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As of April 1982, the needs and wishes of the hard-core wargaming public have been addressed with the advent of the New York-based Victory Games, Inc. At first concerned exclusively with the design, development, and promotion of its quality wargame-oriented line, Victory Games will in the future expand into the areas of science fiction, role-playing, and computer games. The firm will rely heavily on its parent company, Monarch-Avalon, to provide administrative and service support. The “think-tank” atmosphere and concentration of effort afforded by this unique arrangement are intended to produce a body of games of a consistently high standard and exceptional variety.

The range of topics to which Victory Games plans to address itself has not been categorically limited, since the design staff includes personnel experienced in virtually every aspect of the industry. An initial schedule, covering the first year of operations, includes forays into contemporary and World War II conflicts, science fiction, role-playing, initial design conferences have already taken place for several of these products, and work is underway to devise new systems both for new topics and for subjects whose popular appeal seems never to diminish throughout the hobby.

The staff of Victory Games includes four of the most respected designers in the field. Together, these individuals represent some 25 years of experience, during which time they have been responsible for the design and/or primary development of more than 60 fantasy, science fiction, role-playing, and historical simulation games.

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THE COMBATANTS OF ARNHEM
Contrasting Approaches to STORM OVER ARNHEM

By Thomas C. Springsteen
and Donald Greenwood

Thomas Springsteen headed one of the “blind” playtest groups for STORM OVER ARNHEM. As such, he reported his findings directly to the developer: Don Greenwood. The relationship must have been to Greenwood’s liking, because he is still getting in the last word—dissecting Springsteen’s British analysis to aid in the presentation of his own theories on how best to play the Germans.

THE BRITISH

STORM OVER ARNHEM is an interesting and impressive game. Its components (especially the mapboard artwork) will certainly be the topic of favorable commentary and set a standard for comparison for future game releases. SOA is a unique and innovative system, a refreshingly different change from the conventional zone of control and hex formats. The designer’s emphasis on playability is readily evident. However, I was pleased to discover that many aspects of the design contain subtle but significant amounts of realism, making the game an interesting simulation as well. The player can incorporate this simulation to his advantage by reading the game’s historical notes and reviewing additional literature inspired by the battle.

General Strategy

The primary premise that the British player must accept is that by most standards he will, in all probability, “lose”—both in casualties and in the amount of terrain forfeited. Historically, the British force held much longer than was planned or reasonably expected, but was decimated in so doing. Given unlimited time, the German player will overwhelm the British bridgehead. But herein lies the proverbial “fly in the ointment” for the German forces. They do not have unlimited time; Operation Market Garden, a major Allied offensive spearheaded by tanks of the British XXX Corps, is in progress to the south of the little town. The spearhead is rolling inexorably, although unexpectedly slowly, towards its critical objective—the bridgehead over the Rhine at Arnhem.

The German player must eliminate or displace the British forces from the neighborhood of the bridge within the time frame required, or the British force will “win” a strategic victory. Therefore, the British player is on the defensive, and should strive to inflict the greatest amount of casualties and/or create as much disruption among the enemy as possible while his perimeter and force are reduced. This is not to say he should ignore occasional offensive opportunities. Brief, well-timed and well-executed offensive forays can be costly and quite disruptive (physically and psychologically) to the enemy. The net result can be the acquisition of critical time for the beleaguered bridgehead.

Neither player should be lulled into thinking that the British are pushovers. The British 1st Airborne Division, the “Red Devils”, contained (in actuality and in the game) elite units capable of taking and dealing severe punishment. The heart, therefore, of the British player’s strategy should be to trade real estate and men (unfortunately) for time. The key to this strategy will be to understand and recognize the moment to end the tenacious resistance for an area and fall back to conserve enough strength to maintain a sufficient bridgehead for the required duration. Let us now examine some of the major aspects associated with this strategy.

Terrain/Deployment

The map board is an excellent scale representation of the urban battle zone around the Arnhem bridgehead. The region is subdivided into areas for ease of play. I highly recommend that players take a moment to read the first two paragraphs of the Designer’s Notes to fully appreciate the rationale and effort behind this concept. Figure I is color coded to show the initial British, German SS and German Army perimeters.

Arrow Number 1, of Figure I, indicates the probable primary German SS thrust. The second arrow indicates the likely German Army (with some SS support) attack along the riverfront. This thrust will probably have the German Army Mark Ills involved as armor support. Arrow No. 3 indicates a potentially dangerous lightning thrust by SS armor, supported by infantry deployed on the western flank of the British perimeter.

As indicated by the above comments, and graphically by Figure 1, the primary threat to the British perimeter is on the eastern flank. The potential threat of an early armor pincer movement (Arrow No. 3) can be eliminated or reduced by moving British units into the northern region (area 28 and zone C) of the battlefield. This is possible due to the British player having the Tactical Advantage, which determines which player will have the first
As can be surmised from Figure 1, the British-controlled area 16 is one of the most critical areas on the board. It is in the direct line of advance for any projected primary SS thrust. In addition, it is adjacent to two high Victory Point areas (5 and 17, two VP each) and borders the likely primary German Army line of advance. Area 16 often becomes a meat grinder for both forces. The area generally involves, in one way or another, so many units from both sides that its retention or collapse can be a major factor—for both players. As important as it can be to the game, a player should avoid the potential tendency to be preoccupied by the struggle, and must be conscious of the big picture and not become vulnerable by overly weakening other fronts.

Because of the German's numerical superiority, the British player will soon find himself hard-pressed if he has multiple threats around his perimeter. One ploy addressing this problem is to launch a strong, surprise counterattack against the German SS units in the west at the beginning of the game. This strategy could eliminate, or at least cripple, the threat from the west. Once the enemy force on that flank has been effectively neutralized, the British can shift all their strength toward the strong forces in the eastern flank.

For area 28 and zone C; alternately the simultaneous hidden pre-game placement imposed (rule 5.5) can be used to the player's advantage if he can confuse his opponent with an unexpected (but well thought out) setup, which will be disruptive to the German's intended grand strategy. Again, the latter's net result could be the unproductive consumption of additional time by the Germans, which is of vital importance to the English. As a final comment, British players should constantly monitor the game "clock" and Victory Point tracks, weighing the importance of abandoning areas (including VP areas) against consuming the resources to maintain them.

The six Engineers are nasty! They are by far the toughest units available to the British player, and should not be squandered. They can often intimidate an enemy contemplating unfriendly thoughts for their area. The four 1st Parachute Squadron Royal Engineer squads enjoy the same unit integrity DRM previously mentioned. These units can do an excellent job of slowing down a German unit, including most armor (woe to the armored car close-assaulted by them). The defensive tenacity of the Engineers is legendary. I would recommend a healthy representation of Engineers in the suggested first impulse attack against area 29 and/or area 19.

Concerning deployment, the initial setup can be crucial to the flow of the game and the ultimate outcome of the conflict. Too, like chess, this game has several standard "best" moves-countermoves, which quickly expand geometrically after a few impulses or turns; the game can rapidly degenerate into a mass melee. The player who has learned and executed the best opening moves can gain significant advantages by the time the melee or general engagement has commenced. This phenomenon is especially evident when the optional ten second impulse time limit is enforced.

The key to success of this lightning hammer blow is to commit sufficient strength to guarantee results, but provide adequate support for the eastern perimeter to temporarily hold until reinforced by the western forces. This is easier said than done, but well worth the gamble when one considers the alternative of potential early attacks from the east, north and west. The surprise, disruption and psychological impact to the German player as a result of this bold English offensive should consume time and could conceivably throw the German off balance, triggering tactical errors. An additional point to keep in mind; the British should refrain from direct fire attacks on the two western SS areas, denying them the opportunity to retreat en masse from Close Combat.

Available Forces

The units represent the approximately 600-700 British paratroopers who reached the objective, and their limited anti-tank support.

The three squads of the Royal Army Service Corps form the weakest platoon in the British OB. Their defensive factor is the lowest of any of the English units in the bridgehead, equalling the ad hoc Reformed Units (see below). When attacking it is best to fire as a platoon, gain-
ing the DRM benefits from unit integrity attacks. Alternately, they can be scattered in the rear or interior areas of the British bridgehead as security/emergency reinforcement units. Their presence in areas occupied by other friendly forces can compromise the stronger units’ security due to their low defense factor.

This lone squad represents the contingent of the 16th Parachute Field Ambulance personnel in the town. All of the comments presented in the previous segment are valid, with the exception of those dealing with platoon strength attacks. The remaining comments concern the chance of it ever gaining a unit integrity DRM advantage. I often assign this squad sole responsibility for occupation of area 11, the extreme eastern and probably the most vulnerable area in the British perimeter. During its brief stay in the game, it serves to reduce SS mobility in adjacent areas. You can expect this unit to draw fire early and, in all likelihood, die early. Fate (or perhaps a deep basement) can cause the quantity of committed SS units necessary to displace or destroy this unit to be phenomenally high, much to the chagrin of the German player! The deployment of this unit is realistic; quite a few US units have certain prohibitions against direct fire attacks (especially in uncommitted state). Their major vulnerability is to Close Combat assaults. If unscreened by infantry, they will die quickly on the bayonets of the Germans.

The other three HQ units represent the higher echelon units that made it to the bridgehead. Most of the above comments concerning headquarters are relevant, except that they are unable to combine with the company infantry units for unit integrity DRMs. The major difference between these units and the company HQs is that they can call in the British artillery (be it ever so feeble . . . but ever so useful). The German from the German side of the placement of these units. They may be sub-consciously associated with the significant artillery strength that their German counterparts wield. If a British player holds his artillery threat in reserve, it can often have a noticable effect on the German tactics.

One word of advice and caution is in order at this point. Under the category of “dirty tricks,” the rules prevent a HQ unit from calling in artillery fire if its area is currently occupied by any enemy unit. The German player can become quite frantic in his efforts to clear a unit from the area. When a unit is eliminated, a nasty tactic is to thrust another unit into the same area, the effect is a result of the lower defensive factor of this unit.

These six units represent the maximum possible piecemeal reinforcements that could have conceivably broken through to the British perimeter at the road bridge. The airborne infantry unit capabilities and liabilities are identical to those detailed earlier. The units are remnants and can never attain the unit integrity DRM. Chances for entry of any of these units are rarely better than 14% during any given game turn, and probably less than 20% for the British player only. In any case, the number of these arrivals is probably less than one unit, and if you do get one, consider yourself ahead of the game.

The Ben Carrier represents those units, loaded with ammunition, which attempted to form their way through to the beleaguered British bridgehead. Their attack strength is non-existent, their defensive strength is negligible, and they will succumb to anything larger than a Luger. Despite their weakness, the ammo they carry can save a close game. If they begin a turn in a British-controlled Victory Point area, they nullify the late game effects of ammunition shortages (adverse DRMs) of the British player for that game turn. If the German maintains the Tactical Advantage, the chances of a Bren Carrier appearing peak at 14% on turn 6 and drop rapidly thereafter. The prospects of one actually unloading its vital cargo are mighty slim, but they offer the only real hope for an active British defense on turn 8.

These eight units represent the ad hoc defensive units that were formed as a result of the desperate situation that the British force found itself in. They consisted of lightly wounded men and stragglers from other units. When the British cannot or will not commit the other units in the line, these units will be formed. They are the worst individual infantry squad the British player commands. Generally the British will accept and can use any help that he receives, even in this form. On the bright side, although the fractional mechanics of their generation may prevent them all from coming into play, most of them will be used. There are several problems associated with these units. If the British don’t possess a Victory Point area, newly reformed units are lost. (But, of course, if the British don’t have a Victory Point area the game is lost anyway.) More importantly, the forced distribution (one per VP area) of arriving Reformed Units can compromise the defensive security of better units in the same area. The effect is a result of the lower defensive factor of these units.

Fires, Fate, and Tactical Advantage

These subjects provide the visible elements of chrome in SOA. Fires are an especially interesting topic. They represent the German’s desperate attempts to flush the British forces by setting fire to an area’s structures. Some German players never use them, while others swear they are the decisive factor in the game. They are particularly dangerous when adjacent German forces coordinate their efforts. British units forced to leave a building (become committed) are more susceptible to adjacent direct fire attacks. On the other hand, German units may take pyromaniacal delight in burning buildings, and are themselves more vulnerable to direct fire.

STORM OVER ARNHEM is a game where fate can conceivably play a major role. An attempt to lessen the influence of the dice is made by rule 22, which incorporates a finite number of chits. This is perhaps fairer, but allows a player to monitor the chits drawn and their effect on future event probabilities. I prefer to let fate run its course and not incorporate additional, unnecessary mathematical influences in the simulation. Fate has a fickle way of swinging the pendulum both ways during a game, and is often the scapegoat for poor play.

Finally, the subject of the “Tactical Advantage” will someday result in an article on that topic alone. Suffice to say it’s like a kid in a candy store (or a wargamer in a hobby shop) that can buy one thing. The problem is, what to use it for and when. However, several obvious comments are in order. Don’t waste a Tactical Advantage by not monitoring the automatic change-over points on the turn track. And don’t be so stunned by a particularly devastating attack result as to forget to use it. Remember to regard it as a small form of insurance, meant to be used but not squandered, and no difficulties should beset you.

THE GERMANs

Given the editorial advantages of hindsight, I will now unashamedly display my lack of a sense of fair play by seizing the opportunity to comment on my English colleague’s theories of devising an effective British perimeter defense. You’ll notice that I enter into this endeavor with no fear of reprisal in kind—secure as I am that this treatise will be rushed to press before my opponent lays eyes on it, let alone sets pen to paper. Besides, my general lack of principles adds to the credibility of my role as the German player. Fortunately, I don’t have to seek to strengthen.

Know Thy Enemy

At the outset, I should acknowledge that Tom’s advice is given in terms of generalities. Doubtless, given specific situations to respond to, he would respond with more advisable courses of action. So much for charity. If one is going to deal in generalities, one should not launch his article so as
to leave the reader with the impression that his best form of defense is to commence a limited offensive. Such wholesale advice is to presume that this course of action can be entered into frequently with high hopes of success, and it may be that it can be rarely attempted without temerity and only against a surprised or confused opponent.

In short, the occasions in which the British offensive outlines by Tom could be of any real use are extremely rare. To be of practical, long-range benefit, the British would have to have received reinforcement from off the board, and the German would have had to commit already (and most unusually) his western forces without effect. Any British offensive against uncommitted forces would be pure folly. Even if the British were not repelled, the German units would not be surrounded and would readily be able to regroup and strengthen this attack against committed German forces is a mistake; to attempt it versus uncommitted forces is insanity.

In fact, the longer I reflect on the matter, the more difficult I find it to concoct a situation in which such an attack would be beneficial. Not only would one have to exploit an obvious gap in the German line by focusing an attack they cannot afford to lose, but even if victorious they will find themselves far removed from the eastern perimeters. Blocking zone C might be advantageous to the British if it kept the Training Companies in zone B out of zone C on turn 1, but then would have to be surrounded by a fourth or fifth delay units in 28 and C. A third unit from 22 would have to enter zone D to keep the 3-5-5s out in turn 1, and yet a fourth and fifth delay unit may be required in 28 if German starting forces in 27 are substantial or lucky in their attempts to clear it. Perhaps if the Germans occupied only one of the two western setup areas and were committed, and the Germans were having troubles to the east, and... Suffice to say that, as the German commander, I would welcome British offensives on the western perimeter unless I was foolish enough to set up my main artillery HQ on that side.

All of which is not to say that the British are incapable of limited offensives. They most certainly are capable, and I have vivid recollections of whole companies massacred along the banks of the Rhine to prove it. Yet, Thomas advocates holding the key to this offensive capability with but a single squad of the 16th Field Ambulance! Figure 1 graphically portrays area 11 as a British peninsula jutting out into a sea of German blue. It is adjacent to five SS setup areas—which are free of fire from any other British perimeter area. Small wonder that Tom abandons it to the wolves for the price of a hapless delaying unit. But look a little closer. Tom. That British peninsula can also be likened to a thorn stick left in any area and poked at.

One should keep in mind that the way the game simulates the initial German confusion over the extent of the British defenses is to force the German player to set up with no more than five units per area and so commit their forces piecemeal at the outset. By not occupying defending area 11, the Germans are allowed to deploy for turn 2 unimpeded by the foremost firebase. Whereas Tom neatly extends area 11 and two Victory Points to the German on a platter, I am more inclined to man it with the better part of an entire company including an occasional AT gun (which is likely to find an armored car or two in range). For as long as area 11 is British-held, areas 6 and 7 remain a dangerous cul-de-sac which the Germans may enter only upon threat of encirclement and destruction along the banks of the Rhine. Once all adjacent German units have been committed, a single British squad moving into area 8 would expose German committed units in 7 to treacherous fire from area 6. It is a trap that has been sprung many times. Amateurs especially as a firebase alongside the only German area which can direct fire into the eastern British perimeter (excepting 11) on turn 1. Area 15 is the only eastern area in which the German can set up his 10th Recon BN HQ and be sure of targets for his artillery. If faced by strong fire from this area, the German commander should be foolish to commit his forces there as long as the British remain uncommitted. That being the case, a single British sacrifice unit moved into 15 to foul the German HQ will deprive him of the bulk of his turn 1 artillery should the forces in 25 and 14 prove unable to dislodge it.

All of which is only a portion of the case which could be assembled for putting up a defense of area 11 similar to a dog with a bone. To be fair, Tom could rightly respond that defending area 11 gives Jerry too easy a target for his artillery, which might well have been hand-ed to find suitable targets on turn 1, and yet a fourth and fifth delay unit may be required in 28 if German starting forces in 27 are substantial or lucky in their attempts to clear it. Perhaps if the Germans occupied only one of the two western setup areas and were committed, and the Germans were having troubles to the east, and... Suffice to say that, as the German commander, I would welcome British offensives on the western perimeter unless I was foolish enough to set up my main artillery HQ on that side.

Available Forces

The 10th Reconnaissance Battalion Headquarters is the single most important piece in the German arsenal. Its ability to call in all three sources of artillery support makes it invaluable in the early stages of the game. It is hard to conceive of a German win in which this unit is lost early. As such, it should be highly protected and never left without a protective screen of supporting units of the same type (i.e., uncommitted or committed) to absorb fire impulse casualties and hold close combat attackers at bay. It should also be flanked by high AP units such as the SWP 250ths in the event or adjacent areas to clear away sacrificial units which attempt to thwart its artillery observations. Despite its importance, it must be at the forefront of the attack—always in position to direct fire onto an adjacent enemy concentration. Thus, it usually ends up in area 15. More conservative placements abound in 10-14 with an eye toward hammering a well-defended area 11, but this could be thwarted by a weak or non-existent British defense of area 11 which would silence the German big guns on turn 1. Westward placements in 19 and 24 are far too chaney due to the lack of firepower support which is needed to protect the German artillery from area II. Perhaps if the Germans occupied only one of the two western setup areas and were committed, and the Germans were having troubles to the east, and... Suffice to say that, as the German commander, I would welcome British offensives on the western perimeter unless I was foolish enough to set up my main artillery HQ on that side.

The three PSW 231 armored car units are the most robust of a recon contingent not known for its defense. As such, they are the best choices to push the trigger fire into an area such as the 10th Recon BN HQ. The three PSW 231s available in the Basic Game are reduced to two in the variant game because the 9th SS remnant piece must join its ill-fated fourth sister piece in the crossing attempt, where it is likely to survive the entry. Like a good company, these are units to be deployed as late as possible, when the attack is too weak to mix it up in combat. These should be kept out of trouble as the armor support for a kill group until such time as their speed gives them an opportunity to die a meaningful death by rushing in to reinforce a critical contested area or to block British movements. Their speed makes these highly valuable pieces, which seldom survive a game. Before the advent of rule 13.7, their primary use was as cannon fodder to absorb AT gun losses aimed at the 6-2-8s. Even so, the 3-3-10s remain...
The two Panzer Grenadier Co. HQs serve a dual function: platoon infantry and backup spotting for the 10th Recon artillery. As such, their losses is not to be taken lightly. The painful choice of losing one of these or 4-6-6 is not an easy one to make. The 4-6-6 should probably be sacrificed before the HQ unit, until later in the game when Close Combat becomes more of a consideration. The 4-6-6 HQ's these units need to be at the forefront. Immediately, the German hopes to have all four of his artillery spotting HQs adjacent to the enemy in four different areas to give him the widest choice of possible targets and to diffuse the British tactic of blocking such fire with sacrificial units. They are frequently placed in the western starting areas with a platoon of panzer grenadiers and an engineer to form the most efficient infantry stack of five units and to provide an artillery option on the western perimeter.

The three engineer squads of the Westerners Company may well be the second most important pieces. They not only possess the best combination of infantry attack, defense, and movement factors, but have the special capacity of counting as three units when setting fires. Forget the platoon integrity DRM! These units should be separated to lead three different assault groups so that their 5AF can be used to lead three attacks, and so that there will always be units of lesser value to absorb casualties. The most efficient five unit infantry stack would consist of a platoon of grenadiers, a 2-7-6 and an engineer who could fire with ten Attack Factors. Unfortunately, placement of such forces en masse is unlikely since they need to be kept well away from AT guns and British artillery. Sooner or later however, both will have to be dealt with; against a competent British player the confrontation with artillery will likely be sooner than later. When that occurs, this is the 6AF piece which should be placed in harm's way. This is why the natural accompaniment for this unit is lots of 3-5-5 infantry—both to provide the firepower for a kill group and to absorb the casualty points that the artillery fire this piece will surely attract will generate. I use the term "kill group" to identify a maximum attack strength force. According to the rules of the game, the largest single attack which can be mustered is 16 Attack Factors plus a roll of the dice. A 16AF force can be mustered only by the German player since the British have neither armor nor a 6AF unit. An attack can include the AF of any one piece (6) plus a factor for each additional unit up to a maximum of six infantry, one HQ and three armor units (9) and a 1 factor bonus for platoon integrity. Such an attack force, assuming equal resolution dice rolls is guaranteed at least six casualty points against even the strongest British defense. When the German wins the dice roll there is real hell to pay. Such a force as German artillery fire, should fire as soon as possible. Doing so does not weaken the defense much in the case of a 6-3-10 (nor in all the case of a 6-2-8) since armor defends at the same strength whether committed or not. I am far happier retreats committing units to fulfill casualty point losses than purposely weakening a unit in the case of a 6-3-10 or 6-2-8 since it is much easier to risk on the opening turn, but it accomplishes nothing if not placed adjacent to the enemy where it can bring its firepower to bear. Yet, initial placement restrictions limit the amount and type of support it can set up with. Using infantry to absorb artillery casualty point losses is easier to justify with supporting 3-5-5s than the SS units. For this reason, I favor placement in area 27 where it is out of danger and yet may still be of use in firing on any British blocking attempts in area 28.

The two SPW 250/8 units are of obvious value due to their 6AF, but are less mobile than the armored cars and the most attractive target for British artillery, thus making their use extremely specialized. Initial placement adjacent to potential AT guns or artillery spotters is all but out of the question for a conservative player. Setup in area 27 in not out, unless you have the support for the 10th Recon BN HQ in 15 is desired, in which case area 25 is a quite useful placement. On the reckless side, if the German has succumbed to the urge for an adventurous placement of the 6-3-10, he might as well go all out and place his 6-2-8s in attack positions also. The British have enough artillery to make it worthwhile to target one target, you might as well give him three. Placement in 14 and 10-12 would then be acceptable for the others, being sure to back them with 3-3-10s and 3-4-10s to absorb casualty points with retreats where possible. Adventures aside, the primary use of the 6-2-8s should be as flanking fire for artillery spotters until British AT and artillery capabilities can be reduced.

The Bocholt BN HQ is important solely as a backup for the 10th Recon BN HQ in directing the artillery of the Harzer Kampfgruppe (8AF, 9AF); but this is no menial role. In the early stages of the game, it should be considered more important than any infantry squad simply because it can threaten artillery direction from another location—thus making the 10th Recon BN HQ less vulnerable to blocking attempts. There will also be times when advances and circumstances prevent the 10th Recon from moving into any kind of forward position, leaving the Bocholt BN HQ as the source of otherwise lost artillery support. The main drawback to be aware of is its low movement factor, which often prevents it from moving where it is needed. It invariably sets up in zone B, from where it can move into area 28 on turn 1 so as to direct artillery fire on areas 22 and 23.

There are 27 of these training squads which make up the Bocholt Battalion; they form the bulk of the German force. Their prime function is to absorb casualty points in lieu of the better quality units, and provide firepower for the kill groups formed around the 6AF armor. In the initial play, they will take casualties with retreats where possible; but later, when assaulting an area, they will die, absorbing three casualty points (sometimes even for two casualty points in a critical area) to assure maximum German presence in the area after the turn. However they are used, they are not the critical units so that loss can be taken most economically (retreats for two casualty points; elimination, if desired, for three or more). Always be prepared to follow their movement with more of the same to replace the fallen, but do not make the mistake of stacking an area to capture and move in the HQ spotter or engineer they were supposed to protect. Training units are meant to be used in groups; but they are also meant to be used in conjunction with quality units—to gain a combined-arms effect. Setup is usually standardized at two companies in zone B and one in zone A. If then move to zone C, they are each move to zone D more than negate the British Tactical Advantage on the Random Events Table for turn 2, to area 28 to form a screen for the Bocholt BN HQ, and to lead some type of assault along the southeast perimeter.
The three Training Company HQs are more useful than their factors lead one to believe since they can replace any one unit of their three training platoons as a part of the 4-6-6 integrity DRM bonus. This takes on increased importance because the ranks of these units will be soon scattered to the four winds by losses and retreats. It is rare to find many of the original nine platoons still intact by mid-game. For this reason alone, I would recommend taking losses in 3-5-5s rather than their HQs until such time as an equal or disadvantaged Close Combat situation is anticipated. Equally important, these units, like all HQ pieces, enjoy a superior defense rating which makes them the equal of a 4-6-6 on defense. This means that after the committed armor have all been eliminated or retreated, these units can remain in an assault area with 4-6-6s without detracting further from their defense while still lending the SS units a degree of ability to soak up casualty points through non-SS retreats or eliminations. Naturally, these units set up with and endeavor to accompany their 3-5-5 charges throughout the game.

The three PzKw III tank units are the only real muscle found in the Bocholt BN, and even their strength is misleading. With an attack strength of four, they are rarely used to attack anything other than delaying and/or committed units. Their defense value is such that they can be used to tempt an AT gun into premature fire, or accompany an infantry force without attracting artillery fire. Their best use is against committed British units where they can take reasonable pot shots without exposing themselves to return fire. Invariably, however, they are thrust into a breach in an attempt to block British movement or add weight to an assault destined for resolution in Close Combat. From their initial position in zone B, they can be sent to the western perimeter via strategic movement or tossed into an immediate assault on area 11. How they are used on the first turn often sets the pace for the entire game. They seldom are around at the finish.

The two Tigers are not so important as their impressive attack and defense factors would indicate—simply because they don’t arrive until turn 5 when the foundation for victory or defeat has already been laid. The Tigers will make the difference in a close game, but cannot tip the scales in a game where the British have not yet felt the bite of near-even attrition. When they do arrive, the Tigers can go pretty much wherever they want subject to their movement factors ability to get them there. They should not hesitate to put themselves in the thick of the fighting and should move immediately into any Victory Point area (usually 22 or 23) which they could help take in the night close combat of turn 5, and from which they can fire in the daylight of turn 6. You do not want to waste time moving Tigers—you use every attack opportunity. Ignore AT guns except for the pre-emption of moving the Tigers in tandem in case the British should get a two-casualty point hit.

There are 12 Harzer Kampfgruppe infantry reinforcement squads, and although they almost never all get in to play, they are almost never totally shut out either as frequently happens to the British. The annotations suggest an average expectation of approximately five of these units making an appearance per game. Of course, reinforcements received on turn 1 are more valuable than those arriving on turn 8. Their random entry can be particularly galling to a British player when it coincides with a portion of the perimeter at which he is hard-pressed. Their game function is to assault. They receive no platoon integrity bonus, but their enhanced defensive value in the committed mode makes them valuable accompaniment for any SS assaults. Incidentally, they are experienced troops, albeit poorly organized and equipped due to their recent ad hoc formation from remnant forces hastily scrapped together.

The three StuG III armor reinforcement units are far less likely to see action. Not only do they not appear before turn 4, when they have a 5% chance (8% if the German controls the Tactical Advantage) to come into play in whole (33%) or in part, but there is a chance that the German player will turn them down in favor of infantry replacements. The probability of the arrival increases until turn 7 (or turn 8 without the Tactical Advantage) to a maximum of 16%. However, the arrival of armor carries with it a +1 DRM to the Random Events Table for the duration of the game. This penalty may make it worthwhile for the Germans to opt for infantry reinforcements instead—at least until turn 7 when the chances of a Bren Carrier slipping through decrease dramatically. Once on board, their function is obvious: assault. Treat them as Tigers and put them in the center of the fray.

The four 9th SS SPW 250 halftracks (and their armored car cohorts) in the variant have only one function in the game: to draw fire. They pay with their lives for the privilege of committing as many British units as it takes to eliminate them. It is not a sacrifice made in vain; the British player will be less able to prepare for the attrition of the armor replacements. The probability of their arrival increases until turn 4 (or turn 8 without the Tactical Advantage) to a maximum of 16%. However, the arrival of armor carries with it a +1 DRM to the Random Events Table for the duration of the game. This penalty may make it worthwhile for the Germans to opt for infantry reinforcements instead—at least until turn 7 when the chances of a Bren Carrier slipping through decrease dramatically. Once on board, their function is obvious: assault. Treat them as Tigers and put them in the center of the fray.

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This piece, representing German possession of the Tactical Advantage, may well be the most important in the game. I have seen hundreds of players report which indicate usage of this counter dozens of times per game. Such usage is frivolous, and definitely not conducive to good play. The real value of this piece is in denying its use to your opponent. The player who uses it every time he loses a die roll or a unit is extremely foolish. Its use should be withheld until such time as not using it would cost you the game or you are going to lose it soon anyway (or regain it in the case of the Germans) due to a Turn Record Track dictated change of possession. Aside from the obvious reason of refraining from its use to deny it to the British, it is important to make sure you control it at the beginning of every possible turn due to its very real influence on the Random Events Table. Should the British control it at the start of turn 4, they would have a 27% chance of receiving reinforcements that turn (as opposed to 8% if German-controlled). Similarly, on turn 6, the chance of a Bren Carrier arrival should rise to 44%. The German should save the reroll opportunity for turns 2, 5, and 8 where loss of the Tactical Advantage will have no effect on the RET. Even then, such use should be limited to one of four uses: 1) to reroll a disastrous defense causing multiple losses which simply cannot be afforded; 2) to reroll a defense in which an extremely valuable unit was eliminated by a low odds attack; 3) to reroll a disappointing attack by a kil group which was counted on to create a gap in the British perimeter assuming equal die rolls; and 4) for any attack which cannot be followed by British usage of the Tactical Advantage due to the end of the turn and a change of possession on the Turn Record Track.

There are a multitude of points this article does not address. Pages could be written on the intricacies of the Pass impulse alone, but that—like other delights of this fine game—is left to the curiosity of the reader and the literary efforts of future authors.

CONTEST NO. 107

Turn 7 of a closely fought STORM OVER ARNHEM game using chits instead of dice has just finished. The Germans have 13 VPs and need to control all six victory areas in the coming turn to eke out a marginal victory. All victory areas except 4 and 5 were last solely occupied by the Germans, who last used the Tactical Advantage on turn 5. Only the pictured units remain in play, although three British reformed units, five German infantry, and two StuG III units are available as possible reinforcements. No other Bren carrier have arrived during the game. The British losses during turn 7 were: one unit that suffered four casualty points, three units eliminated in Close Combat, three units which suffered three casualty points apiece, and two units that suffered only two casualty points apiece. Most importantly, one of the players has been counting the chits and realizes that all of three of the remaining chits for each player are 7s. If we assume that any die rolled will result in a 4, then one side or the other has the capability of forcing either a tie or a marginal victory regardless of anything his opponent might do. Your task is to determine what unalterable result will be and list the exact impulses for that side only which are necessary to achieve that result.
This article is undoubtedly a first in wargame publication history. Never before, at least in our recollection, has a game been published with all the parts necessary for a variant style of play except the rules. Oh, one could make an argument that PANZERBLITZ or even SQUAD LEADER provided extra counters which the players could plug into the system for “Design Your Own” scenarios; but, those were primarily game systems utilizing scenario formats and typical terrain map configurations. In STORM OVER ARNHEM the mapboard is extremely accurate and the order of battle has been structured as closely as possible on that of the actual participants, whereas in the former games one can only hope to capture the feel of the battle by using fractions of the actual forces and loosely representative terrain. So, in SOA we were definitely covering new ground. How would players react to having their Time Track actually contain two extra turns that they knew nothing about? And wouldn’t they be irritated to have a dozen extra counters without knowing what to do with them?

The jury is still out on those questions; as this is being written, we still haven’t received substantial feedback on the game itself from the general public. But perhaps some background is in order. Those who have not yet seen STORM OVER ARNHEM should be appraised that the game depicts a set-piece battle without scenarios. In essence this means that, like the “classic” games of a bygone era, there is only one version of the battle portrayed in the game. It is a throwback to the days of D-DAY and STALINGRAD in that the appeal of the game is not in how many different versions or scenarios there are to play, but in the challenge of playing the basic game itself as flawlessly as possible. In developing the game, we decided to temper this sameness of situation by including a Random Events Table to introduce a certain degree of variation to each game. Although the Random Events Table is based on probability (the Germans did receive reinforcements throughout the battle and had access to even more had their commanders so chosen), it also introduces a touch of what might have been. The British reinforcements cited in the table did indeed exist—in fact, the British Re-formed Units rule is based on the remnants of such forces as did manage to filter into the bridge positions. More importantly, however, it adds variation to the play of the game in an attempt to keep it from becoming stereotyped and vulnerable to “perfect plan” types of analysis. Even so, if SOA has a fault it is probably in the type of battle it portrays. A siege does not present much opportunity for the ebb and flow of battle and the initiative is usually one-sided. The turning points are rarely as dramatic as the swing from defense to offense by the Americans in BATTLE OF THE BULGE or the Russians in TRC. Consequently, when the game was well along in the development stage we decided to design an extension to the game which would give the British the opportunity to play the attacker and recreate the actual seizure of the bridge before going over to the defensive.

There were many positive features to the decision. Besides giving the British the chance to actually portray their taking of the bridge, it also brought on the opportunity to simulate probably the most famous engagement at the bridge—the massacre of Captain Grabner’s 9th SS Recon Battalion in its attempted crossing of the bridge on the 18th. Forever immortalized by Cornelius Ryan’s A BRIDGE TOO FAR and the subsequent screenplay thereof, this action is by far the most vivid public remembrance of the battle and doubtless will salve the average player’s obligatory need to synchronize the recognizable sub-battles in his game with the chronological events of the battle as he remembers them. Indeed, the most frequently asked question by our playtesters was why the Germans couldn’t attempt a crossing of the bridge since in play it was seldom heavily guarded. A recreation of what happened to Grabner’s column will serve as a vivid reminder of why the Germans were loath to try
crossing the bridge a second time. Equally important is the opportunity it gives the British player to take history in his own hands, ignore the historical perimeter, and set up his own bastion. The question of whether the basic game's historical position, an expanded perimeter at the expense of additional unit vulnerability, or a contracted initial defense is the best course to pursue is not answered without considerable thought.

Then why, you might well inquire, didn't we include these initial goings on in the basic game? Well, contrary to the opinion of at least one of our playtesters, it was not just a cheap scheme to get players to fork over a few bucks more to buy the GENERAL. The primary reason was play balance. The paramount consideration in a simple game such as SOA is play balance. A game whose main emphasis is perceived realism and detail to the nth degree can get away with a lack of balance. To simulation enthusiasts lost in a sea of details, a lack of play balance is excusable and can even be chalked up to recreation of the real life challenge of winning as the underdog. In a game whose forte is playability, lack of play balance can be a crippling and most damning flaw. Appending the two turn extension onto our game at the midpoint of our development of play balance is excusable and can even be chalked up to recreation of the real life challenge of winning as the underdog. In a game whose forte is playability, lack of play balance can be a crippling and most damning flaw. Appending the two turn extension onto our game at the midpoint of our development of play balance is excusable and can even be chalked up to recreation of the real life challenge of winning as the underdog. In a game whose forte is playability, lack of play balance can be a crippling and most damning flaw. Appending the two turn extension onto our game at the midpoint of our development of play balance is excusable and can even be chalked up to recreation of the real life challenge of winning as the underdog. In a game whose forte is playability, lack of play balance can be a crippling and most damning flaw. Appending the two turn extension onto our game at the midpoint of our development of play balance is excusable and can even be chalked up to recreation of the real life challenge of winning as the underdog.

However, none of this prevented us from knowing what the OB for the variant extension would be, and as long as there was room on the counter sheets for additional counters why not include the actual pieces in the game with a reference to the issue of the GENERAL which would contain rules for their use? By the time that issue went to press we would have time to playtest the variant rules. And by planning ahead, we were able to schedule a STORM OVER ARNHEM feature presentation for that same issue. The casual player who was interested in picking up a copy of the variant rules would also get the latest errata on the game at this writing there is none, articles on strategy and an illustrated sample game to help him comprehend the game or show him where he's going wrong if he's unable to win with a particular side. It was a revolutionary concept and one that appears to make a lot of sense to me. For those who feel they have been ripped off for the price of the magazine I can only say that the alternative would have been no game extension at all, because I would not have included an untested scenario in the game. GENERAL readers would then have eventually been treated to such a variant with no die-cut counters. [We look forward to your response to this variant and the concept behind it—including extra counters in the counter-mix for such later published variants. Your opinions will determine whether this type of approach will be used again.]

Thus was the decision made to limit the extension of the game to variant status. The variant was not included in the game itself simply because we had not yet had time to playtest it. Only after the basic game was published in December did we begin to playtest the variant with the same by-mail playtest crews, and only now are we satisfied that its effects on the basic game's play balance are minimal. However, we are happy to report that it does change play of the game considerably and many of our test groups reported that they prefer the variant version to the basic game as it gives each player a sort of "free" setup. So, now we can happily tell you all to finally punch out those die-cut counters you've been saving, read on, and get set to play...

THE CROSSING
A STORM OVER ARNHEM VARIANT

The variant starts during Sunday night, September 17th with the turn marker on Turn A and the British player in possession of the Tactical Advantage. If he does not use the Tactical Advantage, the British will control it until the start of turn 3 when it will once again switch to the Germans automatically. The Germans are in control of all Victory Point Areas at start and may receive Victory Points for any areas they still control at the end of turns A and/or B, but cannot receive points for reducing the British perimeter until Turn 1.

1. ADDITIONAL UNITS—

1.1 PILLBOX [4-X-0]: The pillbox counter is setup in Area 4 to start the game. The pillbox may only attack/be attacked during the Close Combat Phase. Only those units in Area 4 which are designated to attack it may be attacked by the pillbox. Therefore, regardless of who controls the Tactical Advantage the British player must designate his Close Combats first. The pillbox does not affect enemy movement or stacking limits in any way. The pillbox does count as a German unit for control of Victory Point areas.

1.2 ARNHEM GARRISON: The Arnhem Garrison consists of two 3-5-5 infantry units and a 2-6-5 HQ unit which start the game in Area 23. If all three units fire together they do receive a +1 DRM for platoon integrity. During the A game turn only, these units do not affect enemy movement costs into adjacent areas (i.e.: 8.22 case B does not apply).

1.3 9th SS RECON: The 9th SS Recon consists of two 3-3-10 PSW 231 Armored Car and four 3-2-8 SPW 250 Halftrack units. The one 9th SS Armored Car unit in the Basic Game German setup is removed and must enter the game instead with the 9th SS Recon units on turn B at the bridge as per rule 3.4. At the end of any game turn after they enter the board, any halftrack counter of the 9th SS Recon Battalion may be replaced by a 4-6-6 infantry recon counter of the 9th SS. Once this substitution is made it may not be reversed. The 9th SS Recon infantry do not qualify for platoon integrity.

2. VARIANT SETUP—

2.1 TURN A: All British Basic Game initial placement units except Company B setup in zones D and/or E. The German player sets up his pillbox and three Arnhem Garrison units in areas 4 and 23 as outlined previously.

2.2 TURN B: The British player brings on Company B in zone E and is now able to attempt to use his artillery for the first time. The German player places his 10th SS Recon Bn in zones A, B, and C with a maximum of eleven units per zone and is now able to attempt to use his artillery for the first time. The 9th SS Recon Bn must enter at the bridge per rule 3.4.
2.3 TURN I: The German Bocholt Training Battalion is placed in zones A and/or B as in the Basic Game.

3. SPECIAL VARIANT RULES—
3.1 All British units (except AT units) have one additional MF during turn A. British AT units have a MF of 6 during this game turn. After turn A, all units are reduced to their normal Basic Game movement rates. The requirement for the British to set up at least three units in each Victory Point area at the start of Game Turn I is waived in the variant.

3.2 Neither side may enter a perimeter zone during turn A.

3.3 The Random Events Table and Setting Fires rules may not be used before turn I.

3.4 The German 9th SS Recon Bn elements must enter together in one impulse during turn B as follows:

3.4.1 Before every German M/F Impulse during Turn B the German player must roll a die. If the die roll is a 1 or 2 the entire German 9th SS Recon Bn must enter the game during that Movement Impulse. If the die roll is not a 1 or 2 the German may move or fire normally or even Pass, but the turn will not end and even if the British follow with a Pass of their own. If the British and German players do pass consecutively, the 9th SS Recon Bn automatically enters and the phase ends with that impulse unless the German player has the Tactical Advantage and wishes to continue the turn by using it.

3.4.2 When the 9th SS Recon Bn enters the game, all six units must be placed at the bridge on the area dividing line between areas 4 and 5. Any uncommitted British units occupying areas 4 and 5 which wish to do so must now fire as one combined group (even if that group exceeds the basic game maximum fire limits) at all the German units occupying the area as if they were occupants of their own area. No AT units may fire at this time, even if they occupy areas 4 and 5. German casualty points must be expended by unit elimination only (up to 4 casualty points per unit). All firing British units become committed.

3.4.3 Any surviving units on the border are then advanced to the area dividing line between areas 18 and 17. Any uncommitted British units occupying areas 18 and 17 which wish to do so must now fire as one combined group (even if that group exceeds the basic game maximum fire limits) at all the German units occupying the area. Any uncommitted AT units occupy areas 18 and 17 may also fire, but as a separate attack. German casualty points must be expended by unit elimination only after the infantry attack and any AT unit attack(s) have been resolved. All firing British units become committed.

3.4.4 If any 9th SS Recon units still remain, they may move into areas 18 and/or 17, or continue on to the border between areas 22 and 23. Those units choosing to move into areas 18 or 17 must end their move there if British units are present in the area moved into. At that point they would have been susceptible to a maximum of two combined fire group attacks plus up to one or two AT gun attacks. If there are no British units present in the area moved into, they may continue movement normally, and to be considered for overseas orders before leaving the bridge to enter areas 18 or 17. Any surviving 9th SS Recon units which do not wish to enter areas 18 and/or 17 must be placed on the border of areas 22 and 23 and receive fire from any willing and eligible British units in those areas as per 3.4.3, except that the German player may elect to satisfy casualty point losses by retreating if otherwise able to do so.

3.4.5 Any 9th SS Recon units which have survived border fire in areas 22 and 23 must enter area 22, 23, and/or 28. They may continue moving as usual (having already expended 4 MFs on the bridge to that point) if the area entered is unoccupied by British units. If the area entered is occupied by British units, the German unit(s), the German unit(s) must stop in that area.

3.4.6 It costs 1 MF to enter the game via the bridge plus 1 MF for each border ramp moved onto. No unit may end this special Movement/Fire impulse on a border. It must pay normal MF cost to enter a specific area when leaving the ramp border. All surviving 9th SS Recon units become committed at the end of this impulse and the game then converts back to the normal M/F impulse sequence with the British player in control of the next impulse.

3.4.7 British artillery may not be used against the 9th SS Recon units on the ramp. Neither artillery nor Anti-Tank Guns may be used against the pillbox.

3.5 At the start of turn 1 the six British perimeter control counters are placed by the German player on any six areas currently occupied by the British. These areas cannot be Victory Point areas but may contain German units if there are not enough areas solely occupied by British units. If the British player does not currently occupy six such areas, the German player may select other areas which are currently unoccupied but were last transitioned by the British to fulfill the limit of six perimeter areas. If the German player is still unable to specify six perimeter areas, he receives two victory points for each counter not placed. Under no circumstances may the German specify more than six perimeter areas.

3.6 The game continues normally from turn 1 as per the Basic Game rules. Only the special provisions for the German pillbox not affecting British movement rates could conceivably alter play from the Basic Game norm.

3.7 VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans begin the variant with their Victory Point marker in the -2 block as a play-balance adjustment.

FORTRESS EUROPA PBM KIT
A Play-By-Mail Kit for FORTRESS EUROPA is now available. The kit contains four pages of instructions, much of this covering the conversion of many of game's special rules to facilitate PBM. Also included are the Allied and German OBs which show a picture of each unit for movement purposes. Only available direct from Avalon Hill, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. The 1 Player Kit is $3.50 and the 2 Player Kit is $7.00, plus 10% postage (Canadians add 20%, Overseas add 30%). MD residents add 5% state sales tax.

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The players are identified by color: German comments are printed in black; British in red. Moreover, in the interests of clarity, all my moves are listed on the line below his comments for that impulse. An attack is listed in the form: Attacker in the [area attacking from] vs Area Attacked (italized numbers represent a committed group) at odds [British chit: German chit # Number of casualty points] [Results list units eliminated behind a K: units retreated and area retreated to behind an R]. Movement impulses are listed in the form: unit moved [number of area moved from] number of area moved to.

OPENING COMMENTS
The German placement is limited in its options by the game rules which intentionally try to recreate the initial German confusion and piecemeal commitment of forces which so hampered them in the real battle. A good German will do his utmost to overcome this initial handicap by refusing to commit his forces piecemeal and attempting to position them so that they can come adjacent to the British defenders in as concentrated a force as possible. Turn I belongs to the British. The German player who tries to accomplish too much on the opening move merely helps the game recreate history. His main task should be to avoid giving easy kills to the British while he masses for more extensive efforts on turn 2. I believe that even attrition early in the game favors the German player, so I will attempt to fulfill my casualty losses with retreats when possible—trading space for men.

My opponent is a veteran player who has bested me many times in this game, including our first attempt at this same replay when I forgot the premise of my conservative ways and used a more daring (and foolish) opening. The last time we played I allowed him to neutralize my artillery cheaply by stationing my main artillery spotter in area 29 where it was devoid of support from adjacent areas to cover it in the event of a British unit moving into the same area to prevent artillery fire. Alan is a firm believer in this tactic, so I must constantly be on guard against allowing him to neutralize my artillery so cheaply. By placing my 2-2-2 in area 10 and surrounding it with two 6-3-8 armor units, three platoons and two engineers in areas 9, 10, and 12, I assure myself of no less than seven even-or-better attacks against any unit he cares to sacrifice by moving into the same area with my spotter. It is doubtful whether he will attempt to block my artillery against this setup; if he does, it should be to my advantage—offering me easier kills than the artillery would generate anyway.

The danger of this disposition is, of course, that if he doesn’t occupy area 11 my artillery is setup to hit an empty area. Indeed, against this deployment, his best strategy may well be to simply abandon II for perimeter reduction as well as robbing him of a artillery to bear. I would nevertheless welcome this option as it would result in two easy victory points for perimeter reduction as well as robbing him of a firing opportunity this turn with each unit he withdraws. The worst possible circumstance would be if he were to guess all this in advance and not setup in area 11 at all. I doubt this will occur however as this is the first time I have used this particular setup and we both had to make major British commitments to area 11.

The placement of five units in area 15 is primarily to discourage British fire from 16 when I move into 11. Hopefully, they will not fire until late in the turn and even then will fire simultaneously so as to be able to absorb return fire casualties by retreating.

The 6-2-8 armor units are positioned out of harm’s way from any possible artillery or AT attack while still providing covering fire for the 2-7-5 in 10. Should the latter prove unnecessary, they will be able to move into area 8 with the 3rd Company to form a kill group on turn 2. The remaining German armor units in area 22 where they can swing in either direction to reinforce as necessary.

The early fall of area 11 is vital to any southeastern effort. German units advancing into 7 while 11 is still in British hands are extremely susceptible to being surrounded and cut to ribbons by multiple low firepower attacks which would turn retreats into kills.

To the west I have abandoned my conservative ways and am changing my armor to possible AT and artillery attacks in 19. Most players downplay this as a serious threat due to its extreme isolation, and it is relatively rare to see major defenses there. In our last game Alan neglected to cover this area with even so much as an artillery spotter, let alone an AT gun. I am gambling that he is a creature of habit. He tends to favor AT gun placement in 23, 16, and 11 (as do I), but, like myself, he may feel that his play has become too patterned and make a switch. If I were him, I wouldn’t place an AT gun in 11 simply because I never chance placing armor adjacent to 11. Artillery coverage of 19 doesn’t bother me so much as that has only a 2/3 chance of calling in fire anyway, and I have other units there which can absorb the losses—but losing the 6-3-10 to an AT gun on turn 1 would be unpleasant. If neither are present I will be able to launch a 10-firepower attack from 19 at my leisure. Nevertheless, this is a chancy proposition; but I feel the need to do something different. Alan and I have played the game many times and he has become too accustomed to my conservative ways. While the changes you can make from game to game are largely restricted by the setup rules, they are nonetheless significant and make the simultaneous setup both interesting and exciting. It also helps to fight the boredom repeated play can generate in some games while making the matter of the "perfect setup" to me . . . the hope of change of that in you must outguess your opponent.

At least one company of training units is destined for zone D. Once there, they will qualify for a -2 DRM to the Turn 2 Random Events Table as well as being available for a night sortie into 22.

The remainder of the setup is basic stuff, attempting to take advantage of platoon integrity and maximum maneuver where possible. The engineer platoon is split so as to be able to lead three different platoons. Preserving platoon integrity with the engineers is not the way to go. By splitting them to head different groups, maximum use of their superior firepower can be made, as well as better protecting them from losses by absorbing casualty points with lesser units. Their better defense value is little solace when a group consisting solely of engineers and an artillery-spotting HQ must take a loss. Make no mistake about it—the engineers are the most valuable units in the German repertoire—they must start the all-important fires once infiltration has begun.

Now to see how my setup jives with his . . .

Most Series Replays take more than one attempt and this one is no exception. In the first game Don conceded before the end of turn two. While turn one had ended with even attrition, both of us losing seven units, positionally it had been a disaster for Don. He had chosen not to form large fire groups, which is a main part of his normal strategy. Instead, he had played aggressively all over the board, a strategy he has adamantly opposed in the past. He had surprised me with numerous moves and my commentary was beginning to be a series of amazed expressions. At the end of turn one, he had very few units adjacent to any of my units. In turn two, Don moved into Area 7 with the 3rd Company. I surrounded the units by occupying Area 8 and he was unable to dislodge my unit. In five impulses, one unit firing each time, all ten units of the 3rd Company were eliminated. With things almost as dark in other parts of the board as well, Don resigned. And so the stage is set for attempt number two.

After a few games, players will establish a standard British setup and the only major changes from game to game will be in the placement of the Anti-Tank Guns. Decisions in the British setup are quite limited. Most units have colored dots and these units must start in areas which have dots of the same color. Though there seem to be quite a few areas with red, green, and blue dots, this is deceptive. For example, no units should ever be placed in Area 6 so the red dot there is superfluous. Further restricting the British setup is the requirement that three units occupy each Victory Point Area (Areas 4, 5, 17, 18, and 22). If not I don’t think anything would ever be placed in Areas 4, 5, and 17.

Before looking at my setup Area by Area, I will take some educated guesses at what Don’s setup will be. In the past, Don has always placed one HQ, one HVY WP, and three 4-6-6s in Areas 19 and 29. I see no reason to expect anything different this game. The HQs will probably be the AR HQ and LR HQ. The 10th Rec/HQ HQ should be in Area 15 along with the last HVY WP and three more 4-6-6s. Not knowing where my Anti-Tank Guns will be, Don almost always places all of his armor units out of harm’s way, placing them in Areas 9, 25, and 27. Again I expect him to hold firm here. However, after seeing my setup in game one, there is some chance he may risk putting one or more armor units in either (or both) Areas 19 and 22. Completing his on-board setup, one platoon of 10 Rec infantry will probably go to Area 9 and another to Area 22. One of the other two platoons will be placed in Area 14 and the final in either Area 9 or Area 10. Offboard, Don normally puts two Companies in Zone B and one in Zone A, the three armor units and the HZ/BOHT HQ also placed in Zone B.
Figure 1: Initial Deployment.

(British positions are shown in red; German in black.
Units are indicated by strength designation w by platoon organization.)
While it doesn't matter that much if I am not 100% correct, I wanted to predict the German setup so I could explain my setup in relation to it. So here we go. There are six units with black dots, the 4th and 5th platoons of B Company. Since these units can only be placed in Areas 3 and 4, and considering the Victory Point Area occupation requirement, one HQ is placed in Area 3 and one in Area 4. While the German player can setup in Area 19, this is the hardest part of the board for him to attack as it will take several turns to get more infantry around the board. Armor units can make it by turn two, but unsupported armor is rarely effective. The platoon placed in Area 4 (B5) can reinforce either Area 3 or 18, move to one of the other sectors of the map. Units with blue dots can be placed in Areas 3, 18, and 22. However, since B4 is holding Area 3, the only Areas for blue units are 18 and 22. Area 18 gets only the three units of Tp A and Area 22 gets the other four.

In game one, I tried to surprise Don by placing both Tp A and Tp B in Area 18 and leaving only the two 9th Co units in Area 22. Expecting Areas 18 and 22 to be major artillery targets (this is why Don places HQs in Areas 19 and 29), I had thus maximized the defense of Area 22; by placing just the two units of the 9th Co, the A Company HQ, and the 1 Bde HQ in Area 22, the defense of this area was the highest possible. The other units were simply that I would rather have Don use his artillery against Area 18 than Area 22. Area 18, like Area 3, will be hard to attack before turn three, while Area 22 is open to attack on turn two (or even a turn one armored assault after one or more successful artillery attacks have cleared or weakened the area). My plan was never tested though, as he placed the 10 Rec/HZ HQ in Area 29 and I moved a unit into the area immediately to prevent the HQ from calling in any artillery. In fact, Don lost both HZ artillery units for both turns in the first game. I do not think he will make the same mistake again and I expect to see the HZ HQ in either Area 14 or 15 this game. While I still expect Areas 18 and 22 to be prime artillery targets, he should only have the one 10th Rec artillery unit to fire into one of the two in turn one.

The two areas the British must occupy that they would not occupy by choice are Victory Point Areas 5 and 17. These are the key areas to prevent for German troops from one side of the board to the other. For instance, if a British unit occupies it on turn one, the German infantry that begins the game in Zone B cannot move into it.

I intend to harass German movement by blocking Area 28 with one of the Company HQ units in my initial setup. For this reason, I have placed A and B Company HQs in Area 22, and C Company HQ in Area 17. The three Company HQs are ideal blocking units, having a committed defense of '5', the highest possible. With my setup, all three can make it into Area 28. The RASC platoon will still be able to reinforce Areas 18, 22, and 23, and the 1st platoon on turn two if Don attempts to do so. The recruitment of both HQ platoons was a minor surprise to Don in game one, but he will probably be expecting it this time. It will be interesting to see how he will counter.

There are only four units with yellow dots; the four units of the 1 Bde, the best British platoon. Two of these have high movement potential, the 1 Bde and the Anti-Tank Gun. I find it a lot more difficult to have these two units in the game, and often the first to see close combat, is Area 11. One strategy is to give this area up without much of a fight and concede the 2 Victory Points it is worth. But not me! I intend to put up a tough fight everywhere and concede nothing. The red units are good blocking units and I am setting up the British to defend Areas 7, 8, 11, and 17. When playing in any artillery. In fact, Don lost both HZ artillery units for both turns in the first game. I do not expect to see the HZ HQ in Area 14 this game. While I still expect Areas 18 and 22 to be prime artillery targets, he should only have the one 10th Rec artillery unit to fire into one of the two in turn one.

The three remaining HQs (1 Rec, 2 Para, and 1 Div) are the only three HQs which can call in my artillery. I place the 1 Div in Area 22 and the 1 Rec in Area 18 to be able to call in artillery on Areas 19 and 29 if Don brings in armor to assemble fire groups in these areas. The 2 Para is placed in Area 11 to cover Area 8, which is another prime area to amass a fire group. The 6-2-8 armor units are particularly susceptible to artillery and I will try to wait to get a shot at one of them.

I will not use Anti-Tank Guns until they are used as deterrents. The one in Area 11 will make it costly to use armor on Areas 7, 8, 11, 15, and 16. The one in Area 22 will do the same for Areas 28 and 29. The Anti-Tank Gun in Area 11 will be somewhat exposed, especially if he goes all out for the area, but I am willing to lose it. I figure that if the British move to Blockhouse, I will still have another unit to make an anti-tank attack. In addition, as I said, there is some chance he may set up armor in Areas 19 or 29. If he sets up armor in just one of the two, I hope I have the corresponding one for my Anti-Tank Gun.

Perhaps the most basic consideration of the British player in STORM OVER ARNHEM is the balance of aggressive and cautious play he must use during the game. To this end, the British player will send some impulses passing because he cannot afford to divulge his intentions or commit his units till the German player has done so first. On the other hand, the British player will have chances to inflict casualties on German units which have been committed in exposed positions and cannot pass on a turn without taking his fire opportunities.

STORM OVER ARNHEM becomes much like a chess game between two experienced players. Each player has the highest potential to move another countermove. The players become two gunfighters waiting for the other to go for his gun. It is unlike almost any other wargame in its precision, and in the decisions the players must make on each move of the game. It is very easy to fall into one of several traps the game creates. Instead of being aggressive, I will be very cautious, feeling that the moment is right. Don fell prey to this in game one and it began to steame, making an aggressive (and risky) move followed by another, the flow of the game taking him further and further away from his game plan. Sometimes, it is necessary to concede some units after you have made a mistake as trying to save them may be more costly than letting them die. It is a game that can be most unforgiving.

German armor is often considered the biggest cause of the aggressive versus cautious play dilemma, are the Perimeter Victory Point Areas. The German player needs some of these points to win. The British player can afford to give up some of these and still win, and must be careful not to be too aggressive. German armor is a weapon that can lose the game while winning the battles. On the other hand, the British player cannot afford to give up too many points, nor too much ground too quickly, as the defense of the interior Victory Point Areas hinges on keeping the German units away from them for as long as possible.

The board can really be divided into three basic sectors. The east sector, with the emphasis on Areas 7, 11, 16, and 24, is usually the first to come under attack. One danger in this sector of the board is infiltration by German armor. If German armor units can survive one turn in Areas 11 and/or 16, then they can easily block up the British movement as well as threaten to take Victory Points. If this happens, the British line will crumble. I will endeavor to maintain a solid line of defense here and not let German armor units stray through my line. I will play the most aggressively in this sector.

The north sector is highlighted by Areas 22, 23, 26, 28, and 29. Here I will attempt to disrupt the German movement. I will also try to defend this area with a minimal number of units so the main part of my force can be used in the east.

The west sector hinges on Areas 3, 4, 18, and 19. The action here should not get heavy till turn three or four, and in many games never really gets very heavy till the last two turns. It is on this side of the board that I can sometimes surround German units (as Don will try to do to me in the east). Balancing my forces in each of the three sectors of the board may be my toughest job.

The north sector is dominated by artillery. I can call on it in an area where there are committed German units or an area where there is a German armor unit with a poor DV (2 or 3). I intend to try to prevent the 10th Rec/HZ HQ from calling in all its artillery by occupying the area it is in with a British unit. While this unit cost some units, it should save some too, and I can always change my mind if it gets too costly.

I will begin most turns by passing or making repositioning moves until German units move into positions where I can fire my units without them being fired upon in return. I will fire most units separately in this sector to deny German units away from my lines, and combine the whole fire of a platoon only when I have a good chance of eliminating units, rather than retreating them.

I will take casualties in retreats (not eliminations) except where very disadvantageous to do so, like when a unit would be left vacant. I am also apt to see if Don will pursue an attrition strategy in which he tries to mass large fire groups, or an aggressive positional strategy in which he tries to capture ground right from the start.

I have mentioned the term 'fire group' several times and I should probably explain it. The rules allow a British unit to make an attrition fire attack on an area's AV, one point for each infantry unit (up to a maximum of six infantry units, but minus the firing unit if it is an infantry unit), one integrity bonus for using three units of the same platoon, one HQ, and three armor units. The biggest possible AV is '16'; a 6 armor unit, six infantry units, the Fd Am unit and three SP guns.
There is little I can hope to add to either of the players’ opening comments. Because of this and the narrative style of the replay, I will limit my comments here and throughout the replay areas where I may disagree or see something you may have overlooked. It is quite obvious that both Don and Alan are experienced players of STORM OVER ARNHEM and know their business. To comment at all, I was forced to look long and hard at their setups. I might take a few moments though to reinforce or possibly add to their comments in areas where I feel deserves the attention.

One of these areas Alan mentioned in his opening commentary concerns the British placement in area 16. There is no question in my mind that Alan is justified in placing two platoons in that area. Actually, the addition of a HQ unit also would not be overdoing it. This area not only has the excellent fire position. A fine opening barrage. I am very pleased that the east. He will certainly move to Area 8 with the 3rd Company and he may also try an assault on another area 7 with his entire SS troops. I briefly considered sending my artillery to fire Area 8, but the result of the second impulse took care of that. If he assualts Area 11, I wouldn’t be able to call in my artillery anyway. So, now I can go ahead and call it in Area 19.

Attempt to call in 1 LR RA fails on a roll of 5'.

A fine opening barrage. I am very pleased that he chose to fulfill his casualties by eliminating an artillery-spotting HQ. If I can get rid of his AT Gun, my 6-2-8s will be able to operate with impunity on the outskirts of his entire SE perimeter.

GAME TURN #1

The first turn Random Events dice roll is a 6 (modified to a 7 for the British Tactical Advantage) resulting in no effect.

1. Don has protected the 10th Rec/HZ HQ in the Area 10 by surrounding it with lots of firepower in Areas 9 and 12. My strategy of sending a unit in to prevent the HQ from calling in artillery certainly seems to have made him more cautious. I have done a pretty good job of guessing his setup again, except I lost out on the 50-50 with my Anti-Tank Gun. At least I can fire my artillery at Area 19 which is even better than the AT Gun. My choice for this impulsive fire is between moving a Company HQ into Area 28 or firing a Company in Area 7 for moving the HQ, which prevents him from moving any infantry from Zone B to Area 28 until he retreats his unit.

Company A HQ [22] 28

2. His move to cut off area 28 is of little concern to me as I may pass east. However, I am concerned that he did not expect me. I just didn’t expect him to use the third artillery unit on Area 11. Area 11 now looks real weak. My two platoons in Area 16 will have to do a good job of fire support since he is almost certain to assault. He probably won’t move into Area 7 now though, so the units there can also add fire support into Area 8. This probably my last chance to reinforce Area 11, but I’m going to pass it up as this is exactly what he wants. He has too much firepower with which to kill any committed units. I will move one RASC unit to Area 6, which I must do sooner or later to block any forward retreats.

3-6-5 [5] 6

7—This move is not necessary! The retreat priority rule 8.355, case F, would have required a German unit to move back toward the east where there are few British-occupied areas. In effect, Alan has lost the use of one squad this turn. This could prove important later. At this point it’s too early to tell.

8. I don’t understand his move into area 6 at all. What does it gain? Now is the time to move into Area 11 to take another shot from outside the area he may withdraw the AT Gun and I want to trap it. As the 3rd Co can’t reach area 11 this turn, I will move them into 8 in hopes of drawing some of the available fire that would otherwise be available to hit my move into 11. 3rd Company [A] 8

9. Moving the 3rd Company to Area 8 is a standard German move in turn one. My platoon in Area 7 can fire at his committed units in Area 8 immediately since they cannot be fired upon themselves and the 2 DV is the best possible target they will ever have. I will fire individual units instead of the whole platoon to maximize my chances of causing casualty points, multiple retreats being preferable to kills. I may have to save one or two of these units to fire at Area 11, but I can’t see any harm in firing one at Area 8 right away.

4-7-5 [7] vs 8 at + 1 [3:4 = –

10. My luck holds—the chin draft yields the most efficient non-result possible—beating his +1 attack with a +1 advantage on the chin draft, but I am still too strong to risk a move into 11. I hope to dislodge another unit or two with this attack. If it doesn’t work I will have to forget moving into 11 on turn 1.

6-5 + LR/6 Pit [12] vs 11 at + 1 [8:7 = –

11. He’s really serious about Area 11. It is clear now that Don will be using his fire control strategy this game and following an attrition policy rather than an aggressive geographical one, at least in the east. If he’s going to keep committing his units by firing them at Area 11, I think I can fire another unit from Area 7 into Area 8. He may have no intention of moving into Area 11 after all, instead trying to kill units there by using all his units to form several small fire groups.

4-7-5 [7] vs 8 at + 1 [7:8 = –

12. Well, if it isn’t to be, it’s not to be. I might as well commit area 10 to fire. If 11 holds out, my artillery will still be in position to fire on turn 2.

5-6 + LR/5 Pit + 2-7-5 [10] vs 11 at + 1 [8:8 = 2]

[2] 4-7-5 S to 6

13. No luck again with my fire at Area 8 last turn. If the whole 3rd Company is still in Area 8 at the beginning of turn two, I will be in a lot of trouble. I know he’ll move the armor from Area 9 to Area 8 to make the ideal fire group, but he may want and give my Anti-Tank Gun in Area 11 an
alternate target first. His fire at Area 11 has been most effective which isn’t helping matters either. Area 11 is now wide open to attack. His next move will probably be to bring in the armor from Zone B. I’m considering reinforcing with the two RASC units while they’re still able to do so, since they won’t be able to make it if he moves in. However, I don’t think the area is worth it and it looks like he’s going to get 2 Victory Points. My only chance is my fire from Area 16. I will also save my last unit in Area 7 to add a little more fire. It’s time to wait.

PASS

[13]—Because of the early success that Don has achieved with his attacks on area 11, an interesting dilemma arises for the British player. Should the ATG in area 11 stick around for a shot at an APV or move to area 6 while it still has a chance? Moving it will free the 6-2-8s to move to 15 and/or 8, but will allow its use in later game turns rather than risking its loss now in Close Combat. This is a difficult decision to face. It boils down to whether Alan feels he can adjust on to area 11 and for how long. At this point, I feel conservative is in order and would move the ATG to area 6. Given their extremely low mobility, this may be the last opportunity to move it.

[14] One turn too late. The only way I can try for area 11 now would be to commit the PzKw IIs in the teeth of his AT Gun. That would limit the reinforcement of the area to his seven adjacent uncommitted units which I could match with eight 4-6-6s. Any losses to the tanks could be reinforced with armor from area 25. The drawback is that I have no engineers left to give me the advantage in next turn in fire setting attempts and I would be blocking my own artillery. I will try it and decide whether to stick it out or withdraw entirely based on the results of his AT Gun fire.

Three 4-5-8s [B] 11

[15] I’ll bet Don wishes he’d put the third HYW WP in Area 15 instead of Area 29. It would have improved the AV of Area 15 by one. While one may not seem like much difference, in this case it could be important. Glad to see I can still predict his moves. Not that it helps me that much. If his armor survives in Area 11 it will be big trouble for me next turn because they could move into Area 6. I also guessed right about him giving my Anti-Tank Gun an alternate target. Unfortunately, I must pass up the possible shot at a 6-2-8. It is too important to try to get the armor out of Area 11. Hope I don’t regret it next turn when the fire group in Area 8 lays me.


[16] We stay. I will move the 1st Co to D to burn an impulse in hopes that he will possibly fire his last unit in area 11 at my tanks before I commit my infantry. That will be the point of no return as it will be my last chance to withdraw the armor and still leave me with a target for my artillery on turn 2.

1st Company [B] D

[17] I’m three for three so far. What happened to the Moon luck? Don usually likes to move one Company to Area 28, so at least I’ve stopped something this turn. Putting the Company in Zone D is not that much different though, and there is an advantage because he will get a modifier on the Random Events Table. I will move two units to Area 16. This will give me the option of moving some of the units in Area 16 into Area 11, though I’d hate to do it. We are now playing the waiting game, both hoping the other will move into Area 11 first. The other reason for this move is to try to draw some fire from Area 15. After he commits his units in Area 15, I can make my decision about what to do with my units in Area 16.

Two 4-7-5s [4] 16

[18] I can’t farm it out much longer. I have to have the advantage in 11 before I dare pass.

LR/4 Pht [9] 11

[19] He makes the first move. My move from Area 14 to 16 was well timed at least. Now I will fire from Area 16 with a single unit and the two committed units will help protect my firing unit (easier to spread out any casualty points between three units instead of one if he fires into Area 16).

4-7-5 [16] vs 11 at 0 [6:9] = –

[20] I have to move the Bohlt HQ to position before I can risk a pass. Unfortunately, that will just give him four free +1 shots with his units in 24 before it really pressures him to do anything in area 11. Maybe I’ll be lucky.

2-6-5, 4/4 Pit, 2-6-4 [8] 15

[21] Unbelievable. I haven’t hit a thing so far. Don is assembling another fire group in Area 15. I can fire at Area 15 from Area 24 since this will be the only targets my units will get and if it would nice if he didn’t start turn two with all of his units adjacent to my units. Would also like him to commit those units in Area 15.

4-7-5 [24] vs 15 at +1 [8:7] = [K 3-3-5; R two 3-5-5s and 2nd Co HQ to 25]

[22] Ouch. So much for luck.

2/5 Pit, 3-5-5 [B] 15

[23] Some luck at last! Finally forced him to make a move as he had to reinforce Area 15. I can fire at Area 15 from Area 24 since this will be the only targets my units will get and if it would nice if he didn’t start turn two with all of his units adjacent to my units. Would also like him to commit those units in Area 15.

4-7-5 [24] vs 15 at +1 [8:7] = [R two 3-5-5s to 25]

[24] Can he get multiple casualties three times in a row? We’ll see.

3-5-5, 3-5-5 [B] 15

[25] Now we’re getting somewhere. Again, his move is forced as he brings in his final reinforcements from Zone B to Area 15.


[26] Hooray! Now if he just misses with his last shot.

PASS

[27] His pass means he is refusing to commit his units in Area 15, waiting for me to finish firing my units in Area 24.

4-7-5 [24] vs 15 at +1 [7:8] = –

[28] Two passes in a row? This will put him on the horns of a dilemma. He can get out of it, but at least he is forced to commit himself first. His dilemma will worsen if he misses again.

PASS

[29] He passes again, waiting to see what I’ll do next turn now that all I’ve fired all my units in Area 24. I have to try to retreat his units in Area 11 so he has to bring reinforcements in.

4-7-5 [16] vs 11 at 0 [5:4] = [R 4-6-6 to 10]

[30] One more time. He is really doing me a favor by not firing the unit in 11. That unit is still my “escape card” out of area 11.

PASS

[31] One clumsy casualty point last impulse. He doesn’t even have to bring in a replacement. Try again.

4-7-5 [16] vs 11 at 0 [9:7] = [R two 4-6-6s to 10]

[32] I would move all five 4-6-6s in 15 into 11 except that perhaps the presence of the fire capability in 15 has something to do with his not firing the unit in 11—something I still hope to delay as long as possible.

As long as I am willing to accept losses, two units are all that is necessary to satisfy casualty point losses efficiently.

Two 4-6-6s [15] 11

[33] Two casualty points is better. Now he moves in some replacements. If I can retreat the two units out of Area 11 with one shot, he will then have to commit the others from Area 15. He’s gambling I won’t get lucky here, cause he could get hurt with this piecemeal commitment (two units less able to absorb casualties than five).

4-7-5 [16] vs 11 at 0 [10:10] = –

[34] His miss allows me the luxury of another Pass impulse. As long as I can take out his only infantry unit in Close Combat the AT Gun will die automatically at the end of the Close Combat Phase. As long as I maintain this superiority he can’t afford to pass.

PASS

[35] The chit draws have been amazingly bad for me this turn, working out almost perfectly for Don in a number of cases. For instance, on this even attack we both drew a ‘10’, and on several +1 attacks Don has drawn a chit with one more than me. He is now content to wait and see if I can retreat his units out of Area 15 before doing anything else. He knows I won’t pass out the turn at this point and he’ll have time to move his other units (especially the armor in Area 9) later.

4-7-5 [16] vs 11 at 0 [4:6] = –

[36] My luck has been good this stretch but I think he errs by not moving into 11 for Close Combat, rather than taking these shots. If he fails on his next shot I am almost certain to take the area in Close Combat.

PASS

[37] Not only is he passing, he’s smiling (or as close to it as Don ever gets).

4-7-5 [16] vs 11 at 0 [4:10] = –

[38] I’m going to pay for this present good fortune down the road, which is another good reason to limit my infantry in 11 to two units; it cuts my losses should he connect on a 12:2 exchange in the chit draw process.

PASS

[39] I’m pulling my hair out from the inside. From him I get more passing and smiling. Time for me to make some repositioning moves. I will move C Company HQ to Area 26 to prevent an assault on Area 23 next turn, so I can move some of the units out of Area 23.

2-8-5 [17] 26

39—I would have to agree here with Don. The ACs in area 25 could move into 26 and have a 67% chance of eliminating the HQ with little threat of return fire, except by the HQ itself in Close Combat. Only about 17% chance of eliminating the AC. Possibly a better move would have been to move it to area 23 and leave it there. The area could still have a defense of nine from adjacent attacks next turn, ten at night.

[40] He apparently intends to pull out of 23 entirely, in order to block me from it with units in 26 and 28. As long as my armored cars remain uncommitted I may be able to spoil that notion.

PASS

[41] It is unusual for the German player to pass so much with so many uncommitted units. But his pass is the correct play at this time. I will move the two RASC units to Area 6, building this Area up for a possible assault or armor infiltration next turn.

Two 3-6-5s [5] 6
[42] I am becoming somewhat nervous that he will answer my pass with one of his own. I cannot move my 6-2-8s until I've assured the destruction of his AT Gun. Moving one more unit into 11 takes away the 16% chance of not taking area 11 in Close Combat were he to pass now. 4-6-6 [15] 11

[43] What a whiny move. One unit from Area 15 to Area 11. Don is really being cautious, or maybe he thinks this is my game to be unlucky. Or, optimistically, maybe I'm wearing down his patience with my last few positional moves. I'll make a couple more before firing my last two units into Area 11. I will move the FD Am from Area 17 to 6. I want all the units with a 6 DV together so they don't weaken more than one area. And Area 6 will not be an artillery target next turn so this is the perfect place. 3-6-5 [17] 6

[44] I shouldn't do anything until he commits his last two units in 7 and 11. PASS

[45] He passes, but not smiling this time. I will move one of the 1 Bde units from Area 23 to Area 6. This unit's 5 AV gives me a nice attack against his armor if they move in next turn. 5-8-5 [23] 6

[46] Nothing has changed. PASS

[47] Aha. Got a sigh out of him that time. Can't decide whether to move one more of the Bde units as well. They won't be attacked this turn, but they will help support Area 22 next turn from where they are. 4-7-5 [23] 24

[48] It is really unusual for the German player to get away with this many PASS impulses before the end of a turn. Usually it is the British player who does the majority of the passing, but . . .

[49] Was that a moan? Wish I could delay some more since it seems to be getting to him. Better fire though. 4-7-5 [11] at 11 at +1 [6:5 = 2] [R two 4-5-8s to 14]

[50] Finally he commits area 11 totally. The choice of how to satisfy the casualty loss was a painful one between retreating two infantry, eliminating one, or taking the losses in armor. The decision would have been easier had the casualty loss been 3 or 4. I did not want to withdraw the tanks as I was hoping to move my armored cars into 26 in an attempt to destroy his one unit blockade in Close Combat, but he still can prevent the loss of area 11 by moving his last 4-7-5 into 11 to bring down the odds of Close Combat. I need the last two infantry units to fire on it should it move into 11. Two 3-4-10s [25] 11

[51] Two casualty points wasn't enough last impulse. It allowed him to surprise me by retreating two of the armor units to Area 14. After I went to all the trouble of building up Area 6 against an armor infiltration. Then I thought that maybe after seeing my fire group in Area 11 at his uncommitted units in Area 19, but decide the risk is not worth the potential gain. The west part of the board does not seem to require any risks on my part. PASS

[52] Hooray! That frees me to move my armor. I won't fire on 11 with my two remaining 4-6-6s because it would allow him to retreat the 4-7-5 and I now have a guaranteed kill in Close Combat. 6-2-8 [9] 8

[53] Another miss. He finally moves his armor units from Area 9 to 8. Now it's my turn to pass as I know he won't end the turn before moving his other armor units. PASS

[54] With the AT Gun and the artillery spotter gone I can now afford to move fire support into 15. 6-2-8 [9] 15

[55] Moving his armor to Area 15 establishes a good fire group there. I will move my 1 Div HQ from Area 22 to Area 24 so I can fire my artillery into Area 15 next turn, which will probably be my first impulse move. 2-8-5 [22] 24

[56] Ouch! I forgot that he hadn't committed his other artillery HQs. Guess where he'll try to use his artillery next time. I should have moved both 6-2-8s into area 8. I had enough infantry there to form two fire groups. I am firing my armor in 19 because he can't fire back. The infantry will have to remain uncompromised; they would be too susceptible to return fire. Hopefully, I will be able to retreat one of his units which will then be vulnerable to attack from the Arnhem artillery. 6-3-10, two 3-3-10s [19] vs 3 at 0 [10:5 = -]

[57] He decides to make the first move in the west by firing at Area 3. Now I can fire all my units in Area 18 at his uncommitted units in Area 19. If he fires back, I should be able to handle the casualty points in retreats. Tp A Plt, 2-8-4 [18] vs 19 at 0 [7:9 = -]

[58] I'd like to jump into 26 but I don't care as long as his engineers in 23 are uncompromised. Will fire my 4-6-6s in 15 at -1 apiece in hopes of retracing some units out of the way for next turn. 4-6-6 [15] vs 16 at -1 [11:6 = -]

[59] He fires at Area 16, knowing he doesn't need to move any more units into Area 11 (he will automatically eliminate my infantry unit with his six units and then the Anti-Tank Gun will also die automatically because it is alone in the area). I am considering firing my units in Area 3 at his uncommitted units in Area 19, but I fear the Arnhem artillery. I decide to pass and don't particularly care if he passes out the turn or not at this point. PASS

[60] At least I burned one of his 11s repositioning a minor attack. 4-6-6 [15] vs 16 at -1 [6:7 = -]

[61] At least I've had some luck against his attacks. I am just waiting for the turn to come to a merciful end.

PASS

[62] Moving into 8 with the armored car to increase the size of my fire group there. 3-3-10 [25] 8

[63] He adds one more point into the fire group in Area 8. I hope this is it.

PASS

[64] I'm not going to get a shot at a committed unit with the Arnhem Garrison artillery so maybe I can make the shot. AG6 vs 4 at -1 [4:5 = -]

[65] It isn't. He fires his Arnhem artillery but I survive intact. I consider firing my platoon in Area 4 at his uncommitted units in Area 19, but decide the risk is not worth the potential gain. The west part of the board does not seem to require any risks on my part.

PASS

65—Leaving the lone British 4-7-5 in area 4 seems to be a waste to me. It could have been used to help area 6 or, better yet, moved into area 18 it could stiffen the western defense as a whole and be out of harm from the Arnhem Garrison attacks. A less conservative move would be to shift it to area 3. If the German units in area 19 choose to fire on it at even odds, the British units in area 3 could respond with either three even attacks or one +3 attack. This would be true if the unit moved into area 18 instead; but such is a much more conservative move since the other committed units already in that area could absorb any casualties resulting. A move into area 3 would not have this advantage.

CLOSE COMBAT

The Germans destroy the lone British 4-7-5 in area 11 automatically and destroy the AT Gun as well. The AT Gun does eliminate a 3-4-10 in Close Combat but the 4-7-5 is unable to extract any further price from the Germans. Area 11 falls to the Germans who collect two bonus victory points.

The automatic loss of the ATG in Close Combat brings the turn to a disappointing end for the British and two VP's for the Germans. Turn two will surely see a large fire group attack from both areas 15 and 8. This, topped off with the German ability to assault numerous areas during the night game turns, makes the picture even bleaker. But things are not all bad; areas 24, 16, 6 and 7 are heavily occupied and the night does bring a +2 modifier to adjacent fire attacks and reduced artillery attacks. In addition, it would seem that the threat to the north is only in terms of the potential that the 1st Company enjoys from zone D. The situation in the west is still a stalemate as is normally the case at this point of the game.

Let's turn briefly to the luck of the draw and see if either player had any advantage there this turn. Because the players used the chit system (22) for fire combat, we must look at something other than just the actual numbers drawn. First, let us look at the number of successful fire attacks each player had compared with the total attacks attempted. A success is defined as a positive chit draw; in other words, a positive net result when the defender's chit is subtracted from the attacker's. The ratio of successes divided by the total attempts made is what I will call the "success percentage" and should be 50% on the average. Don was five of sixteen for 31%, not too good when one
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considers that there were about twice as many British attacks as German attacks during turn 1. If we also look a little deeper at these attacks, we see that most of these were at about even odds. So let’s examine another ratio I call the “casualty ratio”. This is the actual number of casualties divided by the “expected” number of casualties. Don had a ratio of 1.14 while Alan’s was about 1.63. In Close Combat, the ratios were very much the same—1.0 for Don and 1.3 for Alan. It’s obvious too early in the game to tell anything, but we can see that during this first game turn, luck played only a minor part.

GAME TURN #2

The British roll a 5 for Reformed Units and thus miss getting one (they needed a roll of 3 or less). The Random Events dice roll was a 10, but is modified to a 9 due to the German presence in zone D over mixing the British TA.

[1] My choice is whether to fire my artillery into Area 19 or move a unit into Area 11 to block his route into Area 6. I think he will fire his artillery first though, so I should have time to make several moves. Attempt to call in 1 LR RA fails on a roll of ‘5’.

[2] The move of 1st Co into zone D has paid off already as it prevented British reinforcements from arriving, as well as freeing three of his engineers in zone 23 as he no doubt fears my usual foray into area 7. He didn’t waste any time trying to call in his artillery on my 6-2-8. I will use my artillery just as quickly—although once I get off a shot I don’t think he would waste units by moving into 15 to block two night artillery barrages. HKG(7) vs 16 at 0 [9:3 = -]

[3] Can’t believe we rolled a ‘5’ again for my artillery. If I don’t get a shot luck this turn, the game will be over. Hope the artillery roll isn’t an omen. His artillery fire has no effect, but using the same chits, if I had gotten my artillery, the attack would have caused 9 casualty points. Grumble, grumble. I will move a DEF unit from Area 7 to Area 5 to block any forward retreat possibilities if he moves into Area 6. I’m playing a guessing game here, assuming he’ll call in the rest of his artillery as his next two moves. I still can’t decide whether to move a unit into Area 11 or not, or wait and let him come into Area 6 if he wants to and then surround him by moving a unit into Area 11. The danger is that he surrounds my units in Area 7 at the same time I surround his units in Area 6. And it is for this reason that I will use a unit from Area 7 to move to Area 5.

4-7-5 [7] 5

3—Once again the British waste a unit and move. As it now stands, a German unit in area 6 forced to retreat could retreat to 5. But a British unit in area 17 would stop this just as well as one in 3 (B.335). Besides, at this point there are no German units in 6, so why not wait until such time as there are and then follow that impulse with a move to area 17 or 5, or even better, hope that by that time a British unit has retreated to 17 or 5.

[4] I don’t understand that move at all. What is he worried about? HKG(6) vs 16 at -1 [7:9 = 1] [R 4-7-5 to 17]

4—There, now the British wouldn’t have had to worry about a German retreat forward from area 6 to 5. The unit retreated to 17 will prevent it.

[5] His artillery forced me to retreat a unit to Area 17 but this is okay since I needed a unit in Area 17 anyway in case he attacks 16 instead of Area 6 or 7. I have decided not to move into Area 11. If he moves into Area 6, I can always move my units from Area 7 into Area 6.

PASS

[6] I think I’ll save my last artillery shot in hopes that he’ll eventually give me a better target. On with the assault in the southeast. I’ll be content if I can take area 7 this turn for another 2 victory point bonus and still be in position with big kill groups in the daylight of turn 3 when I will control the Tactical Advantage (TA). 6-8, 3/7 & 3/8 Pts, 3-3-10, 2-6-5 vs 7 at +6 [5:9 = 10] [K two 4-7-5s; R three 4-7-5s to 6, one 4-7-5 to 5]

[7] He doesn’t go for the encirclement. Just makes a big attack on Area 7 with his fire group in Area 8. His AV was 15, one short of the biggest possible AV of 16. In my favor was the night turn modifier and that this fire group may not have anything to fire at in turn three. But ten casualty points is a disaster. I am forced to move a unit from Area 16 to Area 7 to fill the hole. I won’t hold the area with just one unit but I must occupy it. His units in Area 25 could move to Area 7 if I don’t. Also, I want him to come in with a strong force here. If so, he can use so many shots at Area 7 from Area 6. It begins to look like he has no intention of attacking Area 6.

4-7-5 [16] 7

[8] I think Alan erred in not using his TA for a reroll. That attack represented my only real chance of hurting him this turn. If he forced a reroll and won the subsequent chit draw I would have had a tight on my hands even to take area 7 this turn. Now it should be relatively easy. His move of a blocking unit into area 7 shows he is more concerned with keeping me out of 6 this turn than the merits of 7. Nevertheless, it is a good move because it keeps my training units in 15 and 25 out of 7 so that I can’t form an efficient kill group in 7 next turn. The best tactic, of course, is to occupy the adjacent area with a 6-2-8, two other armor units, and six cheap infantry plus a HQ for a maximum attack of 16, leaving a strong force of 4-6-6s behind them to leapfrog into the attacked area. Now I will have to form a kill group with 4-6-6s, and the 3-5-5s will be unable to reach the attacked area in daylight. Nonetheless, I will be content with the easy capture of 7 and two more VPs.

LR/4 & LR/5 Pts [10] 7

[9] As a quick aside, Alan’s move does not keep the 3/7 British out of Area 6. He forced a reroll and they still have the 3/7 British in Area 6. I think he may also want to follow up with three armor units to form a kill group with 4-6-6s, and the 3-5-5s will be unable to reach the attacked area in daylight. Nonetheless, I will be content with the easy capture of 7 and two more VPs.

[10] Moving in three more 4-6-6s into 7 to absorb losses from his evening fire from area 6. My units in Area 11 will move the 2-7-5 artillery HQ and the 3/7 Boflt PIt into 7 after he’s shot his wad. I may also want to follow up with three armor units to complete the kill group. I won’t fire into 7 any more because his delay unit is going to die automatically in Close Combat.

Three 4-6-6s [11] 7

[11] I really didn’t think he’d commit this much so soon. Especially units out of Area 11. I must block Area 11 now to seal off Area 7. With a unit in Area 11, he will only be able to reinforce Area 7 with the units from Areas 8 and 10. If I can get some good results against Area 7 with my fire from Area 6, I might not have to worry about a German retreat forward from area 6. I really don’t want to give up two more Victory Points. The unit in Area 11 will also protect Area 6 which was my original reason for this move.

4-7-5 [24] 11

[12] He is determined to prevent me from reinforcing 7 as strongly as I’d like. I can’t stop him, but I like being able to use my artillery in 11. A kill is a kill, and if he moves in another unit I can probably manage another kill in Close Combat. I’m not sure blocking the formation of my kill group in 7 is going to be an efficient use of force for him.

4-5-8 [11] vs 11 at 0 [12:6 = -]

[13] Wonder how many units he’ll use to try to get this unit out of his hair. Hope I can hang on through a few more attacks. It could get costly moving replacement units in. Now I can use my firepower against Area 7.

5-8-5, RASC PIt, 3-6-5, and 4-7-5 [6] vs 7 at +6 [7:5 = 8] [K 4-6-6, R five 4-6-6s to 9]

[14] Ouch! I wasn’t expecting him to form a kill group of his own. His previous occupation of 11 complicates matters—forcing me to retreat to 9 instead of 10 from where they could have once again moved into an enemy occupied area next turn through area 11.

3-4-10 [11] vs 11 at -1 [5:7 = 1] [R 4-7-5 to 16]

[15] Whatdya know, it worked. Now I will have to commit his units from Area 8 to Area 10. I’m sure he would like to have moved his units from Area 12 to Area 7, but he must get rid of my unit in 11 first. I have to replace the unit in Area 11. Will be interesting to see which units he uses to fire at my unit this time.

4-7-5 [24] 11

[16] I guess I’ll have to be satisfied with two more kills in Close Combat.

10R(6) vs 3 at -1 [10:2 = -]

[17] Am surprised he fired his artillery into Area 3. I really doubt he is thinking about assaulting this area. I will fire my A3 unit in Area 6 at Area 7 since this unit may not have anyone else to fire at. If I can manage to clear out Area 7 I will definitely reinforce from Area 16. All he has is one platoon in Area 8 to fire at Area 7. My nuisance unit in Area 11 has worked wonders; even his armor in Area 14 can’t get to Area 7.

4-7-5 [6] vs 7 at -1 [7:4 = 2] [R two 4-6-6s to 9]

[18] Some good comes from everything. If you have to draw a 2, it’s best to draw it on offense in a unit that can benefit from it. I will fire his platoon in Area 7 and hope it draws him into a fire fight. I need that consolation though, because all of a sudden I’m in danger of not even taking area 7, let alone establishing a fire base. Despite his protestations to the contrary, Alan is in good shape.

3/7 PIt [8] 7

[19] My attack was successful in clearing out Area 7 and forced him to move the platoon in Area 8 to Area 7. Since he didn’t use the units from Area 10 first, I have the feeling he may be thinking about an assault somewhere else as well. Wonder if he’s looking at Area 16. I see his raise and move one unit to Area 7 which should be just enough to deny him the Victory Points as one of my two units should survive the close combat. It is also interesting to note that if the Area remains as it is, he would have two ‘5-6’ shots and I would have two ‘5-6’ shots even though he has 4 units to my 2. He only has two
more units to move in, so I will not have to move more than one more unit in no matter what. I don't want to overcommit to this area since Area 16 is looking weaker all the time.

4-7-5 [16] 7

[20] So much for controlling area 7, but by fighting for it he is almost doing me a favor. Any survivors in the area will be in range of my kill group in 8 next turn. By moving the engineer unit in, I hope to encourage him to move yet another unit into 7. If he weakens area 16 sufficiently, I can try to move in from 14, 15, and 25.

5-7-6 [10] 7

[21] He ups the ante with one more unit so I call and move in one more unit.

4-7-5 [16] 7

[22] I can't reinforce 7 further. The only unit which can reach it is the 2-7-5 which must be moved into 11 (once I guarantee that I will be the sole occupant of 11 next turn) to establish my artillery base. To do that, I must first occupy area 16. The question is when. My five units in 10 and 12 cannot do anything else except move into 11 this turn, and yet I only need four (counting the engineer) to guarantee a kill on a single 4-7-5. Therefore, by using three to fire on area 11, I really am committing only one more unit than would be necessary to secure area 11 anyway. Hopefully, I can kill an extra unit this way and siphon another unit out of 16 or 24 to block 11 again. Then, I'll move into 16.

LR/6 Pit [12] vs 11 at +1 [3:11 = 9] [K 4-7-5]

[23] He doesn't want to move the HQ from Area 10 into Area 7 because I'm sure he'd like to have it free to call in artillery next turn. His fire killed my unit but wasted six casualty points so I guess I shouldn't complain. The platoon that fired won't be next to any of my units next turn. I have to replace my unit.

4-7-5 [24] 11

[24] What a waste--6 casualty points hit nothing but air! Now to move into 11. The lone 3-5-5 is held back to move into 11 to complete the automatic Close Combat kill.

Three 3-5-5, 2-6-5 [25] 16

[25] I was right about the assault on Area 16, but I'm not happy about it. I have stripped Area 16 so I need some luck. I must fire now even though he will be able to return fire from Area 15.

4-7-5 [16] vs 16 at +2 [9:12 = -]

[26] Just burning an impulse moving into 11 to see what develops in 16.

5-7-6 [12] 11

[27] I'm sure he would have liked his HVY WP in Area 16 instead of Area 11. Wouldn't be surprised to see him fire soon with his units in Area 15.

4-7-5 [16] vs 16 +2 [2:8 = -]

[28] Committing myself to an artillery base for next turn.

2-7-5 [10] 11

[29] His last move was no surprise because Area 6 will be the main artillery target next turn. I think he has missed his best chance to fire at Area 16 now though, since after I fire one more unit this impulse I will have four committed units there. Two or three would have been an easier target. I guess he's leaving his options open, as he can either move or fire into Area 16 with his units in Area 15.

4-7-5 [16] vs 16 +2 [9:11 = -]


3-5-5 [25] 11

[31] Incredible! Three misses at +2 in a row. Moving another unit into Area 11 gives him an automatic elimination in Area 11, but I would guess he'd think the unit needed in Area 16 more.

4-7-5 [16] vs 16 +2 [8:7 = 3] [K 3-5-5]

[32] Risking an even attack with the 6-2-8 in hopes of gaining a retreat which will improve my Close Combat odds and thereby the chances of taking area 16.

6-2-8 [15] vs 16 at 0 [8:7 = -]

[33] Finally got some casualty points last impulse, but three wasn't enough. Out of four +2 attacks I got three casualties, five below average. Firing his armor in Area 15 at Area 16 is a surprise and a relief. He's passing up a chance for a 14 AV attack with his armor in Area 15 (or even Area 16: +6 attack). Couldn't resist a giggle. The way things are going, it may be my last. Now it's time to wait for him to either fire or move his other units in Area 15, (which I expect him to do before firing my units in Area 24). I will probably reinforce Area 16 with one of the 1 Bde units from Area 23 and the unit in Area 4. I would like to make him pay somewhere and Area 16 is my best chance.

PASS

32 and 33—I would have to agree here with Alan about Don's attack on area 16. The payoff is greater with the +6 attack than with firing the 6-2-8 and moving a couple of units in.

[34] I could play games and move in one unit per impulse which would be smarter in terms of winning the game, but for the sake of brevity...

Two 4-6-6, 3-5-5 [15] 16

34—With the reduction of German units in area 15, the British can now take a chance and move a unit in (now that there are fewer units to open fire) and block the retreat of German casualties from 16—assuming, of course, that the British can inflict some casualties there.

[35] He moves a platoon out of Area 15. Good. Now I can fire my units in Area 24 since his remaining force in Area 15 is not enough to deter me. But wait, I almost missed this one. I can move the HQ from Area 26 to Area 15 and surround his units in Area 16. Then I can fire and get some kills instead of just letting him retreat back to Area 15.

2-8-5 [26] 15

[36] Good move! I should have moved the 26 PIt in last impulse also. He now blocks my reinforcement of 16. I couldn't really have moved out of 15 and left me without covering units next turn anyway, but I did want to move the tanks in 14 into 16. By firing at the blocking unit in 15 I don't really give him anything a sure free shot in Close Combat. If I kill or retreat the unit, he'll have to sacrifice another to block my armor from reinforcing or allow them to do just that.

2-6 Pit, 2-6-4 [15] vs 15 at +2 [7:9 = 4] [K2-8-5]

[37] He promptly kills my unit, but I will move in a substitute to block his retreat again. This also prevents his armor from Area 14 from aiding in the attack on Area 16.

2-8-4 [24] 15

[38] More importantly, he now has a temporary encirclement on my units in 16. Although he can reinforce 16 against my armor excursion and nail them in Close Combat I have to at least try to temp him away from firing on 16.

Two 4-5-6s [14] 24

[39] One more surprise for Alan. His move is to give me an alternate target with my units in Area 24. I'm not falling for his ruse. I will try for kills against his surrounded units.

4-7-5 [24] vs 16 at 0 [6:7 = -]

[40] At least he missed his first shot. I might as well pass because I know he won't.

PASS

[41] His pass was barely audible; preferring to suffer silently. How about a good result to make him pay for a change?

4-7-5 [24] vs 16 at 0 [8:6 = 2] [K 2-6-5]

[42] I should probably pass as this move will release his engineers to reinforce his Close Combats, but I want to set up a kill group in 19 for next turn just as badly as I want to survive the Close Combats. At least now I won't have to fear a pass impulse.

1/1 & 1/2 Pits, two 3-5-5s [D] 19

42—Don surprised me with this one, as I'm sure he did Alan. Movement into area 27 would seem to be the more logical move. By moving the entire 1st Company into area 22, he could pave the way for the engineer and grenadier units in 29 which could set fires in turn 3 and possibly neutralize the ATG there.

[43] One crummy kill last time. My move into Area 15 has not paid off since I will have lost two units there in exchange for eliminating one of his in Area 16. I felt sure he would assault Area 22 with his units from Zone D. Moving them to Area 19 is a very cautious move. I can move a unit to Area 24 now that it looks like this area is safe from attack. I would like to get two 5-6's shots at his armor in Area 24 so I need four units, but I will move one unit at a time to let Don make some other moves.

2-8-5 [22] 24

[44] It will take more than that to get a nibble out of me.

PASS

[45] Too smart for me. I hope I'm not stripping the north and west too much.

3-7-5 [22] 24

[46] Nothing has changed.

PASS

[47] I don't think he really wants the turn to end, so he must figure I have other moves to make. He's right, of course.

4-7-5 [4] 16

[48] Nothing I can do will improve my position unless he fires first.

PASS

[49] The sly dog. I can move one unit out of Area 23 since he probably won't be able to mount much of an attack on it next turn either.

5-8-5 [23] 16

[50] If even one unit survives his even attacks I will have the advantage in Close Combat. A good gamble I think—especially if he commits another of his engineers prematurely.

3-5-5, 2-6-5 [D] 28

[51] He is trying to get me to move another unit to Area 28 or at least draw some fire. He may still be considering attacking either Area 18 or 22. I definitely won't move another unit to Area 28, but if I don't fire I will probably lose my blocking unit in there during close combat. So, I'll bite.

5-8-5 [23] vs 28 at +1 [5:8 = -]

[52] If he scores four or more casualty points on the first fire, I'll give up and retreat out. Otherwise, it's all or nothing.

AR/2 Pit, 5-7-6, 2-7-6 [29] 22
52—With the move of the 1st Training Company to areas 19 and 28, I don’t feel this was a very good move. It is strange to see a gutsy move like this after a somewhat cautious move to 19. To come out of this without some casualties or loss of position, Don will have to be fortunate.

[53] I can’t believe he’s attacking Area 22 today. Don didn’t attack the British from Zone D as well? I think he’ll regret his lack of patience. Lots of fire at him. Hope it goes better than it has up to now.

5-7-5 [22] vs 22 at +2 [10:9:3] [K 2-7-6]

54—I’m making a multiple move to reinforce 22 and attempt to block his reinforcing from 18. However, it chances a +1 AT Gun attack which would not have otherwise hit a unit. I don’t like it, but I’ve gone this far.

4-6-7, 2-7-6 [19] 22; two 3-3-10s [19] 18

55—Another gutsy move! This doesn’t seem like the same fellow that’s been playing the game on the eastern side of the board. Once again his moves don’t seem to match the conservative move of the 1st Training Company earlier into area 19. If Don does not pay for these moves, he will have to consider himself “lucky indeed.”

56—A good start for once. He has lots of options left, but so do I. I was just wondering what he was going to do with his units in Area 19 when he moved them. All of a sudden Don is playing very aggressively again like he did in the first game. He would be better to sit still in the west but aggressive play is a trap the German player falls into. It is my job to make his moves a mistake with some good fire.

5-7-5 [22] vs 22 at +2 [11:6 = 7] [K 4-6-6, R rest to 19]

57—Alan is quite right. He has a number of options here. I think, though, that the HQ unit in area 28 should attack first to see what happens there and, if successful enough, the 5-4-5 in area 23 could fire at 22 before the units there would have to fire. This in turn would give the units in area 22 the opportunity to fire at any German unit(s) that were forced to retreat into adjacent areas. They could even be used to reinforce other threatened area by moving during a later impulse. Granted, this is a lot of “ifs”, but I feel it gives a few additional possibilities to Alan.

58—So much for that. I should have passed from impulse 52 on. Poor patience on my part. I deserve what I’m about to get.

PASS

59—Don knows his moves were a mistake now. His main hope now is that his armor in Area 28 can escape.


60—Nothing to do but grin and bear it.

PASS

61—Now he’s passing, not mindng if the turn ends, though he knows it won’t.

2-8-5 [28] vs 28 at 0 [10:11] = –

62—Is it possible I will get out of this unsaved?

PASS

63—Three misses in a row at Area 28. I think I had my whole supply of luck for the turn in Area 22. He passes again but must be thinking of firing the armor unit in Area 19. He may be hoping I’ll fire my units in Area 18 first. I will fire the Tp A platoon and HQ in Area 18 as a group against his two armor units hoping to kill them. If I fire one unit at a time he will just retreat immediately even if I don’t get any casualty points.

Tp A Plt and 2-8-5 [18] vs 18 at +4 [8:5 = 7] [K both armor]

64—Near good set of reasoning on Alan’s part.

65—I paid the price for my folly. I had hoped to retreat at least one of those armored cars, but Alan did the right thing and attacked in a kill group.

3-6-10 [19] vs 18 at 0 [2:6 = 4, but TA 9-10 = 1] [R 3-7-10 to 4]

66—I made him pay in the west, that’s for sure. He lost two armor units and two infantry units and got nothing. I’m sorry he decided to fire his armor unit in Area 19 at my committed units in Area 18 because the four casualty points hurt. I couldn’t afford to retreat everybody out so I had to give him the Tactical Advantage. He would get it at the start of next turn anyway. But he will have a free shot in close combat, even though he can’t use it for a fire impulse. The reroll was acceptable.

3-7-5 [22] vs 28 at –1 [5:6 = –]

67—I might as well shoot my last shot. The Arnhem garrison isn’t much of a threat to prevent his firing from 3 to 19 in that it isn’t likely to do much more harm to 3 than it would to 4.

AG(4) vs 4 at 0 [7:10 = 3] [K 4-7-5]

68—I wish I’d moved another unit into Area 28 now. He has a 50-50 chance of eliminating my unit in close combat and if he kills it he will open up the north a little. He calls in his ARNHEM artillery so now I can fire my units in Area 3.

4-7-5 [3] vs 19 at 0 [6:3 = 3] [R 1/2 Plt to 1]

69—Nothing left, but to look forward to Close Combat. The only obvious strategy to follow there is to preserve my TA for an area in which I have the most to gain or the least to lose. As the chances of winning an area outright (7) are less than 4/6, I will use the TA only to force a reroll should he get one of my engineer units, and only then because I will get it back automatically next turn.

What can I say? 4-7-5 [3] vs 19 at 0 [9:9 = –]

69—And so it goes.

PASS

No comment.

PASS

GAME TURN 3

The British get one reformed unit automatically which he places in area 17, but is unable to roll the 3 or less needed to qualify for a second 3-6. The Random Events dice roll is 7 which is modified by the German TA to a 6 for No Effect.

[1] Possession of the TA gives me the first impulse which is an advantage in this case because I will be able to make an artillery attack before he can move. I am normally under the circumstances it is unlikely he will move to block my artillery at all because I have three different spotters in position and can guarantee all three placements if I use them as my first three impulses.

HKG9 vs 6 at +3 [12:4 = +]

[2] Getting by that first artillery attack is a good start to the turn. Maybe this is my turn to be lucky, even if only means that his artillery will have no effect. I have a choice between three moves for my first impulse. The two obvious ones are to either call in my artillery on Area 19 or move a unit into Area 11. The artillery attack is a big +4 and with any kind of decent result it is likely he will have to give up the Tactical Advantage right away or retreat most of his force and end his effort in the west for the turn. Moving a unit into Area 11 is an attempt to prevent his HQ there from calling in any more artillery on Area 6. However, I am leery of this now because it might get costly if he retreats/kills the unit easily and I have to keep sending in substitutes. The third possibility is to call my artillery in on Area 11 in an attempt to weaken his force there and then move a blocking unit in next impulse, having given it a better chance to survive. Tough choice. Decide to call in the artillery on Area 19.

Attempt to call in 1 LR RA fails on a roll of ‘6’.

2—Actually, Alan only has two choices here. Without an eligible HQ unit in an adjacent area, there is no way he can call in artillery on area 11.
The chits have been kind to me. Although my 3-5 attack didn't score, it did burn his 12 chit while getting rid of a 4 for me. More importantly, he has failed to get his artillery again—thus losing the chance for a +4 attack on area 19 which would have broken my kill group there. I deeply regret my folly in not passing at the end of turn 2. Trying to force the issue in the west not only cost me 6 units needlessly (including four very valuable armor units), it robbed me of position as well. Those four missing units included an artillery spotter—which when coupled with the kill group in 19 may have caused all kinds of mischief on his western perimeter. My brief moment of impatience has cost me dearly and I have blown a hard-won advantage.

HKG8 vs 6 at +2 [5:6 = 3] [K 3-6-5]

Incredible. I have lost three big attacks by not being able to call in my artillery for the first three turns. Forget about being lucky this turn. I'm going to pass up the chance to occupy Area 11. He's already fired two of his artillery at Area 6 and so letting him fire the third is no big deal. Nothing to do but wait at this point.

PASS

One more try to pry something loose with my artillery before committing any troops.

10R8 vs 6 at +2 [11:7 = -]

He missed two out of three and he's out of artillery. Let's see what he's gonna do now.

PASS

What a disappointment. My massed artillery fails to clear the way. This is my last big attack. If I can gain a +3 on the chit draw I can still force him to waste 1-2 Plt's before I have to move. If it fails, I have no advantage at all. I might consider use of my TA if I get a negative result.

6-3-10, 1/1 Plt, two 3-5-5s [19] vs 3 at +4 [7:9 = 6] [K two 4-7-5a]

He goes back to the fire group strategy. When he declared his intention, I was glad he was committing everything, giving me options with my units in Areas 3 and 18; but I couldn't help but think he should never have had the fire group in the first place I had gotten my artillery. The result erased any joy and compounded the regret. No reason not to attack from Area 19 and Area 20, so I will. My units can't be fired at and the area can't be assaulted.

3-7-5 [18] vs 19 at 0 [10:8 = 2] [R two 3-5-5s to J]

One short. I think I must settle for taking area 7 this turn, trying to gain favorable attrition, and gaining position for turn 4. If I can dislodge the 4-7-5 in 7 he will expose many units to fire should he attempt to block 7 again. I chose a +2 attack so as not to expose my engineer—the training units taking any casualties that his return fire generates.

5-7-6, 3/7 Plt [7] vs 7 at +2 [3:5 = 4] [K 4-7-5]

Killing my unit in Area 7 was worth the four units it took to do it. It frees all my units in Areas 8 and 9 to move up or assault Area 6. If he hadn't eliminated him the first time, he might have had to waste quite a few other units (in Areas 8 and 11) to get him out. Uncommitted blocking units are tough. And I can't afford to replace him. A committed unit is a much easier target.

4—Whoops! I'm sure Alan doesn't see it, but by not leaving at least one unit in area 5, he is allowing area 6 to be surrounded by a German move from area 16 to 31. And this is not considering the two VP's area 5 would be worth if the Germans could hold it. I would reinforce first with units from Area 5. If I wait and he assaults Area 24, these units wouldn't be able to get there. This may discourage him from assaulting since he can only get three armor plus a HVY WP in. Will move the HQ from Area 18 to Area 24 if he does not assault to allow my artillery to be called in on Area 15 next turn. This may force him to assault Area 24 with the armor.

2-4-7-5s [5] 24

PASS

Although they have little chance of remaining I must move into 7 with a show of force before passing.

LR/4 Plt, two 4-6-6s [9] 7

He begins setting up a fire group in Area 7.

PASS

Of course, I will stay in 29 if he continues to miss. In fact, it is now worth reinforcing 29 with the 1st Co HQ which will not lower the area's defense but will give me an extra unit to retreat should his last shot from 22 score.

2-6-5 [28] 19

This is enough to make my hair fall out. Not only am I missing my shots, but the chits are coming out perfectly for him again. Oh gosh, I just saw something. He must have missed this one too. If he moves a unit from Area 16 to Area 5, he would surround all my units in Area 6. I would have to try to dislodge the unit and would have to commit units firing at it because he could turn fire at him. He could also retreat units in Area 5 to Area 4. Cannot believe we've both missed this. Good thing he didn't pick up my thoughts during his impulse. Better fill this hole immediately.

3-6-3 [17] 5

22—It is about time. Alan was very fortunate indeed that he discovered his error before Don. It was unlike both players of such experience to let so many impulses pass without seeing the opening.

Ouch! What a chance I missed! A move into 5 from 16 would have surrounded area 6, and forced him to commit units to dislodge it. Now I must pass and wait for him to take the first shots at 7 and 15.

PASS

He is safe passing, knowing I have lots of shots to take.

3-7-5 [22] vs 29 at -1 [7:7 = -]
25] His miss gives me the luxury of another Pass. PASS

[26] Three for three misses that is, against Area 29. Frustrating. Time to shift to the east where I have lots of shots.

4-7-5 [6 vs 7 at +1 [6;5 = 2] [R two 3-5-5s to 8]

[27] Firing my last uncommitted unit in 7 does nothing to hurt my defense (unless he decides to move into 7 to deny me the area) and gives me a chance for a kill.

4-6-6 [7] vs 6 at +1 [4;6 = 1] [R 4-7-5 to 5]

[28] Normally, I don't think he would have fired at my unit in Area 6 with his last unit in Area 7, but maybe for the first time in his life, Don Greenwood is feeling lucky. I can't blame him. He's on a roll.

4-7-5 [6] vs 7 at +1 [9;12 = -]

[29] He still has seven even or better attacks left. My chances of staying in 7 seem slim. I'll move one unit in as casuasley fodder. I am hoping to delay the commitment of my remaining armor as long as possible.

2-6-5 [8] 7

[30] His move was probably just to use up the impulse. Need some good shots before he brings in more units.

4-7-5 [6] vs 7 at +1 [7;7 = 1] [R 3-5-5 to 8]

[31] I can't get over the number of passes I am taking in this game; it's almost a complete role reversal from normal games.

PASS

[32] All my last attack did was improve his DV from 2 to 3.

4-7-5 [6] vs 7 at 0 [4;4 = -]

[33] I should have been more patient in moving into 19 with 1/2. If I had tried my Arnhem artillery first and scored with a +1 attack he would have had no chance to draw units from the big battles in the east.

PASS

33—Actually, I feel the Arnhem artillery does more to intimidate than anything else. By not using it, Don prevents the 4-7-5 in area 3 from firing. For if the unit does fire, the artillery can respond with a +2 attack advantage. Firing the artillery at the unit before it is committed has a poor chance of success and, more importantly, allows the 4-7-5 the freedom of firing without threat of retaliation.

[34] I'm thoroughly disgusted. Four attacks have produced three retreated units. My last shot coming up.

7-4-6 [6] vs 7 at 0 [12:9 = 3] [K 2-6-5]

[35] Now that he has only one attack unit over my defense value of 4, I'm willing to take the kill rather than retreat.

Two 4-6-6 [9] 7

[36] Now he moves more units into Area 7. Time to miss some shots at Area 15.

4-7-5 [24] vs 15 at +1 [5;11 = -]

[37] Still nothing for me to do until he commits his units in 16. If I fire my units in 11, he could move into 11 from 6 to block my artillery.

PASS

[38] It is very unusual for the German player to pass this much, but this has been a very unusual game.

5-8-5 [16] vs 15 at +2 [2;8 = -]

[39] As much as I'd like to take a chance at a kill, I may be better off in the long run waiting for more units to be committed so that if I score multiple casualty points he'll retreat several units. Besides, the next time he fires his defense will go down.

PASS

[40] I can't believe he's not going to fire at my committed units in Area 16. Now is the perfect time, with a committed unit to shoot at; the best chance of killing units.

4-7-5 [16] vs 15 at +1 [9;7 = 3] [K 3-5-5]

[41] If I can gut it out through one more attack, maybe I can begin trading shots with him.

3-5-5 [28] 29

[42] Even when I do get some casualty points, it is nice and nest. Two casualty points are better than three, since he then has to retreat two units or kill one for less than it is worth. Three makes life too easy for him. He makes another delaying move while I keep shooting. I cannot believe he isn't going to fire at Area 16. After I fire this time, I'll have three committed units which should be able to absorb any casualty points. Maybe he feels that the more committed units I have the more I have to lose.

4-7-5 [16] vs 15 at +1 [4;4 = 1] [R 3-5-5 to 25]

[43] I'm willing to move into 16 in force—knowing full well I can't stay—but it will draw fire and I'll be able to retreat into useful areas for turn 4. If he should miss I'll be able to fire my uncommitted units in 16 without exposing them to 2-casualty-point kills one at a time.

LR/6 Pit [12] 16

[44] He moves in reinforcements to Area 16 now that I've fired a lot of my units there. I will alter my fire to attack these committed units.

4-7-5 [17] vs 16 at 0 [6;12 = -]

[45] Now to see if I can't knock someone out of 16—not that I have any delusions about staying there myself.

6-4-6 [16] vs 16 at 0 [5;5 = -]

[46] He begins to fire back in Area 16. Need to kill or retreat more of his units to give me the edge in close combat. Each unit I fire improves the chances of survival of my committed units.

4-7-5 [16] vs 16 at +1 [11;7 = 5] [K 4-6-6, R two 4-6-6s to 11]

[47] Damn! Five casualties there isn't cheap! If he had scored four I'd have retreated altogether and abandoned the area. Now, I might as well return fire and if I get lucky I can reinforce the area with my engineer, but that's a long shot.

4-6-6 [16] vs 16 at 0 [3;9 = 6] [K two 4-7-5s]

[48] My last fire was good. Unfortunately, it was better. Hope I can keep the ball rolling. At least I've managed to clear out Area 16.

4-7-5 [16] vs 16 at +1 [9;5 = 5] [K two 4-6-6s]

[49] So much for my plans to retreat. At least I took down two British units with me—a fair exchange.

6-2-8 [8] 7

[50] I can't complain about the results in Area 16. I actually had two good shots in a row. Meanwhile, he establishes another fire group in Area 7.

4-7-5 [16] vs 15 at +1 [7;9 = -]

[51] My fire base in 15 is now secure. I'll build it up with the armored car. I still can't afford to fire area 11 as long as he is free to move into the area with a blocking unit. I'd accept a double pass move now quite willingly.

3-3-10 [8] 15

[52] He builds up Area 15 a little more now that I cannot fire at it. I will move my Anti-Tank Gun to Area 22 while I have the chance. I hope this will tempt him to move his armor into Area 23. I also need to do something just to fill this impulse, waiting for him to make his last few moves. I want to fire the 1 Bde and RASC platoon in Area 6 at either Area 7 or Area 11 but must wait till his units in Area 11 do something first. If he decides to move these units into Area 16, I want to have at least one shot at them.

6x1 [23] 22

[53] Predictable. He doesn't want to commit himself in 6 any more than I do. In the meantime I can save a unit from death in Close Combat, and burn an impulse at the same time.

3-5-5 [16] 15

[54] He retires out of Area 16, conceding it for this turn. A minor surprise. Will delay again by moving a unit from Area 22 south. This should tempt him a little more to move his armor to Area 23 where I would have one shot and then at worst a two on two close combat situation.

5-8-5 [23] 22

[55] He's still playing for time. I'm willing to pass to prevent his getting four free shots out of 6.

PASS

[56] He doesn't go for it. I don't have any more delaying moves. Time for a decision. I will fire at his uncommitted units in Area 11 and try for kills. I'm giving up a +5 versus the committed units but the uncommitted units are choice targets and with a lot of luck he'll have to either eliminate a HVY WP or his best artillery HQ.

5-8-5 and RASC Pit [6] vs 11 +3 [8;6 = 5] [K 3-5-5 & 5-7-5]

[57] Surprise! I had not seen how vulnerable I was to such an attack. His big gamble pays off. I could have taken four casualty points, but not five. What a choice! Retreat my artillery out of range or lose an engineer. Tough price to pay for taking the last shot.

4-5-8, 3-4-10, 2-7-5 [11] vs 16 at +1 [7;9 = 5] [K 4-7-5]

[58] Something works. He was forced to make the exact decision I wanted him to and he decided to lose the HVY WP. I would have had the same number of kills had I shot at the committed units. A pat on the back for me.

PASS

[59] No use taking a -1 artillery shot which will free him for a +1 infantry shot on 19. Pass and end the impulse. Attrition is exactly even at 22 units apiece, but my position is good. I need reinforcements from the Random Events Table.

PASS

With the losses that the British are taking, it is hard to find error in any of Alan's play this turn, or even in the game to this point. Don can hardly be faulted for his play this turn, taking full advantage of the situations by forming no less than three large fire groups for the coming game turn. In addition, he has positioned his spotting ILOs in locations from where they can do the most damage. As Alan states, Don is in an excellent position for turn 4. Taking advantage of the favorable chit draw to the fullest, Don has been able to gain this fine position as the even attrition rate takes its toll on Alan's resources. The only outright error made by either player this turn was inexplicably overlooked by both players and corrected before it had any real effect on the game. This was, of course, the British move on impulse 14 which left area 5 vacant, allowing a possible German move from area 16 to 5.
Turning to the luck element this turn, I’m sure Alan doesn’t need to hear any statistics to know that Don had a successful game turn once again. Well, here they are anyway. Don jumped to a “success percentage” of 66% this turn, something he can hardly complain about. His “casualty ratio” was only average at near 1.47. Alan’s “success percentage” hit 42% while inflicting casualties a little better than Don with 2.06. More important than the numbers here are the actual losses both players have seen. An even attrition of 22 units at the end of the third turn is a sign of things to come in later game turns. For successful British play, the German losses should be about 50% higher at this point in the game, the British are going to have difficulty holding out for eight game turns as it now stands. The next few turns will have to feature a decided swing in luck towards the British for Alan to dare hope. This is especially noticeable if one studies the German positions on the map. With an opponent such as Don, one cannot expect to see many mistakes; so, I’m afraid luck is all Alan can realistically hope for.

While assembling the final rule booklet for STORM OVER ARNHEM, I found that “Designer’s Notes” had to be omitted because of space limitations. I would therefore like to take the additional space allocated to me here, to finish those notes and expand in detail on some of the more important, if not more interesting, rule sections of SOA. Basically, SOA presents in a game format a very unique style of 20th century combat: “street fighting”. Few games have dealt with the subject and none in the highly playable form presented by SOA. With the isolated nature of the small number of combat troops involved (roughly three battalions), the plight of Frost’s men seemed ideal for simulating street fighting at a scale that would do justice and yet maintain a high degree of playability, thus attracting the casual gamer.

Some players familiar with the battle may wonder why the game does not start earlier and include the much publicized German assault across the famous bridge. Contrary to the players in the game, the Germans did not realize until much later the full strength of the British bridgehead. Add to this the extremely exposed nature of any forces attacking across the bridge, and one can easily see why the attack had virtually no chance of success. The recreation of such a hopeless task added little insight to the portrayal of the situation at the bridge. More importantly, it would have added to the overall playing time, so the decision was made to drop this portion of the battle from the basic game. For players interested in simulating this highly glorified portion of the battle, a special variant version entitled “The Crossing” is included elsewhere in this issue.

Contrary to what I feel to be the case with many wargames, SOA was designed primarily to be read and enjoyed. I was not concerned with trying to impress players with my knowledge of the battle but rather with the simplest method of presenting significant elements of the siege. I have always opted for the simpler—but not simplistic—approach to a design problem. Many times this took several rewrites and long hours of playtesting. As an example, let’s look back at what did and what did not see print in the final version of SOA.

In its original format the mapboard, which is undoubtly one of the most detailed and accurate ever printed, had over ten-times its current number of “areas”. Each block, which in the published form is roughly one area, was divided into several small areas. This was discovered to be the wrong direction and quickly changed for one all-encompassing reason. At this level of detail, players would have been forced into concentrating on the wrong (to my way of thinking) concerns in the game. With SOA, I was not interested in showing how best to successfully traverse a street with a squad of men. You, as the player, are not a squad leader, nor even a company commander; rather, you are placed in a position of responsibility for the total defense or destruction of the bridgehead perimeter. To have the players spending a large portion of their time with tactical trivia would be mis-emphasizing the basic intent. The British player should be making decisions on which blocks to defend and the forces to commit, not on which buildings to occupy and which floors to place firegroups on. It is the designer’s major role and responsibility to clearly show the players, through the game system, the elements he understands to be the most important to the situation being depicted (i.e.: what the players should be getting out of the game, besides pure entertainment). And what better way to do this than by concentrating each player’s time in those areas the designer feels are most relevant. In simpler terms, if a player must spend 60% of his playing time calculating supply conditions, then that should be the major intent of the game: to show the importance of supply on the situation. If not, supply should be simplified to a point where it no longer dominates the play.

Another item that was eliminated, though much later in the design, was the effect of terrain on combat calculation. Originally, I had modifiers printed on the mapboard in each area based on the predomin ate terrain feature. Not much problem there; but when I got to the final mapboard prototype, I found that 90% of the areas had the same dominant terrain: buildings. Making all the terrain effects identical and incorporating them into each unit’s defense factor, I was able to eliminate one more DRM, which affected the overall game in only a very minor way.

This leads me into an area wherein I think some players may have a misconception. It has to do with the calculation of the defense value (DV) for an area under fire attack. It would seem that some players feel that by using the defense factor (DF) of the weakest unit in an area, it somehow weakens any stronger units also occupying the area. [See, for example, the Arnhem Series Replay in this issue.] I hope to show that this is not the case. As an example, let’s compare two different areas, one occupied by a single 4-6-6 and one occupied by a 4-6-6 and a 3-5-5. Many players contend that the second area suffers due to the presence of the weaker 3-5-5, since it must be used to calculate the DV of the area rather than the 4-6-6. It would seem, at face value, that the 3-5-5 has indeed weakened the area. But, taking it one step further, assume an attack of 6 on each area. The net casualty result in the first area is zero, no effect. In the second area, a net casualty result of one would here require the 3-5-5 to be eliminated and the 4-6-6 still con-
trols the area. An attack of 9 would obviously still
determine the 4-6-6 in the first area; but the 4-6-6 in
the second area had to be determined at a later
occasion, once again, of the 3-5-5. I think it is quite
true that the advantage gained by the inclusion of
weaker units in an area is the increase in potential
casualty point absorption, easily offsetting the
reduction in DV.

But as mentioned only in passing in the original
"Designer's Notes", I think the basis for the
Movement Factors deserves further discussion
here, if for no other reason than to answer ques-
tions regarding the slight but quite important dif-
fierences in the values among units. Street fighting
was a slow and deliberate process which the MFs
and the DV would reflect. Moving from house-to-house
was best done by "mousselhing". This involved
breaching walls to allow unobserved
movement between adjacent buildings. Movement
along open streets could only be done safely in areas
away from the fighting or under cover of darkness.
German training units and the British paratroopers
both have lower MFs due to a combination of their
street fighting inexperience, lack of direct armor
support, and the difficulties the British incurred in
moving within their perimeter once German snipers
had infiltrated the area. A vehicle's cross-country
speed and whether it was fully-tracked or not were
major considerations in resolving vehicular MFs.
Equally important, however, were the conditions in
which the vehicle had to operate. The narrow streets
were soon clogged with hastily erected barricades
and rubble from shelled buildings. Such obstacles
often had to be negotiated in a "buttoned up" mode.
It must also be remembered that city combat is
primarily an infantry battle. Without infantry
support, armor fought at an extreme disadvantage
and was under constant threat of ambush. For this
reason, armor generally moves at a rate which
allows for the necessary infantry support to keep
men in action.

Earlier I made reference to the fact that fighting
at the bridge was, for the most part, isolated from
the remainder of the battle. Even so, I did not want
the movement around the immediate bridge area
to be totally restricted by the physical edges of the
playing area. For some reason or another, many
players believe that taking a unit out of the perimeter
zones was the only way of doing business. These
zones abstractly represent the area surrounding the
site of the actual battle. With their inclusion, neither
player is totally restricted by moving only within the
30 numbered playing areas and artificial blocking tactics are
rendered useless.

The artillery rules require little explanation with
the possible exception of the special uses and
restrictions of the Arnhem garrison unit and the
British access die roll. The garrison unit represents a
battery of direct fire guns across the river. Because
of their direct LOS and their lack of indirect fire
capabilities, these are restricted to the indicated
areas but need no on-board HQ unit to spot targets.
The British access die roll stems from the radio
problems the British encountered throughout the
battle as well as supporting support requests to the
same battery, which was engaged elsewhere and
needed to husband its dwindling ammunition
stocks.

A short note or two in closing regarding the
Victory Point levels seems justified. In general, the
German player must do better than his real life
counterpart anyway. A victory is defined as all
national objectives achieved and the German
player's efforts will yield a Marginal British Victory.
Although the British failed to hold a bridge across
the Neder Rijn, they did manage to slow the
German reinforcements moving toward Nijmegen
and prevented a successful counterattack in that
area. The German player is therefore rightfully
stuck with the burden of attack. Partly due to this
and partly due to the many subtleties of the game
system, the German side is the most difficult to
master after the initial lessons of proper perimeter
defense have been learned. Even so, both players
will pay dearly for faulty tactics. Don't be
deterred by the early encounters; when played by
two experienced players using the proper strategies,
the game will yield a very tightly balanced contest
to the very end. During our pre-
publication testing in which twenty copies were
distributed to various groups around the country,
reports started to meet in the middle with hotly contested
Vic torial Victories for either side being commonplace. I feel that
you too will soon experience such.

AH PHILOSOPHY

Continued from Page 2

Mark Herman, Director of Victory Games,
worked most recently as Simulations Publications' Vice President for Strategic Studies, in which situa-
tion he was responsible for the procurement and
fulfillment of simulation-related contracts with
the US government and other major consulting
corporations. In his seven years with Simulations
Publications and the BDM Corporation, Mark has
designed and developed more than a dozen SPI
games. In addition, Mark's design of the Strategic
Analysis Simulation is currently enjoying great
success as a learning module for officers of the
National Defense University.

Mark is a graduate of Parsons School of Design, brings numerous talents to Victory Games. A talented illustrator, his art has
appeared on the covers of various adventure
games and magazines. As a senior member of the
product development staff at Simulations
Publications, John is credited with the design and development
of a great variety of games of diverse
subject matter.

Drawing on the hotbed of wargaming activity
found in the great state of Texas, Victory Games has also secured the services of designer-developer Eric Lee Smith. A graduate of Pratt
Institute, and a promising young photographer,
Smith's work at Simulations Publications utilized
his talents as a developer and rules writer.

Long-time gamer and role-playing expert Gerry
Klug rounds out the Victory Games design staff.
Gerry's work on Simulations Publications' fantasy
tales to the release of a much-improved second
dition of that product, and his management and
rules-writing skills have been the primary factors in
the critical success of follow-on products in that
role-playing system.

Bob Ryer, for five years the managing editor
for Simulations Publications, will continue in that role with Victory Games. His experience in editing some 75 magazine issues and
over 150 games—in addition to innumerable
advertising and promotional pieces, books, and
sundries—will be applied to the challenge of
development in the new format and rules engine
for the new firm. Freed from the burden of Simulations
Publications cluttered publication schedule,
Bob plans to continue his pursuit of the perfect
game rules, custom designing formats for each
game according to its requirements.

Charged with the heady task of instituting
and maintaining a graphic design and art production
department, art director Ted Keller brings to Victory Games some three years of experience as assistant
art director at Simulations Publications. During his
tenure at that firm, Keller—a veteran of the US
Army graphics division—handled the assembly of
political cartoons, ad
vertisements, rules, and magazines. His knowledge
and experience in the field is vast, and his participation
in the Victory Games design scheme
assures a standard of quality that is unlikely to
depart from the industry.

The former Vice President of Marketing at
Simulations Publications, Jerry Glitchenhouse, is
charged with the promotion and marketing of Victory Games products. Working closely with the
design staff and art personnel, Jerry has already
begun to devise schedules, providing his invaluable
diligence for the design of particular titles. It has
been largely Jerry's perception of the gaming public's
needs that directed Victory Games on its early
and avowed course of providing hard-core wargames,
in addition to innovative science fiction, fantasy,
and role-playing products.

Trish Butterfield, wife of designer John, is also
an alumna of Simulations Publications. Her decided
talents for virtually every type of business office
function—from handling personnel problems
to dissuading enraged designers from rash acts of
fluky LOS rules—have long since proven her worth.
At Victory Games, Trish will handle God knows
how many tasks in addition to her full-time work
with Jerry Glitchenhouse in marketing.

While a brisk pace of new product publication
is central to the Victory Game plan, the group's
inherence on thoroughly researched, exhaustively
tested work is paramount. A key phrase that
emerges from early design conferences has been
"the games will dictate the schedule." Victory Games
places enormous trust in its own ability to
fulfill this precept, without retarding the flow of
new releases.

In order to retain its integrity as a group devoted
solely to game creation, Victory Games will publish
no product unless it is perfect. For the foreseeable
future, the compact staff will refrain from expanding—either in
number or in functions—until the Victory Game line has
established itself, both critically and popularly.

In its first public appearance, the staff of Victory
Games will attend the 1982 Origins, at which
time all the company's personnel will be available
for questions and discussion. Also planned for the
convention is an on-going demonstration of one of the company's first
planned release—Gulf Strike.

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THE LONGEST DAY
AN OVERVIEW

By Jim Burnett

... A BIG, BIG game about a big, big battle! Available from Avalon Hill for just $65.00 (AH ad copy).

In times of inflation and penny-pinching personal finances, everyone seems to be intent on getting the most value for a dollar. Why should I cough up $65 for a game? After all, didn't I get TACTICS II a few years ago for less than the 10% postage charge will be? I can get a good steak for four dollars a pound and a fairly good car for less than that. Why should I pay eight dollars per pound for THE LONGEST DAY?

If you wish to look at mere components THE LONGEST DAY delivers over 2500 counters, seven mapboards, three large and one small set-up charts, four CRT/TEC/etc. charts, a 48-page rule book, and a six-sided random number generator. All this does, however, is create a big heap of cardboard and paper.

The myriad of counters provides the most novel portion of the hardware. The familiar counter symbology from the days of the classics is gone. In its place is a close derivation of the actual German WWII system. The new symbols sharply delineate unit function designations. (Refer to Figures 1 and 2 for an example.) There are over 60 individual types of combat units; most of these are either battalion or battery size within three main movement classifications of non-motorized, motorized, and tracked and are further divided into three functional classes of infantry, artillery, and armor. Headquarters units are typically division or corps level with a few brigade/regimental HQs thrown in. These counters are round—as are the supply unit counters—for easy distinction from the other types during play. There are five different types of fortification counters available to the German and eight types of air and naval units for the Allies. A dozen functional counters are included to keep the game flowing smoothly. When you consider that almost all of the counters are also back printed, there are over 4500 separate counter faces in over 100 different types and categories—no small amount.

The counters are also functionally arranged so that their information content reflects the practical need for such information. The numerical data for attack, defense, and movement factors, stacking factor, and range for indirect weapons is presented in larger type than that presented for historical information. It may take a small amount of time to become used to a new system, but it's well worth the effort.

The mounted mapboards cover the entire Normandy campaign area from Cherbourg to Cabourg, Avrances to Argentan at a scale of two km/hex. A total grid of about 90 by 75 hexes (ap-
proximately 115 by 95 miles) gives some idea of the
immensity of the campaign. The terrain
represented includes clear ground, bocage, hill,
forest, swamp, flooded, and river with the
appropriate movement and combat effects for
each. Movement is affected by the terrain and the
road and rail net which covers the board. Roads
come in three types and the rivers are bridged.

Other miscellaneous “goodies” on the map are
beachhead and port designators and the symbol
for each unit that begins the Normandy Scenario
and the Campaign Game on the board. The
Cherbourg area units are shown on the
appropriate set-up chart. These counter pictures are
quite unobtrusive—so much so that at times one
must search a bit for a particular location. A
minor correction is that the names of MKB Nich
and Pair are swapped. In addition to all the other
terrain presented, there are over 2000 individual
named cities, towns, and villages. While the names
are not generally applicable to play, the amount of
research in the game is reflected by this fine touch.

One area in which THE LONGEST DAY really
impresses the buyer is in the charts. There are a
total of ten front and back sections of 14” x 11”
heavy stock with a true wealth of information.
One side of each of the three-section charts is totally
devoted to one of the first three scenarios. These
are complete with units, strengths, reinforcements,
and a full scale map of starting positions. Scenario
Four is on a single-sized card (front and back) which
is also used to set up the Cherbourg area for the
Campaign Game. The reverse side of the three
cards contains information and off-board move-
ment tracks necessary to play the Campaign
Game. One card contains the time track, weather
cycles, port logistics, naval gunfire and
bombardment tables, Allied aircraft deployment
and utilization, railroad interdiction and status,
and the Allied invasion units and their destina-
tions. The other two cards are each devoted to
Allied and German unit entry, strategic disposi-
tion, replacements, and supply entry. Since each
counter is pictured in its individual location, the
use of the four cards and the mapboard counter
start locations would allow the buyer to quickly
determine if any counter was lost, and to replace

Figure 1.

unit—quite a feat considering the number of counters
available.

The four smaller (9 x 12”) cards included pro-
vide each player with a copy of the Terrain Effects
Chart, Fortifications Chart, Combat Results
Table, Combined Arms Modifier Chart, Remnant
Exchange Chart, DD Calamity Table, and
Debarkation Capacities Chart plus a summary of
all possible Air Operations and a Standard
Sequence of Play. As these charts are strictly for
information, they will contain no counters during
play.

Last, but certainly not least, is the rule book.
Perhaps the major fear engendered so far is that
the player will be inundated with the detail of informa-
tion contained in the game. Not so! This game is
definitely a “friendly monster” and its information
is not for the purpose of burying the player, but to
allow him to use it to actually simplify play. To wit,
the rule book only contains eight pages of basic and
scenario rules, four pages of Campaign Game rules,
and five of optional rules and variants. Two pages
are devoted to the scenario setup and another six are
detailed information and examples. At this point,
the wise reader has added in one page for the front
picture and wants to know why we are up to only a
26-page count. The remaining sections of the
rulebook serve to give the thoughtful player insights
into the research, design, development, and
playtest of the game—with two pages of Player’s
Notes from playtesters, eight pages of Designer’s
Commentary and Notes covering the entire scope of
the game with unit and equipment charts interspersed
for some German divisions, a five-
page index to the rules, five (!) pages of annotated
bibliography used in the design, and two pages of
Game Design Annotations which cross-references
the rules and comments to the appropriate
bibliographical reference. Thus, if a small annota-
tion number is spotted in the rules or comments, a
quick look will provide the designer’s rational and/or
the reference(s) used. In a time of critique of
designers/developers for their game conclusions,
here is an easy road for the player or reviewer to
take sources and draw conclusions as to the merit
of design and development decisions made based on
fact.

So what do you get for your money? I think a
lot. A lot if you just count the research and develop-
ment and information, a lot if you just count the
physical components, but a real deal if you count
the fact that you have a playable game in the end.

THE GAME

Yes, the game is playable. A monster game can be
a monster because of the complexity (per
SQUAD LEADER) or size (as is THE LONGEST
DAY). (We hereby ignore the combination of the
two as just not practical nor playable.) In either
instance, it is capable of becoming a great game. It
may also be noted here that we speak of the Cam-
paign Game with its full use of all counters and 87
possible (but not probable) turns. The scenarios
themselves are not monsters, encompassing three to
seven turns and 150 to 500 counters (the sole excep-
tion: the setup time for the Normandy Scenario
which is the same as the Campaign Game and takes
about one and a half hours). All this means that you
can spend a day with a scenario or a couple of
months with the Campaign Game and still get the
flavor of the game and be involved in the beauty of
the whole system.

To provide some order to the rest of this article
and some basis for those who own the game to
follow along, the comments on the form and effects
of the rules will be presented as they are in the Rules
of Play (i.e., by scenario). Comments on the play of
the scenarios will be held until that section would
normally be reached in the rule book. It is hoped
that this will provide a better overview of the game.
SCENARIO 1: MORTAIN

This scenario introduces the basic sequence of play, which is simply separate player segments with movement, opposing player mechanized movement, and combat. These are repeated for the other player to constitute a distinct game turn. One of the major features of this is the enemy mechanized movement phase in which the opposing player may press uncommitted tracked units to the defense of a particular hex. Let this seem too powerful, this addition to defense strength is made without exact knowledge of attack plans and, perforce, means that some armor must have been kept in reserve in the first place. It is no good to stockpile armor if the defender has a paucity of counters anyway. All in all, this is worth the comments and considerations presented later.

Movement is fairly standard game fare per the TEC. The real change from the norm is that only units which have enough points may move, instead of the usual ability to move one hex no matter the situation. A ZOC (see below) also stops movement, but a unit can move from one ZOC to another. Mechanized movement (as mentioned above) is conducted during your opponent's portion of the turn but can only be used by tracked units which are not adjacent to an enemy unit or disrupted (see Scenario 2). Road and bridge movement are handled normally (per the TEC). Strategic road movement, however, doubles the effective movement points to which units which make their entire move on a road and do not come adjacent to an enemy unit. Note that a combination of strategic road and mechanized movement could conceivably allow a unit to go 128 hexes during one day. In practice, this equivalent of a Sunday drive from Cherbourg to Caen is not probable, but it does serve to illustrate the speed with which units can be transported when necessary; an illustration which is brought to focus when one must expend all of MPs just to move a motorized unit across a river into bocage country. This will be presented even more succinctly during the play of the game when planning unit positions and moves for three to four moves in advance is necessary. The importance of the road net can be seen when you realize that a foot unit can move to the other side of a division be allowed to spot for their own divisional artillery. Support fire is used in conjunction with an attack by regular combat units. It is added directly to the attacking factors, but is not affected by intervening rivers.

Defensive fire is an outstanding bonus in the game. Not only is it used during the enemy portion of a turn, but also may be directed against individual units rather than whole hexes. Thus, an attacking unit with a high attack factor but a low defense number is a perfect target for defensive fire. Anytime a defender has unused artillery units, an attacker cannot be truly confident of his planned combat. Still another advantage of ranged artillery fire is that it does not suffer losses, therefore a 1-2 defensive fire searching for the magic '6'on the die is a perfectly acceptable shot. Ranged artillery units are inverted to display the "FIRED" side of the counter after fire and are reset on the appropriate reset phase. It is the experience of this author that if defensive fire is conducted in some orderly fashion (east-west; north-south, etc.) that it is an advantage to do re-inversion during the defensive fire phase so that defensive factors may be easily seen. Also note that some of the nastiest units in the game are the tracked artillery, which may move to a new location, then fire at a possible attacker before the attacker's combat is resolved. These units should be held in reserve at all costs.

Each military organization works (?) by chain of command. Since TLD is really a divisional game, the important HQ units are divisional. Per the supply rules below, divisional units will wish to

Figure 3.
No army fights without supply. No TLD unit attacks at all, defends or moves very well without supply; defense and movement are halved. In keeping with the divisional nature of the game, the supply counter is round-just like a HQ. It must be located with the HQ to provide supply for the units. Supply is used by half values and the counters are back printed to reflect this. A suggested addition to the rules for more realism would be that once a unit has used its nine battalions, three independent units, its artillery group plus two battalions and artillery batteries from adjacent divisions on either side of its front using only a half supply and even have one artillery battery saved for free defensive fire. Corps do not have this "free" privilege.

The eight-hex supply route serves to limit both the scope and range of units; but one trick to employ with corps units is to use one HQ for movement and another for combat. The supply rules also serve to take the sting out of defensive fire as there are few times when a side can afford this massive supply use for an extended period of time. As one more change to the rules, drop rule II.D.13 since it is easy to keep up with where remnant counters came from by using the appropriate portions of the game charts. This also allows more use of a partially-depleted division by keeping the number of independent units available at three. While most players will find that during the scenarios the supply rules will not cause any great difficulty, these will come into their own in the Campaign Game as one of the most important factors of the game.

Most disruption that affects play is a consequence of air or naval fire (defensive fire does cause disruption but the units are immediately undisrupted at the end of the turn). As such it will occur in the Normandy scenario and the first part of the Campaign Game against fortifications. The German player must always remember the possibility of disruption anywhere near the coast. As variations of the disruption rules, remove only one disruption counter from a unit during a reset phase and/or remove none if the unit is not in supply.

**SCENARIO 3: OPERATION COBRA**
The addition to the turn sequence is the Allied air/naval phase following the replacement phase.

The significant point of this phase is that Germany does not have one.

Combined Arms Modifier rules favor the player who plans ahead. The allocation of armed independent units to infantry divisions will give a plus C.A.M. and the reserve armor units which can rush to the aid of crucial points in the line can negate that advantage for the defender. Note that for the attacker, INF on the C.A.M. chart is also INF + ARTY. For added realism, consider the attacker armor vs. defender INF + ARTY C.A.M. to be -2 only if the defender's artillery is either AT type or over 100mm HE.

Airpower is just that—at least for the Allies. Anything that you have and your opponent doesn't is nice. The air rules for the scenarios will call for few choices. Each air unit has its own role to fill. The tactical air support units should be spread out over a few hexes, unless the Germans have no armor reserve or defensive fire. Interdiction is best used by groups of three aircraft at road junctions near bridges and by single aircraft on bridges. Remember that you have only eight interdiction counters and the use of all of them spread out to cover a length of important road is better than one clump. Carpet bombing is a mixed blessing since the terrain torn up is almost as much of an obstacle as the defending units. Use carpet bombing to destroy units in conjunction with other attacks for maximum effect. The seven possible bombing patterns are shown below (Figure 3). If possible, pick on HQ and arty counters with your bombing. At times, an attack behind the lines is not a bad tactic either.

**SCENARIO 4: THE FALL OF CHERBOURG**
Naval bombardment is another Allied blockbuster. Range and spotting are its only drawbacks. Note that by the bombardment table, a smaller number of factors applied over a given area give better chances of hits, but factors tend to...
like to assault Pointe-du-Hoc with the Rangers, giving a bit more spread to the attack against Omaha Beach and increasing the threat of a quick link-up. One impressive Allied advantage is the Allied follow-up movement allowance which can be used to capture Carentan on the first turn. The US player who does not do this is just plain incompetent.

The other portion of the beach assault is the bombardment operation. Tables of suggested naval and air attacks, coastal artillery replies, and expected results are given (Figures 4 and 5). Note that the −1 modifier for forts does not apply to rockets. Figure 6 shows the coastal artillery positions which have fire on a beach or port. From the figure, it is readily apparent that 9/1716, 2/1260, 10/1716, and MKB LONG batteries must be suppressed as soon as possible. The use of 31 factors of naval bombardment to supress 8/1716 and 1/1260 pays huge dividends by lowering the factors of coastal fire against several beaches to another odds column. Paratroopers may be able to take care of 1/1265, 2/1716, and 2/1255, but these are not really as essential as the first two. The suggestion that has been made in THE GENERAL (Vol. 17, No. 6) to hold HQ units off the board until coastal artillery can be supressed by first turn combat has some merit. Just make sure an opportunity to make a long advance is not lost by being unsupplied during the second turn movement phase. As a variant here, consider units which are more than eight hexes from their HQs to be out of supply for the first turn also. Essentially, even though there is supply for all units available on the first turn, they still cannot act effectively unless they are in contact with their HQ. Allied units whose HQs are off the board are considered to be in supply if they are within eight hexes of a beachhead counter. This option should only be used if the Allied player is the weaker since it gives the Allies a distinct advantage. It would cause quite a change in German defense and movement.

German coastal artillery is a major factor in German planning for the first few turns of this scenario. Since the operation to be performed is strictly mathematical, the only thing required of the German player is not to overlook any units. Figure 6 should help with this. A copy of the chart with which to mark off the batteries as they are lost is very handy. Also remember that coastal artillery only fires at port or landing boxes, but its defensive factors are always active and no supply is needed.

Likewise, the Allies should not forget any of their special assault units. The combination of British naval power and the special armored units should allow any fortification to be easily overwhelmed.

All in all, these rules for this scenario should be viewed as an exercise. Simply remember to follow each sequential step and the Campaign Game for which you are practicing will go smoothly.

THE SCENARIOS

The clarifications and Addenda in Vol. 17, No. 6 should be added to all scenario setups. These corrections should provide answers to all confusion involving setup.

EXAMPLES OF PLAY

One correction to this section is in order. Under the Example #1 Attack A: only half a supply is expended since the 352 division pays only once for all of its units, both infantry and artillery, during an attack phase.

SCENARIO ADDENDA

This section is a must. If you are to have any real fun at all with the scenarios, all possible rules and units must be added to them. Dig back in the Campaign Game rules section and add the portions on weather, inter-allied co-operation, and air bombardment. These are essential to gain the full flavor of the game. Weather rules will blunt air power just as supply does defensive fire; inter-allied co-operation will give the Germans a little extra chance at Falaise.

[Mr. Burnett's article will conclude with a strategic study of the scenarios and the campaign game in the next issue of the GENERAL.]
THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN
THE INVASION OF FRANCE IN THIRD REICH

By Michael Anchors

As the Norwegian campaign winds down (see my article “The Norwegian Campaign” in Vol. 18, No. 5), the focus of attention in most games of THIRD REICH shifts to la belle France. Certainly, in most games won by the Axis, Germany eliminates France in two or three turns and forces Russia to surrender by early 1942. (Oh yes, I have seen bizarre games with Germany invading Russia first! England conquered in 1939! But one would think that, in the years that THIRD REICH has been played, some standard about strategies would have emerged—and that is perfectly true.) Competent Allied players can master “Sea Lion” in 1939 or “Barbarossa” in early 1940 with ease; the Axis plan of conquest that deserves intensive study is Norway-France-Russia in 1939, 1940, and 1941.

To begin, let us agree that France is indefensible. (Study the area map in Figure 1.) The entire eastern border, except for the Swiss border hexes, is open. The interior of the country is flat and devoid of helpful river lines. The French Army is an armor-poor, air-poor galleon of slow, weak units. The superior British units are certainly the “Few”; and, of course, there are all sorts of rules limiting Anglo-French cooperation (34). Besides, the French have no ace in the hole, nor are the Mediterraneans. The crux of the problem is the conditions for Russian surrender on Russia in a single year.

It would not be necessary for the Axis to accomplish the first two objectives if able to reduce the British and American BRP to such low levels that none could be granted to Russia—but that’s damn difficult to do. The term BRP-equivalent can best be explained by way of examples: 10 BRPs are ten BRP-equivalents, Leningrad is fifteen, a 3-5 armor unit is six. A running tally of BRP-equivalents lost or left is a good method for either side to keep track of how many rolls with four dice produce a sum of four. While fifty percent of rolls with four dice produce a sum of four, only 70 BRP-equivalents per turn—and that figure is usually beyond their ability. Before the advent of the Third Edition rules, the German player would routinely make a token invasion of Russia in the Fall of 1940 to get the Russian Winter Rule out of the way before the real push in 1941. Now however, Russia has the option of delaying the implementation of the Winter Rule effects, unless the Axis has more units in Russia than the sum of four dice. While fifty percent of rolls with four dice produce a sum of twelve or less, even twelve units are too many for a “token” invasion. Therefore, the Axis’ ideal is to mount a serious invasion in Fall 1940. It takes Germany one and a half turns to transfer or build enough units on the Eastern Front to allow the implementation of “Barbarossa”. Consequently, the Axis player would like to have the French Campaign in the bag by Summer 1940.

In spite of what has been said, the invasion usually does not come in 1940, and Russia usually does not surrender in 1941. With competent Allied play in the Russian Axis and France, it is insufficiently upset to permit the Russian Winter to occur in 1941. Nevertheless, the same tripartite Axis design for victory in 1941 can bring success in 1942. The initial Russian inventory of BRP-equivalents in 1942 is actually less—because of losses incurred in 1941. The Axis player need not destroy as many BRP-equivalents to be successful. But 1942 absolutely marks the last chance to knock Russia out. With the American entry, Germany can expect a second and a third front, along with BRPs in the pipeline to Russia. (Of course, if the Allied player was unhandy enough to lose France and Russia in Spring 1940, he didn’t have to worry about 1942.)

Now let’s return our attention to France.

With German armor committed to Poland and the airborne unbuilt, France is easy to defend through the Fall of 1939. All the Allied player need do is ensure that French and Belgian units form a continuous double row on the northern border and a suitable screen in the south (Figure 2).

But the respite of short duration, for in the winter, defense of the country becomes considerably tougher. In areas that can be reached by the airborne, the defense must be upgraded to a triple row of units. The Germans could penetrate a double row by using the paratroopers to knock out a stack of defending infantry in the second row, opening a hole for exploiting panzers. A double row of units will still suffice in areas out of airborne reach but, in deciding what parts of the line are out of reach, bear in mind that the airborne only has to land adjacent to a unit to attack it, not necessarily on top of it. As we have already seen, the airborne unit is often based in the neck of Denmark in 1939 to threaten Oslo but, if the British launch a preemptive invasion of Norway, it could fly south for the winter instead—say to Brussels or the key hexes (refer to Figure 1). Consequently, a triple row in the north is the usual arrangement (see Figure 3).

There is a tactic I’d like to warn you about. The Italian Navy can land armor divisions on the beach adjacent to Marseilles and, if the French screen is not perfectly set, that armor can exploit through the heart of the country. The Allies get plenty of warning before this sort of move since the Axis player must leave the armor of the invasion force stacked in a Mediterranean port a turn before the invasion. It’s easy to put a French armor unit in T20 to cut the mobility of these southern invaders.

Within the above guidelines, there are many acceptable Allied arrangements that will deny the Axis any cheap French real estate in 1939. Figures 2 and 3 show typical arrangements for the Fall and Winter of 1939, assuming a modest British commitment and conventional German play (such as basing that airborne in Denmark). Against such defenses, the enemy may well prefer to postpone a serious assault on France until Spring 1940 and instead make the Winter turn one of preparation. The Germans should embark on a maximal construction program and seize the Low Countries. Belgium should be occupied, of course, leaving...
From the 4-6 column, the Allied DAS would cost the Allies fifteen BRPs. The Allies to dislodge on an offensive option, but the loss of three armor units to keep their toehold on the Seine. The threat in Southern France could be handled by slipping the French armor unit into Lyons to block the German armor in T21. The panzer unit in R21 is out of supply but, since it exploited last turn, it can move next to Paris for a normal ground attack. It cannot make an exploitation attack because it is unable to "trace a normal supply line at the start of the player turn in which [it] exploits" (44-38). If the German armor is pushed out of O23, the armor in R21 cannot combine its attack with the armor in the north because it can't attack in the same phase. Thus, the Allies have a 50% chance of ensuring that Paris cannot be attacked by more than two panzer units in the summer, while saving most of the Allied units threatened by starvation. The Attrition Option is preferable to an Offensive Option because it costs no BRPs, risks no Allied casualties, is immune to Axis DAS and ensures that Paris will not be left empty.

Well ... what happened? The German player won a great victory in his turn, but with a die roll of 1-3, the Allied player can wiggle off the hook. So, what is wrong with this method of blitzkrieg? Quite simply, the German penetration was too narrow. Even though many Allied units are immobilized by being out of supply, the units at the ports in the Allied DAS. But, for the sake of example, let's say the Germans made a lot of low-odds attacks and won them all.

The Allies could redress the situation by attacking the German armor adjacent to Paris at 1:1 odds, assuming everybody's air forces have already flown. Of course, if the Allies could get a 5-4 air unit into the fight, they could swing 2:1 odds—but we'll suppose they can't. The Allied player could take an Offensive Option and attack the 4-6 at O24; however, even if successful, there is not much to be gained since the Allied units at N24, Q23, Q22 and P23 will still be isolated and removed. The attack on the armored spearhead at 1:1 odds is extremely risky; a roll of six would leave Paris wide open. The Allies couldn't build there, couldn't SR to it. The French campaign would be over.

Alternatively, the Allies could run an Attrition Option on the 41-50 column. On a roll of 1-3, the Germans would have to eliminate the armor unit in Sedan and retreat the armor in O23 or accept the loss of three armor units to keep their toehold on the Seine. The threat in Southern France could be handled by slipping the French armor unit into Lyons to block the German armor in T21. The panzer unit in R21 is out of supply but, since it exploited last turn, it can move next to Paris for a normal ground attack. It cannot make an exploitation attack because it is unable to "trace a normal supply line at the start of the player turn in which [it] exploits" (44-38). If the German armor is pushed out of O23, the armor in R21 cannot combine its attack with the armor in the north because it can't attack in the same phase. Thus, the Allies have a 50% chance of ensuring that Paris cannot be attacked by more than two panzer units in the summer, while saving most of the Allied units threatened by starvation. The Attrition Option is preferable to an Offensive Option because it costs no BRPs, risks no Allied casualties, is immune to Axis DAS and ensures that Paris will not be left empty.
forts (i.e., near Calais and in the Maginot Line) are in supply and able to displace German units on the Attrition Option. If the single hex at the root of any of those Axis spearheads is occupied by the Allies, the German units in the spearhead become susceptible to elimination because they have no retreat. To preserve their retreat route, the Germans would have to displace them as far away as possible.

Add to that fact that many German armor units have their mobility reduced by adjacent Allied armor, and it is clear why so few German armor units would be left to renew the offensive in the summer.

Suppose the panzer units in Dieppe (in Figure 4) had occupied N24 instead; and the panzers in southern France were reserved in Nurnberg able to strike north or south. I'm using a modified form of the German attack (Figure 4) to demonstrate correct German technique, which focuses on key hexes. Those three hexes on the French border (as shown in Figure 4) are each two hexes distant from Paris. Let us suppose the Allies do well again and recover every enemy-held French hex except one—a key hex. And now the Allies pack the threatened hexes adjacent to Paris, N23 and O23, with six to seven ground factors. The Germans can attack one of those hexes at 2:1 odds, using seven ground factors and twenty-one air factors. The hex next to Paris then becomes a breakthrough hex onto which the Germans stack six (indeed!) armor units. They make an exploitation attack across the Seine. The airborne drops on Paris to untangle the six factors of French defenders. The odds of the attack are thus 2:1 on the ground.

Now it is true that this scenario leaves the German player with only nine air factors to intercept Allied DAS. However, the Germans should have the use of ten factors of lent Italian air. The technologically-inferior Italian air units can be used for ground support, freeing ten factors of German air for the interception role.

The worst case for the Axis occurs when M24 or Sedan is the only key hex held, since only one of the hexes next to Paris can be directly assaulted. The Allies can usually manage to put strong British units in that hex, forcing the Axis to confront both French and American DAS at M24 and Sedan. In many games, the Allied player would be unable to put two strong British units in both N23 and O23 without embarrassing other fronts. That makes N24 a “super” key hex. From N24, the German player can selectively attack the French-occupied hex next to Paris in order that the Luftwaffe need only master the British air force would be powerless. But, even if the only German-held key hex is M24 or Sedan, the Germans could still turn back British and French DAS, if the attack on Paris or the adjacent hex is made at 1:1 odds. There is a 16% chance of Dachterammerung; true enough, but there is an 84% chance of victory, and that's better than the estimated 49% chance of winning the war the Axis player starts the game with. It's better than the chance Beyma's Germans had (in Figure 4). When the Germans are ready to go cactep down the Champs Elysees, they deposit a Bridgehead counter on Paris and move five panzer units onto it. With the airborne already there, that's 23 factors doubled to 46 on defense. British air units cannot be used to attack Paris (34). If no French air is available, no Anglo-French counterattack is even possible; often it is impossible even with French air support. The key to the whole operation is the rapid movement of BRPs in Fall 1939. The Allies in their turn must spend enough BRPs to reduce the combined Anglo-French total less than to that of the Axis. The British can easily spend their limit building new units; the French may have to burn up a few extra BRPs by bombing somebody's fleet, invading somebody's country. With the airborne already there, that's 23 factors doubled to 46 on defense. The Germans can take either Paris or London on the next turn.

No article on the French campaign would be complete without echoing the admonition that the Allies avoid handing the Germans two moves in a row. There is a 50% chance of someone doing that, of course, and a 50% chance of his being able to establish some kind of foothold.Sometimes, narrow penetrations are good Axis technique even if the player cannot preclude a key hexes. It would take the Germans stack six (indeed!) armor units. They make an exploitation attack across the Seine. The airborne drops on Paris to untangle the six factors of French defenders. The odds of the attack are thus 2:1 on the ground.

Once France surrenders, and assuming there are no German units in the British Isles, The British units in France should stick around, supply routes permitting, to tie down German forces and hamper their departure for the Eastern Front. Indeed, if conditions in Egypt permit, even more English forces can be sent to France! Make the Germans drive them out. There is no hurry to get the troops home in many games. In 1941 Britain often has more units than places to put them, given that much of her BRP production will go to Russia.

For the German, thoughts of the east now fill his head.

Diplomacy World

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The idea to do a game of court intrigue came up early in the career of the designers. An enjoyment of European history, costume adventure films, Shakespearean plays and other dramatic works suggested a game which permitted players to take on the role of conspirators in a royal court.

We had some definite impressions of the kind of game we wanted. It was to evoke a world of conspiracy, of ruthless intrigues and power-plays, of base treachery and expedient alliance, of spying and being spied on. There would be torture in dungeon rooms and daring prison breaks. Characters could go into hiding to avoid a corrupt law, or live in foreign exile awaiting the day they could return vindicated. Yet we also wanted players to experience the flavor of a courtly civilization, with all its color and romance.

These formidable ambitions, as our first halting and experimental efforts proved. There was simply no other game on the market to serve as a model, or to suggest solutions to the problems the design encountered. There were boardgames and role-playing games aplenty, but testing proved that our game could not be exactly one nor the other. The project became one that was picked up and set down several times over a three year period. The experiments ranged from Monopoly-styled track games to baronial slugfests on medieval landscapes. Eventually we found the right path.

The conspirators of our game of intrigue became lords pictured on cards. They sought to place a royal personage, loyal to their faction, on the throne. Players were to be pitted against the skill of one another as well as against a non-player king. This "King" could be interacted with by means of summoning (made available to a junior in this early version) that netted the player a character favor or disfavor. "Favor" was spent to acquire offices and titles which could increase the character's status and/or power. Factions grew by drawing from a noble's deck. Bungled assassination attempts and accusation-chits sometimes placed nobles on trial; revelation of scandal could force them out of office.

We were laying the groundwork for the final version of DOWN WITH THE KING, but the early prototype differed in important aspects. It was set in a medieval age and foreign wars caused the characters to be subject to the hazards of combat. Knightly battles were fought via an abstract system and noble casualties were very high. Moreover, the means to usurp the throne was to launch a baronial revolt, ala Bosworth Field.

Yet, even the design had not really launched itself. We had just worked on two other medieval-flavor games and were blase about the period. Furthermore, the military subgame distracted from the court intrigue aspect. And the government did not really function; the offices bestowed status and troop strength, but the office holders had no official powers or responsibilities. Finally, there were not enough activities to give the players the spectrum of choice we desired.

The game was again set aside while we took up other projects, but the interim was by no means wasted time as far as the intrigue game was concerned. It was a time for analyzing different approaches to the subject and research. Briefly we considered the feasibility of putting a high degree of fantasy into the mix, offering a sort of Eddssonque magic kingdom. Alternatively, we supposed a relocation into the city states of Renaissance Italy would allow us to use the ruthless philosophy of Niccolo Macchiavelli as a guide. We abandoned both approaches; magic was superfluous to intrigue, while the political systems of Italy were radically different from the West European monarchies which had been models for all our work to date. Continuing to mull over the possibilities, the breakthrough came with the decision to study the society and politics of the late seventeenth century—the Baroque Age.

The choice was ideal; unlike earlier periods, political manipulation did not involve a lot of swordwork—Baroque lords were not expected to come anywhere near a battlefield if they did not want to. The distracting military aspect could be left highly abstracted in the simulation. Unlike later periods, such as the latter 1700s, intrigue centered in the palace and noblemen were still in control of the masses. In a game of this period, the players could take the role of noblemen under a divine-right monarchy—patterned on the model of Charles II's England or Louis XIV's France.

A spot of intensive research followed as we tried to get at the flavor of the Baroque society and the essential techniques of palace revolution. It was an age of flamboyant living, courtly etiquette and ruthless power-plays. Cloakroom conspiracy had all but replaced baronial revolt. The choice weapons of political conflict were falsehoods whispered in the right ear, rumors of scandal, and occasionally the dagger or poisoned winecup. The skilful schemer needed to be less apt at moving armies than at manipulating the power blocks of his society—the church, the growing merchant class, the peasantry, the feudal system, and those who profited from the feudal system. The professional officers corps, the townspeople clamoring for a voice in policy. Violence was everywhere, but on a subtle and individual level. The sanguinary baronial upheavals lay in the past; the current of revolutionary armies lay yet in the future. The ambitious courtier was a gambler—almost as reckless with his life as with his purse.

The most instructive decade of the Baroque era was the 1680s in England. This was the time of ferment culminating in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Starting with the Rye House Plot, intensifying with the rebellion of Monmouth and Argyle, the period of revolutionary armies lay yet in the future. The ambitious courtier was a gambler—almost as reckless with his life as with his purse.

The most instructive decade of the Baroque era was the 1680s in England. This was the time of ferment culminating in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Starting with the Rye House Plot, intensifying with the rebellion of Monmouth and Argyle, the period of revolutionary armies lay yet in the future. The ambitious courtier was a gambler—almost as reckless with his life as with his purse.

By Glenn and Kenneth Rahman
that he would be the last character to become a conspirator, having eliminated all his potential rivals beforehand. From this experience, it was clear that to start the game at a fast clip and keep it developing rapidly, every player had to represent a committed conspirator from the very first turn.

DOWN WITH THE KING is a multi-faceted game, but three of its systems give it its unique dynamics and flavor.

To give the offices the characters held meaning, each character was given an "Ability Rating". This rating quantified his competence to "solve" political problems that affected his office. These problems arose in the Crown Events Phase, representing economic, diplomatic, military and social quandaries which had to be addressed if the character was to keep his office and, incidentally, the public support of the King's government high. A die roll, matched against the ability of the character, determined if he had done his work well. If he had, the monarch's position was made more secure (which was bad if one's faction was not yet ready to try for the throne); if he had not, the stability of the government was undermined. If fumbling continued, the character would be put out of a job.

No office holder was allowed to rest easy in his own jurisdiction. Each office could have influence on other offices. For example: the problem of waging a foreign war is the province of the Minister of the Army; but at the same time, the Minister of State, the General and the Ambassador could each logically help or hinder as the whim took them. The departmental interfiling under this system can and does become feverish, with some factions seeking the disgrace of an individual office holder or the preservation of the office and the King's support, or the promotion of dissatisfaction and upheaval throughout the land.

With so much skullduggery in progress, plainly the game called for a sophisticated system for handling those accused of crime. We wanted this to be experienced in some detail, so treated the three main stages of it in order: interrogation, hearing and trial. By luck or the skillful manipulation of cards representing alibis, evidence, informers or prison guards, it was possible for the accused to have a play, but the specific details of the sentencing: with results ranging from not guilty, a conviction. The player who controlled the powerful judge he wanted to hear the case-hostile, friendly or neutral as his situation warranted.

Influence is the acquiring of titles, offices and other advantages require something different— influence. "Influence Points" represent the power of money and of favors collectible, the perception by others that the character is a "mover". Influence comes from certain Prestige Tables, as well as from curing the favor of royal characters—playing the sfyphant today in order to be the king-maker of tomorrow. Influence is spent, to acquire the intangible things that enhance status or power. The loss of influence leaves a noble unable to do much for his friends or for himself.

With all the systems working, the designers were satisfied that they did not want to make the game an exact simulation of any particular time or place. Instead we opted to create a fictional court where all the special elements of West European court life could have a play, but the specific details of the power struggle could evolve uniquely in each different game. The setting became the island of Fandonia, an Italian-speaking state occupying the general vicinity of Sardinia. At the suggestion of the AH developer, Alan Moon, it was moved to a general vicinity of Sardinia. At the suggestion of the AH developer, Alan Moon, it was moved to a
down with the King, the Prestige Tables. When we approached the problem of giving the game the charm of the era, we were aware that we had to do so in the briefest possible way. The game was meant to be easily learned and played, not a monster with a catalogue of rules and solutions which would be a cue from some of the fine role-playing games on the market, placing a wealth of evocative detail and adventure into random event tables. These tables, meant to provide "prestige" and "influence" for the character as well as allow the player to get a feel of the civilization, were broken down into categories. Each was a major pastime for a man or woman of the latter 1600's: literary pursuits, fashion, romance, socializing, patronage, carousing, gambling, sport, business speculation. The player could choose the category (past experience establishing how "good" a character is in a particular field of endeavor) and get a result. For example, a character might choose to go courting, hoping of course that he will "Gain Useful Information" or be noted as a "Cavalier" whom others admire and emulate. But many other things could happen including getting drunk, insulting someone and being forced into a duel. Within these systems, there developed two special currencies—prestige and influence—both of which had a special role to play in the effectiveness of a canny conspirator.

Early on we saw that not just any nobleman should be able to have and hold the friendship and loyalty of dukes, marquises, judges, generals, archbishops and the like. He must be a prestigious individual himself; the more prestigious he is, the more influential and powerful his friends. This spawned the "Prestige Point", a quantification of a man's esteem and popularity among his peers, the perception that he is a "comer". There are several ways to earn Prestige Points, but the most common is to play the Prestige Tables, or be a successful counselor to the reigning monarch. Prestige Points were not spent, but they could be lost through bad luck on the Prestige Tables, scandal or an "embarrassing incident". A character who loses Prestige Points cannot hold as many factional characters as before—some of his friends slip away from him.

As important as prestige is, the acquiring of titles, offices and other advantages require something different— influence. "Influence Points" represent the power of money and of favors collectible, the perception by others that the character is a "mover". Influence comes from certain Prestige Tables, as well as from curing the favor of royal characters—playing the sfyphant today in order to be the king-maker of tomorrow. Influence is spent, to acquire the intangible things that enhance status or power. The loss of influence leaves a noble unable to do much for his friends or for himself.

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38. OPTIONAL RULES, ROMANTIC INTRIGUE—add "The Monarch and Monarch's spouse may not be seduced. "Treachery" Event cards and 'Informer' Event cards negate all seductions. Note: If players agree, the following rule may be used: Any character that attempts a seduction and fails is automatically accused of wrongdoing.

38. OPTIONAL RULES, ADDITIONAL MONARCH'S COUNSELOR POWERS—add "To use any of these additional powers, a Monarch's Counselor must be in Fandonia."

38. OPTIONAL RULES, ROMANTIC INTRIGUE—add "A FAC Monarch may pardon a character accused of wrongdoing."

38. OPTIONAL RULES, BLACKMAIL, before the last sentence—add "If the card drawn is the player's DOWN WITH THE KING card, it is given back and another card is drawn instead."

38. OPTIONAL RULES, ADD "MARRIAGE A PC who is married may take the spouse along when rolling on the Court Ball Table, the Fashion Table, the Societizing Table, and the Patronage Table. The player may then roll twice on the table as part of the same activity."

38. OPTIONAL RULES, SHORTER GAME—delete "b."

GAME TABLES, COURT BALL TABLE Notes, --should read "Player may make a free counsel during his Player Turn."

GAMES TABLES, INTERROGATION TABLE—should read

2 — FAC Exposes Faction. The Player Must Designate His PC And Two FACs To Be Accused Of Wrongdoing. "
3 — FAC Exposes Faction. The Player Must Designate His PC and One FAC To Be Accused Of Wrongdoing."
4 — FAC Exposes PC. The Player's PC Is Accused Of Wrongdoing."
5 — FAC Exposes Friends. The Player Must Designate Three FACs To Be Accused Of Wrongdoing (Cannot Be The Player's PC)."
6 — FAC Exposes Friends. The Player Must Designate Two FACs To Be Accused Of Wrongdoing (Cannot Be The Player's PC)."
7 — FAC Exposes Friend. The Player Must Designate One FAC To Be Accused Of Wrongdoing (Cannot Be The Player's PC)."
8 — Character Dies
9 — Character Implicates Self. Add One To Trial Table Dice Roll.
10 - Character Confesses. Add Two To Trial Table Dice Roll.
11-12 — Won’t Talk. No Effect.

If the character being interrogated is a NC, treat as "No Effect."

Note: The respective player may choose the order in which PC/FACs are accused of wrongdoing.

EVENT CARDS CHART Key—the notes that follow *** and **** should be exchanged.

Don Robert Munsell is 35, married and father of three, and is a student at senior Georgia Tech in Marietta, Georgia.

Favorite Game: Squad Leader series

AREA Rated Games: SL. COl. COD

AREA W-L Record: 29-0

% Time PBM: 60%

Playing Games/Week: 4 hrs.

Play Preference: PFT

Hobbies: tennis, archery, hunting and fishing

Pet Phrase: The small group of people who have neither the ability nor emotional maturity for AREA play.

When asked on improvements he would like to see in the hobby, Mr. Munsell was quite vocal: "Wargaming is still in an infant stage and has a long way to go before we can start having tournaments of the same level as chess. The single elimination tournament is easy to manage, but in no way reflects the ability of the winner as the best in the game. For example, I played in a Panzer Leader tournament where the winner was a player of average ability who, by the end of the game, had received a complete novice and crushed him thoroughly due to the novice’s failure to understand the rules. This situation could easily be corrected by making the tournaments round robin. Winners would play losers and losers would play losers. Ties would be resolved by totaling the ratings of the players defeated and subtracting the ratings of the players who beat you; the overall winner would be the player who beat the higher rated players. Each player would have more fun because he would be playing people of his own ability; and he would get more for his money by playing whether he won, lost or drew the first and following rounds. This would make the word ‘Champion’ more than just an empty title."
I have reviewed carefully the article in Vol. 18, No. 2, by L. Bird concerning some of the technical aspects of my TOBRUK wargame of 1975 and believe that there are responses in order for the consideration of him and his group, as well as for the rest of THE GENERAL’s readership. In this article I present these comments, keyed in order to Mr. Bird’s major points, and hope that they satisfy the concerns he has raised in the article that parts of the game have been overtaken by time.

Overall, I believe that everything in the article was carefully thought out and as clearly presented as can be the case when extremely complex physical phenomena are involved. I’m sure that there are thousands of TOBRUK players who have conducted similar analyses with the same conclusions resulting. Therefore, this letter is considerably more detailed, for their benefit, than have been numerous similar letters and articles published in THE GENERAL as well as in other magazines since the game’s appearance back in 1975. This detail will hopefully answer a number of the technical questions undoubtedly still asked by the majority of these dedicated players. Let’s first respond to Mr. Bird’s lead-in comments that much of the game has been overtaken by recently available new miniatures rules and is therefore not “state of the art.”

The data sources used in TOBRUK’s design between 1972 and 1975 were the detailed and complicated analyses of the weapons and tactics prevailing during the early war years which were compiled by various organizations during and after the war. Noteworthy of these organizations were the U.S. Army Ballistic Research Laboratories (BRL), still influential in Army research to this day, and the National Defense Research Committee (NDRC) of the wartime Office of Scientific Research and Development which was the model for the current all-service weapons analysis community, the Joint Technical Coordinating Group (JTCG) for Munitions Effectiveness (JME), Aircraft Survivability (JAS), etc., which generates and disseminates standard guides for weapons effects used throughout the US and Allied armed forces. The BRL and NDRC documents generated and issued during the war were, of course, classified at the time. However, enactment of the General Declassification Schedule has allowed the general public access to these materials provided they know where and what to look for. I was fortunate at the time of the game’s design, and since, to have both knowledge of and access to BRL and NDRC reports without which TOBRUK could not have been designed, unless I resorted to “war movie” guesswork as have numerous other game authors before and since. As a result, each game system in TOBRUK (armor vs. armor, infantry vs. infantry, etc.) reflects state of the art thinking as it existed during and shortly after the war. Inasmuch as few serious analyses (that is—by military professionals) of wargaming tactics and technology have occurred since then, it is not at all realistic to assert, as Mr. Bird does in his article, that recently available miniatures rules supersede those in the game. Generalities, however, are easy to make. Therefore, let me elaborate by responding in detail to each of Mr. Bird’s comments and document I appreciate your statement in the lead-in to his article about my “... impressive credentials...” but, as well as you know, I have never resorted to resting on these laurels and will not here. Let’s let the numbers speak for themselves.

The ‘88’ Phenomena: Mr. Bird is absolutely right about the probability of a ricochet by a shell or piercing projectile is a function of both its raw striking energy as well as the thickness of the plate which it is attacking. In designing TOBRUK we, of course, understood this from the beginning but found no realistic way of reflecting the effect except by providing to the gamer, not just one “Area Impacted” table for each armored target, but a separate table for each threat which that target might face at each range which the target might be threatened. It takes little imagination to realize that the resulting hundreds of tables, easy enough to generate via computer but prohibitive to include in a manual wargame where such assist is not available, would realistically never be published. We provided many such tables to Avalon Hill but mutually concurred that publishing them would be unwieldy. I include below an extract from one such table, the one prepared for the US M3 “Honey” frontal aspect which Mr. Bird finds of particular interest and, as can be seen readily, the complexity is pretty intimidating. The numbers in the table take into account all of the aspects which could affect ricochet such as projectile type, armor hardness, and the effect of rounding the armor, as was done on this vehicle for both the lower hull and the gun mantle, and, as can be seen, ricochet probabilities vary significantly from weapon to weapon. Our solution to this problem was to publish an Area Impacted table for each weapon which contained ricochet probabilities which were “weighted” to reflect the relative probability of being struck by each threat weapon, a probability which we assumed correlated to the number of each weapon present in the area at the start of the Gazala battles on 26 May 1942. These numbers and the corresponding weight given to each weapon are on the table. It can be seen easily that, for example, the contribution of the “88” to the M3 Area Impacted table is only 14% of that of the 47mm(t). Let us assume that an M3 vehicle is being attacked by an “88” at 1000 meters’ range and that the “Honey” is neither dug-in nor moving. The front glacis plate (about 17% of the total frontal area) is laid back 68 degrees from the vertical and so, giving the doubt to the target, cannot be penetrated by BRL’s rules. Also, the front part of the turret roof and at least one side of the turret when it is not centerlined display at least 70 degrees obliquity when attacked from the front. I won’t ask Mr. Bird or anyone else to take my word for this, but I would ask him carefully to munis­rate good photos or drawings of the vehicle and judge for himself. I’m sure that he cannot disagree that, according to the BRL rules, about 26% (17% glacis, 5% turret, 4% edge-on armor) of the vehi­cycle’s front cannot be penetrated by any threat at any range. In designing the game, we conducted a careful evaluation of every vehicle which, when coupled to the weighted ricochet probability discussed above, resulted in the Area Impacted tables published. These tables obviously slanted the vehicle’s protection towards its most prevalent threats and thereby reduced the lethality of its more dangerous opponents and increased the lethali­ty of those which were less threatening. We accepted this philosophy for the simple reason that the more lethal threats probably would kill anyhow and, therefore, such slanting would not seriously affect the game’s play. To illustrate this point let’s look further at the “88” phenomena which Mr. Bird seems so interested in.

Let us assume that an M3 vehicle is being attacked by an “88” at 1000 meters’ range and that the “Honey” is neither dug-in nor moving. The basic probability of an effective (e.g. on the hull,
accepting Mr. Bird's premise that a smaller flank definition needs to be played in the game. His contention that a 120 degree-wide flank sector also allows up to 60 degree obliquity hits is, of course, correct, but in designing the game we allowed for the bonus provided by such obliquity through exactly the same procedure for producing Area Impacted table entries described above. In doing so we consulted the appropriate BRL publications (BRL 590 "The Range and Angular Distribution of A.P. Hits on Tanks" and BRL 702 "Terrain and Ranges of Tank Engagements") for data on the relative percentage of hits as a function of attack azimuth and factored these data into the tables as well. Mr. Bird's suggested alternatives would not include such information and, accordingly, I cannot support them.

Suspension Hints: In this paragraph Mr. Bird implies that the track immobilization of probabilities in TOBRUK are "... simplified version(s) of the truth...". Although there is an alternate approach, in response, I can only say that we evaluated the exact track mechanism of every game vehicle available at Aberdeen Proving Ground for the parameters which give a TR hit in play and possible M-kill. These parameters included the exposure area of vulnerable track components (drive wheels and idler axles and track link connecting pins) as well as the thickness, and thus relative ease of breakage, of each component. No assumptions about track vulnerability were made in the game, contrary to what Mr. Bird asserts, and I therefore cannot at all agree with his recommendation that a different immobilization procedure needs to be used in the game. Tracks were in 1942, and are today, the most vulnerable part of armored vehicles and I believe this fact must adequately be portrayed in TOBRUK.

High Explosive Tank Fire: Again, I disagree with Mr. Bird's recommendation that some intuitive method be used to evaluate HE fire from tanks rather than what's in the game. Our evaluation employed, as described in the Designer's Notes, the DoD-wide approved JTGC/MME methodologies for calculating HE effectiveness utilizing the best available data on the munitions involved and I can't see where he provides a better approach, even if there is, indeed, "... quite a bit of logic..." on his side. In my mind, logic or intuition simply fails to stand up to careful hard analysis.

Armour and Shell Revisions: Any TOBRUK player is perfectly free to select from the many sources of WWII anti-armor weapon effectiveness data and come up with whatever damage ranges he likes, but in doing so, I would advise using the same procedures we used in designing TOBRUK. Simply stated, these procedures are as follows:

- Find the best weapon test performance data available. We used the numbers in the classic NDRC 1946 document 'Effects of Impact and Explosion' supplemented by data from the technical library at FT Sill.
- Insure that the penetration data used are for actually perforating the target, rather than for merely penetrating to a depth in an infinitely-thick block of armor which was the standard (Army Ballistic Limit criteria) measurement process used during the war. A rough rule-of-thumb is that about one-eighth of the diameter of the attacking projectile is enough.
- Make sure that enough residual penetration exists after perforation to insure a kill.

Although Mr. Bird claims that he and his group did some research to arrive at the modified damage ranges he suggests, he makes no direct references nor does he discuss procedures employed to calculate them. Accordingly, I can make no informed comment about the numbers other than to say that they differ from what appeared in the game and, therefore, must disagree with them knowing that the game ranges were computed with each of the above procedural steps taken fully into account. I would ask, incidentally, for Mr. Bird to go back to his evaluation of the lethal range of the 50mm long vs. The Valentine, include the above steps, and see if, indeed, the target was vulnerable to beyond the 225 meters now in TOBRUK.

Rate of Fire: In the game expansion article which appeared in Vol. 13, No. 4, I discuss at length why the rate of fire of WWII anti-armor weapons are as they are published. This issue is not currently available but Avalon Hill will provide photostats of the article for interested readers at $1.00 per page. I have no objection to what Mr. Bird says in this regard with one exception. The answer to his question "... whether we roll once or allow for multiple hits?" is that:

- This would not provide for a shot-for-shot duel which characterized so many desert engagements (please, please read Tank These Men)
- This would force wastage of ammunition which, especially for the German with his APCR, would be unrealistic.

I like many of Mr. Bird's ideas in this paragraph but going away from the shot-by-shot play would, I believe, hurt the game more than it would help. Someday, however, someone will come up with a workable solution to the "sore wrist" problem.

Visibility: I agree completely with Mr. Bird's suggestions and, in the GENERAL article referred to above, made similar ones myself.

Range Measuring Ruler: Good idea.

Machine Guns on Tanks: I don't care if TOBRUK is, as Mr. Bird claims, one of the only WWII game systems which gives the coaxial MG in vehicles more power than the MG in the hull because this simply is the truth. The coax has a circular field of fire, is above the dust and severe heat shimer zone which plague hull MG's, and, most important, is aimed by the gunner or commander using the same sight assembly which directs the main gun. These advantages are so pronounced, I believe, that any system which reverses this relative advantage in favor of a hull MG simply is wrong.

In summary, I think that Mr. Bird's comments are thoughtful and thought-provoking. Some of his ideas are excellent and should make improvements to TOBRUK but others appear to have been based on intuition. Coupled to good judgement, intuition, naturally, has a valuable place in every game design. When hard data exist on a subject, however, such as those I have provided directly or by reference here, I believe that intuition must stand aside, even when the results may not be "intuitively pleasing". Some aspects of TOBRUK definitely are not pleasing in this way but no one yet, to include Mr. Bird, has convinced me that they don't do a good job of representing the real world of 1942 desert war.
One of the most well-known tales in the history of literature comes alive in Avalon Hill's new strategy game for two players, The Legend of Robin Hood. The setting is 12th century England, before the signing of the Magna Carta, as the daring outlaws of Sherwood Forest oppose the Sheriff of Nottingham, Sir Guy of Guisbourne, and the evil Prince John. In the absence of King Richard, it is a land beset by the oppressions of nobles and clergy whose only concern is their own well-being. As Robin Hood, you must enlist the support of the local populace (including Little John, Will Scarlet, and Friar Tuck) and rob the rich to give to the poor. As the Sheriff of Nottingham, you must insure the safe passage of the wealthy through the area, tax local villages to raise money, capture and hang the outlaw leaders, and help to prevent the return of good King Richard from the Crusades.

In a typical Game-Turn, Robin Hood will move his forces from area to area, trying to best position them for recruiting new units and ambushing travelers passing through Sherwood Forest. The Sheriff Player will position his forces in an attempt to protect the travelers and possibly trap and capture the outlaws. Battles occur when both Players have forces in the same area, and are resolved by die rolls representing Archery and Melee Combat.

The Legend of Robin Hood contains a colorful map of the area around Sherwood Forest, 100 playing pieces, a rules booklet, and a six-sided die.

PLAYING TIME: 2 hours

COMPLEXITY RATING (from 1-10, 10 the highest): 4

The Legend of Robin Hood is available for $6.00 from the Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% for postage and handling (20% for Canadian orders, 30% for overseas) Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
Dear Sirs:

Events as I have described them are results of the \textit{receive}. A key player was watching for the \textit{deception} and the game was over. I realized that the player is in control of the game and I have no way to \textit{manipulate} the outcome.

Dear Editor:

The subject I would like to address is the realism versus playability debate. I guess you could consider me a so-called realist "freak". So it was with some excitement that I read Mr. Kovach's letter in Vol. 17, No. 3 and the response it elicited. I firmly believe that realism is a key element in a game. I think that Mr. Kovach and Mr. Beard (whose letter follows) are overlooking the fact that a game can be fun and informative as well as realistic.

Dear Sir:

Even though I could be described as a buyer and collector of wargames, I do not think that a game is simply a collection of pieces. I think that a game is a simulation of a real-life situation. I think that a game is a way of learning about history and technology. I think that a game is a way of entertaining yourself.

Dear Sirs:

In Volume 18, Number 3, Robert Calcaterra offers several changes to make VITP more realistic. In doing so, he is addressing a problem that has been discussed in the past. The problem is that some players feel that the game is not accurate enough. However, the game is not intended to be a historical simulation. It is intended to be a game of strategy and tactics.

The real problem is that a ship does two things: it attacks and it defends. The player is responsible for both actions. If a player fails to attack, the game is over. If a player fails to defend, the game is over. The game is not designed to be played in a cut-and-dried fashion. It is designed to be played in a flexible manner. The player must decide what to do in each situation.

While there are numerous examples of ships with various levels of destruction (the Atlantic campaign) because of damage or accident, there is simply no case of a ship evading hot pursuit because of a miscalculation. (If a ship is evaded, it comes back open on Turn 2, and missed being destroyed in the battles around the Java Sea, but at the end of the game it is still there. I think it has been withdrawn—as if it had not been played there in the first place.) My suggestion—the firing player's only show of interest in the firing player—to select whether a disable result takes effect or not. A disable result is the lack of defense against air strikes. The optional airstrike rules look promising, if flawed. In the first phase of the Battle of the Coral Sea, the American task force was there, but it was not strong enough to take on the Japanese task force. It failed to destroy the Japanese aircraft as they arrived. If using that optional rule, the American task force would have had to pull out of the game without penalty. Only the Japanese ever took moves to rebuild lost air groups.

A ship is a machine in the hands of American light cruisers, which were generally larger and heavier, and generally used about the same time. The Japanese cruiser would possibly be at the same time, but they did not have the resources to build a new cruiser.
STORM OVER ARNHEM
8.32 May the maximum attack force be exceeded if the attackers are fighting within their own area? A. No.
11.2. Errata Delete the words "even if no British units start the game in those areas" from the first sentence.
17.3 Should the German receive armor reinforcements on two or three different turns, is the +1 DRM to the Random Events cumulative for each occasion? A. Yes.

THIRD REICH
15.63 Can the retreating Free Syrian Transfer be in Axis ZOC? A. Yes. "Friendly" hexes are defined by "control" (7.12).
16.7 May friendly AFVs be added to the US Box that have not initially deployed perform any usual duties? A. Yes. See 29.17. The restrictions there apply whether the AFVs have initially deployed or not.
21.4 Must a nation declaring war take an Attrition or Offensive Option against the nation being attacked, or can it merely issue the last turn's F. A. T. to a Pass Option? A. Yes; No.
21.4 Does the resolution of DoW apply even if the interception of a submarine or transport mission by another entity prevents the attackers from launching the attack against the new enemy? A. No.

21.4. Errata Add "during the Movement or Combat Phase" between "minor" and "or" in the first sentence.
25. Could Germany/Italy declare war on their own inactive minor allies? A. Yes. Any partitioned units in the country would be temporarily removed until after the minor’s forces have been set up. The Axis player may then place any remaining units anywhere in the minor country not occupied by a minor country unit.
26. Are Italian forces allowed within Germany Minor Allies before activation? A. Yes. "German" and "German" should be read as "Axis" throughout this rule, except that it is Germany, not Italy, who actually controls the minor’s forces.
26. To the 20-factor limit continuous or assessed only at specific points during the turn, i.e., could a German player move more than 20 factors through an inactive minor in a turn? A. Yes, the 20-factor limit applies only to the end of the movement phase and player turn.
28. Can Russia declare war on a partitioned inactive German ally without declaring war on Germany after Fall 1941 or a German violation of the Polish Partition Line? A. No.

46.3 How does the Axis player roll "or” or "higher" than a 6? Does this mean Foreign Aid recipients can get +1 DRM for BRP grants rather than just cancelling out an enemy’s BRP grants? A. Delete or "higher." 

THE LONGEST DAY
I.B. How do I tell if a HQ is motorized? A. By the two dots under the flag bracketing the staff.
I.B.3 Are halved strengths rounded up or down? A. Halves are retained. (Changed from the GENERAL, Vol. 11, No. 6.)
I.A.1. a. Do the allies get all Naval- Bombardment backers each time? A. All 61 US and 163 British factors are available for naval anti-ship except for rockets (which are available for 6 June only).
I.B.10. Is the creation of field forts limited by the counter mix? A. Yes.

AVENAL HILL RBG RATING CHART
The games are ranked by their cumulative scores which is the average of the 9 categories for each game. While it may be fairly clearly that each category would not weigh equally against the others, we use it only as a generalization of overall rank. By breaking down a game’s ratings into individual categories the gamer is able to discern for himself where the game is strong or weak in the qualities he values the most. Readers are reminded that the Game Length category is measured in multiples of ten minutes and that a rating of 18 would equal 3 hours.

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Infiltrator's Report

Despite the recent demise of SPI, our informers tell us that many of the SPI events formerly planned for the ORIGINS convention will be held under the auspices of different sponsors. Paramount among the events which were saved in this way were the seminars by Colonel John E. Jessup, US Army (Retired) who is one of our top experts on the Soviet military. Among his many accomplishments, Col. Jessup has a PhD in Russian Area Studies and is President of the US Commission on Military History. He was Chief of Staff, III Corps, Vietnam, and has 150 Eastern Front entries for Simon & Schuster's ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WORLD WAR II. He also directed the preparation of a 13 volume study on the Soviet Navy for the Secretary of the Navy, and enthralled no less than 300 attendees at ORIGINS '80 with his lecture on the 1973 Air War.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

THE GENERAL will list any gaming convention in this space free of charge on a space available basis provided that we are notified at least four months in advance of the convention date. Each listing must include the name, date, site, and contact address of the convention. Additional information of interest to Avalon Hill gamers such as tournaments or events utilizing AH games is solicited and will be printed if made available. Avalon Hill does not necessarily attend or endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that any such event will be held. Readers are urged to contact the listed sources for further information before making plans to attend.

JULY 2-3-4
NANCON Sh-V, Houston, TX
Contact: Nan's Game Headquarters, 118 Briargrove Center, 6100 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77075 (713)-783-4055. NOTE: Tournaments in SL, AK and CM among others.

JULY 3-4
FIRST ANNUAL ATLANTA SQUAD LEADER OPEN, Atlanta, GA
Contact: D. R. Munsell, 2237 Dayton Circle, Marietta, GA 30062 (404)-973-8040. NOTE: Five round, round-robin SL tournament.

JULY 9-10-11
ATLANTA WARGAMING CONVENTION, Atlanta, GA
Contact: A.S.G.A.R.D., P.O. Box 90952, East Point, GA 30364. NOTE: SL

JULY 23-24-25
ORIGINS '82, Baltimore, MD
Contact: Atlanticon Inc., P.O. Box 15405, Baltimore, MD 21220. NOTE: The National Adventure Game Show including many AH sponsored events among a wide range of other gaming activities.

JULY 24-25
KOMMAND CON '82, Mansfield, OH
Contact: Kommanders Wargaming Club, P.O. Box 2235, Mansfield, OH 44905.

AUGUST 6-7-8
TEXCON '82, Austin, TX
Contact: David Ladyman, 8028 Gessner #1805, Austin, TX 78753. NOTE: Tournaments in KINGMAKER and SPEED CIRCUIT.

JANUARY 21-22-23
GUERNSEY CON '83/CONSPIRACY II, Kean College, NJ
Contact: Metropolitan Fantasy, Wargaming & Science Fiction Club, P.O. Box 1037, Denville, NJ 07834.

The prejudices of the readership were never more apparent than in the voting for Volume 18. Number 1. Garnering a final rating of 2.99 (the first below 3.00 since that of 2.79 for Vol. 17, No. 11), the issue obviously pleased the many fans of SQUARE LEADER and THIRD REICH. A better gauge than their consistent listings at the top of the "So That's What You've Been Playing" column, the articles on these two games were ranked the eight best. The totals for all features, based on a random sample of 200 responses, are as follows:

SPANISH GAMBIT 437
BASIC ARMS & THE MAN 153
YET MORE POSSIBILITIES 117
OPERATION SEASONING 97
THIRD REICH AT THE CLUB 77
SQUAD LEADER CLINIC 65
DESIGN ANALYSIS 53
VARIANT TEN (RCX) 37
THE CLASH OF UNITS 31
THE LONE FOX 22
ADVANCED LEVEL RFP AGAIN 18
REVIVING THE GHOUL 10
AN PHILANTHROPY 6

Bill Hughes joins the staff of Avalon Hill as assistant to Joe Balkoski. He should find the years of analytic studies that led to his Masters in Business Administration useful. And, his broad interest and comprehensive knowledge of the sports world should serve him well in good stead. Expect to see much of Bill's fine brand of sports analysis reflected in the pages of our sister publication, ALL-STAR, and in Avalon Hill's growing line of sports games.

From Mike Mills comes a copy of his Zine Directory '82, third in the series devoted to compilation of play-by-mail game magazines with an emphasis on multi-player diplomatic games. A yearly publication, updates are issued quarterly. This year's issue contains over 120 listings from ten countries. Readers can obtain a copy of ZD '82 by sending $1.75 and a 9" x 6" self-addressed, stamped envelope to Mr. Mills, 47 Mayer Drive, Suffern, NY 10901.

Reilly Associates announces the publication of the first issue of Variant, a quarterly magazine to be devoted entirely to variants of established games. Premiering in March 1982, the periodical will be available at gaming/hobby stores and by subscription. Cover price will be $1.50, with a year's subscription (four issues) available for $4.00. The editors of Variant encourage submissions by outside contributors; payment upon publication of such will be at one cent per word. Those interested in submissions or subscriptions to "Variant" are asked to contact Reilly Associates, P.O. Box 17144, Rochester, NY 14617.

ORIGINS '82, despite the loss of SPI (long a principle supporter of ORIGINS) through sale to the non-sponsoring TSR, looms as the biggest ORIGINS ever as the Eighth Annual National Adventure Gaming Show approaches. The largest exhibit facility ever to house an ORIGINS has been sold out with 132 booths leased to date, representing almost 100 different manufacturers. A wide variety of events not included in the Pre-Registration form have been added by late arrivals to take the place of some of the many SPI events which had to be cancelled when SPI was sold. July 23rd-25th looms as a major gaming extravaganza the likes of which may not be seen again on the East Coast for quite some time.

Latest news from the Metro Detroit Gamers is that the dates for Origins '83 have been finalized. MDG has announced that Origins will be held on the weekend of 14-17 July, 1983 in their fair city. Those interested in current plans for next year's convention are urged to contact the Metro Detroit Gamers, P.O. Box 787, Troy, MI 48098.

Kirby Lee Davis, author of "Reviving the Ghoul" (Vol. 18, No. 5), writes to inform us of a change of address. Those with questions on this DUNE variant are urged to contact Kirby Davis at 125 South Heights Drive, Mustang, OK 73064. Do not forget to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if a reply to questions is expected.

From the numerous correct entries for Contest 105, ten were randomly drawn. All matched the solution to the THIRD REICH problem posed exactly. The ten winners were: Michael Boyd, Houston, TX; Michael Brophy, State College, PA; Claude Drong, Spring Grove, IL; Randy Hotchkin, Willowbrook, IL; Peter Lewis, San Francisco, CA; Douglas McBratney, Tustin, CA; Chris Roginsky, Bethlehem, PA; Robert Swanson, Minneapolis, MN; Christian Van der Bekten, Darmstadt, West Germany; and Jon Vavrus, Pasadena, CA.

The solution for Contest 106 required careful attention to the situation as well as an excellent grasp of the rules and tactics of the SL system. Briefly, if skulled, the German player can win a sure thing by following:

Rally Phase: The German player uses his dice roll of "3" to create a leader in F5. The subsequent roll of "6" makes the leader a 6 + 1, which then rallies the squad.

Prep Fire Phase: Two of the 4-3-6s and the GMG in G4 use sustained fire—on the 16FPF column, the result is a "9" (6 + 3), resulting in a 1MC. The Russians do not change level, so the 8-3-8 then fires; it also burns down the German player in G5, with 16FPF, resulting in another 1MC, which the Russians still don't pass and are consequently eliminated for breaking twice.

Movement Phase: The remaining 4-3-6 in G4 that did not fire doubletimes to F7 via G5, G6 and G7. Defensive Fire Phase: The SU100 cannot hit the 4-3-6 without pivoting; but if it pivots, its modified dice roll is still not low enough. The only other possible target, the 8-3-8, will not be affected by the 1MC the SU100 would cause.

Advanced Fire Phase None.

Rout Phase None.

Advance Phase: The 4-3-6 can pass a pre-AVF morale check by rolling a "6", and so advances onto the SU100.

Close Combat Phase: The 4-3-6 rolls the automatic "6", modified by -2 (open-top AFV with no MGs), creating a 4 which destroys the SU100.

Thus—an automatic German victory, as the Russians are eliminated and the German player controls building G4. The most important thing to note is that both sides are reduced a morale level due to Battlefield Integrity. This means the AVF cannot be destroyed until the 6-1 leader is created, which is just enough to restore the German player to normal morale. Too, the creation of the leader allows the 8-3-8 to rally, thus enabling the German player to eliminate the Russian squares in G5. This means the lowly 4-3-6 must get the SU100; since even doubletiming it has but five MP's, the only route it can take without being shot is through hex G5. All in all, a truly elegant solution to a truly challenging contest.
COLLECTORS CORNER

Wanted SL. COl, COl medallions. A SL. move to Florida and needs you at Suburbans, 3R, and SL. COl. Contact: Don Ward, 483-3073, 1600 S. Beach Rd., West Palm Beach, FL 33409. (404) 731-3939.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

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

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

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

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

1. 
2. 
3. 

CONTEST 107

The situation for Contest 107 can be found on Page 10 of this issue. The solution will be printed in Vol. 19, No. 2 and ten winners will be announced in Vol 19, No. 3. One entry per subscriber. To be valid, entries must include a numerical rating of the issue as a whole as listing the three best articles, and must be received prior to the mailing of the next issue.

[ ] British Marginal Victory [ ] Draw [ ] German Marginal Victory

Impulse # Unit(s) Impulse*

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6.

*If movement impulse, merely list the starting and ending areas (a move from area 5 to area 4 would be shown as 5-4). If a fire impulse, list the area the attack originated from, the total attack factors of the attack, and the target area and group (5-4AP:3 would be a 4 AP attack by the LR4 Platoon in area 5 against the uncommitted units in area 4).

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

Best 3 Articles

1. 
2. 
3. 

NAME __ ADDRESS __

CITY _______ STATE ______ ZIP _______
Third Reich Revision Kit

Few wargames have maintained their popularity over the years as well as Third Reich; the winner of various hobby "Best" awards. This popularity is even more remarkable in light of the game's admittedly poorly developed rules. In recognition of the special qualities of this title, Avalon Hill has put Third Reich through the development process again. A team of Third Reich enthusiasts from all around the globe was assembled to test the revised edition. Years of experience with the earlier edition helped formulate the revision during a blind playtest session. The results have been more than gratifying with our most enthusiastic testing response ever. A 4th edition rulebook with all of the questions & answers and errata listed in this issue is now available.

Third Reich' 81 is much more than a cleaned up version of the old game, although the rules presentation itself is much improved over the first edition. Among the changes is a completely revised mapboard with terrain changes that have profound effects on the game, while being both more functional (no ambiguous hexes) and attractive. The scenario cards have been revised to provide more useful information at the player's fingertips and also provide the U.S. and French players with their own separate cards.

However, the biggest change is in the rules themselves. Not only are they more complete and better organized, but they contain many design changes which drastically improve play of the game. Paramount among these changes are revisions to the Strategic Warfare rules which bring the U-boats under control by 1944 and account for the Luftwaffe's absence from the battlefield as they are withdrawn to protect the Reich from Allied strategic bombing. A free Russian Replacement rule portrays the influx of Siberian forces at the crucial point of the Eastern Front, and major changes to the Murmansk Convoy rules make that aspect of the game almost a game in its own right. A completely new innovation is provided in the form of Intelligence and Foreign Aid rules which allow more political maneuvering outside the purely military sphere of the game.

Third Reich' 81 is available now in a revised 3rd edition box for $16.00 plus 10% (20% Canadian; 30% overseas) postage charges from Avalon Hill. Those wishing only to update their old game may order the Third Reich' 81 Revision Kit (mapboard, rules, and scenario cards) for $9.00. MD residents please add 5% state sales tax.

Editors' Choice Awards

This issue marks the beginning of Volume 19 in the life of the General. It is time once more for the editors to offer their nominations for the best articles of the past year. The winner receives a lifetime subscription to the General, plus a $100 bonus. Please vote for only one of the nominees and vote only if you have read all the articles nominated. Eliminating those articles written by paid AH staff members from consideration, we have the following articles to select from:

☐ TACTICAL SIDE OF BISMARCK by Bob Proctor, No. 1
☐ AIR FORCE ANALYSIS by Dave Bottger, No. 2
☐ THE DECISIONS OF AUGUST by John Berry, No. 3
☐ OPERATION TORCHLIGHTER by Frank Preissle, No. 3
☐ THE SPANISH GAMBIT by David Hablanian, No. 5
☐ BASIC ARMS AND THE MAN by Mark Swanson, No. 5
☐ YET MORE POSSIBILITIES by Larry Bucher, No. 5
☐ The SQUAD LEADER CLINIC series by Jon Mischon, Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5
☐ NATIVE POLICY IN SOURCE OF THE NILE by Michael Anchors, No. 6

A.R.E.A. Rating Service

As outlined in The General, Vol 11, No. 5, Avalon Hill offers a lifetime service whereby players are rated in relationship to other game players. Return coupon NOW along with $5.00 lifetime service fee for complete details on the Avalon Hill Reliability Experience & Ability Rating.

☐ I don't object to having my name and address printed in The General with the rating lists. I rate myself:
☐ A—an excellent player
☐ B—a good player
☐ C—an average player
☐ D—a novice in my first year of gaming
☐ E—a beginner

NAME ________________________________________________
ADDRESS ________________________________________________
CITY______ STATE______ ZIP______

Factory Outlet

Whenever in the Baltimore area feel free to drop in at our Factory Outlet store located in our design offices at 900 St. Paul and 20 E. Reed St. This store is the world's only retail outlet featuring a complete selection of Avalon Hill games, parts, magazines and accessories. Pay by cash or check or bring your credit card.

Sports Illustrated

All-Star Replay: quarterly magazine all about table-top sports games; how to win at them; how to find opponents and join leagues, much, much more. The bible for the true sports game buff. $7.50 per year.

Name ____________________________
Street ____________________________ Apt. ______
City ____________________________ State ______ Zip ______

Mail to: Subscription Dept.,
ALL-STAR REPLAY
The Avalon Hill Game Company
4517 Harford Road
Baltimore, Md. 21214