULES**

H.1 Consider all hexes of Hill 538 as ground level woods.
H.2 "Bore Sighting" (rule 78) is not allowed.
H.3 The American player may not make an "artillery request" until game turn "3".
H.4 Because of frozen ground conditions, units may not roll for entrenchments.
H.5 The American artillery module is based on 105mm guns.

AFTERMATH: In the morning hours the local civilians had informed the American patrols of German tanks and infantry assembling around Wanne. Just before noon a company of grenadiers supported by self-propelled guns appeared along a road which ran past the rise held by the paratroopers. Infantry teams equipped with bazookas knocked out the assault guns as they advanced but sustained heavy losses. Finally artillery support called in from positions west of the river, disrupted the German advance. Further attempts continued in an effort to relieve Peiper but each met with little or no success. On December 24th Peiper's men, leaving all their vehicles in the pocket escaped on foot and Christmas morning rejoined the rest of the 1st SS Division south of Stavelot.