"I've some bad news, and I've some good news." This old saw is most apt in the case of this installment. First, the bad news. The GENERAL will show a price increase. A one-year subscription will now cost $15.00; a two-year subscription, $24.00. Individual copies will carry a newstand price of $4.00. Now for the good—as of the first issue of Volume 25, The GENERAL will expand to 60 pages, while retaining the usual four-page insert. Hence, you will now have 64 pages to pour over every two months. And we'll have more room to bring you an ever wider scope of articles.

In the process, I hope to implement a number of changes I have long contemplated. These range from the trivial to the wide-sweeping, and encompass changes in format and content. But, rather than trust to my own oft-questioned judgment, I'd like the input of the readership on both editorial and composition policy first. On the insert of this issue the reader will find the "1988 GENERAL Readers' Survey". We would appreciate each of our friends taking the time to complete and return this sheet. It is your chance to help guide the course The GENERAL will take for the next few years. It is, unfortunately but understandably, all too rare that we have the opportunity to hear your collective voice on such matters; please take advantage of this chance to help make The GENERAL serve you even better.

Readers will, I am sure, realize that all decisions on content and format involve "trade-offs". More "Historical" coverage means less space devoted to other types of articles. A larger typeface means fewer words. An expanded "Letters" column means something else must be trimmed. Every one of the questions posed to you here represents a tough choice. So please give your responses some thought; we're asking for your valued insights, not

Continued on Page 34, Column 1
Are you intimidated by the size of the ASL Rulebook? Do you enjoy games other than ASL and dread having to re-learn even the basics when you want to play it again? Are you an experienced ASL player, but find it hard to remember all the details? Are you tired of those arguments over "crooked" dice and knocked-over unit stacks? Then let the ASL Game Assistance Program help you! What does it do? ASL GAP serves as a QRED on a computer. It includes all the following tables from the Rulebook cards:

Chapter A: 3, 5.132, 11.11, 14.3, 15.1, 15.5, 16., 17., 18.2
Chapter B: 25.65
Chapter C: 3, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4, 7.2, 7.31-35, 7.7, 13.33

The program presents only that information related to the results of your actions. And it keeps track of where you are in a game. It does not judge LOS; it does not check; it does not use a "mouse". And while the program does not teach you how to play ASL, it can help you to understand how ASL rules and situations work by seeing how the GAP executes and resolves them—and it also reminds you of many little-used rules you may forget during the heat of battle.

The concept is simple. For example, the IFT function asks for the FP and DRM of your attack. The program then locates the proper table, rolls some "dice" and you are told what happened to the target(s). Furthermore, it takes into account Covering (A7.9) as well as the increased penalties for Inexperienced Personnel (A19.33); it even accounts for Critical Hits from FFEs (C1.53). It reminds you of Sniper Activation (A14.1) and offers to resolve this for you right then and there. It reminds you when ROF has been maintained (or lost) and to check for SW breakdown. Do you remember all those possibilities every time you roll the dice on the IFT? How about for To Hit and To Kill tables? Infantry close combat resolutions? Or Morale Checks? Do you even use the Battlefield Integrity rules? Now you can, and without worry. (Some sample screens from ASL GAP are shown to the right).

If you are a fan of ASL and play often, think what the program can mean in savings of time and trouble. And that means that you can concentrate on the game at hand, not the game system. ASL GAP is available for the 64K Apple® II+, /c, /e and //gs computers. A version for IBM® and compatible computers is currently under construction. The Apple version (only) can be ordered by mail for $25.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add 10% for shipping and handling (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

The applications, especially for solitaire play, are incredibly convenient. Can't finish a game in one sitting... no problem. Save it for instant recall when you begin again. Tired of your opponent grousing about his luck? The GAP will put an end to that. Dice roll averages for each player are continuously updated and presented on the Main Menu so that each player will always know exactly how far his overall "luck" has varied from the norm.
A Land that Time Forgot...

Deep in the impenetrable Amazonian wilderness of South America, an unscaleable plateau rises from the jungle floor. This strange land has never been trod by Twentieth Century man—until now. Your band of intrepid explorers has made the ascent and now stands at the edge of a veritable scientific treasure trove of unmeasurable value. Before you lies a land teeming in flora and fauna long thought extinct or never even imagined in the mind of man. Strange, terrible bellows reverberate from the dense forest before you until, at last, the very ground shakes to the approach of a prehistoric beast. Truly, riches beyond measure await those who bring proof of these discoveries back to civilization. But behold...the cruel twists of fate and the greed of man has betrayed you. Your tenuous bridge across the gaping chasm is gone! Isolated, the task now becomes one of survival and escape...certainly a frightening enough prospect against the background of such terrible prehistoric monsters, but even now other eyes are watching you from the recesses of the trees.

Players explore this Lost World, ever wary of its horrible inhabitants, in search of sites where they can embark upon adventures yielding great scientific discoveries and means of escape. Each adventure site leads the player through an illustrated trek filled with great peril and reward. Comic book style story lines give vent to the player's imagination as his adventures are virtually pictured before him in an ongoing narration as he proceeds from frame to frame. Front and back, full-color views of the dinosaurs actually stand erect and loom ominously across the plateau.

DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD is different from anything you've ever played before and changes with every game you play. No two games are the same. Although simple in concept, the game comes in two versions—a basic game suitable for 8 year-olds, and the full game which will challenge even the most erudite game player while allowing his children to be competitive in the same contest. With a playing time of approximately 90 minutes per game, it is great family fun. Actually three games in one, DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD also contains an excellent solitaire version for those wishing to play alone—pitting themselves against the forces of prehistoric nature in a race against time.

DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD is available now for $20.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Hartford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% shipping and handling to all orders (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
The year 1942 marked an abrupt change in the course of the ‘Battle of the Atlantic’. The entry of the United States into the world-wide war held much promise for eventual relief from some of the burden shouldered by Great Britain, even though it would be some time before that promise could be translated into material gain. It was true that the U-boats were now carrying the war into the Western Atlantic with seeming impunity, but events were evolving that would remove from the Atlantic convoy lanes the threat of large-scale surface action by the German fleet—no mean accomplishment for the Allies.

Although forbidden to engage in equal combat by the German high command (for fear of losing what few capital ships they had), the surface raiders had already made an impact on the Allies’ merchant fleets. The year 1941 saw the end of successful voyages by the battleship Admiral Scheer and the battlecruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisau, and the dramatic break-out of the battleship Bismarck. The cruise of that 45000-ton monster threw a scare into the British Admiralty (especially after the loss of the Hood) and most realized that they had been extremely lucky to sink her.

As 1942 opened, the British command was aware that a second Bismarck-class ship had been completed, and priority was given to keeping this one off the convoy lanes. This was brought to the attention of Combined Operations, which had been organized to carry the war to the enemy through offensive means, limited as they might be following Dunkirk. In early 1941 commando forces had been organized with the intention of operating against select targets along a coastline that stretched from the Arctic to the Pyrenees. The first raids, small affairs, were mounted that same summer. In August 1941, the port of St. Nazaire was first proposed as a target, considered and rejected by Admiral Keyes, head of Combined Operations. Now, Lord Mountbatten, the new head, was asked to consider the port as a target once more.

In St. Nazaire was the only drydock large enough to accommodate a vessel the size of the battleship Tirpitz, sister to the Bismarck. This dock had been constructed for the building of the great French liner, the Normandie (which took four years to complete). It could easily handle ships up to 85000 tons, being over 1100 feet long and 164 feet wide. The lock gates were two huge sliding caissons 167 feet long and 35 feet thick. The caissons were moved on cambers with the motive machinery in winding houses at the end of each camber track. A pump house near the southern end of the dock housed the machinery for filling and emptying the dock.

The British commanders reasoned that the destruction of the Normandie dock might well prevent the Tirpitz from ever venturing into the Atlantic. If she was damaged in combat, it would be to St. Nazaire she must steam for repairs (it was to St. Nazaire the Bismarck had been fleeing the previous year). The Germans had thus far shown inordinate caution in the use of their capital ships. Without the dock, it was unlikely the Tirpitz would sail for the convoy lanes.

But the port offered other targets that made the prospect of a raid attractive. The Germans had based U-boats at St. Nazaire and were building huge bombproof shelters to protect them from the RAF. Some of these pens were already complete and in use. The pens themselves would be too formidable for commandos, but some of the submarines might be disabled, as well as equipment and stores. More vulnerable were the lock gates that controlled the tidal action in the port basins. If these could be destroyed, the harbor would be tidal and this would, at the very least, inconvenience the U-boats. There were also bridges, power plants, and gun positions that could be knocked out, as well as a group of underground fuel storage tanks. Close examination of the map shows that destruction of but a relatively few locks and swing bridges would at least impair the operation of the port as a whole by isolating areas of St. Nazaire. And there would inevitably be the propaganda value of a successful raid to consider. Eventually, the list of targets for the operation numbered 24 entries.

THE PLAN
By the end of January 1942, the French port was officially tagged as a Combined Operations target of highest priority and planning was underway. Two officers, Captain William Pritchard and Captain Robert Montgomery, had worked out a plan for a raid on the port the previous year. They were brought into the staff almost immediately. Much of the relevant data was in hand, with the destruction of the Normandie dock caissons the prime objective.

The idea of ramming a ship into the southern caisson and blowing it up evolved rather quickly when it became obvious that laying the charges on such a massive target by hand would be too difficult. The planning staff originally called for the use of two destroyers, one for the actual ramming attempt and one to withdraw landed commandos. The Admiralty balked at the idea of two destroyers being risked (since they were in short supply and the U-boat war was intense), and only grudgingly assented to part with one when shown that nothing smaller would survive the impact with the massive caisson. The vessel finally chosen to be sacrificed was one of the fifty Lend-Lease destroyers from the United States, the former USS Buchanan, now the HMS Campbeltown.

Unable to acquire a second destroyer, the planners settled on using a number of motor launches to carry
in the balance of the commandos, provide covering fire for them, and withdraw the raiding force at the conclusion of the operation. These were Fairmile Type B MLs, 112 feet in length and 18 feet across, displacing some 65 tons. They had a top speed of about 20 knots and were armed with twin 20mm Oerlikons. They were crewed by two officers and ten ratings, and would carry an additional 15 commandos each.

A Fairmile C Motor Gun Boat (MGB 314) and a motor torpedo boat (MTB 74) were added. The MGB was considerably faster than the other MLs, with three 650-hp engines, and more heavily armed with a 2-pdr. gun and twin machine guns amidships; she was to be the headquarters ship for Ryder and Newman. MTB 74 was a strange craft, commanded by Sub-Lt. Micky Wynn. It had been adapted for a special mission against the battleship Scharnhorst at Brest. The torpedo tubes were mounted far forward to launch the torpedoes over anti-torpedo nets. Special delayed-action fuses would then detonate the warheads under the target in the hopes of breaking her back. When the German ships dashed home through the Channel in February, MTB 74 was a boat without a mission, so she was added to "Operation Chariot". It was felt that Wynn could act as back-up against the dock in case the Campbeltown failed to ram the caisson. Four further MLs, each equipped with torpedoes, were later added to the naval force to operate against targets of opportunity.

Commanders of the raiding force were chosen with care. Lt.-Colonel A.C. Newman was placed in charge of the ground force. A veteran officer from the Essex Regiment, he had been in command of No. 2 Commando for most of 1941. Command of the naval forces was given to Commander R. E. D. Ryder. He had already served a colorful career, and was presently between commands. Ordered to attend Ryder, he had already sewed a colorful career, and the Essex Regiment, he had been in command of learned what parts of the equipment of their targets of "casualties" so that all would be proficient, operation parties) came from.

Two of the infantry companies and ten vessels from two German minesweeping flotillas based in the harbor. The Germans had some 6000 men stationed in the area, including a brigade of the 333rd Infantry Division a few miles inland. It seemed a most secure establishment, but Dönitz inspected it anyway just prior to the raid pursuant to a Fuller Directive warning of the possibility of a "commando raid" at St. Nazaire. The local command confident that such a thing could not happen at St. Nazaire, unaware that the "10th Anti-Submarine Striking Force" had already put to sea.

THE VOYAGE

Scheduled to depart on the 27th of March, "Chariot" left a day early at the advice of Ryder. The night before, air reconnaissance photos showed four destroyers of the Wolseley-class, the smallest of the harbor, and this couldn’t alter their plans. The Admiralty did decide to send a further two destroyers for escort. Cover for the attack was to be an air raid laid on by the RAF. The planners of Chariot had wanted a full-scale air attack to keep the Germans busy, but political considerations caused Churchill to place restrictions on the bomber crews, allowing them to release their loads only if they could clearly see their targets. Churchill was afraid that any indiscriminate raid might injure relations with the French. Due to security demands, the bomber crews were not informed of the reason for the raids at all. They were to find out for themselves, but the French were informed that the destroyer would not be coming back; and thus, there was no sense in letting her consider stores go to waste, or worse to the Germans. Up to that point, all had duly paid for what they had been asking for. The commandos and naval personnel were unifying into a cohesive fighting force; sharing in this adventure seemed to have fostered a rare kinship.

Board the Campbeltown, the men had things even better. There was an air of adventure, that they were informed that the destroyer would not be coming back; and thus, there was no sense in letting her consider stores go to waste, or worse to the Germans. Up to that point, all had duly paid for what they had been asking for. The commandos and naval personnel were unifying into a cohesive fighting force; sharing in this adventure seemed to have fostered a rare kinship. Board the Campbeltown, the men had things even better. There was an air of adventure, that they were informed that the destroyer would not be coming back; and thus, there was no sense in letting her consider stores go to waste, or worse to the Germans. Up to that point, all had duly paid for what they had been asking for. The commandos and naval personnel were unifying into a cohesive fighting force; sharing in this adventure seemed to have fostered a rare kinship.

One ML, commanded by Lt. Briault, suffered engine trouble. The commandos were transferred to Falconer’s ML (one of the extra boats). Falconer managed to catch up with the Chariot before the final run-in, but Briault was unable to repair his engine until 10:20 PM, too late to catch up. He returned to port without trouble.

At 8:00 PM on the 27th, Ryder ordered the flotilla into attack formation. Ryder and Newman took their positions on the MGB and her commander, Lt. Curtis, was placed in MTB 74. Two hours later, they found the British submarine Sturgeon at her navigation station exactly on schedule. They had but forty miles to go. At 11:30, the men could see the RAF bombers going into action over the port. The cloud cover that Ryder was grateful for proved that any indiscriminate raid might injure relations with the French. Due to security demands, the bomber crews were not informed of the reason for the raids at all. They were to find out for themselves, but the French were informed that the destroyer would not be coming back; and thus, there was no sense in letting her consider stores go to waste, or worse to the Germans. The commandos and naval personnel were unifying into a cohesive fighting force; sharing in this adventure seemed to have fostered a rare kinship. Board the Campbeltown, the men had things even better. There was an air of adventure, that they were informed that the destroyer would not be coming back; and thus, there was no sense in letting her consider stores go to waste, or worse to the Germans. Up to that point, all had duly paid for what they had been asking for. The commandos and naval personnel were unifying into a cohesive fighting force; sharing in this adventure seemed to have fostered a rare kinship.

The British entered the Loire estuary about 12:30 AM, still undetected. Fifteen minutes later, the lookouts sighted the northern shore—which meant they were now among the dangerous shoal waters. Ryder cut speed to ten knots, to keep the destroyer as high in the water as possible.

The air raid had caused some confusion among the German defenders, but its normal pattern and general lack of aggressiveness did more to alarm them than an ordinary raid. The anti-aircraft brigade commander, Captain Mecke, quickly surmised that the raid might be a diversion. At midnight he sent a warning to all Wehrmacht command posts in the region to beware of parachute landings. By 1:00, most of the defenses were involved, and the few remaining were milling about beyond the range of his guns. He ordered the searchlights doused, but also ordered a “continued and increased alert” with strafe for AA troops, the addition “to direct special attention seaward.”

The British force navigator, one Lt. A. R. Green, put in a flawless performance. The Campbeltown
had eased over the mud flats (even though she grounded twice, reducing her speed to five knots), and passed the old Les Mores tower at about 1:20. One of the German harbor defense boats patrolling the main channel did spot the enemy force, but without a radio was powerless to warn anybody. A German AA battalion commander had sighted the approaching vessels five minutes before, but his initial call to the harbor commander’s HQ was rebuffed. His next call to Mecke was not, and at 1:20 Mecke sent out the code message ordering all commands in the area to “repel invasion”. It was now time for Leading Seaman Pike to play out his much-practiced role. Sent along by the Admiralty for his knowledge of German signals, his task was to delay German reaction to the approach as long as possible. At this stage, minutes were precious. The British had obtained the Morse name for one of the German E-boats in the area and at 1:22, when the first searchlights came on, Pike went into action. The problem however was that the British were challenged by two enemy stations at once, one from Villes Martin on the port beam and one from the German Sperrbrecher ahead. A few shore positions manned by nervous German crews operating under Mecke’s order also opened fire. Ryder ordered Pike to answer the shore station first. The signal was accepted, and the firing ceased. But Pike had had to cut short his message and deal with the Sperrbrecher. Some searchlights were still on spotlighting the little fleet, and firing from some German positions began again as Pike was flashing the German ship. He immediately switched to the German signal for “ship being fired on by friendly forces”, and firing again ceased. Several minutes had been won.

But the bluff was up—for if they had truly been German ships, the boats’ commanders would have halted when fired upon. Instead, Beattie now brought Campbeltown up to speed for the charge at the caisson. As the Germans opened fire on the accelerating destroyer at 1:28, Ryder played his last card by firing his Very pistol—loaded with what British intelligence believed to be the correct German recognition flare. But it was the wrong kind, rose only a few feet, and fell into the water. Worse, it was the wrong shade of red. On Campbeltown, the German flag came down and the British naval ensign went up. It also broke out on the stern of all the other little boats, and all of the guns of Chariot opened fire at the shore.

THE RAID

The ferocity of the British reply caused a temporary slackening of the German fire and put out some of the searchlights. The MGB silenced the 88mm gun on the Sperrbrecher. While several had been hit, none of the British boats—including the Campbeltown which got most of the attention—were mortally hit. But now casualties started to mount as more German guns joined in, and the flotilla neared the docks. On the destroyer, two Oerlikons and the forward gun were knocked out. Beattie found the light house on the Old Mole (Area 342) and used it to orient for the final run to the Normandie dock. The MGB sheared away as the destroyer went to 20 knots. At 200 yards, Beattie spotted the black line of the top of the caisson. An incendiary bomb (possibly from one of the few remaining British aircraft overhead) struck and exploded on the forecastle seconds before impact. Beattie ordered the crew to prepare for impact, felt the momentary check as the ship tore through the torpedo nets, and ordered a final change of “Port Twenty!” to hit the caisson dead center and keep the stern from the blocking the Old Entrance. At 1:34 the Campbeltown struck the caisson, crumpling her lower bows back some 34 feet and leaving the forecastle deck projecting

Figure 1: The Scene of the Action
a foot beyond the caisson’s inner face. The commandos did not give up on the idea to abandon ship to his naval personnel until the commandos had all disembarked. Then Chief Engine-Room Artificers Howard and Reay opened the sea valves and removed the condenser doors to let in the water. As insurance, Torpedo Gunner Hargreaves set off scuttling charges, and the Campbeltown began to settle by the stern. The Avant Port could help, but will rarely do much damage against the guns.

The Northern Caisson—256—must be the prime target for the Campbeltown’s commandos since its destruction, along with that of the southern one, will yield more than a third of the points a player needs to win.)

Tibberts and Copeland, Newman’s second-in-command, directed the landing from the destroyer, accomplished under a deluge of fire from German batteries. Roderick’s assault party left first to silence nearby gun positions and establish a defensive perimeter for the demolition squads. Roy’s assault team attacked and destroyed the gun positions atop the pumping station, and then moved on to the bridge over the river (212). They followed the practice by the demolition groups proved important and they functioned well, despite casualties and confusion.

Chant, with one of his men wounded, blew open the doors of the pump house (222) and headed for the main pumps below ground; 150 pounds of explosives exploded. The pumps and collapsed on the floor above, saving them the need to deal with the electric motors on the ground floor. They completed the destruction by smashing gauges and instruments with hammers and setting the transformer oil afire.

Christopher Smallley’s target, the winding house (216) was the nearest to the Campbeltown and he made short work of it. Charges were set on the two great wheels that moved the caisson; when the fuses failed, he calmly set new charges and was rewarded with the complete destruction of the building. Seeing Burt’s launch at the Old Entrance, he led his men to it and embarked, even though the boat was at the time trading fire with enemy vessels in the St. Nazaire Basin. Smalley himself was killed while trying to unjam the ML’s Oerlikons.

Brett, Purdon and the reinforcing Burtenshaw had a much tougher time at the northern end of the great dock. Their protection squad had been halved while still aboard the destroyer and only its leader Dienson and two of his men remained. Despite this, all ran for the northern targets. Reaching the northern winding station (235), Purdon smashed open the door and set charges much as Smalley had, and then waited for Brett and Burtenshaw to complete their work on the caisson (256) itself. Brett was wounded early on, but continued to advise the others. The commandos laid underwater charges against the face of the caisson by hanging them from a railing along the north side. But fire had picked up and a number (including Burtenshaw) were killed. Retreating, Sergeant Privett set the charges and the caisson was damaged, but not destroyed. Purdon fired his charges, and together the remaining commandos retreated toward the bridge Roy held over the Old Entrance.

The destruction of the dockyard machinery was so complete that, even if the Campbeltown charge failed, the dockyard would become unusable for at least a full year. But reaching the bridge, the commandos found the bridge under fire and could only be crossed with great risk. Newman’s headquarters was on the other side. Under fire, all crossed to meet with him and inquire about everyone. Newman only told them that they became aware of the carnage on the river.

After the Campbeltown had rammed the caisson, the MLs began to come up—the port column headed for the Old Mole (336) and the starboard column making for the Old Entrance (356). Shortly after the destroyer had rammed, Curtis’ MGB moved into the enclosed area, Ryder was unaware of the fate of the little boats.

The MLs began to take heavy fire even before the destroyer ended her voyage on the Southern Caisson. And it began to tell immediately, with both MLs taking a pounding. The lead boat of the starboard column commanded by Stephens, never reached the Mole and was abandoned aflame with casualties aboard. Burt’s boat overshot the Old Entrance, came about, and put his commandos ashore. Ryder’s boat, third in line, was already there. But fire was heavy, and Morgan’s and Woodcock’s groups reembarked, asking to be put ashore on the downstream side. Total confusion now reigned. Lt. Beart’s ML 267 also overshot the Old Entrance, came about, landed the commandos, reembarked them when the fire was found too intense, and then savaged by fire before it could withdraw. Burt’s boat was lost.

ML 268 was the first boat in the column to make the Old Entrance approach as planned, but came under accurate fire and exploded astern of the Campbeltown. Fenton, in the fifth boat of the group, managed to avoid the drifting and burning vessels of his companions and made the Old Entrance, there landing Hooper’s assault party. But now, with severe damage to the engines, he tried to withdraw. Being one of the four torpedo boats, he attempted to torpedo the Sperrbrecher, but after one run abandoned the attempt and withdrew to the open sea.

Ryder, likewise, gained the Old Entrance despite the holocaust to land Haines’ party. He then tied to the Campbeltown, taking off the naval personnel and retraced his course through the German fire to the open sea.

The other spare ML, under Lt. Nock, found its way to the Old Entrance, arriving in time to witness the destruction on the river at its height. He spent some time engaging enemy guns with the Oerlikons, but could not locate any. Withdrawing, his ML 298 was badly hit, both engines exploded, and the boat was abandoned. Meanwhile, Burt’s boat had come upon Collier’s craft, which had been badly shot up. Moving to offer assistance, he was waved off by Collier—alone on the bridge and mortally wounded. But the pause had been fatal, and Burt’s ML was heavily hit, engines and steering knocked out. Burt ordered all aboard to abandon ship.

(There is little the player can do about the German fire pouring into the naval force but pray and deal with developments as best can. The covering fire can help, but will rarely do much damage against the German fire and searchlights. The British force is simply outgunned, and suffering from the fragility of floating platforms against fortified gun emplacements. The Avant Port can be used to hide from the worst of the enemy fire while waiting to pick up the surviving commandos, but only here even if the guns protecting it—311, 312, 411, 434A, 434B—are silenced.)

The port column of launches was having almost as much trouble as the other, although more of these boats would eventually escape. Their landing zone, the Old Mole, remained in enemy hands throughout the operation. Of the commandos in the blockhouse in the middle, would remain in action. The action here was so furious that the final landing attempt was over only fifteen minutes after the destroyer had struck the caisson.

First came ML 270, but her steering was KO’ed by a direct hit and her captain, Lt. Irwin, decided he had to withdraw rather than be an easy target; she made the open sea. Lt. Platt, next in line, carrying the commandos under Birney who were to secure the Mole, apparently ground short of the steps and came under fire from German infantry above. Trying a second approach, the boat was hit and drifted away burning. This brought up ML 160 under Lt. Boyd. Carrying no troops, he made himself a nuisance to the Germans along the waterfront, giving support fire everywhere, attempting to torpedo the Sperrbrecher, and eventually expended all his ammunition engaging enemy gun positions at close range. He picked up the survivors of Platt’s boat and even stopped in the holocaust a second time to pick up three commandos in the water. Despite repeated hits, the boat was charred and retired through a cascade of shells from shore batteries to the open sea.

Next in line came the aforementioned Collier, at the helm of ML 457, carrying two four-man demolition parties under Pritchard and Walton and the protection squad under Lt. Watson. Avoiding the burning boats, Collier landed his passengers, and the returned to midstream to await them—a fatal mistake. Burtenshaw, himself was killed while trying to unjam the ML’s Oerlikons.

Collier, MGB 160, and the approach to the shore by enemy gun positions there. Horlock overshot the mole, then with casualties mounting, simply found the fire too thick to make another attempt. Hender- took his ML 268 to both the Old Mole and the Old Entrance, but was unable to land at either and turned for home. Falconer took on various survivors from the water, losing all his guns to enemy fire in the process, and wisely retreated back to the open sea.

Ryder left his position at the Old Entrance around 2:30 after seeing Wynn’s torpedoes fired against the lock gates (212). As Curtis brought his MGB out into the river, Ryder got his first look at the slaughter. The wrecks of five launches were still burning, and he witnessed Collier being savaged as he made his second run at the Old Mole. Ryder ordered Curtis to go to his aid. MGB 314 sailed to within 250 yards of the mole, promptly silenced the dangerous German gun in the bunker (356), and also engaged the Sperrbrecher, and a second enemy gun inshore (344). With the boat now receiving numerous hits, Ryder determined to return to the Old Entrance to tell Newman there would be no boats to withdrawal the commandos. But he found a firefight raging at the shore there, and no other craft about. Ryder ordered Curtis to retreat.

Of the commandos in the motor launches, few made it ashore—Newman’s HQ, Haines’ group, the leader of the small boats. The initial plan had been for the second destroyer to land these troops, and the destruction of the small boats after the German inability to seriously damage the Campbeltown proved the accuracy of the planners’ predictions. With the impact of the fire, it became clear that all the German positions were manned, even the few commandos ashore here had little hope of doing further damage. Newman had landed at 1:40 and shortly less than an hour later issued orders recalling his men. Cut off from their transport home, they would have to fight their way through the Old Town and the Old Entrance to get to safety. With this as the “Bridge of Memories” (343) into the new town, and from there hope to reach neutral Spain. (As it turned out, only five were able to complete this path and return to England; the rest either died
THE AFTERMATH

Most tried to hide. And most were routed out by the thorough German search procedures. As the commandos were captured they were brought together in a cafe for processing. The main concern among the British, and the Germans, too, was whether they were far enough away from the Campbeltown.

As the search had been mounted, other Germans gathered at the Southern Caisson to view the great curiosity of a British destroyer perched atop the dock gate. A quick search of the ship had been undertaken but had failed to uncover the explosives. Shortly after 10:30 AM, with nowhere in the neighborhood of 100 Germans, dockyard workers and souvenir hunters aboard, the Campbeltown fuse ran out and detonated the charges. The caisson was blown off its track, and the rush of water forced it back against the inner wall of the dock. The two tankers in the dock, the Beattie and the Schneidau, were carried along on the tidal wave into the inner face of the Northern Caisson. The remainder of the Campbeltown was carried into the dock and sank to the floor.

The blast was a tremendous shock to the Germans, and it raised tensions considerably. Shots were still being heard that night as nervous Germans fired at shadows, Frenchmen, and occasionally each other. By Sunday morning, things had calmed—only to be again unhinged by the detonation of Wynn's delayed-action torpedoes at the lock gates at 4:00 AM. The Germans were angered, and as they had rounded up the last of the commandos the day before, such was the case. When a second torpedo exploded an hour later, the reaction was severe as German officers felt a civilian rising was the offening. In various incidenances, some 16 Frenchmen were killed and 26 wounded.

For the surviving British boats, Rodier's was disabled and abandoned about three miles downstream. The survivors of it (including Beattie but not Rodier) were picked up by a German patrol boat. Wynn's gallant little craft was destroyed by shore guns when he stopped to rescue survivors. Wynn's and Wynn's MLs were still left alive in the world.

As for the surviving British boats, the Old Mole is the best place from which to reembark with the shortest route out of the harbor. Land withdrawal is far more difficult, since the commandos will have to work through the entering reinforcements in order to get free of the town. And you can't blow the bridge at 3:43 until the last minute, as it will be needed for a landmark break. Some few groups might even be evacuated from the relative safety of Avant Port, although the Forced Landing rules make this difficult. In short, there is no easy path back to England.

We would hope that this game has given its players some appreciation of the realities of commando operations. At the very least, we would hope that it is challenging and fun to play. If we have accomplished that much, we've succeeded. Good luck.
One of the things I dislike most is to find out that I've been playing a game incorrectly. Do you know the feeling? It happened to me recently while playing RAID ON ST. NAZARE. I read the rules carefully (I thought) and then went through them again as if I had played my first game. Things went fine, but as the game progressed and I dove back into the rulebook to clear up certain questions, I began to discover that I hadn't been counting movement costs correctly. It happened to me on the first turn of the game when I moved my British commandos to the north of St. Nazaire. I had assumed that the movement costs for the British commandos would be the same as for the German units, but it turned out that they were different. I had misinterpreted the rules and had been counting the movement costs incorrectly.

In the case of the rulebook, the rulebook is pretty complete, but does not present rules in quite the right order for the reader. A full-blown tutorial would help, but it would be at least as long as the rulebook and there is not enough space for such in The General. Instead, I offer here a detailed "Turn Sequence" for RAID ON ST. NAZARE which should make it possible for the reader to start playing as soon as he gets the game box from the store. It is intended to be complete enough, and general enough, that those of you who do not have the game should even be able to follow the Series Replay in this issue. I have not tried to replace the rulebook and I refer to the appropriate sections to avoid repeating minor details.

Counters and Map
Before we get into the actual Turn Sequence, we must review those aspects of the game that will be unfamiliar to those who have not yet played this excellent solitaire game.

Look at the counter sheet first. About two-thirds of the counters are combat "units." Some units represent infantry and these are called "commandos" if they're British and "Stosstruppen" if they're German. Other units represent a major weapon—a vessel, a gun, a searchlight, or armored car—and the crew which operate it. The destroyer Campbelltown has two counters, one for each half of the ship. (I left them joined together to make a distinctive counter one inch long for this most important "boat"). Note that all British vessels are called "boats" regardless of size and German vessels are called "ships". Boats have counters; ships are printed on the mapboard. Searchlights are a bit unusual in that they have one counter for the light itself, and one for the beam. The beam counter is used to indicate where the light is currently shining.

The map is gorgeous, isn't it? It uses "areas" and "zones" instead of the familiar hexagons and there are two different systems of movement—one for water and one for land. Boats and the rules care- water zones. The harbor is divided into five zones labelled "A", "B", "C", "D" and "Z"; the smaller two zones on the left—"Approach" and "Open Sea"—play minor roles. On land, the areas are much smaller and are identified by three-digit numbers. The numbers are set inside a symbol that indicates whether this area is open ground (circle), a building (square), a ship (triangle) or part of the U-boat pens complex (hexagon). The areas are con-nected by solid lines to show where movement is allowed and by dashed lines to show where movement is not possible but combat is (across water, for instance). Areas are grouped together into four zones: areas 111 to 166 are Zone "11", 201-266 are Zone "2", 301-366 are Zone "3" and 401-494 are Zone "4". Gray boxes on the mapboard are Zones "5" and "6" which represent offboard German assembly areas.

There are some dice-rolling terms which are used in the rulebook (and in this issue of The General) briefly. Some will be familiar; some are unique to RSN. For the uninitiate, a "dr" is the roll of one die which gives a result of from "1" to "6"; a "DR" is the roll of two dice where they are added together for a result of "2" to "12". A "drm" is a modifier for a dr or DR value added or subtracted to the number actually thrown.

In ST. NAZARE, a Selection DR" is the roll of two dice as well, but it is read as a two-digit number in the range "11" to "66". The convention is to throw a white and a colored die and to read the colored die first. In the game, such rolls are primarily used to select one of the British boats as a target. A "Triad" is a roll of three dice. Read the red die as a dr, and the yellow plus the white as a DR. One will tell the player whether a hit has been made, and the other what the damage is to be. All are thrown together to save time. A "Selection DR" of "4-5" means the light will hit its primary zone, which is the top of the three. A roll of "4-5" or "5" illuminates the secondary zone and a roll of "6" illuminates the tertiary (bottom listed) zone.

If there are less than six boats or commando counters in a zone, there is a chance that a light may be ineffective. If the beam counter ends up in such a zone, a dr is made and if the number on the die is greater than the number of British units, then flip the counter to its gray (0 To Hit drm) side. It will have no effect for this turn, but the light is still functioning and can be shot at by the British.

2.0 Naval Attack Phase
2.1 Predesignated Harbor Defense Fire: First the defense gets one automatic hit on any target that is too big or too bright to miss. There is no To Hit drm since no misses are possible. Just roll two dice for the effect and refer to the Harbor Defense Table. There are no drms for this. Roll first for the Campbel-town (until it is abandoned by its crew or sunk), then once for each boat that is "On Fire" (including the destroyer if she's ablaze). Boats that are in Zone Z or the Open Sea are immune to both predesignated and normal Harbor Defensive Fire. Mark the results with appropriate "Evade", "On Fire", "Turn Away", "Dead in Water" or "Sunk" counters and record gun, crew and commando losses on the Game Log (as explained in Rule 7.1). Note that when a commando loses one or more boxes, you must also check for ammo losses (according to Rule 11.8).

2.2 Harbor Defensive Fire: Now the normal defensive fire is resolved and it becomes possible for the Germans to miss. The player makes rolls until a miss occurs or until 12 hits are made (not counting any hits from predesignated fire). Use the "Shots Taken" marker on the turn record track to count the hits.

For each shot, throw all three dice. The red die determines if a hit has occurred and the other two dice determine which boat is being shot at. A "6" on the red die is a miss (after Turn 3, a "5" or a "4" is a miss). If the three dice do not add up to a number, then it's a chance for a change into a hit! There is a -1 drm if the boat is on fire or dead in the water. Searchlight illumination can also be a -1 drm; if there is a beam counter with its yellow side up in the same zone as the target boat, and if its drm makes the difference between a miss and a hit, then place that beam counter directly on top of the target boat counter and apply the drm. This boat is considered "caught in the beam" for the remainder of this turn; the
light’s -1 DRM is applied to any subsequent shots against this boat but cannot be applied for combat against any other British unit. If there are two or more beams in the same zone they cannot be used against the same target, but otherwise all drs are cumulative.

The yellow and white die of the triad are a selection DR to determine which hit is scored. As there are 36 possible combinations, all 38 British boats, each boat has a pair of numbers assigned (shown on the cover and the Game Log). For example, if the yellow die is a “4” and the white a “11”, then the selection is “411”. Boyd’s boat is “41-42” and so would be hit. If the boat which is indicated has been sunk or is not in any of Zones A, B, C, D, or D (the zones where Harbor Defensive Fire is allowed), then find instead the boat with the nearest selection number that is available. Once you have figured out which boat is the target and that there is a hit, another DR gives the effect on that boat.

2.3 Covering Fire: Now the British boats get to shoot back at searchlight or gun positions. They also shoot until a miss occurs, and there is an effective limit of six shots. Each shot is a triad where the yellow and white die total is the To Hit DR and the red die gives the effect. The To Hit total must be “7” or less to get a hit and +1 drm is added for every hit scored this turn. This has the effect of making “7” a hit on the first shot, “2-6” a hit on the second, “2-5” on the third, and so on. If you manage to score six hits, the +6 drm makes any further hits impossible. There are also To Hit drms based on the “Flotilla Gun Display” on the Game Log. This shows the total number of guns in the flotilla at the moment; losses among your boats are reflected by marking off the appropriate hits on your guns (if a boat sinks, then all its guns are crossed off). For example, after eight boxes have been crossed off, a +1 drm is added to all British Covering Fire To Hit rolls.

You must choose the intended target for each shot before you place the unit in the area (Rule 10.2). The following rules govern your choice of targets:

1. Targets cannot be “Disrupted” or “Out of Action” if they aren’t active, they would be invisible in the dark.
2. You must have a boat with a functioning gun in one of the three zones the target could affect.

2.4 Dockside Defensive Fire: Harbor Defensive Fire represents the general effect of offshore German guns; now the guns onboard get their turn. This is resolved one sea zone at a time, in any order. It is applied to the Approach zone on the first turn only. Each gun may fire at only one zone and must fire at the highest zone of effect in which there are target boats. Flip each gun unit as it is allocated to show that it has been used for Dockside Defensive Fire. Note that a gun may not engage in such fire if there is a commando unit ashore in the same area as the target boats. This fire is resolved by a triad in the same manner as Harbor Defensive Fire with the To Hit number of the firing boat, but +1 DRM if selected gun has any modifiers (due to damage or evasive maneuvers) can only move to Zone A from the Approaches this turn. Those with 2MF could move through A to Zone B or Zone Z. One thing you might want to aim at is sinking the Sperrbrecher. This ship is anchored in the harbor so that its two guns could be used for defense; sinking it early will prevent those two guns aboard from doing more damage on Turn 2. The player can attack it with any torpedo boat except MTB 74 (Wynn)—which has delayed action torpedoes. Choose one that has 2MF left after Naval Combat and move it into Zone A (1MF); now use the second MF to torpedo the ship (Rule 8.4). The light/gun is restored and the attack is not resolved until after all naval movement is completed, and only a dr of “11” or “22” is active, so you could improve your chances by making another attack with another torpedo boat.

Landings should commence on Turn 2. A boat expends 1MF to enter or leave a Landing Area. Area 336 is the easiest to reach; it is adjacent to Zone B so that boats that start there with at least 1MF can make a landing. Boats in Zone A with 2MF can also reach it. Even though the boat is placed directly on Area 336 (or close alongside if things get crowded, there is no limit to stacking), it is still considered to be in Zone B for German naval fire.

Another event that should happen on Turn 2 is the Campbelltown ramming the Southern Caisson of the Normandie drydock. Only the destroyer may do this and it costs 1MF. Thus, if Campbelltown can maintain a speed of 2MF, she can move into Zones A and B on the first turn and on Turn 2 can move into C and ram the caisson. Rule 8.2 for details of how its guns may fire after ramming and how the crew can scuttle the destroyer to improve the odds of getting the 12 Victory Points (VP) for destroying the caisson.

There are two other movement rules which you can look up only when needed. It takes 1MF (per boat) to pick up/transfer passengers from another boat in the same zone (Rule 8.3). As survivors are worth VP if you can get them to England, this is a decision to be made. And, starting on Turn 5, a boat may stop a Force 1 Landing in an area not designated for landings (Rule 8.4). This takes all of a boat’s MF that for that turn and succeeds only on a dr of “11” or “22” (no drm are applied).

3.2 Torpedo Attacks: Resolve any torpedo attacks in any order you wish with a dr on the Torpedo Attack Table (-1 DRM if the target is already “Damaged”). Mark off the torpedo box for that boat on the Game Log. Note that Wynn has delayed action torpedoes (see 8.42) which are not resolved until the end of the game. Mark off Wynn’s torpedo when he attacks, however.

3.3 Clear Markers: Remove all “Evade”, “Turn AWA”, and “SubMARiners from all British boats. Remove any boats that weigh anchor and delete them from the Game Log.

3.4 German Ship Withdrawal: This is a rule you won’t use until Turn 10. Beginning then, the German ships moored around the basin move to the U-boat pens for protection. Read Rule 13.2.8 when the time comes.

4.0 Loading/Unloading Phase

4.1 Load/Unload Commandos: All boats in a Landing area may unload or load passengers. To unload, simply place the commando counter on the area; there are no stacking limits to worry about. To load, remove any commando counters that are in the Responsive area of the passenger (a commando unit on the boat’s passenger counter) and move it onto the boat to match the current strength of the unit(s) being loaded. Note that all boats have a limit of 12 passenger boxes.

5.0 German Activation Phase

5.1 Activation Number: It’s time to see how the Germans react. There is a drm for each turn printed on the Commando Record Board. This starts out at -3 but gradually becomes positive; thus, more and more Germans enter the fray as the game progresses. Roll a DR to see how many German units will be activated this game turn.

5.2 Select Units: Draw that number of units randomly from the cup holding the available forces. If the Activation Number is “12” or more, then the first unit is automatically an armored car (Rule 9.5). All of the units in the cup are taken, add the next group of counters you sorted before play began. In other words, if you took the last unit labelled Alarm 1, then put all the Alarm 2 counters into the cup and keep drawing. When the fifth group has been used, add all the German casualties from groups 3-5 to the cup. Unbent areas are those where one or more of the following conditions apply: it is occupied by British units, or it is a German ship that has withdrawn; it is an overwater area (bridge, ship or lock gate) that has been destroyed; it is an area from which it is not possible (due to demolitions) to ever reach a commando.

6.0 Land Movement Phase

6.1 Commandos Move: Commandos move from area to area along the solid lines, paying movement costs as shown on the Game Log. Rule 12.1 allows commandos to be connected by a single solid line then the cost is 1MF; two lines cost 2MF; three lines, 3MF. Commandos have 3MF at full strength and 2MF at reduced strength, but they have 1MF less on the turn that they land (Rule 10.3). Remember that it costs 1MF to enter or leave an area containing any enemy unit (including guns and lights) and German units are activated automatically when a commando unit moves onto a ship (Rule 13.21) or adjacent to the U-boat pens (Rule 14.2).

6.2 Set German Movement Number: The Stosstruppen’s mobility varies randomly from turn to turn. Roll a die (no drm) for the Move Number for this turn and mark it on the track provided on the map. The MF of each German unit will be in the range of 0MF to 3MF, depending on their current strength (10.2). Larger units will be more mobile than smaller ones.

6.3 German Units Move: Stosstruppen take the shortest route towards the nearest commando as detailed in Rule 10.4. They follow the same rules as commandos, except that they cannot leave an area containing a commando unit and German units on ships and in the sub pens are restricted (Rules 13.1 and 14.2). Armored Cars can move 4MF no matter what the movement dr,
7.0 Land Combat Phase

7.1 Resolve Commando Attacks: Commandos can engage in Fire Attacks against a specific enemy unit in their own area or in any connecting area. All combat in the same area must be resolved before any fire between areas is resolved. Resolve combat by making a DR where the colored die is a To Hit dr and the white die is the number of enemy strength points lost. Several To Hit drs may apply depending on defensive terrain and whether the commando is a demolition unit (those with the orange stripe on the counter) or an assault unit (Rule 11.3). German losses are taken immediately by replacing the target counter with an appropriate one of lower value. Assault commandos may instead make a "grenade attack". Grenade attacks can only be made against units in the same area. Such attacks use one ammo box on the Game Log and are the only way to destroy armored cars (Rule 11.3). They can, if successful, eliminate all German Stosstrupp units in an area except in the U-boat pens (Rule 14.2). Grenade attacks can be made against guns and lights, but affect only the target (11.4 and 11.6).

7.2 Resolve Stosstruppen Attacks: Surviving German units fire back following the priorities laid out in Rule 11.31 for targets of their fire. This fire is conducted and resolved the same as British fire attacks, except that British losses are recorded on the Game Log. When a commando loses one or more strength points, you must also check for ammo losses (Rule 11.8). If a commando unit’s strength is reduced to three or less, its counter is flipped over to the 2MF side.

7.3 German Long Range Fire: Any guns in Flak Towers which have not yet participated in a Fire Attack this turn may shoot at commandos in any area which is color-coded to match the gun’s area (Rule 11.51). A dr of “1” or “2” is a hit (−1 drm if the target is illuminated) and a hit removes one strength point on the top commando unit in the target area. Check ammo loss for each hit.

7.4 British Mortar Attacks: Assault units (only) may return the long-range fire with mortars (11.52). They must be in an area subject to German long-range fire and the target is always the gun which can shoot into that area. A dr of “1” is a hit; resolve hits with a dr on the Covering Fire Table.

8.0 Demolition Phase

8.1 Preparation: British demolition units (with ammo) that are in an area with a VP objective, a gun or a searchlight may try to blow it up. If the target is a VP objective, a preparation dr must be made first. Roll a die (drm for attacks made, movement, and presence of enemy units); if the result is less than or equal to the current strength of the commando unit, place a “Prepared Charges” counter in the area. If successful, mark off an ammo box for that demolition unit on the Game Log.

8.2 German Removal: Any Stosstruppen unit that is in an area with a “Prepared Charges” marker and no commando units may attempt to remove the charges. Roll a DR and if the result is less or equal to the unit’s current strength, the charges are removed (and the counter).

8.3 Demolition Resolution: For every “Prepared Charges” counter in an area with a commando unit, roll a die on the Demolition Attack Table (drms per Rule 12.3). Note that an assault unit can detonate the charges, but with +1 drm. A result of “1-3” destroys the target; a “4” damages it. Mark the target area with the appropriate counter. A result of “5-6” means no effect. In all cases, remove the “Prepared Charges”.

9.0 Consolidation Phase

9.1 Combine German Stosstruppen: For each area in which there are two or more Stosstruppen counters and no commandos, replace two German units with a replacement counter equivalent to their combined strength (Rule 10.6).

9.2 Move Turn Marker

10.0 End of Game

10.1 Resolve Detonation of Campbeltown: After all commandos have been eliminated or evacuated, the explosives in the Campbeltown detonate. Make a dr on the Detonation Attack Table to see if the South Caisson is destroyed. There are a number of special drms for this attack. First, the normal +1 for the South Caisson does not apply. There is a −1 drm if the Campbeltown rammed at speed 2MF, and another −1 drm if she has been scuttled (not sunk). If the maximum −2 drm applies, only a roll of “6” will fail to destroy the caisson.

10.2 Resolve Detonation of Delayed Action Torpedoes: If MTB 74 made a torpedo attack during the game, resolve this now with a dr on the Torpedo Attack table.

10.3 Count Victory Points: Add up all the VP for targets destroyed, half value for targets damaged, and any additional points for survivors that reach England (Rule 15.2). How’d you do? So far my best has been 86.8 points and my worst has been 16.2! (This last disaster occurred when six boats, including the Campbeltown were sunk by Turn 2 and the rest pulled out.) But, the amazing thing about RAID ON ST. NAZAIRe is that we, unlike the British who rode into history on the small boats, can try again. Good luck.

CONTEST 140

It is the British Movement Phase late in a game of RAID ON ST. NAZAIRe and although you have sealed off the Old Town from the Western Reinforcement Zone by blowing the southern bridges and lock gates, a pitched battle in the north has been lost and Stosstruppen are pouring across the Northern Swing Bridge and Northern Caisson. Bradley, the last unharmed Demolition unit, is attempting to blow the Lock Gates at 212 and thus seal off the Old Town from the Northern Reinforcement Zones, but has been unable to Prepare Charges yet. Your last remaining forces with any chance to assist Bradley are Haines, Newman and Hodgson. Haines and Newman have taken casualties, but each still has three MF and an ammo. Hodgson, on the other hand, has been reduced to two MF and has no ammo. All of the German flak towers are still active, but the Searchlights have all been eliminated. Your task is to create the best move for these three Assault units in such a manner that will give Bradley the best chance to destroy the Lock Gates.

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive merchandise from The Avalon Hill Game Company. To be valid, an entry must include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole and a listing of the three best articles in the judgment of the contestant. The solution to Contest 140 will appear in Vol. 24, No. 5 and the list of winners in Vol. 24, No. 6 of The GENERAL.
Introduction

This article is based on what I have learned from playing 81,000 games of RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE. Okay, I exaggerate somewhat. I didn't actually play 81,000 complete games from start to finish. However, I was able to simulate on a computer virtually all of the naval aspects of the game. From those simulations, I believe you will have a better idea of what to expect in RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE and will pick up some hints on how to better play the game.

There are two distinct phases in this game. The first, or the naval phase, consists of transporting commandos by naval vessels to their Landing Zones and attacking selected installations with torpedoes and naval gunfire. The second, or land phase, consists of those commandos attacking specified shore installations such as bridges and drydock machinery in the midst of mobilizing German infantry. While there are a few links between the naval and land phases of the game, to a large extent they can be considered independently. This article is concerned with naval operations; land operations are considered herein only to the extent that they affect the naval aspects of the game.

At first, it would appear that the Royal Navy can win the game with very little help from the commandos. The Southern Caisson, once rammed by the destroyer Campbeltown, can usually be blown up for 12 Victory Points. The torpedo boats are available for four Victory Points each and the floating battery Sperrbrecher for another one. And two-tenths of a Victory Point is awarded for each of the 226 crew and commando sections successfully evacuated back to Britain. Therefore, in principle, the Royal Navy can accumulate 66 VP (12 + 2 x 4 + 1 + 2 x 226) on its own out of the 70 required to win. Commandos could pick up the remaining victory points by blowing a few installations.

It is important to recognize that virtually all of the demolition targets are initially unprotected but that, as time passes, more and more German infantry organize themselves into effective units that pose a threat to demolition squads. Furthermore, any delay in landing commandos needlessly exposes them to risk from German guns firing at their naval transports. This argues for quickly landing the commandos.

Therefore, at first glance, the mission of the Royal Navy in RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE is clear: suppress shore batteries with naval gunfire, ram the Southern Caisson with the DD Campbeltown, land as many commandos as possible as quickly as possible, torpedo the Lock Gates, pick up commandos after they have blown a few targets, and then return to Britain.

If you have played through RSN a couple of times, you probably realize that the above description of the Royal Navy's mission is wildly optimistic. Unfortunately, German shore batteries and embattled guns turn the St. Nazaire channel into a devastating turkey shoot. This article is intended to indicate reasonable expectations for the course of naval operations and to explore some options that are available for minimizing losses. These objectives are accomplished by means of a computer simulation which, except in a few minor respects, faithfully reproduces all aspects of naval operations for a game. To give some idea of the complexity of the computer program, it consists of over 1100 BASIC statements (many of which must be executed numerous times in a game). Even so, all the naval operations can be performed in several seconds on a personal computer rather than in hours as would be required in an actual game. This makes it possible to test out various tactics in thousands of games.

The ability to play thousands of games is particularly important with RSN because most tactical choices involve subtle tradeoffs; it is difficult to tell in advance whether a particular tactic will help or hurt on balance. The only way to tell whether a tactic will be beneficial is to try it out in games. However, due to dramatic changes in the character of the raid from game to game as a consequence of die rolls, it is virtually impossible to ascertain the net effect of a particular tactic by playing only a few games. One cannot tell whether a good outcome was due to luck or whether it was due to superior tactics.

Fortunately, it is possible to simulate the naval aspects of the game on a computer because there are a small number of decisions that need to be made and, by and large, those decisions can be made before the game even begins. Indeed, perhaps the most important decisions concerning naval operations must be prespecified. The rules require that the destroyer Campbeltown proceed with all speed to ram the Southern Caisson and that the Landing Zones for commandos must all be specified before the game begins.

The Computer Simulation

The elements of the Sequence of Play that pertain to naval actions are fully reproduced in the simulations, except that "Open Sea Encounters" are omitted. In the interests of simplicity, I made several decisions up front that might be different in an actual game as it progresses. In some respects, these simplifications may make the game more realistic. Like nearly all wargames, RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE assumes the commander has far more information and control in the heat of the battle than is probably realistic. The simplifications I have made can be viewed as a part of the operational orders that are issued to commanders before the raid commences. In the chaos of the raid itself, it is unlikely that the flotilla commander could successfully communicate major changes in plans to boat commanders and have them executed.

The simplifications I have made are described below:

1. Boats do not pick up passengers. In principle, crew and commandos from stricken boats can be picked up at a cost of one movement factor. Those who are rescued serve no function on the rescue boat, but earn Victory Points if the rescuing boat makes port in England. However, the loss of a movement factor can well determine the difference between a successful mission for a boat or disaster.

2. Targets of covering fire. Royal Navy gunfire can knock out German guns and searchlights temporarily or permanently. I ordered flotilla commandos to first aim for the gun on the Old Mole (336) which threatens ships and commandos landing at the Old Mole—and then for guns in 344, 311, 312, 300A and 300B.

3. Wynn's boat. The torpedo boat commanded by Wynn carries no commandos but does carry a delayed-action torpedo which may explode at the end of the game. Wynn was ordered to attack the Old Entrance Floating Gate. This target was selected since surviving Campbeltown commandos need some over-the-water escape route into the Old Town. Instead of blowing up the Old Entrance Floating Gate immediately, it can be preserved as a bridge to the end of the game if attacked with the delayed action torpedoes.

4. Nock's boat. Nock's boat carries no commandos, and, contrary to what is printed on the log, it carries no torpedoes. I ordered Nock to proceed directly to Sea Area D and to remain there one turn, after which he can make for the Open Sea. Nock can serve a useful purpose in Sea Area D by drawing all additional German guns into action away from other boats. German guns whose primary coverage is Sea Area D will then fire on Nock rather than at boats in the Old Entrance area.

5. No forced landings. Forced landings can be carried out in an area other than the boat's planned landing zone (336 on the Old Mole or 366 at the mouth of the Old Entrance) after the 0152 turn on a die roll of 1" or 2". However, very few, if any, boats with commandos are typically afire and mobile after the 0152 turn. In the interests of simplifying the program, I ruled out forced landings. Boats were required at all costs to land their commandos in their planned landing zones.

6. Interface with land operations. German guns which are successfully assaulted by commandos cannot fire at vessels. However, there are no Victory Points for taking out a gun and assaulting a gun places the commando at risk from return fire if the assault does not succeed.

The Campbeltown commandos more or less have to attack the guns on the Pump House (222) in order to meet their demolition objectives. In the simulation, I ordered the Campbeltown commandos, once ashore, to take up positions at fire at the Pump House guns, attempting to put them out of action. If the commandos are unsuccessful, the guns fire back. In the turn following the landing, surviving commandos move directly to the Pump House and attack the guns with grenades, while demolition commandos provide support fire from adjacent areas. On the following turn, the commandos withdraw. In an actual game, a player might choose not to withdraw at that point. However, by following the plan I have suggested, the simulations give a pretty good idea of how successful the initial assaults on the Pump House guns are likely to be. The steps involved in assaulting the Pump House guns I have outlined above were simulated precisely as they would occur in a game.

Commandos who land at the Old Mole are subject to fire from guns in 336 and 344 on the turn in which they land. To simplify matters, in the simulations I assumed that demolition teams, if unburdened with wounded, would proceed directly to 335. No more than two assault teams would remain in area 336; other assault teams would also move to area 335. The two most effective commandos in area 335 are then used to attempt to suppress guns 336 and 344, with gun 344 being given
the higher priority. The assault teams in 336, if any, then attack that area's gun with grenades. If the guns are still firing, however, these attacks are ineffective, and the Germans fire back at the commandos. On the second turn ashore, I had all surviving commandos move inland toward VP targets and out of range of guns 336 and 344.

Choosing a Plan of Operations

Given the above assumptions, four remaining choices had to be made, and those choices defined my operational plans. The choices pertained to the following aspects of the game:

1. Planned Landing Zones. If the default landing zones are selected, six boats are detailed to land commandos at the Old Mole (336) and seven at the Old Entrance (344). However, instead of landing commandos at either landing zone for any boat before the game begins. The Old Mole is the closer of the two landing sites and hence a successful landing is more likely in this area. Furthermore, if all the commandos are landed on the Old Mole, the guns located there can be overpowered at lower risk to the commandos. However, there are no other benefits to the sending the boats the extra distance to the Old Entrance. First, some commandos can be landed closer to their primary targets. Second, boats that enter the Old Entrance Sea Zone draw Dockside Defensive Fire away from the Campbeltown if it is on fire. This may make the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful raid. Since the net effects of switching landing zones is not obvious, I tried out several combinations. In each operational plan I specified all of the boats transporting commandos would use either: a) the default planned landing zone, or b) the Old Mole landing zone; or c) the Old Entrance landing zone.

2. Objectives of the torpedo boats. Each torpedo boat can launch one torpedo attack in a game against the floating gun platform Sperrbrecher or one of the two lock gates (212 or 313). In a torpedo attack, a die roll of "3-4" damages the target and a die roll of "1-2" (or "3") if previously damaged) destroys the target. If destroyed, the floating gates are worth four Victory Points each. There is only one Victory Point for sinking the Sperrbrecher, so there is some question whether it should be attacked by torpedoes. On the other hand, the Sperrbrecher does carry two guns that menace passage into and out of the St. Nazaire channel. On the other hand, a torpedo boat attacking the floating gate cannot be launched against a 4-point target.

The torpedo boats commanded by Irwin and Boyd carry no commandos. Hence, they have two possible missions: launching torpedo attacks and drawing German fire away from other vessels. Whether or not the Sperrbrecher is designated as the primary target for torpedo attacks, each of these boats should be assigned one of the two gates as a target. When they are assigned to the Avant Port gate, they also draw Dockside Defensive Fire away from boats in Sea Zone A. When they are assigned to the Old Entrance lock, they draw fire away from other boats in Zone E. This latter aspect is particularly important if the Campbeltown is on fire and has just limped into Zone C and must spend a turn there before ramming the Southern Caisson. Again, since the net effects are not obvious, I tried out various combinations of torpedo boat objectives in the simulations. In each operational plan I specified either that a) both boats would attack the Avant Port lock; or b) Irwin would attack the Old Entrance gate and Boyd the Avant Port gate; or c) both boats would attack the Old Entrance lock. (Irwin provides the most effective screening for the Campbeltown since it is "closest" to the destroyer when DR selections are made to take hits.)

There is the additional question of the conditions under which the torpedo boats should be released to return to England. At most, a boat that does not carry passengers is worth only 1.2 Victory Points if it manages the return safely to England. By simply drifting away from German fire away from boats that carry commandos, Irwin and Boyd can serve an important function. Accordingly, when a torpedo boat expended its last torpedo on the Sperrbrecher, it was nevertheless ordered to its secondary target to carry out a feint attack.

3. Dealing with the Sperrbrecher. The boats commanded by Fenton and Rodier carry both commandos and a torpedo. If the commandos, these boats were ordered to attack the floating gate at the Old Entrance. However, if an attack on the Sperrbrecher had been ordered but Irwin and Boyd had failed to sink it, Fenton and Rodier might be ordered to torpedo the Sperrbrecher because it would then be the primary target. The arguments on both sides of this issue. On the one hand, taking out the Sperrbrecher would reduce the number of German guns that harass the flotilla. On the other hand, the delay to launch torpedoes might easily result in disaster for Fenton and Rodier and their commandos aboard. In each operational plan, I specified either that: a) no attack would be made on the Sperrbrecher; or b) Irwin and Boyd would attack the Sperrbrecher alone; or c) Fenton and Rodier would assist Irwin and Boyd, if need be, in the attack on the Sperrbrecher.

4. "C" losses inflicted on crew or commandos? The Campbeltown rams the Southern Caisson unless it is sunk, and the only way it can be sunk is by all of its crew sections or all the commandos. Once again, the automatic damage roll on a 1-2 can ram a Cpoint commando section. In addition, at the option of the player, "C" losses can be taken from either the crew or the commandos on a boat. While electing to take "C" losses from commandos rather than from crew usually won't make the difference between sinking or a successful landing, occasionally it does. The cost, of course, is weaker commandos. In each operational plan I specified either that whenever possible: a) "C" losses be taken from crew; or b) "C" losses be taken from commandos on the Campbeltown and from crew on all other boats; or c) "C" losses be taken from commandos on all vessels. ("C" losses are never taken from the crew if doing so would sink the vessel.)

The Results

An operational plan specifies the choices that were made concerning the planned landing zones, the objectives of the torpedo boats, tactics for dealing with the Sperrbrecher, and whether "C" losses would be taken from the crew or the commandos aboard. Since there are three alternatives for each of these four choices, there are 81 (3x3x3x3) different operational plans in my model. Each of these operational plans was used in 1000 different games.

The single most important outcome from an operational plan is the frequency with which the Campbeltown succeeded in ramming the caisson. If the Campbeltown is sunk and therefore cannot ram the Southern Caisson, then neither the Southern Caisson is rammed, nor the ramming might be well as scrubbed. Therefore, to evaluate the success of the operational plans, I focused on the frequency with which the destroyer rammed the caisson and, given that the Campbeltown did ram the Southern Caisson, the average number of commandos landed, and the average antitype Torpedo. After landing, the latter two statistics only for those games in which the DD did ram the caisson since that is a precondition for a successful raid. (Note that even if the Campbeltown does ram the caisson, its demolition charges might fail; even so, I included all games in which the Southern Caisson was rammed in the count of games that might lead to a victory for the British and for which statistics were computed.) The Victory Points are for crew sections returned to Britain (since I assume that all boats that make it to the Open Sea make it safely back to Britain), the Sperrbrecher, the floating gates destroyed by torpedoes, and destruction of the Southern Caisson. The commandos landed are net of any losses at sea and any losses ashore due to fire from the Pump House guns or the Old Mole guns (336 and 344). As it turned out, the operational plans had very little impact on the average Victory Points, which ranged from a low of 13.6 to a high of 16.9 across all 81 operational plans. (Remember these averages were computed for only those games in which the Campbeltown rammed the Southern Caisson; across all games, the averages would be lower.) This differential of approximately three VP is not large enough to dictate the frequency of operational plans.

The operational plan had more of an impact on the frequency of successful rammings and on the average number of commando sections landed. The frequency with which the destroyer successfully rammed the Southern Caisson ranged from a low of 66% to a high of 79% across all 81 operational plans. In those games in which the Campbeltown did make it to the Southern Caisson, the average number of commando sections landed ranged from a low of 60.8 to a high of 72.0. While these differences across operational plans are not dramatic, they are large enough to be noticeable.

It would be convenient if a single operational plan yielded both the highest frequency of successful rammings and the largest number of commando sections landed. Unfortunately, that did not happen. To a large extent, in RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE you don't get something for nothing. The frequency of ramming usually can only be increased at the cost of decreasing the number of commando sections that make it onto the shore. Measures that increase the survivability of commandos (i.e., switching their landing zone to the Old Mole) often also increase the vulnerability of the Campbeltown. This tradeoff between these two objectives is graphically illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Trade-Off between the Frequency of Successful Rammings by the DD Campbeltown and the Number of Commandos Landed. Each point on this plot represents the average result across 1000 games for a single operational plan.

A plan that dominates all others would appear in the upper right-hand corner of Figure 1. As you can see, there is no such dominating plan. However, most players would probably choose either the operational plan I have labelled "LZ336" or plan "LZ366" which do stand out somewhat from the others. It is possible to find a plan that yields more successful rammings than LZ366, but only at the cost of fewer commandos ashore. It is also possible to find a plan that yields more commandos than LZ336, but only at the cost of fewer successful rammings by the Campbeltown. These two operational plans are very similar. In both plans, all torpedo boats (including Fenton and Rodier) are ordered to sink the Sperrbrecher; "C" losses are taken from commandos on the Campbeltown and from crews on other boats; and both Boyd
and Nock are assigned to attack the Avant Port lock. However, the planned landing zones are different for the two operational plans. The planned landing zone for plan LZ336 is the Old Mole; the planned landing for LZ336 is the Old Entrance area 366. Landing in 336 rather than 366 brings the landing zone closer to the boats’ starting position and hence more commandos can make it ashore. On the other hand, the boats do not draw Dockside Defensive Fire away from the Campbeltown in Zone C in those instances in which the destroyer is limping toward the Southern Caisson. So the effects of shifting all boats from one landing zone to the other are offsetting shifts in the probability of ramming and in the average number of commandos landed.

Taking plan LZ336 first, the DD Campbeltown successfully rammed the caisson in 72.9% of the 1000 games in which the particular plan was used. In the other 27.1% of the games, the raid was called off and the game was considered lost. The remaining statistics in the top section of Table 1 are for 729 games in which the Campbeltown rammed the Southern Caisson and there was some prospect of a successful raid. Many of these statistics are gloomy and may come as a shock to all but the most experienced ST. NAZAIRE players. An average of slightly under five boats make it to the Open Sea after accomplishing their missions. And these ships are manned by an average of only 18.5 total crew sections. That’s less than four Victory Points for evacuees! What is more, these ships haven’t made it back to England yet. They still have to run the perils of attack at sea from the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine, which I did not simulate.

The statistics for commandos landed look more encouraging. At the start of the game, there are a total of 19 units with six sections each. Of the 19 units, an average of 14.2 make it to shore. However, note that this statistic refers to only the games in which the Campbeltown rammed the caisson and so landed its six commando units. Hence, an average of only 8.2 of the 13 units that are not on the destroyer make it into action. And, among the commandos who make it to shore, there has been an average of 17% attrition due to “MC” and “C” damage hits and losses to gunfire from shore.

**Figure 2:** The Results of Operational Plan LX336. Relative Frequency of Number of Commando Units landed for Games in Which the Campbeltown successfully Rammed the Southern Caisson.

If you are hoping that covering fire from the Royal Navy would neutralize the German guns, forget it. On average, there were only two covering fire hits in an entire game!

If the Campbeltown commandos do “hit the beach”, they are fairly effective against the two Pump House guns. Within the first two turns they nearly always destroy at least one of the guns, and destroy both of them 59% of the time. Even though all four torpedo boats are ordered to sink the Sperrbrecher, they succeed only 73% of the time. And the Avant Port lock, which is assigned as a secondary mission for two of the boats, is destroyed in only 3% of the games. The Old Entrance lock gate, which is assigned to three of the torpedo boats (including Wynn), is destroyed in 54% of the games. (This discrepancy is due to the amount of fire Nock and Boyd draw upon themselves as they enter the Avant Port zone and to the fact that they are more likely to have expended their torpedoes on the Sperrbrecher than Fenton or Rodler.)

Each game was played until all ships were either sunk, dead in the water, or in the Open Sea. This required an average of seven turn runs (42 minutes in the scale of the game) and ranged from a low of four turns to a high of eleven. It is sobering to realize that in just 40 minutes the bulk of the flotilla is usually reduced to burning hulks and flotsam.

It is interesting to note the high degree of variability in the games. The number of commando units that make it to shore, given that the Campbeltown has rammed the caisson, varies all the way from six to 19 units. The relative frequencies for plan LZ336 are displayed in Figure 2. While the average is 14.2 units landed, just about anything could happen in any particular game. RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE is not a solitaire game that can be played once or twice and then forgotten because it holds no surprises. Every game is likely to be quite different from the last one that was played.

Statistical analysis of the results for all 81 plans revealed the magnitudes involved in some of the tradeoffs. On average across all operational plans, if the torpedo boats are ordered to bypass the Sperrbrecher, the frequency of successful ramming increases by about 2% and the number of commandos landed decreases by about two sections. The frequency of successful ramming increases because, if the torpedo boats bypass the Sperrbrecher they are more likely to be in a Sea Zone in which they will draw Dockside Defensive Fire away from the destroyer.

If “C” losses are taken against the crew on the Campbeltown rather than against the commandos, the frequency of successful ramming decreases by about 4%, while the upside revelation is that a little more than two commando sections on average are saved to fight on land. If “C” losses on the other boats are taken against the commandos, the net effect is a decrease of about two and a half commando sections ashore. The direct losses to the commandos apparently outweigh the additional losses due to sinkings.

If the default landing zones are used instead of the Old Mole landing zone, there is an increase of about 3% in the frequency of successful ramnings, but the cost is an average loss of about three and a half commando sections.

In summary, while the computer simulations did not unlock the key to success in RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE, they did provide insights into the extent of the carnage that can be expected in a typical game. The simulations also appear to support certain tactical choices and to provide indications of the tradeoffs involved in some of those choices. Now, when you must face these decisions, at least you will be better informed of the consequences.

![Table 1](image)

**The Results of Operational Plan LZ 336**

Frequency the Campbeltown successfully rammed the Southern Caisson in 1000 games: 72.9%

Statistics concerning the 729 games in which the Campbeltown successfully rammed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional ships in the Open Sea</th>
<th>4.7</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>0.2</th>
<th>2.9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crew on board functional ships in the Open Sea</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commando units landed</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commandos landed</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total covering fire hits</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German guns destroyed</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of turns in the Naval game</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Frequency**

- Sperrbrecher sunk: 73%
- Avant Port Floating Gate destroyed: 4%
- Old Entrance Floating Gate destroyed: 56%
- Pump House guns destroyed:
  - Both: 59%
  - One: 56%
  - Neither: 5%

**The Results of Operational Plan LZ 366**

Frequency the Campbeltown successfully rammed the Southern Caisson in 1000 games: 78.3%

Statistics concerning the 783 games in which the Campbeltown successfully rammed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional ships in the Open Sea</th>
<th>3.4</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>0.2</th>
<th>2.8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crew on board functional ships in the Open Sea</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commando units landed</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commandos landed</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total covering fire hits</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German guns destroyed</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of turns in the Naval game</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Frequency**

- Sperrbrecher sunk: 74%
- Avant Port Floating Gate destroyed: 5%
- Old Entrance Floating Gate destroyed: 55%
- Pump House guns destroyed:
  - Both: 58%
  - One: 37%
  - Neither: 5%
This marks something of an unusual event in our series of replays—the playing and analysis of a solitaire game. Of course, RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE is a most unusual solitaire game. It challenges the player to better the exploits of the British combined force in that famous action. As the reader will see, and hopefully come to appreciate, the solitaire system devised to handle the German (your "opponent") reacts with an intelligence and purposefulness rarely found in solitaire games. It demands a mixture of skill and luck to defeat that shadowy figure sitting opposite. Don Greenwood, the game's developer and a fine player in his own right, takes up the challenge.

0128

HARBOR DEFENSIVE FIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot #</th>
<th>TH #</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>DR/Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wynn</td>
<td>7/Evade, MC [crew: 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Horlock</td>
<td>8/Evade, C [crew]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tille</td>
<td>7/Evade, MC [crew: 1, Pennington: 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Irwin</td>
<td>7/Evade, MC [crew: 3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>Stephens</td>
<td>5/Evade, C [crew: 2, Burt: 2, amo]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>Falconor</td>
<td>10/MC [crew: 3, Hodgson: 2, amo]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wynn</td>
<td>9/Evade (Fara, USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tille</td>
<td>9/Evade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>M35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Predesignated target: No Hit DR necessary
** Caught in Searchlight: 1 TH drm

COVERING FIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot #</th>
<th>DR</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gun 336 is my first target because it has the potential of wrecking the most havoc. Historically, this was the position that stymied the landings at the Old Mole. Further, if functioning when the troops hit shore, it can do great damage. Having disrupted it, I hope it stays that way long enough for my commandos to get ashore and eliminate it. Despite its importance, I couldn't afford a second shot at it now. My second target was the 342 searchlight which has more potential in the upcoming Dockside Defensive Fire Phase.

DOCKSIDE DEFENSIVE FIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot #</th>
<th>TH #</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>DR/Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1     | 5    | Rodier       | Turned Away (Boy), or forced to Evade (Irwin and Fenton) all four of my TMLs. Therefore, I am unable to attack the Sperrbrecher this turn. That being the case, it seemed pointless to venture into Zone A this turn with my seven remaining boats capable of doing so as a result, the B's just leaves them open to a devastating Dockside Defensive Fire. Hopefully, my remaining TMLs will be able to be in Zone A next turn and torped the Sperrbrecher. Nock, with neither troops to land nor torpedoes to fire, stays behind to rescue survivors; but as he doesn't have to carry them all, Irwin helps out. Stephens, with his movement halved and on fire, had little chance of landing his commandos. I usually abandon any boat that is on fire; they draw too much attention to survive and their presence can actually turn a Phase-ending Miss into a hit.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE

A dice roll of 6 activates three Stosstrupp units: "2" in 433, "4" in 654, and a "17" in 354.

END OF TURN: 0 Victory Points

As usual, British losses begin to mount from the very beginning. Rodier's and Stephens' boats are in trouble after the German Harbor Defensive Fire. By the end of the turn, the commando groups of Haines and Burns are already gone. At this point in the game, the player's decisions are rather limited. I can't fault Don's choice of targets for his covering fire. I will only call attention to his decision not to commit his boats to the killing field in A, and to his decision to use Nock to evacuate survivors. Both are eminently logical, as discretion is the better part of valor. It is too bad that none of his TMLs got into range this turn to fire torpedoes, since they are spent and might help pick up a few more points for returning to England with passengers. Losses among the British are about average—so far.

0134

GUN/SEARCHLIGHT RESTORATION/ILLUMINATION PHASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>DR/DR</th>
<th>Zone Illuminated</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>336</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Restored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>342</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>412</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HAIBOR DEFENSIVE FIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot #</th>
<th>TH #</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>DR/Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tille</td>
<td>7/Evade, MC [crew: 3, Hodgson: 2, amo]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>10/MC [crew: 2, Bradley: 3, amo]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Destroyer is Pre-Determined target: To Hit DR necessary

NAVAL MOVEMENT PHASE

To B:

Remaining boats stay in the Approach Zone while Nock picks up six survivors from Rodier and Irwin picks up six from Stephens.

DOCKSIDE DEFENSIVE FIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot #</th>
<th>TH #</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>DR/Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>145 Burt</td>
<td>6/Turn Away, KO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>545 Burt</td>
<td>7/3, MC [crew: 2, Woodcock: 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>321 Campbellton</td>
<td>4/-, KO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>534 Henderson</td>
<td>10/MC [crew: 1, Newman: 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>214 Ryder</td>
<td>10/MC [crew: 1, Newman: 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>345 Burt</td>
<td>9/Evade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>113 Ryder</td>
<td>9/Evade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>211 Campbellton</td>
<td>10/MC [crew: 3, Bradly: 2, sugling: 3, ammo]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>152 Burt</td>
<td>9/Evade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>132 Wallis</td>
<td>3/Fire, MC [crew: 3, Bradly: 2, sugling: 3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>425 Collier</td>
<td>7/Evade MC [crew: 2, Walton: 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>551 Burt</td>
<td>4/Purs, KO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* TH is increased due to fire on board.

NAVAL MOVEMENT PHASE

To C: Ryder

To B: Horlock, Burt, Plant, Falconor, Boyd, Fenton, Wynn, Beart

Landing at 336: Collier, Henderson (after evacuating 1 from Wallis)

To A: Irwin (torpedoes and sinks Sperrbrecher)

Approach: Nock (evacuates 6 from Tille and moves to Near Approach)

Phew! A real pasting—had to hold my breath—one more crew casualty to the Campbeltown and she would have sunk before reaching the Caisson. As it is, about the only good thing than can be said for this turn is that Irwin polished off the German AA ship on the first shot and Nock is in position to take an early powder with a full load of survivors. It's hard to be optimistic about scoring Victory Points for survivors on Turn 2! Boyd moves into B to help dilute Dockside Defensive Fire away from the troop-carrying boats and to back up Wynn's efforts against the Lock Gates at 212.

Streaming flames, with most of the crew dead or dying at their stations, the Campbeltown gallantly crashes into the caioss. Actually, the losses Don took are serious. Chances are that he will never have the chance to scuttle the destroyer. One of his valuable demolition parties is shot up, losing a charge in the process, aboard Wallis' boat, and then is lost forever. Another disappears into the maelstrom in the harbor. So Don is already down two assault parties and two demolition parties before he ever gets ashore. In return, his own covering fire has been ineffective. Only his shot on the flak ship brings him any luck—first in avoiding hits on his TMLs and then a 33% roll to sink it.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE

An "8" dice roll activates five Stosstrupp units: "2" in 433, "4" in 662, "2" in 121, "2" in 225, and a "2" in 345.

LAND MOVEMENT PHASE

BRITISH: Roy (6), Smalley (6) to 216; Rodrick (3), Purdon (6) to 203; Chunt (6), Burt (4) to 111; Swainy (6), Walton (4) to 336.

ALL demolition units are listed in italics. The current strength of British units is listed in parentheses.

I don't envy Swainey and Walton the task of taking out restored Gun 336 without Assault troops, but they have little choice. If they were to run, they could only reach 335 where they would be subject
to fire from 344 and 336 anyway. Although the survivors could then head toward their targets, I’m inclined to stay and try to knock out Gun 336 to help the lads in the remaining boats. The move from the Southern Caisson is made to maximize the number of attacks against the two guns in the Pump House. The old adage about the best defense being a good offense is especially true in this game.

**LAND COMBAT PHASE**

**Attacker** | **Target** | **TH** | **Dr** | **Effect**
---|---|---|---|---
Swayne (6) | 336 | 6 | 4/1 |...
Walter (4) | 336 | 5 | 2/1 |...
Roy (6) | 336 | 8 | 2/1 |...
Roderick (3) | 227A | 3 | 1 | 2/1 |...
Chase (6) | 222A | 3 | 2 |...
Bret (4) | 222A | 2 | 4 |...
Pardon (6) | 222A | 4 | 5 |...
Pardon (6) | 222B | 4 | 1 | 4/1 |...
Roderick | 336 | 5 | 5 | 0/1 | Eliminates unit 336.
Swayne | 336 | 6 | 4/1 |...
Walton | 344 | 4 | 2 | Eliminates 2/1, house.

**DEMOLEITION PHASE**

Smallley (6) prepares his charges in the Southern Winding Station, but his attack has no effect and the charges are now at risk.

**END OF TURN: 1 Victory Point**

Two “4” in 155 consolidate into a “6” and a “2”.

I don’t necessarily agree that Swayne and Walton had little choice about landing. Certainly, staying at sea is dangerous; but coming ashore without protecting parties against a couple of guns is sure to garner casualties among demolition troops. On the other hand, if they had managed to eliminate or silence the gun, dividends would have been obvious for those still to land at the Mole. But, this is the first crucial decision that Don has to make—a definite gamble, but that’s the “name” of this game.

Meanwhile, the rush against the Pump House guns has become almost standard play for those who survive the wild ride of the Campbeltown. It’s what happens afterward in this region that decides if the player has a chance at victory. Note how Don put Roderick on top of Pardon to absorb casualties. This highlights the need for support for Swayne and Walton before they go ashore.

**0140**

**GUN/SEARCHLIGHT RESTORATION/ILLUMINATION PHASE**

| Unit | DR (tr) | Zone Illuminated | Effect |
---|---|---|---|
222A | 3 | None | Restored |
432 | 3 | (3) | Effectless |
412 | 1 | (1) | Effectless |
342 | 1 | (3) | Effectless |
142 | 3 | (3) | Effectless |

**HARBOR DEFENSIVE FIRE**

| Shot # | TH | Target | DR | Effect |
---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 5 | 521 Platt | 5/1 |...
2 | 6 | 212 Campbeltown | 4/1 |...
3 | 6 | 615 Irwin | 7/1 |...

**COVERING FIRE**

| Shot # | DR | Target | Effect |
---|---|---|---|
1 | 2 | 113 |...
2 | 3 | 222 |...

* Th# increased due to fire on board.
** Th# increased due to being caught in SL 342.

**DOCKSIDE DEFENSIVE FIRE**

| Shot # | TH | Target | DR | Effect |
---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 4 | 1 | Irwin | 5/1 | Turn away, MC (crew: [1 speed]) |
2 | 4 | 1 | Irwin | 6/1 | KO (sinking, passengers) |
1 | 3 | 4 | Ryder | MISS |

* Caught in searchlight: only possible target in Zone A.

**GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE**

**BRITISH:** Hodgson (4) Bomber to 135, Wilson (6) to 335, Swane (2) to 326, Walton (2) to 334, Hooper (5) to 364, Woodcock (5) to 365, Newman (5) to 364, Roy (6) to 222, Smallley (6) to 216, Purdon (6) to 226, Chassar (6) to 222, Bret (4) to 216.

I’d like to take out SL 342 but Swayne and Walton have been shot up too badly to tangle with any more Germans. Although it is important to knock out the Power Station as soon as possible to shut down the searchlights, I need Wilson as a backup for Hodgson’s grenade attack on Gun position 344. This is a highly debatable gamble. With only two MF remaining after landing, Hodgson is unable to enter 344 for a grenade attack on the gun. Discretion would probably be the better part of valor here! A smarter move might have been to bypass this Gun position entirely and move on into 344, but that would be leaving Moss and Birney to their fate at sea. With my high losses to date and the continuing resistance of the guns at the Pump House threatening a disaster over there, I need every commando ashore. So I’m gambling here in an effort to help them land.

Over at the Old Entrance, Hooper and Newman are setting a trap for Jerry in 364. With any luck, the “6” in 362 will blunder with the “4” in 361 into 364 where we can polish them both off with grenade attacks. Woodcock remains behind to add a third shot should the “6” only reach 339 or our grenade attacks go badly.

Everything hangs in the balance at the Pump House. If our attack fails to take out those guns this time, there may not be enough of us left to attempt it next time. This move maximizes our attack poten-
tial against the guns while also moving to better defensive terrain. Brett and Purdon are not moved to the Pump House because such a move deprives me of two shots versus those guns. While the guns do not have to be taken out to blow the target, their presence detracts from the Preparing Charge die roll, and I can ill afford a continuing exchange with those guns while trying to get my charges in place on the machinery.

My first real disagreement with Don on his operations comes with the action around the Pump House. He has already mentioned the pros and cons of taking the gun at 344, but I think he gives short shrift to his other crucial decision this turn. The guns in the Pump House are secondary; once the target itself is destroyed, you can usually avoid fire from them by moving away. With Smallley ready to take out the Windin Station, I’d go for the quick double strike. And that means ensuring that Chant is not fired on and does not fire. Thus, besides stacking Roy above Chant in 222, why not add Brett as well? He can better spare a charge than Chant, and will leave Chant to concentrate on destroying the target—not non-VG guns. If it works, then all three units can move away next turn, with Chant ready to operate against further targets or supply firepower to protect other demolition parties carrying out their own operations. Instead, as readers will see, Chant is tied up for yet another turn just when every moment counts—before German resistance begins to gel. Of course, if it doesn’t work, Chant will have to stick around—with an increased likelihood of company from the Germans. But, if willing to gamble in one spot, why not here as well?


German units are going to make getting to the Northern Caisson rather tough unless die rolls tie their up with low movement allowances. In any case, as is obvious, every turn here may be crucial. Don needs to get moving against the targets at the north end of the Normandie Dock. And other large German units have appeared near the 261 Swing Bridge and between the Old Mole and the Old Entrance. Brett can only has Roy, Newman and Hooper to expend in challenging them, with Moss and Birney still at sea.

LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE


LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chant</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE


LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE


LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE


LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE


LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE


LAND COMBAT PHASE

Attacker Target TH # Target TH dir DR/Effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3/6</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no point in Wilson continuing to battle Gun 344 alone—especially now that all troops are ashore—and he is needed at the Power Station to shut down those searchlights. Birney can’t reach 344 anyway as the boats have all left 336, “6”/455 to 255. To the north, Wynn’s torpedoes detonate.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE

at hand.
GERMAN: The Movement die roll is a “5”, “6”/261 to 255, “6”/410 to 310.

**LAND COMBAT PHASE**

**Attacker** | **Target** | **TH # TH dr** | **DR/Effect**
--- | --- | --- | ---
Roy (6) | 255 | 6 | 4/eliminates 4
Woods (5) | 255 | 4 | 4/eliminates 2
Purdon (6) | 255 | 6 | 5/6
Bret (4) | 255 | 3 | 1/eliminates 1
Henderson (4) | 310 | 6 | 1/eliminates 1
Swayne (2) | 310 | 1 | 3
Newman (4) | 434B | 1* | 2/eliminates 2, and ammo
Newman (4) | 434B | 6* | 2/eliminates 2

* Long Range or Mortar Fire

**DEMOLITION PHASE**

Wilson (6) fails to place charges [4]. Woodcock (5) places charges again but only with no effect. Bunt (6) places charges again [4], but only damage the Pump House. Purdon (6) fails to place charges [4]. Bret (4) places charges [2] and destroys the Northern Caisson. The number in [brackets] is the number needed for a successful placement.

Don is exceedingly lucky to destroy the North Caisson. There was only one-third of chance to destroy this target, and then a one-third chance to destroy the target completely. In other words, he just hit 11% odds.

**END OF TURN: 24.6 + Victory Points.**

**German** “4” and “2” in 511 consolidate.

**0158**

**SEARCHLIGHT ILLUMINATION PHASE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Zone Illuminated</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>432</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>342</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HARBOR DEFENSIVE FIRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot # TH</th>
<th><strong>Target</strong></th>
<th><strong>DR/Effect</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DOCKSIDE DEFENSIVE FIRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot # TH</th>
<th><strong>Target</strong></th>
<th><strong>DR/Effect</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAVAL MOVEMENT PHASE**

Collis withdrawn uneventfully to Britain during the preceding Harbor Defensive Fire Phase. Henderson, Horlock, and Wynne move to the Open Sea. Platt remains in Zone B—the sole naval target for the coming turn. His chances of survival are somewhere between slim and none, but at least he will distract the searchlights. For what we have Penton to thank. Had he not kept Gun 131 occupied shooting up his sinking hulk, Platt would have been hit again.

**GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE**


**LAND MOVEMENT PHASE**

**BRITISH:** Birny (6) to 410, Wilson (6) to 321, Swayne (2) to 321, Newman (4) to 343, Smiley (6) to 410, Purdon (6) to 320, and Woodcock (6) to 261.

**Germans:** Birny (5) to 411, Swayne (2) to 321, Smiley (6) to 410, and Purdon (6) to 320.

The northern Demo teams are going to really catch it this time. If they don’t blow the bridge this turn, there won’t be any of them left to try. To the south, I’ve finally bought Swayne and Walton an unmolested turn on their targets, but in their weakened condition, it may take quite a while to set their charges.

Hooper and Birny are sacrificed to buy time for Swayne and Walton to give it their best shot—just as Roy was last time. Newman, meanwhile, gives some cover to Walton. At the other end of the harbor, Bret is obviously trying to cover against the Germans coming up from the rear in 253. I see no reason to write these fellows off yet even though Don just wants the points for the swing bridge in 261.

**GERMAN MOVEMENT PHASE**

**BRITISH:** Roy (5) to 492, Purdon (6) to 261, Bret (4) to 261, Smalley (6) to 261, Swayne (2) to 261, Chaplin (6) to 261, Woodcock (5) to 260, Smiley (6) to 320, Purdon (6) to 320, and Woodcock (5) to 320, Newman (4) to 343, Smiley (6) to 261, and Purdon (6) to 261.

**Germans:** Birny (6) to 410, Smalley (6) to 321, Swayne (2) to 321, Newman (4) to 343, Hooper (5) to 468, Walton (2) to 342, Woodcock (5) to 320, Chaplin (6) to 365, Bret (4) to 262, Smalley (6) to 261, and Purdon (6) to 261.
LAND MOVEMENT PHASE

ILLUMINATION PHASE

SEARCHLIGHT

"6" in GERMAN

END OF

DEMOLITION

PHASE

Despite the heroics on the Northern Swing Bridge, Smalley's charge still fails to blow. But in the south, Wilcox prepares charges [4] and blows Lock Gates 331 while Woodcock does likewise [3] to Swing Bridge 343. This unexpected twin success cuts off the Assault teams on the mainland.

END OF TURN: 57.8+ Victory Points

"2" and "4" in 511 consolidate.

0222

SEARCHLIGHT RESTORATION PHASE

Unit | DR/dr | Zone Illuminated | Effect
--- | --- | --- | ---
432 | 5 (3) | 4 | Effective
412 | (6) | 3 | Ineffective
342 | (6) | 3 | Effective
142 | 7 | 1 | Ineffective

NAVAL MOVEMENT PHASE

Minisweepers 223 and 224 withdraw to U-Boot Pens, thereby activating a "4" and a "6" in 443.

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE

A "2" dice roll activates three units: "6" in 652, "2" in 512, and a "2" in 311.

LAND MOVEMENT PHASE

BRITISH: Smalley (2) in 261, Purdon (2) in 261, Chant (6) to 330, Woodcock (2) to 343, Wilcox (2) in 343, Newman (4) to 448, Hoover (4) in 448, Birney (4) to 432, Wilson (5) to 331, Smalley (2) to 323.

As expected, the lads on the Penhouet Swing Bridge have bought it. Purdon and Brett exchange places in the vain hope that Brett can better protect Smalley long enough to blow the bridge. Chant, with no charges of his own to destroy the 212 Lock Gates, moves south so that the Germans crossing the Southern Caisson into Zone 2 will be closer to and attracted towards the firing to the north. The Assault teams in Zone 4 could be cut off if both bridges are blown, but that is a sacrifice gladly made for that unlikely event.

Actually, I would have held Chant in good terrain in 365 and shot down any German crossing of the damaged lock gates. This might take enough heat off the group at the Penhouet Basin to give them a chance to get back to 201 and then cross over. But Don has written them off completely.

GERMAN: The Movement dice roll is a "5". Only "6"'s will move this turn; two in 155 to 135, 116 to 111, 492 to 261, 439 to 432, and 408 to 413.

LAND COMBAT

Attacker | Target | TH # | TH dr | DR/Effect
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Chant (6) | 330 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Woodcock (2) | 343 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Wilcox (2) | 343 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Newman (4) | 448 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Smalley (2) | 448 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Birney (4) | 432 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Wilson (5) | 331 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Purdon (2) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Smalley (2) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Birney (4) | 432 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Wilson (5) | 331 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Purdon (2) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Smalley (2) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Birney (4) | 432 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Wilson (5) | 331 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3

*Long Range or Mortar Fire

Figure 2: The situation at the Swing Bridge immediately prior to the Land Combat Phase of 0204.

Again, Don's luck holds good and Purdon and Brett both chalk up kills against their immediate threats. But Brett pays the piper.

DEMOLITION PHASE

Despite the heroics on the Northern Swing Bridge, Smalley's charge still fails to blow. But in the south, Wilcox prepares charges [4] and blows Lock Gates 331 while Woodcock does likewise [3] to Swing Bridge 343. This unexpected twin success cuts off the Assault teams on the mainland.

END OF TURN: 57.8+ Victory Points

0216

SEARCHLIGHT RESTORATION/ILLUMINATION PHASE

Unit | DR/dr | Zone Illuminated | Effect
--- | --- | --- | ---
452 | 12 | — | Ineffective
412 | 4 | 3 | Effective
342 | 7 | 3 | Effective
142 | 8 | — | Ineffective

GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE

A "7" Activation dice roll activates five units: "4" in 533, "6" in 656, "2" in 425, "6" in 116, and a "2" in 226.

LAND MOVEMENT PHASE

BRITISH: Purdon (2) to 262, Smalley (2) in 261, Brett (4) to 261, Smalley (6) to 330, Woodcock (2) to 343, Wilcox (2) in 343, Newman (4) to 448, Hoover (4) in 448, Birney (4) to 432, Wilson (5) to 331, Smalley (2) to 323.

As expected, the lads on the Penhouet Swing Bridge have bought it. Purdon and Brett exchange places in the vain hope that Brett can better protect Smalley long enough to blow the bridge. Chant, with no charges of his own to destroy the 212 Lock Gates, moves south so that the Germans crossing the Southern Caisson into Zone 2 will be closer to and attracted towards the firing to the north. The Assault teams in Zone 4 could be cut off if both bridges are blown, but that is a sacrifice gladly made for that unlikely event.

Actually, I would have held Chant in good terrain in 365 and shot down any German crossing of the damaged lock gates. This might take enough heat off the group at the Penhouet Basin to give them a chance to get back to 201 and then cross over. But Don has written them off completely.

GERMAN: The Movement dice roll is a "5". Only "6"'s will move this turn; two in 155 to 135, 116 to 111, 492 to 261, 439 to 432, and 408 to 413.

LAND COMBAT

Attacker | Target | TH # | TH dr | DR/Effect
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Purdon (2) | 262 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Smalley (2) | 262 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Brett (4) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Newman (4) | 448 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Smalley (2) | 448 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Birney (4) | 432 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Wilson (5) | 331 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Purdon (2) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Smalley (2) | 261 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Birney (4) | 432 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3
Wilson (5) | 331 | 1 | 1 | Eliminates 3

*Long Range or Mortar Fire

Figure 3: The situation in the south immediately prior to the Land Combat Phase of 0216.

Despite his remarkable proclivity for staying alive, Smalley must have been sleeping in demolitions class; his charges still refuse to blow.

END OF TURN: 57.8+ Victory Points
GAME SUMMARY

The last struggles of the few remaining commandos are listed here in abbreviated form. At 0234 Birney and Newman were wiped out in 439—one area away from a successful escape. Wilson boarded and sunk tug 345 with his last Demo Charge. At 0240 Smalley (1) was finally eliminated on the Swing Bridge. His defective charges were passed to Purdon (1) who had no better luck in getting them to detonate. At 0246 Purdon was eliminated by Germans who entered the northern Swing Bridge and removed the defective charges. Wilson was eliminated at 0252, as were Walton and Swayne at 0258. Walton was eliminated while trying to place a charge on the last tug and Swayne was frustrated when the minesweeper he had prepared charges on was withdrawn to the U-Boat Pens. With it went the last remaining Demo Charges and any chance to score additional points.

Wyran's Delayed Action torpedoes detonated and, with the aid of Fenton's previous damage dmr, destroyed Lock Gates 212 to bring the Victory Point total to 62.8. The game thus comes down to the final die roll. Twelve Victory Points for the destruction of the Southern Caisson will be sufficient for victory if the Campbeltown's delayed charges can destroy the Southern Caisson on a die roll of 1-4 (thanks to the —1 dmr for ramming at full speed). The inability of the destroyer to be scuttled prevents another —1 dmr. A damage result (die roll 5) or no effect (die roll 6) will result in a German win.

As luck would have it, these Germans must have been aware during demolitions class. Apparently they found the charges and managed to partially disarm them for the final die roll is a 5 and the Germans (i.e., the game system) win.

I've not much to add to the concluding turns, as the primary action is finished and Don is merely seeing what becomes of his remaining remnants. As usual, Don's play was excellent—with one exception.

Note that in the historic operation, each commando officer was ordered not to be distracted from his primary target, to take the quickest and shortest route there, and to deal with the demolition of that target while German confusion was at its height. Even Mr. Seaman, in the conclusion to his piece elsewhere in this issue, notes that the player must use the Campbeltown commandos to garner as many points as quickly as possible. This makes Don's choice of actions around the Pump House with Brett and Purdon questionable. With the half value added for the damaged Southern Caisson, he ends the game at 68.8 points. Consider, if they had not paused, had all gone into the Pump House at 0140 to maximize their time and movement, might not Don's demolition parties have managed to eliminate, or at least damage, the bridge in 261. And, all other events being the same, would this not have given the British the victory?

Don's sole tactical "error" in this replay is extremely subtle, and a strong case can be made for the action he did take. 1. On the other hand, am of the philosophy that to win you must push hard in the first few turns ashore, ignoring losses and keeping a steady eye on the targets for demolition. You can, almost invariably, ignore the guns that threaten and bypass them to reach your targets; let the assault troops deal with them. Being distracted by the troubles of one commando party may mean that others fail to complete their assignments. Pausing to deal with the Pump House guns is a prime example.

But that's the marvelous thing about RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE; it's so easy to spot the decision that brings defeat in retrospect, and so difficult to say definitively that the decision was "wrong". Any choice that leads to victory in one playing may well, when made under similar circumstances in the next, bring disaster. The strength of the game's design is the flexible and always differing enemy response to your actions, unlike the rigid responses found in most solitaire games. RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE is a game that demands quick thinking in a rapidly changing combat environment and the constant willingness to take a deadly risk—the very apotheosis of the British commando.

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 our readership such as tournaments or events utilizing The Avalon Hill Game Company's games is solicited and will be printed if made available.

The Avalon Hill Game Company does not necessarily attend or endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that events using The Avalon Hill Game Company's games will be held. Readers are urged to contact the listed sources for further information before making plans to attend.

JUNE 3-5

MARYCON: Fredericksburg, Virginia
Contact: Dick Warner, Dept. of History, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.
Note: One of the premier DIPLOMACY conventions.

JUNE 10-12

MICHICON GAMEFEST '88, Southfield, MI
Contact: Barry Jensen, Metro Detroit Gamers, P.O. Box 656, Wyandotte, MI 48192. (313) 591-2300, ext. 325.

JUNE 16-19

NEOVENTION VII, Cleveland, Ohio
Contact: Chuck Baltes, Northeast Ohio Gaming Society, P.O. Box 412, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44222. (216) 666-1866.
Note: A gaming convention featuring over 200 events held in conjunction with the International Superman Exposition.

JUNE 25

SL RALLY '88, Conway, Arkansas
Contact: Terry Treadway, P.O. Box 265, Marshall, AR 72650. (501) 448-3066.
Note: Fourth annual national SL-ASL tournament.

JULY 1-4

DIPCON XXI, San Antonio, Texas
Contact: Pete Gaughan, 3121 East Park Row #165, Arlington, TX 76010.
Note: The American National DIPLOMACY Tournament.

JULY 9-10

COLONIAL CITY GAMEFEST VI, Mount Vernon, Ohio
Contact: Mike DeWinter, Mt. Vernon Games Association, 205 West Gambier Street, Mt. Vernon, OH 43050. (614) 397-3785.
Players of RAID ON ST. NAZARE are already aware of the game's excellent playability and historical accuracy. Indeed, after numerous playings, I have been pleasantly surprised at how closely the course of the game usually follows the actual raid. But further research into the history of the commando raid (which the game spurred me to) revealed that the final assault plan was the result of numerous compromises. One of the original options considered was for the raid to take place during a major bombing raid. The first following scenario is my proposal for simulating that major raid, rather than the mere diversion that historically took place. Too, there was also the proposal that a second destroyer carry in half the commando force, which was rejected by the British naval command. To give the players even more control of planning, another scenario details how to simulate that plan.

And, for variation, we can consider the possibility of French civilian involvement, the possibility of lock gates or caissons being open, the documented firing of German troops on their own, and the role of leadership in the British forces ashore. The strength of any good design is the willingness to play it numerous times. And the historicity of any good design is indicated by the number of legitimately-based optional rules it can bear. RAID ON ST. NAZARE succeeds on all levels.

OPTIONAL SCENARIOS

16.3 SEA ASSAULT DURING BOMBING RAID: During the early planning stages of the raid on St. Nazaire, the intent was to have an RAF raid begin before the sea assault and continue during the land demolitions. Though the commandos would certainly have been subject to casualties from their own air force, it felt that the boats would have been much more successful in reaching the landing zones unscathed and then withdrawing the surviving commandos. This scenario recreates that possibility.

16.31 Each game turn begins prior to the Gun/ Searchlight Restoration and Searchlight Illumination Phase (4.1) with a die roll to determine if the British boats are detected by the Germans. A die roll less than the current game turn number results in their being detected; any other result means they are undetected.

16.311 If undetected, the Gun/Searchlight Restoration and Searchlight Illumination Phase (4.1) and the Naval Attack Phase (4.2) are skipped in the order of play.

16.312 If detected, the game turn proceeds normally. Once detected, the British are considered detected for the course of the game and play proceeds normally.

16.32 Each turn, after all Commando units ashore have moved, a Trio is thrown to determine if any have been affected by the bombardment. If the first die of the Trio is less than or equal to “3”, a commando unit may have been hit. The remaining two dice of the Trio determine the affected unit: the ID number of that unit is that of the boat which brought it ashore—even though they may no longer be upon it. Should a passenger of the Campbeltown be the affected unit, make a subsequent die roll (1-6, starting with Roy and proceeding in order through Purdon) to determine exactly which is hit. If the Trio indicates that there were no commandos aboard the boat or that commando unit has been eliminated or is aboard a boat, there is no effect for this turn.

16.321 After a commando unit has been determined as being hit, an effect die roll is made to find the number of Strength Points lost.

16.33 At the conclusion of each game turn, a dice roll is made to determine if the bombing raid continues. On a dice roll less than the current turn number, the air raid ends and 16.32 is no longer in effect.

16.34 During the bombing raid, all German Aircraft (4.5) die rolls are modified by -1 and all German Movement (4.62) die rolls are modified by +1.

16.35 French citizen rules (Optional Rule A) cannot be put into effect until after the bombing raid ends.

16.4 SECOND DESTROYER: Original planners hoped for a second destroyer to accompany the Campbeltown and carry half the commandos to the Old Entrance. Certainly, in light of the casualties among the small boats and the greater protection of steel plate, more troops would have likely made it ashore. In this scenario, it is assumed that the British Admiralty released a second Lend Lease destroyer, lightened as was the Campbeltown to cross over the mud flats but without the explosive charges. Remove all small boats from the game, and add a second destroyer with the same “Game Log” statistic as the Campbeltown. In addition, this ship carries eight torpedoes. Each destroyer may now carry up to seven commando units; the player must select which from among the 19 in the game and assign them to each destroyer. This second destroyer must land its troops at Area 366. Note that the Campbeltown ID# is now 11-26; that of the second destroyer is 31-46. Hits on ID numbers above 51 are ignored, but do count as a shot taken.

OPTIONAL RULES

A. The French Citizens: The following rules are to reflect the small, but potentially influential, impact of the French citizenry in the St. Nazaire area. All active commandos in the “French Zone”, indicated is in-

A.1 During the raid, particularly toward the end, the commandos occasionally sought French help in trying to elude capture. During the Commando Movement Phase of any turn, but prior to expenditure of any movement factors, a commando unit may—while in the “French Zone”—attempt to obtain French help. It is successful on a die roll less than “4”. If the unit is unsuccessful, it may not try again this game turn but continue movement, less one movement factor. Any number of British units may attempt to locate French help, but each must check separately and only once per turn. Should the unit be successful in obtaining French aid, all movement lines for that unit within the “French Zone” are considered single lines (i.e., requiring only one movement factor) for that game turn only.

A.2 After the raid, the Germans made accusations that some French citizens, thinking that an Allied invasion had begun, attacked German troops. To reflect this possibility, add a chit labeled “French Partisans” to the French counters of each Alarm

Level from ‘2’ onward. During the German Activation Phase, there is a chance that such a counter may be drawn.

A.21 When the French counter is drawn from the cup, it is temporarily put aside until all required German Stosstrupp are drawn. When making Triad dice rolls for placement of the German counters, the first area in the “French Zone” indicated is instead filled with the French Partisan counter. If no “Southern Caisson” (111) or French Partisan counter is returned to the cup, all remaining German counters drawn are placed normally thereafter.

A.22 The strength of the French Partisan unit is equal to one-half of a single die roll (fractions rounded down).

A.23 French Partisan units move after all possible German units have moved and fire after all possible German units have fired. French Partisan units move in the same manner as the Germans except that they always have a movement factor of “3” (regardless of the German Movement die roll) and always move toward German units. Finally, French Partisan units may only move adjacent to, never into, German occupied areas—though Stosstrupp in any adjacent into French occupied areas.

A.24 When considering equidistant areas or fire options between British and French Partisan units, the German unit always moves/fires at the British.

B. Locks and Caissons: British planners realized that there would be a slight chance that the Southern Caisson and/or the Old Entrance Lock may have been open upon their arrival. The first British boat to enter Zone C triggers a die roll to determine the status of the lock and caisson. On a die roll less than “6”, both are closed. On a die roll of “6”, make a subsequent die roll: on a roll less than or equal to “4”, the Southern Caisson is open; on roll of “5”, the Old Entrance lock is open; on a roll of “6”, both are open.

B.1 Open Southern Caisson: The ships Passat and Schleidstadt are considered withdrawn and areas 235/234 and 251/252 may not be entered. The above-mentioned pass is considered impassable landing zone, but it may not be rammed. Victory Points for its destruction must be by set demolition charges, but against area 203 (not 111).

B.11 Wynn only (MTB 74, 65-66) may enter the Normandie dock (expanding all movement points) if he begins in Zone C in an attempt to destroy the Northern Caisson by delayed action torpedoes; there is a -2 modifier to the Effects Die Roll. While on the Normandie dock, Wynn is immune to Harbor Defensive Fire and Dockside Defensive Fire, but may be fired upon by Stosstrupp in any adjacent area (e.g., 207 or 115). If a hit is secured, roll for damage on the Harbor Defensive Fire Table with +2 modifier. German firing choice between adjacent commando units or Wynn’s boat is determined at random.

B.2 Open Lock Gate: Only Wynn’s boat (MTB 74, 65-66) may enter the St. Nazaire Basin (expanding all movement points) if he begins in Zone C. Wynn may attack the German vessels there normally, or attack the U-Boat Pens (441, 443 or 444) with delayed action torpedoes; there is a +1 modifier to the Effects Die Roll against the completed pens

Continued on Page 27, Column 3
Although the basic armor game presented in *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* works out exceedingly well for the majority of tanks and weapons, and represents the pace-setting miniatures rule set nicely, wargame systems designed to cover all AFV almost invariably fail to do proper justice to a number of tanks that are unusual. There is always a group of tanks, and scattered individual vehicles, with armor characteristics that do not fit into the general system used to define armor ratings. In terms of *ASL*, three areas of tank design and protection can be identified where vehicle vulnerability in the game might be better reflected—APCR hits on sloped armor, split hull ratings where upper and lower hull protection is significantly different, and the “Stalin” tank turret front protection.

Studies of APCR hits on sloped armor indicate that the effective resistance of the armor to penetration increases by up to 32% over the AP shell value when APCR hits occur. For the cases where APCR hits highly sloped armor, the resistance of the plate is often sufficiently higher than the AP shot value that wargame rules should present two armor ratings, one for AP and another for APCR (for the purposes of this article, “AP” includes all non-APCR shells).

Examining armor protection on the front hulls of AFV, there are a number of cases where the hull presents two large areas (upper and lower nose) with different effective armor thicknesses. For vehicles such as the IS-2m, with 26 AF armor on the upper hull glacis but only 14 AF protection on the lower hull front (equating the actual effective armor thickness to the *ASL* system AF rating), limiting the hull front designation to a consideration of only the 26 AF glacis obviously overstates the difficulty involved in obtaining front hull penetrations.

Referring back again to the “Stalin” tanks (IS-2 and IS-2m), the armor protection indicated by the game AF ratings for the turret front is not a true indication of the vehicle vulnerability on turret hits. While the turret face was 160mm thick, with steep slopes, the gunshield (or mantlet) was 100mm thick at its maximum cross-section, and thinned out towards the upper and lower edges. The 18 AF turret front armor rating is a reasonable model for the turret face but severely limits, or rules out, the possibility of a penetration by shells with sufficient penetration to punch through the 11 AF gunshield (such as the 75L and 88L).

In view of the possibility for several improvements to the *ASL* armor rating system for select vehicles, the following sections of this article will propose some simple-to-use variants that add extra detail. The intent of the suggested improvements is not to replace the overall *ASL* armor system but to round out some of the edges that still contain a bit of roughness.

### APCR Hits on Sloped Armor

The earliest theory used in armor gaming to explain the effectiveness of APCR penetration was the \( T = \text{1/cos} A \) formula, where \( T \) was the distance a shell had to travel to pierce the plate, and \( A \) was the slope of the plate (measured from vertical; so a vertical plate had no slope and a horizontal plate equaled 90° slope from vertical). For tanks such as the T34/76, where a 45mm hull plate was sloped 60° from vertical, the above formula predicted a 90mm effective thickness (i.e., a shell required at least 90mm penetration against a vertical target to pierce the 45mm plate sloped at 60°).

The main problem with the \( 1/\cos A \) formula was that actual ballistic tests, where plates were fired upon by shells, produced results that were not constant with the predicted value. During WWII, the U.S. Army test fired most of the armor piercing shells in their inventory against plate sloped at a variety of angles and published the results in "Technical Manual TM9-1914." The Army found that a 60° slope from vertical increased the effective penetration resistance by 160%, as opposed to the 100% increase predicted by the \( 1/\cos A \) formula. Thus, when a 76mm shell hit 45° at slope, the effective thickness was actually 117mm (a 30% increase over the \( 1/\cos A \) value).

Illustration 1

The \( 1/\cos A \) formula assumed a simple geometric approach to effective thickness determinations.

Consistent with the overall use of state-of-the-art design procedures in *ASL*, the armor values used to define game AF ratings are based on the actual ballistic slope multiples found during test firings. Thus, players are using theoretical armor protection quantities that are consistent with the actual performance of AP shells against sloped plate. The only problem that one might find with this approach is that APCR rounds have been found to vary significantly from AP shell performance as the slope of the armor exceeds a 20° slope.

Comparing U.S. and German data for APCR round penetration against sloped armor, the result is that sloped armor resists penetration against APCR with a greater effective thickness than opposes AP shells. For instance, the British 76L. round could penetrate the Panther upper front hull (80mm at 55° slope) at 500 meters, where the shell penetrated about 180mm of vertical plate (the armor had an effective thickness of 180mm versus 76L. AP). The U.S. 76L APCR round, with over 210mm penetration at 500 meters, could only penetrate the same Panther hull armor out to 250 meters, where the penetration was 228. Thus, the APCR round was resisted by an effective thickness 48mm greater than experienced by the AP hits.

The German 88L. APCR round, which is similar to most of the other German high velocity armor piercing rounds in terms of slope effects, was resisted by 132mm effective thickness on hits against the T34/76 front hull. Due to the fact that the 88L was unusually effective against sloped armor (while most shells experience a 160% increase in armor resistance for 60° slopes, the 88L AP only saw an increase of 138%), the T34 hull front represented a 107mm effective thickness versus AP. The effect of APCR hits on armor effective resistance can therefore be equated to a 23% increase over AP hits.

Stars such as the differences between AP and APCR effective thicknesses indicated that AF ratings would only need to be supplemented with special APCR upgradings when the slope exceeded 20°, and then only for a select number of AFV. It was also noted that the AFV with special APCR armor ratings fortunately fell into some general groupings (such as all T34/76 and T34/85) which simplified the presentation of study findings. The following table indicates the AFV where APCR will increase the *ASL* AF ratings by one level (for example, "8" becomes "11") and the target armor that is improved versus APCR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Armor Improved by APCR Hits</th>
<th>AFV</th>
<th>Armor to be Upgraded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T34</td>
<td>HF</td>
<td>HS, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT-34</td>
<td>HF</td>
<td>HS, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T43</td>
<td>HF</td>
<td>HS, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T44</td>
<td>HF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PzKpfw VIB</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JgPz IV</td>
<td>UBF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JgPz IV(L)</td>
<td>UBF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JgPz IV(70L)</td>
<td>UBF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all JgPz 380</td>
<td>UBF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elefant</td>
<td>HF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*HF, HS, and HR refer to hull front, side hull, and hull rear respectively. UBF refers to Upper Body Front hits on SPG or TD. These armor upgradings only apply to Russian-Soviet combat.*

From a game play perspective, introduction of APCR armor upgrading will significantly affect the lethality of high velocity shell hits on armor. On the actual battlefield, the T34 front hull presented 132mm resistance to German APCR, so the 50L. APCR round (116mm penetration at 500 meters) would be outmatched. With use of APCR armor upgrading in *ASL*, the 17 TFK of 50L APCR (from seven to twelve hexes) will be resisted by 14 AF hull protection on the T34—for a resulting TK of "3" (8% chance of penetration damage). Thus, the results of using armor upgrading will be to bring game results more closely into line with expected battlefield performance (using AF of 11 for the T34 front hull would allow 42% of APCR hits to cause damage).

### Split Hull Armor Ratings

The main problem area associated with rule systems that describe AFV hull and turret protection with a single factor is the handling of different ratings on the hull or turret. The IS-2m had 26 AF glaci protection, but a 14 AF lower hull front; and the Panther upper hull was 18 AF with a lower hull area equivalent to 14 (the Panther upper and lower hull fronts were both sloped at 55°, but the lower hull was 60mm thick and the area was 80mm). If only one rating is chosen, the use of the higher factor overestimates the protection, while the use of the lower rating produces unrealistic vulnerability to penetration.

To allow for a more complete description of the full armor protection, the following table was developed. From an analysis of areas presented to incoming rounds, a statistical distribution of hits
ANSL ARMOR SYSTEM ERROR ANALYSIS

Although it is difficult to say with any certainty exactly how close a particular armor model comes to the real thing, since the available data is often too restricted and unreliable to come to definite conclusions, an attempt was made to compare the ASL AFV TO KILL results with a very detailed and comprehensive model. During the research for this article, a mathematical model of penetrator probabilities was prepared that considered many armor factors, including hex-by-hex penetration data (in millimeters), random variations in shell penetration and armor hardness, angle of firer to the target (not all shots are at target pointing straight at the firer), and all of the armor plates making up the target turret and hull protection (effective thickness in millimeters). The final conclusion to be drawn from the comparison of ASL with one of the more involved models of penetration available in war gaming is that the ASL armor system, simple as it is, comes remarkably close to the results predicted by the intricate system.

Comparing the 7-12 hex penetration probabilities for a variety of guns versus the PzKpfw IVH frontal armor (turret and hull penetrations were considered in a total result, for example, the ASL results for the Soviet 76L and 85L and the American 75 and 57L were found to vary by the following amounts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PzKpfw IVH Penetration Probabilities after a Frontal Hit:</th>
<th>Weapon</th>
<th>ASL</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. 75L</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>1-in-4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. 75</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1-in-2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet 76L</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1-in-14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet 85L</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The definition of ‘Variation’ in the table above is the probability of different results occurring when one compares the ASL one with the more complex model. Since there is a 5% absolute difference between the American 75mm penetration probabilities, on 100 hits there would be five more kills in the ASL system than in the elaborate model. A difference of five kills in 100 works out to be ‘1-in-20’. In terms of the average variation between system results, the above figures indicate that different results will occur on one of every twelve hits—which is an acceptable difference considering the limitations of any armor penetration model.

Comparisons for other major AFV (such as the KV-1 Model 42, the Panther, the Tiger E, the IS-2m, and ISU-122) indicate that the ASL system will generally differ from any mathematical model on about one out of every fourteen frontal hits (i.e., out of every 14 hits, there will be one occasion—on the average—where ASL indicates a different result than the detailed models). With regard to the armor model variants proposed in the article, the revised ASL armor ratings (including the IS turret value) were essentially in line with the mathematical model predictions:

### Frontal Hit Penetration Probabilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Weapon</th>
<th>ASL</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IS-2m</td>
<td>75L</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>1-in-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS-2m</td>
<td>88L</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>1-in-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS-2m</td>
<td>105L</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>1-in-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KV-1 M42</td>
<td>75L</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>1-in-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KV-1 M42</td>
<td>88L</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>1-in-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KV-1 M42</td>
<td>75LL</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>1-in-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panther</td>
<td>76LL</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>1-in-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panther</td>
<td>85L</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1-in-33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The ASL prediction is based on the variant armor ratings in the accompanying article where applicable.

### SPLIT ARMOR RATINGS TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Panther</th>
<th>Jagd Panther</th>
<th>KV (8)</th>
<th>KV (11)</th>
<th>IS-2m</th>
<th>Tiger II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Italicized armor ratings are upgraded on APCR hits, with 26 AF values exceeding 26 (i.e., 26 becomes 33). Non-italicized armor ratings are not affected by APCR hits. ‘KV (8)’ refers to KV tanks with 8 AF front hull armor, ‘KV (11)’ to tanks with 11 AF front hull armor.

Although most of the discussion of split armor ratings has centered on overestimates of armor protection, in the case of the KV vehicles, the ASL armor ratings understate the protection offered by the drivers plate (upper hull area). The KV-1 presented a frontal hull with 11 AF upper, and 8 AF lower, hull front armor—where the 96mm effective thickness drivers plate qualified for 11 AF designation. The armor was superior to the 50L penetration at 500 meters, 78mm for a TKE of 13, and with an AF of 11 only one out of every 36 hits by the 50L should cause damage.

The split hull armor ratings for the IS-2m will have a major effect on the battlefield vulnerability of this tank. Whereas the Stalin tank hull front was previously immune to penetration by 75L, 75LL, 88L, and 88LL hits, with split hull usage of weaker lower hull areas, the hull penetration probabilities change now to 3% (75L), 5% (75LL), 18% (88L), and 42% (88LL).

With the use of split hull armor ratings, the IS-2m front hull armor is still a formidable target for panzer weapons, but the hull armor can be defeated when the shot strikes the weaker lower hull area. With regard to the Panther turret armor, the 14 AF is still a difficult task for guns with a 17 TKG at 21-30 hexes (the Soviet 85L and the American 75L), but guns with more effectiveness against 14 AF will reap significant benefits.

### The Stalin Tank Turret Front

As noted at the beginning of this article, the IS series of tanks carried varying degrees of protection on the front of both the turret and hull, offering virtually impenetrable armor next to the plates that were relatively vulnerable. On the IS turret face, 160mm plates with moderate to extreme slopes were married to a gunshield that was fairly game for any late war panzer weapon. The problem for US hardcore players then becomes one of determining the proper rating to assign—choosing between an 11 AF value that slightly overestimates vulnerability or the 14 AF value that rules out penetration by the 75L. (A third alternative, a ‘split turret rating’, will not be explored in this article since it is the subject of a further armor study currently under investigation.)

Knowing that the Stalin tank turret front offered the best chance of a penetration to 75L through 128L weapons, on the basis of battlefield experience and analysis of captured tanks, panzer and ATG crews were instructed to aim at the turret center. German battle reports indicate that the tactic of firing at IS tank turret fronts was widely pursued, with many reported kills of Stalin tanks by 75mm penetrations of the gunshield. (One report lists an 88LL penetration...
tion of the Stalin gunshield at 1.61 miles—or 65 ASL hexes—on a Nahorsh shot, which is surely too far to qualify as a shot "aimed" at the gunshield!

Since the Stalin tank turret gunshield was the most likely aiming point for shots at the vehicle, and most turret hits would strike near the centerline, it is recommended that players use an 11 AF rating for front turret hits on the IS tanks. While this rating will slightly overestimate the vulnerability of the armor, the results will not be totally lethal to the tank crews. The 75L gun will be able to gain turret front penetrations on 42% of the hits, but the overall 75L kill probability after a frontal hit (hull and turret combined) will only reach 21%. Every 75LL hit against the turret front will kill (and 42% will lead to "brew up"), and the overall probability that a 75L frontal hit will kill a IS-2m will reach 60%—which is consistent with battlefield reports that indicate how Panthers were often able to defeat IS tanks at close range.

Summary and Conclusions
The choice of a system to depict armor protection is one of the most difficult decisions facing any game designer, since the inclusion of ever greater detail generally leads to longer and more involved playing procedures. With the use of AF rating classes in ASL, a high level system has been selected (many tactical wargames do not differentiate between hull and turret armor, but instead use a weighted average of hull and turret or simply present the weaker of the two) and the ensuing detail is quite good. In fact, on the basis of combat resolution time versus realism of results, ASL players are using one of the most efficient and compact procedures available in armor miniatures gaming.

With the use of streamlined play mechanics comes a glossing over of some of the details, which in most cases is limited to factors that have a secondary (or lower) impact on play or cannot be modelled realistically in any event. The loss of detail only becomes of concern when the gameboard chances of an AFV (such as the IS-2m) are clearly affected to a degree that seems too pronounced.

Because exceptions to the rule always occur, even in the most sophisticated and time-consuming game systems, the task facing the designer is to identify and correct the cases that deserve attention. Players will find the ASL system more than adequate for most tank hits. The above suggestions are of interest only to the aficionado. After extensive study of the ASL armor system mechanics and over a year of experience with the overall game system, it is felt that hard-core players are now ready to absorb a game development that can focus on very limited improvements to selected areas of the simulation.

The basic system is complete and will withstand the tests of time; there is only a need to hammer out a few wrinkles.

---

**KREMLIN**

In this year of glasnost and arms limitation talks, do we really know what goes on in Moscow? Has a thaw come to the Soviet bureaucracy? Now you can take a light-hearted peek over the walls and test the muddier waters of politics in Russia. **KREMLIN**, the definitive, multi-player game of satire and diplomacy for the 1980s in playtesting at The Avalon Hill Game Company. Watch these pages for our announcement of the availability of 1988's biggest hit.

---

**BACK ISSUES**

Only the following back issues of *The General* remain in stock; price is $3.00 per issue (plus usual shipping and handling charges). Due to the low quantities of some back issues, if ordering please specify alternative selections. Below is a listing of each in-stock back issue by subject matter; game abbreviations are italicized and standard (a partial listing may be found on the "Opponent's Wanted" form on the insert of this issue). Type of article is indicated by the following abbreviations:

H—Historical, DN—Designer's Notes, V—Variant, SR—Series Replay, S—Strategy, Q—Questions, P—PBEM (postal). Sc—Scenarios, A—Analysis. The featured games for each issue is always the first one listed. Those printed in red indicate one-color reprints of previously out-of-stock issues.
Q. You’re something of an unknown to our readership, Bill. Could you briefly explain your role at The Avalon Hill Game Company?
A. I bear the responsibility for producing the entire line of computer games, from the initial submission to the final product. That involves working with the programmers in developing their games, overseeing the playtesting, and writing the rulebooks. In short, everything with the games except for their marketing and advertising. In that, thank Heaven, I have no authority whatsoever.

Q. Before coming to work for Avalon Hill, you were a reporter. For what paper did you work, and what exactly did you do?
A. That would be at The Raleigh News & Observer down in North Carolina. As a general assignment reporter, I covered everything from accidents to elections. It was your basic hackwork, except when the police reporter needed a replacement. Covering murders and other crimes proved more interesting, but the pay was low, the hours long and the work unsavory.

Q. Do you feel that this experience has helped you with the presentation of the computer games?
A. Writing rulebooks and news stories both demand clarity and completeness. It has to convey exactly what you want to express and in the simplest terms possible. Also, struggling through many a board-game rulebook in my time has taught me a lot of lessons in the art of writing computer game rulebooks.

Q. In your first years with the company, you wore many hats—being editor of the “Victory Insider” and of the fledgling HEROES as well as laboring for the Microcomputer Games division. Which task did you find most enjoyable; and which was most difficult?
A. The early days of HEROES was certainly the most fulfilling. There was a lot of new things happening with the introduction of our role-playing line and, let’s face it, just finding employment after a three-month search was euphoria. The Insider was also fun because it brought me into contact with the designers up there, whose work I had been following for awhile.

Working in the computer game division is definitely the most difficult because when I first
came here my only computer experience was with the TRS-80 models I and III, and a bit of Pascal programming. Suddenly I was assisting the then head of the shop and learning a lot about everything at once. It's been a rough passage, but we've managed to do quite a bit in the last four years.

Q. I understand that you are now editing a newsletter devoted to our line of computer games. What is its title, what does it offer the readership, and how can they get it?

A. The newsletter is On-Line from Avalon Hill and it is designed to publish the latest news about our products. It's a freebie, and since one can be put together in a day, we can publish them quickly and inexpensively. I hope to use it as a clearinghouse for news and information that would only reach the public in driblets—such as upgrades, questions answered, and announcements about new and potential products. I also hope to discuss works in progress, our publishing and design philosophy, and make the reader more familiar with computers and what we're trying to do. To get a copy, drop us a line and ask to be put on our mailing list.

Q. Do you still play role-playing games? I've never really understood the appeal in such games; maybe you could enlighten me?

A. I don't play as much as I used to, but for awhile there it was pretty intense. Role-playing appeals to many different people. There are the power gamers who just want to "win" and are fascinated with images of power. Then there are those who play the German side in SQUAD LEADER. Then there are the dreamers who want to participate in a world where there aren't any complications like earning a weekly paycheck, raising a family or dealing with telemarketers. They'd play DIPLOMACY by mail (and send elaborate releases as if they were the real Tsar of the Russians).

The really wonderful thing about role-playing is that when done right—and I can't stress the word "right" enough—it becomes a very sociable thing to do that doesn't require you to learn a lot of rules. That's my style of role-playing no matter what the game.

Q. Turning to your efforts at Microcomputer Games, you've brought some much-needed guidance and expertise to that division. Recently some truly excellent games have been released for which you oversaw development. Of which are you proudest?

A. Two right now. UNDER FIRE! has a lot of neat points to it, and as the IBM version is coming out this year and the Commodore version later, the game's going to be exposed to a much wider audience. The game is a milestone in the company's history. It's complex, but simple in execution. The rulebook is a successful experiment in a loose style of writing and contains all those things I wish other rulebooks had, like an interview with the designer. And the IBM version is a fantastic piece of programming. All the books exactly like the Apple version with fewer colors, and it'll use CGA (standard IBM color graphics mode), monochrome, and "Hercules" (a third-party monochrome card that delivers sharper graphics). We're also discussing the possibility of releasing extra unit disks that will contain information and vehicles from other parts of the world, like the USSR, Russia and Germany. It also moves faster than the Apple version. I could go on for hours about this game.

The other game I'm proudest of would have to be MAC PRO FOOTBALL—partly because of the enormous amount of time and effort that went into it. The basic game design has remained the same throughout the upgrades, but version 2.0 moves much faster and makes the game more enjoyable.

Q. When you sit down to evaluate a computer game, by what do you judge it?

A. By what is already out there, and by whether or not I enjoy it. That's not as unfair as it might sound. First of all, there's no reason to accept less than what the computer is capable of doing, even if the submission is a translation of one of our own games. My own taste in games is pretty eclectic. A game on any subject will interest me so long as the design is good, such as 1830, SQUAD LEADER and PRO TOON.

It's an accurate adage that there are only a few ways to design a good game, but a lot of ways to do a rotten one. A goodly percentage of the submissions we receive are designed a lot like the early computer games when there was only 16K to work with and limited graphics. What designers need to understand is that, with more memory to work with and very good graphic capabilities, they have to take advantage of them.

Q. Once you have accepted a computer game submission, can you explain the rest of the development process? Do you make extensive use of playtesters, and how do you recruit them?

A. OK—very rarely do we accept a game as is. Usually something's got to be done to it to make it publishable ("Greenwood's First Law of Game Design"). Once the programmer has made the changes, we take it to the playtesters. They're consumers and game buyers who have shown themselves capable of taking a game apart and asking intelligent questions about what's left. After a month's worth of playing, we get their reports and do whatever needs to be done. Each game is different, and problems can arise anywhere. We're always learning more about what the machines can and can't do. After that, it's "Publication City" and the thanks of a grateful nation.

Q. What of graphics?

A. If you mean, "How important are graphics in a game?", the answer is "more than most programmers would prefer." In books, boardgames or computer games, a professional presentation will sell more than an unprofessional one. Computer gaming is a young medium that is still defining itself. The Commodore 64 is the same machine now as it was four years ago, but it took awhile for programmers to learn what they could do with it, and that looks good and what doesn't.

Q. How hard is it to anticipate the fast-paced evolution of hardware for the computer gaming hobby?

A. It's a lot better than back in 1984 when it seemed like a new machine would roll out to great fanfare every month. Nobody—including the manufacturers—had any idea what would fly and what would fail. Which machine do you support and how much? That's my style of role-playing no matter what the game.

Q. What, in your judgment, is the greatest problem facing the computer gaming industry?

A. There is a serious lack of good games which can stand repeated playings. A lot of the software out there are either pure or partially arcade, and that's primarily aimed at children or teens. If someone buys a computer and discovers that fact, his computer may end up on the shelf. Like role-playing games, a home computer could become a toy that you grow out of eventually.

Q. And what do you feel will be the next big advance in that industry?

A. We believe that the market exists for a wider range of true games. There's a need for a game that sets itself up quickly and puts itself away when you're done, and in between all the player would have to do is enjoy it. We can see that with COMPUTER STATIS PRO BASEBALL, SUPER SUNDAY and NRA. There's no cards and no score sheets; the computer handles both, and at the end of the game you have all the stats you want. You can run a league using that game. You can create your favorite teams and they'll look as good as the ones with the game. If we can translate that feeling of historical authenticity and others, we'll have a major advance that will directly affect the consumer. All for the better.

Variations . . . Cont'd from Page 22

(441 and 443). While in the Basin, Wynn is immune to Harbor Defensive Fire but not to Dockside Defensive Fire by the green and orange flak guns.

C. German Jitter Fire: During the commando raid, the Germans were confused and there were reports of German troops firing upon their own units (especially on German troops from other units). If an unmodified "6" results from German fire which does not secure a hit on a British unit, the German unit has inflicted casualties upon itself. Reduce its strength by one.

D. Commando Leadership: Though all the commando parties were highly trained for the operation, there is no substitute for a leader who can guide his command into an effective fighting force. When a commando unit loses one or more Strength Points, there is a chance its leader has been killed. After determining the ammo loss (11.8), make a subsequent dice roll. If this dice roll is greater than twice the remaining strength points, the leader has been killed. Place an "X" next to the leader's name on the Log Pad to signify KIA. (Example: Four strength points remain in Roy; a dice roll greater than "8" signifies that Roy himself has been killed.)

D1 Units with leaders may consolidate with remnant units of the same type (demolition or assault) that are currently without a leader. Such consolidation must occur during the End of Turn Phase. The resulting unit must be able to consolidate. Remnants must be absorbed in total, and no commando force may ever total more than six strength points.
NEW RELEASE

History Repeats Itself!

In 1977 Avalon Hill introduced Wooden Ships & Iron Men to the tabletop gaming public. Eleven years later, Avalon Hill introduces, for your pleasure, the microcomputer game...

The game brings to life the tactical maneuvers and ship-to-ship combat from the days of the American Revolution to the Napoleonic Era. Play begins by selecting a pre-programmed scenario or you can create your own great naval engagements in this highly-detailed and realistic simulation about the age of fighting sail. In addition, WS&IM comes with the "Dockyard" option, allowing you to design your own personal flagships and sail into naval history. Create American gunboats and send them against Tripolitan pirates, or Chinese junks defending home waters against Russian and Portuguese schooners. With its ease of play, in-depth design and willingness to accommodate itself to YOU, WS&IM will make you look at computer historical games in a whole new way.

Partial list of features:
- Thirteen ship types
- Eighteen Nationalities
- Detailed Information on 200 ships including number and type of sails, hull thickness and crew quality
- Dockyard
- Scenario Generator

$35.00. 1 to 2 players. Commodore® 64/128.

Avalon Hill Game Company
A Monarch Avalon, Inc. Company
4517 Harford Road  *  Baltimore, MD 21214
I suppose that it is inevitable that from time to time the "thoughtless offensive" doctrine will come into vogue and cloud the judgement of otherwise competent strategists. It can happen in real life as well as the area—our area—of wargaming! Take, for example, the years 1914-1918. Didn't matter whether you were on the offensive or defensive, the neat thing was that your side got to attack. Why? Well, as military theorists now will tell you, it comes down to that "all-important" aspect-initiative. With it, perhaps they would have us think, you can do anything. Catch is, you can only get "initiative" by attacking, and you can only keep it by attacking. (Or so the majority would have us believe; such is not the case, but more on that later.) The end result is this overriding concern with attacking and initiative is to bring on such courses of action when it is not really beneficial. Attacking is fine as long as you have 1) the resources and 2) the reason. How does this apply to the game FORTRESS EUROPA? Quite simply, I believe that commonly accepted German play in FE violates both of these. I have observed the Allied machine roll ashore and wreak havoc with German defenses time and again. Pretty soon there is no more to munch on the beachhead and the Allied wave begins to pick up steam. What is so galling is that so many German players then play right into the opponent's hands by throwing themselves on the Allied army when there is really no chance of knocking them back into the sea.

This is not to say that I have not seen the Allies stopped at the beaches. However, unless the Allies have really gambled or the Germans have really done some excellent booby-trapping with the hidden units, the Allied player is rarely pushed off the beaches into the sea—maybe one time in twelve. This in spite of the very common German tactic of an up-front, on-the-beaches type of defense. That leads me to believe that something isn't right here. The "coastal" defense is designed to stop the Allies on the beaches. If it does not do this, the German finds himself over-extended and being slowly (or sometimes not so slowly) ground to pieces. The coastal defense is a gambing defense, even when conservative options are taken on the beaches. If the Germans try to push the enemy off the continent (and chances are, he will not), then the Germans are right where the Allied player wants them.

This haphazard method of defense has been the usual method of German defense since the inception of the game. However, there is another way of doing things. It involves a great deal of planning, a cool hand and steady nerves, emphasis on movement rather than combat, and a cringing disregard for previous German objectives and tactics. This novel idea is not really novel at all. It was favored by Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt for the defense of France in 1944. On the surface, it is easy to see why the idea was not popular then, and is overlooked by most FE players today. The plan entails a casual abandonment of the beaches and a fighting retreat through France from the very beginning. To Hitler and his generals like Rommel, this was unthinkable. I find the idea remarkable in creativity and startlingly realistic in terms of resources and objectives. With a few modifications to conform to the limitations of the game's rules, this defense of von Rundstedt will be the subject of this article and its institution as the mode of German victory will be discussed. I would first like to present the ideas that support the implementation of the inland defense, and then go on to give my views of how this defense should be set up and conducted.

The Theory

Why? Why not! I suppose being a valid German defense is enough reason for some gamers, but for some readers who are more discriminating, there are several more reasons—rather more analytical—for using the inland defense.

The first reason has to do with Allied airpower. As in all games, in FORTRESS EUROPA you must make maximum use of your certainties and put yourself in position to take advantages of uncertainties. Allied command of the air puts German strength at risk. This is especially so if four German TAC were used on the June I turn. The disadvantage that this Allied command of the air puts on the German player is very burdensome. German movement is restricted strategically through allied railroad bombardment and tactically through Allied strafing. German attacks are then conducted in dribbles, usually with a majority of the units being high-quality armor, as these are mobile enough to get to action despite air interdiction. These high-quality units are then exposed to Allied attacks with TAC support, attacks that boil away the substance of the German army until nothing is left but a small, crusty residue of infantry and training divisions, scattered and isolated in various towns and/or tied down by game restrictions.

With the inland defense, much of this Allied strength is minimized while German TAC strength is maximized. With the inland defense, German units can retreat out of range of Allied attacks in June, and to some extent in the months ahead. In most games of FE, Allied TAC is used for Ground Support. With the inland defense, there will be few opportunities early in the game for the enemy to utilize Ground Support for there will be few or no targets. This presents quite a different picture to the German player. No longer does TAC have to be expended to cancel Allied TAC on the Ground Support mission. This in turn is fundamentally significant in terms of the quality and quantity of German TAC expenditure. Allied TAC or SAC countered during railroad or replacement missions preserves German attributes directly, and does not merely promote the status quo as with the cancellation of Allied Ground Support. With the inland defense, German TAC is fighting a more even battle, largely isolated against Allied SAC. If the German player can plan to keep the need to make long moves (prime to strafing) from arising and, to some extent, can keep his troops as a whole away from the powerful Allied infantry in June, then he has eliminated most of the Allied TAC from the battle—there just is not that much more of value to do. Railroad movement will not be of much value after the first one or two turns, and a good German player will consider it a luxury and not something to be counted on. Bridges near the front will have to be kept standing so Allied units can attack the major German positions that will be established behind each river. Thus, German TAC can concentrate on important things like preserving German replacements—the key to the inland defense.

Overlapping the discussion of the disadvantages placed on the Allied airpower and the enhancement of German airpower is the overall effect of the inland defense on the strength of the German army. In short, the German army strength is hoarded with passion. Territory is sacrificed to preserve this strength, until the point where the German army is ready to fight a major battle. Contrary to popular belief, I don't believe the Germans are ready to offer prolonged resistance to the Allied invasion in the first month of the game. Needless casualties are incurred by pursuing this. By keeping German units away from battle, they will not be suffering irreplaceable casualties from TAC-heavy Allied offensives or their own unsupported ground attacks. This plan earns interest on its own value, too. Aside from the positive effects of maintaining the present strength of the German forces, by avoiding the need of expending TAC on battle-related functions German airpower can concentrate almost exclusively on saving German replacements and preserving the
future strength of the German army. With proper usage, your initial strength will be supplemented by replacements arriving in June that should just about bring every unit up to full strength. Indeed, there may well be a temporary surplus of replacements. These should be saved for use with German HQ units later.

As for the actual timeframe of the invasion, there may well be a temporary surplus of replacements available in June that should just about bring every unit up to full strength. Indeed, there may be a temporary surplus of replacements available for use with German HQ units later.

The theory behind the inland defense, in some detail, is to retreat before the Allied invasion when it comes in the 19th, 1st or 7th Military Districts. When the Allies land in one of the two other districts, the game progresses much the same as it would under any defense plan. When the Allies land in one of the two other districts, the German units of that respective district will retreat out of the area, leaving nothing if the district happens to be the 19th or 1st, or a few coastal garrisons in the port fortresses if the 7th. It should be noted that the German player will not leave behind all of his coastal infantry divisions should the invasion come in the 7th District, but will convert some of the other ones to regular infantry and retreat them with the rest of the 7th Army. While the Allied player is forced to waste time building up his forces, which will seem and are woefully thin when spread out, the German player is planning a major defensive line at the first opportunity just outside of the district. Between the logistical struggle and the mental dilemma over whether to leave the district or amass more strength, the month of June should pass without major fighting.

When the Allied player is ready to advance from the beachhead, probably in his June IV or July I turn, the German player can anticipate this and preempt it by pulling back to a major river line behind the district. This will be the Loire-Seine line if the invaded district is the 1st or 7th, and the Rhone around St. Etienne-Lyons if the 19th has been invaded. There a defensive corps with three divisions of combined arms will form behind each hex of the river line. Released units from other districts will straggle in and form the reserve. July and August are the months of mobility, with pauses at the various north-south river lines for a week or two. The German TAC, at its high point, will use one commando operation in the event that the district is invaded. If the invaded district is the 4th, the German TAC will use commando operations on the first turn. The training for commando troops is needed if you want to use them against the Allies. The German TAC, at its high point, will use one commando operation in the event that the district is invaded. If the invaded district is the 4th, the German TAC will use commando operations on the first turn. The training for commando troops is needed if you want to use them against the Allies.

The coast is usually a great place to go for a day tripper, especially if you are looking for a rest from the military action. The coastal defense unit in Marseilles is placed so as to possibly lure the Allies away from the district. This amounts to being strong in a couple of areas, but armor-heavy, counterattacking force without much supporting infantry to absorb casualties. The coastal defense unit in Marseilles will also seek to trap the Allies by presenting the toughest face he can into each and every district if he is to have even a shot at stopping the enemy. Thus, his forces are spread thin almost everywhere and he really only has a chance of kicking the Allied invasion force off dry land with the hidden panzer units, combined arms, and the logistics of the country. This increases the scenario I mentioned before of a quality, but armor-heavy, counterattacking force without much supporting infantry to absorb casualties. The coastal defense unit in Marseilles is then exposed and inevitably whittled away in useless battles of attrition.

The inland defense units are then deployed to block up as much as possible the line of advance of the Allies. The inland defense units have to cover as much as possible the line of advance of the Allies, using the hidden panzer units, combined arms, and the logistics of the country. This increases the scenario I mentioned before of a quality, but armor-heavy, counterattacking force without much supporting infantry to absorb casualties. The coastal defense unit in Marseilles is then exposed and inevitably whittled away in useless battles of attrition.

The inland defense units are then deployed to block up as much as possible the line of advance of the Allies. The inland defense units have to cover as much as possible the line of advance of the Allies, using the hidden panzer units, combined arms, and the logistics of the country. This increases the scenario I mentioned before of a quality, but armor-heavy, counterattacking force without much supporting infantry to absorb casualties. The coastal defense unit in Marseilles is then exposed and inevitably whittled away in useless battles of attrition.
valley. The 2-4 unit stacked with the 6-6 panzer will unfreeze the panzer division in the event of an invasion elsewhere and allow it to move off at top speed, whether by road or rail. If an invasion does come here, there are several good defensive positions and useful tactics that can be used. The three SS panzer divisions hidden in the center of France will be able to reach the area by June II at the latest. The paratrooper division in Germany can be brought up to strength and flown in, or one from the 7th District can be released and airlifted (not paradropped), preferably to Valence. With any available rail movement, starting on June III, 1st infantry should move into the upper Rhone Valley. Invasion Reaction infantry can get to the upper Rhone by the end of June, as well as the mechanized infantry division in Stuttgart. The two SS panzer divisions of the Invasion Reaction force, as well as the mechanized infantry division and the Tiger battalions can get to the Lyons area by June II—quicker if any rail support is available. If things are going poorly, another paratrooper division can be railed in. Finally, by the time the Allies fight their way through the Invasion Reaction force, units that were frozen in other districts will have time to make their way down to the St. Etienne-Lyons region.

The major defensive stance taken by the Germans should be at the Durance River. Unless the Allied player presses right up from the beaches, the Germans should have time to compose a defensive line made up of the four infantry divisions of the 19th Army (including the converted 7-0 coastal division), the 6-6 panzer division, the 2-4 parachute regiment and the 1-3 HQ unit by June I. Arriving at this line on June II should be the 1st and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions from the reserve in central France. The airlifted parachute division should probably be flown in on June I to Valence and then reinforced to full strength. If the Allies leave the district right away, say on June II or III, the short term advantages may be offset by the long term disadvantages for them. By doing so, the Allied player will unfreeze all the German units at a very early time and will risk permanent destruction of some very good French units by attacking with such a high proportion in the front line. In the end, an early exit from the district may put some added pressure on the Germans, but the Allied player risks his offensive grinding to a halt or a defeat in detail. If the Allies do wait (and they probably should), then the German player can have even more reinforcements to the Durance line.

The Germans should stay on the river line (edge of the district) for one turn of Allied attacks and then phase the defensive line back to the Valence area, leaving rearguards to put ZOCs on every hex in the valley and garrison time for the Invasion Reaction forces and railed-in panzers and infantry units to arrive. The German should arrive back on the Valence line on about the July I turn. This line should be strongly manned, but remember that it is still only a delaying line. The German player should pursue the line for another turn of Allied attacks, then move on to the St. Etienne-Lyons area for the July III turn. Here is where the buck stops. This region should have been the catch-all net for arriving reinforcements, and the six hexes of this line (running over to the Swiss border) should be occupied by the limit of the stacking restrictions in each hex. If you can make it back to this line by your July IV turn, with only minor losses, you are in good shape to hold this line a month or more.

When the Allies do leave the 19th District, the 1st and 7th Armies should send what reinforcements they can to the northern tip of France to close the gap to the Seine. Only a coastal division should be left in each port and the rest should be converted to infantry divisions for withdrawal. This withdrawal might tempt the Allies into a paradigm of commando raid, and it might even bring the second invasion. If it does, the Allied player will have made the wrong decision. If the Allied player is making a truly realistic effort in the south, it will be truly scattered by the time a major buildup is made in the northwest. The second Allied force will have a large vacant area to cross before being of any use, and a large number of TAC is useful for coasting up to dig the coastal units out of their port fortresses. The division of effort and the dallying with the ports only provides the German player more time to retreat, to pick up reinforcements and replacements, and to make the inland defense all the more effective.

As Figure 2 shows, an invasion in the 1st District is met with the same cowardly reaction. If the invasion comes here, the 1st Army will retreat out of the district and be content with establishing a defensive line on the Loire—ideally suited for major defensive operations. For the lack of efficient landing capability in this area, the invasion force will need a couple of turns to build up in the district. The German 6-0 in La Rochelle will retreat out of the district to Nantes on the first turn as well, between its strength and the French forces will not delay things one bit. The Allied player will probably take the whole month of June to strength his invasion forces. When it comes time to leave, it will be a major error for him to do so in the north. For this reason, the north will be left invitingly open. The 2-3 unit in Nantes and the 1-2 training division in here (which after all, it is only four (410) only serve to protect the 7th Army from a quick blitz which threatens to trap part of it while it is withdrawing to the Seine. An exit in the north would lead the Allies away from the area of ultimate importance, the area containing the German army and the path to Paris and the Rhone, and will lead the Allies in a direction that will make it possible to avoid combat until late July—which could seal things for the Allied player.

This picture I have drawn is accurate because of what the Germans will do after an invasion in the 1st District. The units of the 1st Army, which are set up to be of some aid to the 7th District in the event of an invasion there, will hold behind the river inside the district to prevent the Allies from getting a foothold over the river without having to leave the district, but no other German units will enter the district to support them. The path is left open for the Allies to take the coastal port and count up into the 7th District, if he should be so kind as to fall into that trap, and the rest of the German units rally at the Vienne River. The 1st and 2nd SS Panzer can make the river line on the first turn, along with the 352nd Infantry in Rennes. The two assault gun battalions in Brittany each take the place of a frozen unit; one can replace the 7-3 infantry in Rennes, the other can replace the 7-6 panzer unit in G8. If you really want to get fancy, you could move the 2-3 division into F10 to replace the other the 6-7-3 division in G8. If you want to get fancy, you could move the 2-3 division that starts in F10 up to Rennes and release the other 5-3 division there. The 9th and 10th SS Panzer divisions can be in the general area by June II, and should be able to take the path to Rennes to protect replacements in June I to Valence and then reinforced to full strength, and another infantry replacement should be used to build up the 2-3 infantry in the 7th District to full strength. The two armored replacements should be saved, or perhaps one should go to the half-strength 4-6 in the Netherlands.

Just as the German runs out of TAC for the month, on June III, he retreats out of range. This avoids the potentially dangerous situation where seven Allied TAC could be assembled for use as Ground Support. The Allies will have to spend their June IV turn catching up, and may not even be in position to attack the Loire-Seine on July I. Whether it be July I or July II, however, when the Allies are running out of their own pieces, the German reinforcements should be enough to carry off the 7th District, if not then the 7-6 panzer division could go to the half-strength 4-6 in the Netherlands. The two assault gun battalions in Brittany each take the place of a frozen unit; one can replace the 5-3 infantry in Rennes, the other can replace the 7-6 panzer unit in G8. If you really want to get fancy, you could move the 2-3 division that starts in F10 up to Rennes and replace the other 5-3 division there. The 9th and 10th SS Panzer divisions can be in the general area by June II, and should be able to take the path to Rennes to protect replacements in June I to Valence and then reinforced to full strength, and another infantry replacement should be used to build up the 2-3 infantry in the 7th District to full strength. The two armored replacements should be saved, or perhaps one should go to the half-strength 4-6 in the Netherlands.

How would you like to arise some day and not have to go to the bathroom? There are just some things you come to expect in life. The German player defending every square inch of France in FORTRESS EUROPA is one of them. But not now. The reaction that I spoke of above may well be that of the Allied player when they see the Germans picking up and pulling out. Yes, on June III, the German player will surprise everyone by pulling back to the line of the Loire-Seine. Perhaps I have exaggerated a bit, but this maneuver should give the Germans even more time; assuming that the Allies haven’t left the beachheads yet, it will be weeks of running around for even their best-placed units to reach the Loire, and units around Bordeaux or La Rochelle can expect an even longer trip.

This should provide the German player with a bit of time to prepare. This will, in turn, also prevent any major combat for at least the first five weeks. The Germans should take this opportunity to gather replacements. During the month of June, the German player should use his six TAC on the second and third weeks to cancel any and all Allied SAC committed. If there are any German airplanes left over, they should cancel as many Allied SAC on this zone that you can, until the Allied player comes down to the June I turn. There should be no need for using the TAC for anything else; there will be no combat so there is no need to worry about cancelling Allied aircraft on Bridge or Ground Support missions. Rail transport is important, but it could take quite a bit of the available rail spots, so you might as well get it done. If the Allies need the road transports, the German player should use his TAC to Allied TAC which up until now would not have had anything else to do. Using the six TAC on protecting German replacements will assure at least four replacements, maybe five; and these should be used to build up the 3-4 parachute division in Germany to full strength, and then their infantry replacements should be used to build up the 2-3 infantry in the 7th District to full strength. The two armored replacements should be saved, or perhaps one should go to the half-strength 4-6 in the Netherlands.
(much more helpful when the Allied player is attacking river positions) and two turns protecting German replacements. My recommendations are, of course, worst-case scenarios. During the first three months of summer, the Germans can expect two turns of Storm to help them out, possibly giving them a turn of free replacements if the Allied player elects to use his two available SAC for something other than German replacements. Most importantly, Storm will give the hard-pressed German breathing space in terms of Allied pursuit.

Enough about the air game, for the pattern is easily picked up. Now, massing at Loire-Seine (we have returned to early July) is a giant force. Here for roll-call are all five SS panzer divisions, four or five Wehrmacht panzer divisions, two mechanized infantry divisions, and 20-22 infantry divisions: eight from the 7th Army (including one from Cherbourg and one from St. Malo), one reserve parachute division from Germany, one from the 1st Army, two from the Initial Reaction force, two from the 15th Army, the 352nd, and finally seven coastal divisions turned infantry from the 15th District and all the coastal districts between the Seine and the Somme (except for one to remain in Le Havre). In addition, there should be two Tiger battalions, assorted training divisions, HQ units and possibly (if you were lucky enough to get them out) the two assault gun battalions from the 7th District. The area running along the Seine from the sea to Paris will then be held by the converted coastal divisions with a little help from an armored division and a couple of parachute units; the Paris sector will be held in strength by combined arms stacks of one panzer division and two infantry divisions in each hex. Below this, down to Nevers, and possibly a little farther if units of the 19th Army have been able to join the main force, are the rest of the panzers and the mechanized infantry. Any mobile armored battalions should be deployed down here where the river will help to offset their weakness. The mobile units are here for a reason. When the Loire line begins to crack, the panzers and assorted other elements will revolve back with Paris as the hinge to the upper Seine. Delaying units can be dropped off in the passes (R17 and S20) to buy time for the retreat. Reinforcements for July and August will form up at this line with help from the Paris-Nancy railroad. Beginning on July IV, a steady stream of repeatable reinforcements arrives each week. These units should not be sent to the current front line, but should instead be sent to the next river line to the rear. By August, or maybe even earlier, the 19th Army will arrive to seal the gap between Nancy and Belfort. It should result in the front line running along the Somme to St. Quentin to Reims and then down the Marne.

How long should each river line be held? At the point where it looks like anything more than a local counterattack will be necessary to restore the situation, then it is time to move on. Will these river lines really be able to regain some of the lost time that was passed up by skipping the battles of the beachhead; or is this just an overly optimistic portrayal of happenings to keep the logical legs from being knocked out from under my plan? A few quick examples may suffice at this point. In the first three months of FORTRESS EUROPA, the Allies have some 36 infantry divisions to work with (counting parachute divisions and taking into account the withdrawals) and 15 armored divisions. The Germans have 30 regular infantry divisions (counting parachute ones), 15 armored divisions, six training divisions that will convert to regular infantry units if not eliminated, and 16 coastal infantry divisions that the inland defender plans to convert to regular infantry. The German player, then, has the numerical advantage—and is at only a slight disadvantage quality-wise. There are 15 hexes in the defense line that runs down the Seine to V17, and there are 13 hexes in the line running down the Somme to St. Quentin and along the Marne to X15. In all these positions, at least two-thirds of all troops are in double-duty defense hexes. With the various battalions and HQs, there should be three units in each hex of these lines, and most of them should be multi-step divisions. There should be enough units to provide flank cover, and possibly enough later on to screen the main line from first impulse Allied ground attacks supported from the air.

A common German stack composed of one armored division and two infantry divisions has a combat strength of "15". A common Allied corps of the same unit types has a combat strength of "19". An Allied stack attacking a German stack—1:1 odds, unless your stack occupies one of the hexes with doubled defense, in which case the odds are 1:2. Such attacks are not very conducive to picking up ground or forcing casualties, at least on anybody but the attacker. The burden of the Allied attack must then be carried by the TAC. By allocating six TAC to Ground Support during a turn, the Allied player can bring the odds of two such attacks up to 4:1 (3:1 if attacking across a river). He can manage only two decent attacks a turn, and that conceals all rail movement. German replacements, and the like on such turns. Of course, losses from soak-offs must be considered, and these will most likely be heavy also.

It should be noted that the front line lies on the Somme-Marne on the Sept I turn. While this is the case now, naturally, and where we should be happy enough to find it, this position may cause some concern to players who would consider using the Sudden Death Victory Conditions. To summarize what could be a long analysis, I do not believe that the inland defense will significantly affect the use of the Sudden Death Victory Conditions. While it is true that the inland defense concedes many of the Allied objectives for Sept I, it does not "give them away". It will still take some effort on the part of the Allied player, and this effort is not always beneficial to his game in the overall perspective. Besides, the inland defense allows the German player to make some choices that can make some choices feasible that weren't before. For example, the "nine full-strength armored divisions" option, the "no paratroop" option or the "accumulate five replacements" option cannot
probably out vandalizing ports, and points them now of the units can gather together and taking advanta-
other units towards the district in the quickest man-
tage of as much doubling terrain as possible to dis-
courage Allied pursuit. He should bring as many
divisions of the lst, 15th and 19th districts with the
and one in
will form a connection with the 1st Army by ex-
mitigation in St. Malo, one in Cherbourg
and one in Lorient. The coastal division in St.
Nazaire will make a break for the safety of the 1st
District where it will either join the training divi-
sion in stiffening the flanks of the 7th District or will
circle around to join the 7th Army in front of
Paris. A coastal division each from St. Malo and
Cherbourg will be withdrawn if an invasion comes
at a sufficient distance where they will not be picked
off in transit to the safety of the rest of the army.
On the first German turn after an invasion in the
7th District, the German player should retreat the
7th Army as fast as possible towards the borders of
the district, stopping to form a line where most of
the units can gather together and taking advan-
tage of as much doubling terrain as possible to dis-
courage Allied pursuit. He should bring as many
other units towards the district in the quickest man-
ner possible and should definitely release the panzer
divisions of the 1st, 15th and 19th districts with the
units assigned to that task (same ones as in the dis-
cussion of the 1st District above). On the turn when
the Allied player begins to call in his scattered units,
probably out vandalizing ports, and points them now
in the direction of the German army, then you must
perform your disappearing act and fall back to the
Seine-Loire line.

As to my initial set-up, I have tried to make cer-
tain regions in the district more attractive than others
for an Allied player determined to land there. The
Cherbourg region in particular is one that threatens
the efficiency of the inland defense, so it is well
guarded. The three steps in St. Malo, along with
the nearby infantry and armor, may stir Allied fears
of the classic "St. Malo SS Panzer Surprise". An
invasion at the Brittany peninsula “hinges” will
have to move up into the peninsula to capture ports
for supply, and will force the Allies to spend a week
or two to get sufficient units up in that area to take
ports. If the Allied player spends the June II and
June III turns getting up to the Brittany ports and
June IV and July I bringing them back, and has to
use the July II turn catching up with the retreating
Germans, he has put himself in a very bad position.
All of this time will then have been gained for the
small sacrifice of a few coastal divisions and no
more. An invasion at the tip of the peninsula near
Brest has almost the same disadvantages for the
Allies, though not as much time would be wasted.
All in all, this district is not that bad of a spot
for the Allied invasion. The big ports will reassure
the Allied player’s nagging worry that he should be
doing “something” with all his spare time. And
the ports are actually doing the German a favor by
occupying the Allied player’s time—for you can just
about be sure that Allied troops are not going to
leave the district before every possible unit is ashore
that he can get ashore. Unlike an invasion in the
1st District, an invasion here also releases sizable
German forces right from the start. So an invasion
in the 7th District is definitely not the worst pos-
sible case for the inland defense.

Figure 3 shows my proposed set-up for the 15th
District. In this district, as in the Netherlands, a first
turn invasion is handled in conventional fashion.
There is no room for defense in depth. However,
the setup of the 15th District is one of the most
important in the game. Vital considerations here in-
volve how to create a viable defense while still
placing units for optimum use if the invasion comes
somewhere else.

With the help of a few free set-up units, my 15th
Army is in position to respond to an invasion any-
where in the district as well as either of the two
western districts. With the conservative but
meticulous placement of the hidden panzers, the
eastern part of the district is guarded while 15th
Army units are placed in the western half of the dis-
• Two 7-6 panzer divisions are placed along the
Seine with thought to the almost-certain invasion
in the west. The two 4-3 infantry divisions in the
towns along the Scheldt can be released by the 1-6
assault gun battalions in the Invasion Reaction
force. Of the three possible beaches in the 15th Dis-
trick—Dieppe, the Calais ports, and Ostende—two are
suicidal at best. Dieppe has the two panzer divisions;
three coastal divisions in Dieppe, two in Lo Havre
and two in the woods at U6 which guarantee to make
things crowded and that is before the hidden panzers
and the strong 7th and Netherlands armies get to
the scene. Calais has few steps but just too many
defending factors to attempt a landing there. Any
attack is going to end up scattered and weakened,
and is really rather dubious in value given the
opportunities extended to the Allies in the west.
Antwerp is heavily guarded and units are placed in
the Scheldt cities so any invasion at Ostende will
take some time to break out and the Allies will only
have a couple of hexes to build up before things get
really crowded. An invasion here is not workable
if the German plays his cards right. Two of the hidden
panzers just outside this district are placed so that
they can respond with a maximum of mobility (i.e.,
no strafing worries) in any direction. The 2nd SS
Panzer can get to the river lines in the Netherlands
in one turn, and the 1st Panzer in two turns. All
in all, you can be 99% sure that the Allies are not
going to invade here. Once you don’t expect them
and are not prepared, however, is when an invasion
will surely work.

Figure 3 also shows the set-up for Netherlands Dis-
trick. Compared to congested beach defenses of
many a FORTRESS EUROPA game, this set-up con-

Figure 3: In the 15th and the Netherlands Districts
cedes Amsterdam but forces the Allies to get a DE at Rotterdam to take it on a first-turn coup. It is obvious that I don’t favor trying any heroics on the beaches with hidden units in this district, rather putting them where they can do the most good—in doubled defensive positions on the dykes and behind the Rhine, which is an excellent position to defend from the “swimming-hole terrain” right in front of them to bring any mechanized Allied breakout to a rusting halt. Don’t commit too many units here until necessary, and be content to let the Allied player place himself in a bottle if he lands here. All that remains for you to do is put the cap on.

The Aftermath

The Germans should arrive back on the West Wall by the start of October, and should have the line fully manned by the time the last of the initial army arrives. Of the impressive army that began the game, if roughly 66% of the 13 panzer divisions, two mechanized divisions, 30 infantry divisions and 12-15 coastal infantry coverted to regular infantry divisions remain, then the Allies have a truly massive battle awaiting them. Major German reinforcements arrive in the month of September to help cover if there have been heavy losses, and in October to form a reserve behind the West Wall. If the replacement situation has gone well, and losses have been light, it may be possible to get almost all of the major divisions that began the game back in line for the “Battle of the Wall.” In any case, German replacements will pick up in September and remain high through December; the discontinuous turns of Allied attack in between turns of waiting on the weather to clear, coupled with the low number of Allied attacks each turn, will keep the German in good shape.

The theory behind the inland defense rests on a solid foundation of certainties rather than the uncertainties of the dice. The German army gains the advantages of mass, terrain (unsuitable in any positive manner on offense), and handicapped Allied airpower. It will be seen that, if the Allied air game and the accompanying battles of attrition that ensue, Major German reinforcement can disrupt, the “swimming-hole terrain” right in front of them to bring any mechanized Allied breakout to a rusting halt. Don’t commit too many units here until necessary, and be content to let the Allied player place himself in a bottle if he lands here. All that remains for you to do is put the cap on.

AH Philosophy...Cont’d from Page 2

blind approval of everything.

When they discovered my intention of polling customer opinion, the designers of The Avalon Hill Game Company asked that a survey form be completed will be given a $2.00 reduction of the total. This is your chance to not only help us, but perhaps pick up that new game you’ve been eyeing. The “1988 GENERAL Readers’ Survey” is the forerunner of the celebration of our 25th anniversary of continuous publication of The GENERAL—a celebration we’d like to share with you. Hopefully, this offer makes this celebration a bit more joyous.

Gulf Strike 2nd Edition

Gulf Strike 2nd Edition updates the original game with extra counters, a new map section and a booklet containing a 1988 Gulf War scenario. Variants to the new scenarios include: a new campaign for the original Gulf Strike game, a new campaign for the Gulf Strike 2nd Edition game, and a new campaign for the Gulf Strike 2nd Edition game.

Orders only. call TOLL FREE 1-800-638-9292

The Avalon Hill Game Company

DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.
4517 Harford Road ★ Baltimore, MD 21214

THUNDER AT CASSINO

What began as a mere sideshow, ended up with 135,000 casualties!

Thunder at Cassino re-creates the eleven ferocious days of the third battle for Cassino. The game system creates the feel of simultaneous movement without the hassle of written moves. This fascinating struggle of sweeping contrasts features bitter street fighting in which gains were measured in rooms instead of street blocks. The fireworks begin March 14, 1944 when 460 Allied bombers drop 1,000 tons of explosives in a 3½ hour bombardment. Yet, rising out of the ruins is the 1st Fallschirmjager to defend the shattered town in what the allies called “a mere sacrificial sideshow to ease the pressure on the Anzio beachhead.”

The game features a time scale of 1 turn equaling 12 hours, a map scale of 1” equaling 300 feet in an area movement system; playing time is 1 to 6 hours depending upon scenario.

Thunder at Cassino comes complete with:
★ Several 2-turn introductory scenarios for quick play.
★ Fast introduction to the game system.
★ A 6-turn introductory scenario providing a quick-play alternative to the entire battle.

For 2 players with solitaire suitability, ages 12 & up.

Thunder at Cassino—$22.00

Few wargames give as good a feel of the combined arms aspect of warfare as players are forced to position infantry, armor, artillery, and heavy weapons in the correct proportion or pay a fearful price.

You pay only $22 for the rare elegant marriage of historical simulation and competitive game.
Dear Rex,

It was a real pleasure to see the PANZER LEADER article in Vol. 24, No. 2. This is not the first time I have read about this scenario, and it is certainly one that can be enjoyed by many players. Unfortunately, much of the information about the scenarios is not readily available, so the suggestions you have made will be appreciated by many. In particular, I think the notion of creating a “double-blind” environment is very interesting. This could be achieved by using blindfold players or by using a random number generator to determine which player gets which scenario. This would make the game more exciting and challenging for everyone involved.

In conclusion, I think your suggestions are excellent, and I urge other players to give them a try. I am sure that they will lead to many enjoyable battles and exciting outcomes. Thank you for your work on this article, and I look forward to reading more about your adventures with PANZER LEADER.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Any examination of early war activity in the Mediterranean Theater in THIRD REICH must deal with the Italian/Anglo-French positions. It is the most important early war consideration and it all boils down to whether or not the Western Allies try for a double-turn conquest of Italy. The decision to try for it is one for which their initial deployment might open the door, but one which cannot be decided upon until Italy has concluded the Fall 1939 turn. (See Figure 1.)

The amazing thing is that it is so hard for Italy to preclude good chances of a double-turn conquest and so easy for the Allies to initially deploy for the same, that we are probably all remiss for not trying this play more often. After all, we are considering an attack which might win the game for the Allies—admittedly at the cost of a large number of BRPs, but many of which are French and therefore, of transient value at best. I suspect some of the reasons we rarely see an Allied double-turn invasion are: desire to play a “full” game once the decision has been made to play THIRD REICH (no one wants to “geek-up” the whole thing after all the effort of setting it up), uncertainty or lack of planning/coordination between the Allied players, and—unfortunately—ignorance of the often high percentage chance of victory posed against a known high BRP cost. If more games began with an aggressive Allied deployment, we might then see a great deal more discreet Italian openings.

Ironically, and historically accurate I might add, Italy’s best defense against an Allied double-turn conquest (barring a DoW followed by massive German aid or Allied Variant #2) is to do nothing at all! No DoW, no attacks, and no builds! If the Allies want to take a double-turn against 150 Axis BRPs, they can’t both use Offensive options in Fall of ’39. If one makes an offensive, they have only nine BRPs between them for the Fall builds. If neither takes an offensive, they cannot enter Rome in two turns.

Or the Italian player might even build five BRPs worth of troops, still precluding two Allied Fall offensives but allowing the enemy 14 BRP worth of builds. This whole Italian approach is mentioned only for illustrative purposes. I’ll never use it and don’t recommend it. Churchill would be frustrated, and anyone employing such a tactic should walk the plank for wasting so much time and Italian BRPs.

No, Italy must do something. Marcus Watney summarized everything to date and explored some entertaining new ground in his article “The Long Road From Rome”, which appears in The Gamer’s Guide to THIRD REICH. If you don’t have a copy of the Guide, you desperately need to obtain one right away.

Marcus makes an excellent case for Italy’s goal of starting 1940 with 100 BRPs, which would allow her to threaten the Allies with a concurrent DoW/Offensive Option. This also happens to fit in well with a “Mediterranean Power Play” strategy. To that end, a Fall ’39 Attrition invasion of Yugoslavia is what I find most appealing as the Italian. My point is that Italy can improve her defensive posture to avoid the reservation Marcus voiced regarding an Allied double-turn invasion, and that’s the gist of this article.

The ensuing account explores four methods of defending Italy in Fall ’39 while a large share of that country’s army is involved in Yugoslavia. I’ve labelled these defenses the “Watney”, the “Revised Watney”, the “Downing” and the “Combined Watney/Downing”. (My apologies in advance to Marcus Watney, whom I’ve never met but whose efforts in The GENERAL and the Guide are always intriguing, and to Bruce Downing, who after ten years of playing by mail remains the toughest opponent anyone could ever hope to encounter.)

One thought strikes me. Anyone confused about Invasion Exploitation from an undefended beach hex adjacent to enemy land unit(s) is entitled to that confusion. Rule 14.4 says you can’t, but 29.436 says you can. And for all, undefended beaches are special cases. Exploitation is possible from an undefended beach hex which has just been invaded, despite the presence of adjacent enemy units, provided all other normal Breakthrough and Exploitation requirements are met. The “Question/Answer” section in the Guide helps confirm this. (Should this ruling ever be reversed again, I reserve the right to once again revise this article. Or maybe it would just be easier for everyone to read it backwards.)

**WHAT’S A GOOD DEFENSE?**

There are two things to worry about when defending Italy in Fall ’39. Most obvious is to ensure that only the toughest possible defense is presented so those bothersome British and French don’t entertain any conquest ideas. (That you might opt to use something less than your “best” defense is a concept dealt with toward the end of this article.) Your second major concern hinges on the fact that, to succeed, any Allied double-turn attack must result in the complete conquest of Italy. If Rome is not taken, or is retaken by an Axis counterattack in Winter ’39, Britain and France are both in peril from the resultant enemy double turn.

Consequently, any defense which leaves the greatest gamble the Allies face until the second of their two turns is the better defense by virtue of the fact that the Allied players will have already committed themselves to a double turn at the moment of that attack. There is no turning back, as there could be had the great gamble failed on the first turn. This gives us a means for rating any Allied invasion plan, based on which of the two turns they take the greater risk:

1. Their best attack, when they should seriously consider a double-turn invasion, is when the big gamble occurs on the first turn of battle (such as a 1-1 invasion of W24). Should this gamble be lost, the Allied players can still forego a double turn. They have spent a tremendous amount of BRPs, but have not yet brought an Axis double turn down upon themselves.

2. Much less inviting is when the “big gamble” occurs on the second turn of the invasion. At this point, the double turn is already in force and the Axis players will counter likewise. Watch out for German reprisals!

3. Finally, if you go into this escapade counting on holding Rome against anything greater than an Axis 1-2 counterattack, you should consider a switch to playing RAIL BARON.
INTERLUDE

Anyone who read the recent article "Like a Thunderbolt" (The GENERAL, Vol. 23, No. 5) may wonder why I have gone so far without mentioning Craig Posey's attack on the Watney Defense. Quite simply, his attack is carried out with several illegal actions. France builds an airbase on Corsica without designating a fleet to supply that island. British 4-5 armor exploits from W24 without a fleet supplying the beachhead. France invades hex AA23 at 3-1, whereas in the Guide Mr. Watney showed a 2-3 infantry unit on that beach backed by Italian air (for a French 1-2 attack actually). And, most important of all, Mr. Posey attacks hex X22, a vacant hex adjacent to enemy units and out of supply as well, and exploits from that hex with a 4-5 armor which can’t legally exploit this turn since it couldn’t trace a normal line of supply. That is how he entered Rome—all very illegal. All the Italian player need do to stop Mr. Posey’s attack is insist the British play by the rules of the game.

ARE THE FLEETS AT SEA?

Before unlimbering the main armament of this article, I want to make mention of one related Axis tactic which seems to have been overlooked in these pages. That is—where are the German fleets?

Quite simply, if the two German fleets are stationed at a single port on the Western Front, they enjoy a .4861 probability of preventing three British fleets moving together from changing base to Gibraltar. That probability is .6018 against two fleets and a whopping .8101 against one British fleet. Basing at separate ports gives better chances to ensure interception and at least some British naval losses, but less chance for victory at sea. Nevertheless, even in defeat the Kriegsmarine should take a number of enemy ships with it, possibly enough to cancel Britain’s Mediterranean plans.

Notice that this allows no room for quessiness in German naval policy. The most important thing this navy can do in the early war is to inflict one naval factor loss on the British. That is, provided Germany doesn't go with "Sealion" and Italy doesn't oblige by inflicting this loss, reducing one British fleet is guaranteed to cause your enemy headaches for years to come. Why? Because even only a single naval factor lost precludes that fleet from "invasion-proofing" a beach/port or SRing anyone. Churchill will be screaming when he learns such minimal damage so drastically hinders an entire fleet.

To set up for maximum British hindrance, the German may face bombardment of his fleet by Dutch and Danish airforces if available, or even by the British or French. The minor air forces are certain to come if available. It’s the price you must pay for adding this extra security to Italy. I’m not suggesting the fleets always be deployed in this fashion, merely pointing it out as a tactic to use when you feel the added security is needed (say, against an opponent who has already displayed a proclivity for hitting Italy with a double-turn attack).

For one thing, major air units would require an Offensive Option to attack the German fleet, and so are unlikely to attack unless the Allies are striking elsewhere in the West. To bomb the Kriegsmarine in port, their air units must be located to stage to minor country bases, and so might give away bombardment possibilities in their own set-up. Another important point to remember is that if the British are attacking Italy, they don’t have BRPs to spend on a West Front offensive. Therefore, her West Front fleet move must be done as part of an Attrition option since there are enemy fleets stationed on the Western Front—and France must comply with an Attrition. So the Allies cannot bomb the German fleets unless they either begin with all British fleets in the Mediterranean, invade Italy with only those fleets initially placed in the Med, or forego dreams of a double-turn conquest of Italy altogether.

Should Britain elect to avoid the whole problem of transferring fleets, she might begin the war with her entire navy in the Mediterranean. This opening—the "Churchill Dare"—can lead to some
wild play, often featuring a first turn German invasion of England. Germany takes a gamble, but either way the Rom £ Navy usually sails from Gibraltar to fight. Ten British forces enter Italy unless the Interception roll is a "Miss" (in which case everybody returns to Gibraltar for orders, which will likely see them shuffling WDF units to the home islands). In this scenario, Britain can take two turns to kick the German out of England; when the smoke clears, it's anybody's guess who has the upper hand. If the original British interception was successful, British Fall builds are stranded on the island.

Finally, should three British fleets manage to change base to Gibraltar, at least one Gibraltar-based fleet must then relocate to another Med port. That fleet can be intercepted, although I prefer to hold the Italian navy until the full invasion force is committed. Too much dispersal usually allows too much chance for French fleet maneuvers. (Refer to Figure 1.)

DEFENDING THE HOMELAND—OPTIONS

Whether or not you have the 3R Guide at hand, I have reprinted the Watney Defense of Italy (Figure 2). This is the defense after Attirition failure in Yugoslavia. Also shown is the Revised Watney Defense, my refinement of what Marcus presented. Reasons for the changes will become evident through the course of this article.

The Downing Defense (Figure 4) is quite different from Marcus Watney's. Six units in northern Italy have been replaced by one 2-5 armor, and the beach at W24 is directly held. If Britain transports units through Marseilles, nials the 2-5 and tries to exploit it in Fall '39, he gets no further than U23. This frees five units to surround Rome with a double line, forcing an Allied invasion if Rome is to be contested.

Finally, I present the Combined Watney/Downing Defense (Figure 5) featuring pretty much an even split of these two approaches. What follows is an explanation of various strengths and weaknesses of these defenses of Italy, taken one by one.

THE WATNEY DEFENSE

Strengths: Overland conquest of Rome impossible.

Forces a 1-1 (an Exchange works for the Allies) attack on the second turn of invasion.

Weaknesses: Rome could fall to attacks from any of three beaches at no worse than 1-1 odds.

Some Italian fleets have been used. Libya has been weakened.

Italian air power is dispersed, and susceptible to attack from Yugoslavian air forces.

Mr. Watney properly identifies W24 as Britain's choice for "Best Bloody Beach on the Boot". His decision to not defend the beach directly is intriguing, relying on Allied inability to knock defenders out of X23 in both the Fall exploitation and Winter attacks. He appears to delay the Allied "big gamble" until Winter '39, when they must hit X23 with a 1-1 odds attack. They better succeed or they're cooked!

Unfortunately, the big gamble actually occurs at sea against the Italian navy, as everything that happens after the troops land free at W24 is as certain as an 83% shot at X23. Read that an 83% chance to win the war! Were Churchill here, he would go for it every time.

But Marcus gives the Allies too much credit. Due to Anglo/French cooperation limits, they cannot accumulate Winter air superiority of ten factors over X23 merely by invading W24 in the autumn, because in the winter Italian air could then be counter-armed from W24. With British ground forces there, the armored units could then attack X23 by air. The attack on X23 would go off with five more British air factors intercepting the remaining Italian air forces. Since French air units could not then join in the attack over X23 (British air would be intercepting in the hex), a maximum of only six more British factors (four built in the Fall and one each from Malta and Gibraltar) could have 4-5 armor, and staged within range to provide ground support in that hex. The two factors in Egypt had no way to join in this, as Fall SRs were performed with no fleets available. The British might have saved a fleet to SR these air units within striking distance, but that was certainly strategically increased Italian likelihood of a naval factory and is not considered here.

So Marcus actually has Britain hitting Axis X23 with a maximum 13-12 or 13-15 attack, depending on which Italian units are defending. The British player probably wouldn't invade in the first place to deliver such an attack.

But, if in the Fall the Allies designate a French fleet to supply Corsica and the invasion hex, they can make an exploitation attack on W23 or a combination attack on W23, V24 and/or X24 to clear out defenders there. No airbase can be built in these hexes until after they're captured. He did no Italian armor in X23; but in the winter British troops can now all move out of W24, permitting construction of a French airbase there followed by a French air wing staging in to counterattack an Italian unit. Supply to the beachhead must be provided by a French fleet.

Notice the Allies have all sorts of nasty options they can perform with the ten French air available to support autumn exploitation attacks. Should Italy throw around any DAS, she is limited to three times the basic defense strength in each hex and thus exposes her air units to some painful interception problems. If French air gets an Exchange over V24, permitting it in this manner, she might resolve the whole problem of winter counterattack right here and now, well ahead of schedule.

The kicker here is that both V24 and W23 might fall to an Allied player cagey enough to set the ploy up, and demands enough to elude the danger. With 4-5 armor at W24 and six French air flying ground support over V24, it appears the Allies have a 5-1 attack (with four air factors held back to intercept the maximum three Italian DAS allowed). But if, in face of these odds the Italian player doesn't release some flyers (three air over V24, that air gets intercepted and the attack goes off at only 2-1 against both V24 and W23. The Italian should also have flown three air factors over W23 or, better still, flown no air units at all in hopes that French air losses in an Exchange could not be rebuilt for winter. This method of attack—the "Straight Take-Out"—is the number one method to employ the mechanics of the air rules to destroy your opponent. He'll get out one second guessing. To avoid counter-air from a single French airwing flying out of W24, which is the key to this whole Allied attack, Italy can base both her airnings in one hex. Rationalizations of that, her best strategy, are examined later in the following section.

Otherwise, yet another option is open to the Allied players. They can combine Anglo/French air in one attack (horrors!) provided they attack two hexes at once. In Fall '39, the Italian attack via Libya by exploitation and advance the 4-5 armor. In winter, the 4-5 takes Venice, U24, Florence, Livorno and ends in X22—the Limeys culturally much enhanced for their effort. The 3-4 infantry unit is still in W24 with the 2-5 DWF and a newly formed British airwing (from the 1-B Malta and 1-Gibraltar, plus the three autumn builds). The British 5-4 at Ajaccio stages to Sarajevo; British 5-4s at Toulouse and Lyon stage into Ajaccio and build an airbase. All Italian air gets counterarmed from W24 and Sarajevo. Ten British air factors hit X23 and the French factors hit W23 by the autumn. Yugoslavia allowed a 3-3 to SR into X23 during the fall, five French air fly in to make it a 22-18 attack and Rome falls on any result but "A". Churchill (to mention the great man one last time) would be pleased; with this kind of cooperation Britain and France might have built the tunneled path to Rome now. Notice that even two more French air are usually available for use in northern Italy, as only three need stage to Sarajevo where—with instantaneous intervention—they pick up those two Yugoslav factors for their counterair on the Italian 5-4 at Z24. The French air junto with Fall French air losses must be replaced, but only so far as they might exceed Italian losses. Any excess which can be rebuilt with France's 13 available BRPs will come in useful for defending the northern French line in Italy, or French units in France. Unfortunately for the French player, she also needs to build the two 3-5 armor units in order to secure the north line so her air losses might actually end the conquest of Italy permanently. But at least it would be realized in time to cancel the double move.

Marcus ended his discussion of a successful British invasion with Rome conquered and awaiting a German counterattack. Unfortunately, any comment on any counter measures the Allies might take to prevent a German reconquest—yet this is the first true test of any Allied plan to take the capital. That is, it is too terribly difficult to get into Rome against the Watney Defense (once we start allowing 1-1 attacks as acceptable most anything one can stumble in); but only a plan which provides the means to hold the city against counterattack is worth considering.

This is the real reason any invasion south of the city is a poor choice for the Allies. They simply will not be able to screen Rome from counterattack from the north. Ubi etiam discipulus, nullus! Any comment on any counter measures the Allies might take to prevent a German reconquest—yet this is the first true test of any Allied plan to take the capital. That is, it is too terribly difficult to get into Rome against the Watney Defense (once we start allowing 1-1 attacks as acceptable most anything one can stumble in); but only a plan which provides the means to hold the city against counterattack is worth considering.

To protect her ally in occupied Rome, French troops must be busy in northern Italy. By attacking the Watney Italian front line in Fall '39 and massing her army during Build and SR phases, France is assured of an armor base change in the end of winter. Some French air units might even be available to assist in these exploits if not needed further south. There, Britain could conquer Rome by attacking only one hex—X23!

To protect the Italian defense line in northern Italy, German air based in Berchtesgaden and Munich seem ideally placed. Unfortunately, your German ally will quickly remind you that these bases are in reach of Strasbourg and of a French player seeking opportunity to spend BRPs in a normal Fall turn to preclude any double-turn. Consequently, you will have to be satisfied with the five factors at Graz. Don't expect the German player to provide an airbase to defend against an Italian invasion of such dubious merit. After all, the German would probably like nothing better than just such an Allied gambit.

My Figure 6 shows the situation after the Allied waterline, SB and SR Phase. Clearly, Axis units cannot enter Rome overland. The best they can do is to transport to Spezia or Naples, but six British fleets are available to intercept, as are two French fleets. One ally intercepts any Italian fleet base changes, the other intercepts the transport mission. Note that one Italian fleet may be needed to supply the target port and that additional Allied units could be brought through Venice and Livorno if desired. Finally,
Germany should have been convinced to supply a full five-factor airwing in Graz. Even if three of those factors had flown in the fall, at least they will be available in the winter to help deter the French in the north. All Germans in southern Germany in range of Rome must be considered part of the counterattacking forces. Should this force grow too large, an alert Anglo/French combine might even spot a better opportunity for a Western Front double-turn attack against Germany herself. That potential is always present.

The Southern Approach

With Sicily defended by a 2-3 in Messina, French air able to stage to Tunis/Bizerte allows the Allies to intercept Italy's allowable six factors of DAS, lend four factors of ground support to the 4-5 armor attacking from EE20 and hit Messina at 2-1 odds. One French fleet provides supply for this undertakings and the other two SR two French armor units to Messina; the 4-5 goes back to Syracuse. In the winter, the third French 3-5 is transported to Messina by two French fleets with British fleets available to intercept any threat. The French player hits empty hex V25 and exploits into Rome. British armor chases enemy fleets out of Brindisi and Taranto.

This attack does nothing to stop a German counterattack from the north; it therefore has a very limited practical application. A contributing limitation is the fact that French air units must start no further north than Marseilles in order to stage into Tunis or Bizerte.

But two important facts are driven home. With the right set-up, the Allies can take Rome from any beach they want and can use French fleets to provide supply, intercept the Italian fleet, transport or SR units to the focus of attack. Because the French units in Europe must draw supply from Paris (27.28), British fleets may not carry supply to Syracuse and Messina if French armor is to SR there (see the Question section in the Guide).

Simply consider one scenario in which Germany does not take Warsaw in the Fall '39 turn (it happens in about three of every 100 games) and is faced with rebuilding her army, defending in the West, and conquering Poland in winter. Little or no provision might remain for aid to Italy. That country might have to face the Allies alone! In that case, the southern route to Rome might be the best. Coupled with intervention in Yugoslavia and winter conquest of Belgium-Luxembourg, the Western Allies might prevent an Axis double turn even if Rome is retaken. But that unlikely event need not be explored in detail here.

The Beach at AA23

Marcus defends this beach with only two factors. He mistakenly suggests that they are backed by ten Italian air factors, whereas they can employ only six—for a total defense strength of 12. Britain can attack it at 1-1 odds.

Note too, Mr. Watney's idea is that British fleets are "risked" is misleading. Britain does not risk her fleets in the actual invasion attack because they do not sink even with the worst possible result. The Admiral gets to choose. There is no risk at all. Only the Italian navy or bombing airforce can inflict losses on His Majesty's Navy.

One final note to pick is with Marcus' referral to the "Italian player choosing to hold back his airpower" if the 2-5 WDF is not held back to exploit to Naples and Cassino. Such is not the case, as that Italian air must be committed to DAS prior to commitment of the 2-5.

THE REVISED WATNEY DEFENSE

Strengths: Overlord conquest of Rome impossible.

Weaknesses: Rome can fall to an attack from W24 at 1-1 odds (an Exchange saves Rome).

As important as anything else, the Revised Watney highlights improved air and naval positions. These are also vital elements of both the Downing and the Watney-Downing defenses. As such, they are covered in detail below in this section.

Because Britain needs hexes V24 and W23 to link up with the French army conquering northern Italy, it is vital that the Italian player try to keep them out of those hexes. Therefore, releases of a 2-3 from X24 to W23. Taking only V24 does not allow British ground units on W24 to move off in the winter and still attack X23. So that move nullifies one clever ploy to bring French air units into the picture. Taking on W23 will get those ground units off the beach in the winter, but now the 4-5 starting in W23 cannot conquer Venice or hex U24, which extinguishes Allied hopes of SRing defensive help through northern Italy. In this case, the Allies may be in serious trouble if they hope to obtain a 1-1 attack at X23.

But they can avoid V23 and either V24 or W23 in tandem, using French air over one hex and British air over the other. The 2-3 in W23 makes this tougher than in the Watney Defense, but it's still possible. Italian air can defend V24 with only three factors, so if that hex is involved in the attack the Allies enjoy the tremendous advantage of knowing that the Italian air force must be in X23 in strength—or remain at their bases.

Messina

As Marcus stated, a single unit secures the southern approach. However, that unit should not be at Messina (as in the Watney) but at D22 where it is tripled on defense and out of reach of French air based at Bizerte/Tunis. Britain cannot easily easily starting in W23 cannot conquer Venice or hex U24, which extinguishes Allied hopes of SRing defensive help through northern Italy. In this case, the Allies may be in serious trouble if they hope to obtain a 1-1 attack at X23.

But they can avoid V23 and either V24 or W23 in tandem, using French air over one hex and British air over the other. The 2-3 in W23 makes this tougher than in the Watney Defense, but it's still possible. Italian air can defend V24 with only three factors, so if that hex is involved in the attack the Allies enjoy the tremendous advantage of knowing that the Italian air force must be in X23 in strength—or remain at their bases.

Italian Air—Where?

There are a few other major refinements over the Watney Defense. Notice that both Italian air units are in Naples. They must be able to protect W24, DD22 and AA23. The reason for not putting one in Taranto is because there it could be hit by Anglo/French air flying from beachheads at Syracuse or W26. Had he put that airbase in Naples, Allied air flying into Italy to counterair would be in bad shape due to challenging a force twice its size. Notice that both air units could also be placed in Taranto. This way they avoid any counterair from V24.

But the biggest worry about basing anywhere but Naples or Taranto (and you may laugh) is Yugoslavia's airpower and her airbases. Imagine your embarrassment if Yugoslavia's air flies out of Sarajevo and nails an Italian 5-4 in Taranto or Z24. This is a mistake akin to leaving a used German 5-4 airwing in Kolberg at the beginning of the game and giving the Danish air force a chance to hit it with a -1 modifier only. Here location of it permits Britain to land an invasion, it could be more than a mere embarrassment. It could be the game.

Yugoslavia would not come away from this battle in shame. She has a .9166 probability of harming Italy and, the real kicker, does not spend that hated 15 BRPs for an Offensive option. To add icing to the cake, since she is, at this time, a newly invaded Minor (nobody has intervened yet), she takes her best shot at the Italian air force before the Western Allies even have to take action. They can sit back and watch the Italian defeat. Of course, this is only speculation.
Italy loses two factors; Britain loses one.

Now, there is only .277 probability of the second occurrence, and it appears the same as the first, but only because Italian losses are doubled due to the presence of 18 fleet factors. If, however, one of those Italian fleets were reduced by French intervention or Yugoslav bombarding, the losses against Britain’s navy would be one Italian factor (and no British factors), since the result is no longer doubled. Thus, in this situation, Italian potential to “do better” against the enemy fleets actually allows the chance for a worse possible result.

Libya

I do not recommend weakening the Italian position in Libya any more so than it already is at the start of the game. That situation is already so tenous the Allies can conquer Libya with very little effort. Stealing away one of the defending 1-3s, as in the Watney Defense, not only wastes an Italian fleet on the one turn of the game it is absolutely vital that Italy preserve fleet integrity, it also permits Allied conquest of the colony without a fight.

If the Italian player knows he will not be declared the enemy you have no hostile intentions. He may accept that and himself set up only a 1-3 against Britain’s navy would be one Italian factor (and no British factors), since the result is no longer doubled. Thus, in this situation, Italian potential to “do better” against the enemy fleets actually allows the chance for a worse possible result.

Help for the Navy

Another major refinement over the Watney’ navy’s docking space for Italy’s navy. Marcus completely overlooked the Adriatic gateway cities—Brindisi and Durazzo. With fleets in each of these ports, any invasion headed for W24 is intercepted automatically. What’s more, France cannot intercept the hex where Italian and British fleets are doing battle? This means that at least one British fleet will be reduced. Who says that Albania is not vital to the Italian war effort.

Two fleets sit in Taranto to foil that wild Yugoslav air bombing a single fleet in port as a means of opening the beach for a winter British invasion (Marcus missed this one too). Taranto simply should never fall to such a “cheap” attack. The Italian fleets are positioned to intercept the British navy, but should never be needed for such action. They really don’t want to be counter-intercepted by the mad French, nor can they afford defeat by the British. These are too valuable later on to risk where they may not be needed anyway. The point of the whole undertaking is to scare off the Allies, not to actually attack.

In fact, in one of those wonderful anomalies of this game, interception by more than one Italian fleet is the only way the British invasion force could skate through unscathed and hit the beach without fear of a 1-1 Exchange result eliminating their last chance of taking Rome. To understand this, consider the naval odds:

1. six British vs. one Italian fleet = +6 and −1 modifiers. Best Allied modified rolls would be “7” British and “5” Italian. Italy loses two factors; Britain loses one.
2. six British vs. two Italian fleets = +5 and −1 modifiers. Best Allied modified rolls would be “6” British and “5” Italian.

THE DOWNING DEFENSE

Strengths: Overland conquest of Rome impossible. Forces 1-1 attack at W24, with only a slim chance that even that can be delivered.

Weaknesses: Exchange at W24 in Fall coupled with a Winter combined attack can allow French Exploitation into Rome. Defending northern Italy against German counterattack is easy.

The Downing and the Watney-Downing defenses both propose holding the beach at W24. Two 2-3 infantry guard the beach itself, covered by not only the Italian navy but 12 air factors as well. French air have only a .277 probability of intercepting and destroying these factors. Thus, Italy enjoys a .723 probability of augmenting W24 with some DAS, making any invasion a 1-2 joke.

Alternatively, France can opt to throw her air units at the beach as Ground Support in lieu of trying to intercept. This could have the result of nailing Italy’s entire air force, but can escalate French air losses. It does, however, skirt the whole problem of France’s slim chances of successfully intercepting and grounding Axis air units. Should Italian air units decide to defend the beach, it makes an already critical battle even more important, as somebody will lose his entire air force.

Notice this choice is available to the Allies due to the nature of their attack, a 1-1 shot. Adding equal amounts of airpower, or near equal as in this case, does not change the odds; it merely escalates the cost of the battle. In this instance, it is the best chance the Allies have of obtaining 1-1 odds. Don’t forget, the whole invasion can be called off without air losses if the battle at W24 is reduced to a 1-2 following naval losses. One way or the other, should France handle the Axis air, Britain can hit the beach at 16-12, 26-24 or any points between if only the invasion force slipped through the preceding naval battle unscathed.

If French air flies Ground Support, choosing not to intercept the Axis sortie, an Exchange (as opposed to a CA exchange) result precludes any British landing. On the other hand, should France manage to
intercept and ground those numerically superior enemy aircraft. Britain would have to lose 13 naval factors to reduce the invasion attack from a 16-12 (1-1 odds) to an 11-12 (1-2 odds). But consider what happens when only one British naval factor is lost, and why such loss is guaranteed.

Loss of a single naval factor is a crushing blow to Britain’s chances because it ruins her invasion on an Exchange result. To understand this, it is necessary to examine exactly what is going on aboard the ships of this invasion force. In other words, who’s on what ships?

Quite simply, there are nine factors loaded aboard (a 4-5, 2-5 and 3-4). They require three nine-factor fleets to convey them to the beach. None of these three fleets can be taken as combat losses at invasion. That leaves three bombarding nine-factor fleets which can be taken as losses in an Exchange in order to allow the ground forces ashore. If the Exchange happens to be, as in this case, one of 12 factors and the British elect to take fleet losses in order to land her troops, not only do these three fleets go down but also the 3-4 infantry. This leaves the 4-5 armor unit on the beach followed by the 2-5 to exploit. As always, a French fleet supplies this beachhead, allowing the exploitation.

Unfortunately, Britain will suffer fleet losses. If only one factor is sunk and the invasion result is an Exchange, it doesn’t take a genius to figure out where the extra factor sails into the picture. First, in the naval engagement, a “bombardment” fleet loses a factor and becomes an eight-factor fleet. The invasion can still go off at 15-12. But if Britain suffers an Exchange result and must lose 12 factors at the beach, only eight of those can be lost from the bombarding force and the other four are, naturally, the 4-5 armor. Britain has failed, because a 3-4 and 2-5 attacking from W24 will not take Rome in the winter.

Thus, by defending W24, the Italian fleet can win not only by turning back the invasion, but also by reducing the enemy force to a “1-1 No Exchange Works” situation. Gateway cities Brindisi and Durazzo are what make this interception a guaranteed one. In the Watney, this possibility does not exist. There the British navy must be defeated at sea to preclude a landing. Here, loss of seven fleet factors would make the invasion attack only a 1-2! Notice that rearranging the units carried will not amend this situation. The two armor must land, and deleting the 3-4 infantry from the invasion force or substituting a 1-3 plus added shore bombardment does not improve the chances of effecting that result.

Avoiding Anglo-French “Punt” Tactics

When using the Downing Defense, it is important to maintain a double line before Rome, not including hex W24. This prevents either Western Ally clearing that hex with a cheap shot attack (committing a 2-3 or 1-3 plus Shore Bombardment for 1-2 odds, hoping for a die roll of ‘3’) while nailing the 2-5 armor on the Italian-French border. In Winter, armor SRed to that border could hit an exposed single line an exploit into Rome.

This option gives the Allies opportunity to exercise an excellent one-two punch and avoid a double-turn commitment until after the results of the action at W24 are seen. The “Big Gamble” in this case comes on the first turn, and yet is not a terribly destructive gamble at that.

In this case, if French fleets hit hex W24, Italy is hard pressed to commit her navy to repulse what appears to be a lost cause. British fleets will be free to SR. Note that Britain still pays for an Offensive option and must attack an Italian or move onto Italian soil, and either France or Britain must kill the 2-5 on France’s border. But, if eliminating W24’s defenders gives one a shot at Rome, it can be well worth Anglo/French efforts.

The Friendly German

One advantage of defending W24 is gaining use of German DAS, which is useless to the Italian on defense unless it can be used at W24. Naturally enough, the problem is to convince him to place any unused air unit(s) in Graz. Air used in his autumn Polish campaign or elsewhere will do you no good since it won’t be available to fly DAS in the Fall, the turn of Allied invasion. But, unless he is doing something else elaborate, your ally can provide this 2-4 and still conquer Poland easily in the Fall of 1939. If Germany simply won’t supply this help, you still have a good chance that the Allies will call off the invasion in face of overwhelming odds, or meet defeat at W24 because of those odds. They still must sail through your entire fleet without major loss in order to deliver a chance 1-1 attack at W24.

Another advantage of defending the beach is that British air cannot join in the battle, for two reasons. It cannot stage within range and could not combine with French air units over the target anyway. Notice that if you have forced Britain to use all six fleets, no British ground forces can be SRed across water—including any newly built armor in the islands. British air units, however, can be SRed as usual.

THE WATNEY-DOWNING DEFENSE

Strengths: Overland conquest of Rome is impossible. Forces a 1-1 attack at W24, and only a slim chance of that.

Weaknesses: A 1-1 “D” result at W24 can lead to fall of Rome.

This combined defense is the culmination of everything discussed in the above. It borrows the superior northern defense from Mr. Watney and everything else from Mr. Downing. Everything is held as strongly as possible, including Libya, to prevent Allied successes. The result? Less than .04 probability that the Western Allies can take Rome.

To do it they must land two armor units at W24 in the face of the entire Italian navy and air force, supported by the Kriegsmarine and two factors of the Luftwaffe in Graz. They have a slim chance of delivering a 1-1 invasion attack in which any result other than “D” or “CA-Exchange” spells defeat. A second-turn attack on X23 and exploitation into Rome is anticlimactic after that, and nearly automatic. But I doubt any serious Allied player would take that initial gamble.

Continued on Page 44, Column 1
As "Bottle Baby" clanked to the top of the ridge, Lt. Baker had the hatch open so he could train his binoculars across the copse of trees on the next ridge. The growl of his idling Sherman drowned out all other sounds. Intelligence reported German armor holed up in those trees, delaying the American advance down the road. Baker's platoon was ordered to flush them out. He scanned the copse intently, but all he saw were confusing silhouettes against the setting sun. At least the rest of his platoon was safely nestled down, presumably out of sight on the road behind him.

Then came the unmistakable whine of an "88" that shrieked by him and smashed into the flank of the M10 directly behind "Bottle Baby." Dropping down the hatch, Baker radioed the platoon to move out. He knew it was going to be a long afternoon . . .

A complete solitaire game, Open Fire is a game of armored combat, adventure, and heroism set in France during World War II. A descendant of the award-winning Ambush! game system, Open Fire has taken a giant step forward in the development of solitaire gaming. You are the commanding officer of a platoon of tanks, tank destroyers, and other vehicles on assignment with the American 4th Armored Division during its whirlwind drive into Germany in the summer and winter of 1944-45. The game controls the German side, attempting to stop you with Panzer IV's, Tigers, Panthers, and the dreaded Jagdtiger.

You control the movement and firing of the vehicles under your command, while the game system handles German actions in a simple manner. An innovative sighting/event system activates the Germans in a realistic fashion as your platoon moves across the map. Be careful which way you go, for your units may find their escape route cut off by the Germans' reactions!

Bad Kreuznach, Germany. 15 March 1944. A pocket of German armor just west of the Rhine has mounted a counteroffensive to protect a crossing on the Rhine. Your platoon is the forward point of defense and you must stop the Germans from penetrating to your still disorganized rear.

The above mission, plus five more equally hair-raising firefights, offer you continuous challenges in solitaire gaming. You select your platoon from M4A1's, M4A3's, M10 tank destroyers, M6 scout cars, M3 half-tracks, 76.2mm anti-tank guns, jeeps, and trucks. Against this US machinery, the Germans will send their best, asking no quarter and giving none.

COMPONENTS
Open Fire comes complete with 210 playing pieces, rules booklet, paragraph booklet, one 22" x 32" mapsheet, one 8" x 32" charts and tables display, 16 vehicle data cards, 79 unit/squad characteristics cards, one mission card, one cartridge view sleeve, one platoon record pad, two decimal dice, and a counter storage tray.

VICTORY GAMES, INC.
43 West 33rd Street, New York, New York 10001
A Division of Monarch Avalon, Inc., Baltimore, MD 21214

Available at leading game and hobby stores or call 1-800-638-9292 for ordering information
The playtest experience in re-working SL scenarios #7 and #8 emphasized the considerable changes in the ways that ASL handles halftracks. This column reviews our thoughts for the tactical usage of armed and armored halftracks.

It is worthwhile to recall that halftracks were developed to provide pre-assault cross-country mobility for infantry and heavy weapons. Many nations also used fully-tracked carriers (i.e., Kangaroos, Brens, etc.) but the expense of production and maintenance of fully-tracked AFVs precluded their common use as mere transports. That, of course, is the key reason for the existence of halftracks. They were less expensive in every aspect than were tanks. Yet they could transport “soft targets” through shelling and sniper fire. Clearly, that alone is the key reason for the existence of halftracks. They were less expensive in every aspect than were tanks. Yet they could transport “soft targets” through shelling and sniper fire. Clearly, halftracks were viewed as “battlefield taxis”, not as assault vehicles.

True, both Germans and Americans did use halftrack mounted troops to try and rip through weak defenses. However, the vulnerability of halftracks was pronounced. While quite resistant to shrapnel and rifle fire, they were easy prey to SCWs, even the lightest of ATGs, and even rifle-calibre MGs.

The original SQUAD LEADER, regrettfully, portrayed halftracks as a kind of tankette. We often used clustered halftracks as a sort of armored assault group. Load three or so squads and leaders, drive up to within six hexes, pop-up in the Adavance Phase, blast away with defensive fire, and then drive off to the next target next turn. Ah, the good old days. Do that in ASL and you’ll likely lose all three halftracks before getting off a single shot. Quite rightly too. That kind of clustered target would have brought a smile to any .50-calibre gunner.

There are two rule changes that have dictated a change in tactics. First, the improved armor penetration tables give a more realistic representation of the vulnerability of halftrack armor. Second, the ability of machine guns to take multiple shots means that tight concentrations may take a number of hits. Knowing that even a MMG will get three shots 11% of the time and may have a 16% Kill chance with each hit tends to make one a mite nervous.

So, forget the “mailed fist” tactic. Ditto using halftracks as isolated AA platforms. Even the use of halftracks as mobile MG platforms versus infantry is probably no longer a good idea. Generally speaking, a halftrack is easier to kill than an infantry-manned MG and usually the same MG used off-vehicle will have a higher rate of fire.

How do we use halftracks? One role is their historical one. Halftracks can generally carry more troops and SWs faster cross-country than any other vehicle. This mobility is always nice, and occasionally required (see the rewrite of “Hube’s Pocket”).

Even better is the “abandon ship” play. Take, for example, the M3 halftrack in “Buchholz Station”. Firepower is “4”, ROF is “1”, range of eight hexes, and the vehicle is vulnerable to the German HMG out to a range of 16 hexes. Potential loss of five victory points. Rather than just hiding this vehicle away in a corner, try driving it up onto a reverse slope. Abandon the vehicle, taking the MG, and advance onto the ridgeline. Now you have a MMG with the same FP but a ROF of “2”, a range of 10 hexes, and with a self-rallying crew. A much lower value target with a more potent weapon. Nicely done.

Halftracks are also the only decent way to get a four-squad fire group in one hex. (OK, OK, four squads and a crew—jeez, the nitpickers.) By “decent”, I mean without the overstack penalties (see A5.4). This can be crucial. The American last stand in “Buchholz Station” is often 3X0. Most of the time this is held by three squads armed with two MMGs. Add in an M3 halftrack with a passenger squad and the firepower rises from “24” to “36”. All commanded by the same leader! Much more intimidating.

Lastly, I must mention the panzerblitz assault. An AFV overruns an HMG position and stays in the hex, preferably in Motion. Halftracks then move up adjacent to the position and unload at least one squad. The HMG can’t fire at the halftracks (A7.212) and the combination of overrun, adjacent infantry firepower, and close combat is usually enough to take the position. Even if the MG position is moderately well protected, laying OBA smoke down frequently permits the rush. The assaulting player then gets to experiment with a captured MG in the enemy rear or flank. Naturally, this kind of wild charge can be warded off by...
adequate defenders flanking the HMG. The problem is often that the number of covering units seriously demodes any defending maneuver force.

The rules have changed. I think for the better. As conditions change, so must tactics. Sounds almost historical.

Our re-working of "Buchholz Station" and "The Bitchie Salient" are included on the insert of this issue to allow readers to get a chance to experiment further. Please allow us at this time to express our gratitude to Bill Connor, Andrea Cantatore, James Turpin, Mark Nixon and their associates for their continuing help in playtesting these scenarios. We would hope all the work is worth the effort.

After Action Report—Escape from Velikiye Luk

These notes continue the series of commentaries in the Clinic pertaining to the scenarios published with the previous installment of the column (Vol. 24, No. 1 in this case). The intent is to provide the ASL player with one of numerous possibilities for defensive setup, attacker initial placement, and basic tactical approaches for both. Having had several months to examine your own approaches to our Clinic scenario, the reader can now compare his findings with our summation.

RUSSIAN: Place a "?" and two squads in 3B3; "?" and three squads with a MMG and 8-0 leader in 3E4; "?" and two squads in 3P2; "?" and three squads with a LMG in 3CC5 (HIP for two squads and the LMG); "?" over three squads, 9-1 leader and two LMGs in 3W4 (using HIP for all but one squad with a LMG); four "?" in 3N2 (2nd level) and "?" in 3W5.

GERMAN: Put the 10-2 leader, three squads and two LMGs on Cloaking Counter A; the 9-1, 8-1, two squads, two LMGs on Cloaking Counter B.

ATTACKER'S TACTICS: The German cloaking counters A, B, C are on one flank. Counters D and E are on the other. Might as well roll a die for which flank. Try to stick close to the board edge. Don't shoot unless you must.

DEFENDER'S TACTICS: Once the best Russian leader is activated, use him to alert your other troops rather than getting him immediately into the fray. Don't forget that the Germans must exit to win, so better to fight a delaying action than trying to win a stand-up fight. The key to winning lies in getting your 9-1 leader active ASAP.

Man the Beaches...Cont'd from Page 41

Notice, too, that because Italy has not built the fifth fleet in Fall '39, she ends that turn with not only all her ground forces built, but with 47 BRPs instead of 38. These extra nine BRPs have tremendous impact on Allied plans for a double-turn assault on Rome. That such a defense can preclude the Allies from even making such an attempt is, ironically, the weakest feature of this defense. That is, an even better defense would be one which leads the Allies to believe that they have a good shot at storming Rome, whereas in fact they don't. A trap, in other words.

In this respect, Watney's plan to not defend the W24 beach is a good one to use on an inexperienced player. He may think he has you with a "free" invasion and not foresee the problems he will encounter in the winter. He will probably not make the correct builds, will not provide any means for France to counterair an Italian airwing and will face a 1-2 attack against X23. You have trapped him. He was tricked into paying the DoW costs and wasting BRPs an effort in landing in what turned out to be, for the novice player, too demanding a situation.

The single-unit Downing Defense of northern Italy may catch a raw recruit napping, but in reality is quite transparent. Anyone who has played the game more than once or twice will realize he needs more than two turns to get to Rome from the north. The full-blown beach defense I have outlined in the Watney-Downing falls flat on its face in the "gambit" category. It is not going to fool anyone into thinking he can get ashore. That's not its intent, which it avoids very well. It does prevent the Allies from trying, unless they want to win or lose the game in the first two turns. Say—96% lose, 4% win.

Indeed, I'm not too sure how anyone would go about reporting such a trap in the pages of The GENERAL. The instant it sees print, everyone will know to avoid it. Lindsey Murillo was right: the whole thing defies description and can only occur during the course of play. We all know the feeling when it happens too!

AN ACT OF DESPERATION

My final assessment is that against the Watney Defense, Britain enjoys too good a shot at knocking out Italy for my tastes. That is why I prefer the Watney-Downing. Using that defense, Britain will take Rome only four times in 100 games; she might try 24 times without the first victory, all die rolls being equal.

The irony of it all is that any Allied player clever enough to identify this slim chance of taking Rome is also clever enough to avoid it, safe in the knowledge that he can find some more certain manner to win the war at a later opportunity. A player desperate enough to launch such an invasion will first of all likely lose the attack or, if successful, likely lose the game on some later turn by taking some other similar long shot in yet another attempt to offset what he must consider to be his opponent's superior play.

A Monkey-Wrench

None of which is even remotely to suggest that the "best" defense is not necessarily what you want.
OPPONENTS WANTED

Reliable 16-year-old gamer seeks pbm for GOA, 3R, FRED, and JGG. Prompt, dependable player. Lives in Pennsylvania. My name is German! Jeff Thompson, Rt 1, Box 4, Dubach, LA 71235, (318) 777-3974.

Latoya, LA area interested in finding local wargamers for 50's, 60's, and 70's. My name is SL, FP, 3R, ASL. Just learning ASL. Looking for comparable opponents. Keith Martin, 108 Meadow Lane, Latoya, LA 70506, (504) 981-2985.

ASLers where are you! Looking for ASL oppo- nents to learn and play a game in club. Will play other games. Will travel short distances. ASL, 3R, FP, Keith Martin, 108 Meadow Lane, Latoya, LA 70506, (504) 981-2985.

New Orleans Area Gamers Club seeks players for all game types and skill levels. Greg Schlenker, 3824 Edgewood Dr., Marrero, LA 70072, (504) 247-1745.

Wanted opponents for ftf or pbm 3R, W&B, MD, AK, PK, MD. Write to: Tony Cesario, 2921 North 19th St., Birmingham, AL 35206.

Have campaign system. Craig Nelson, 27-year old seeks opponent for ftf ASL, TRC, BL, 3R, BB'65, VIP, VITP, MA. Having trouble finding mature, reliable opponents. Mike Smith, 504-984-5857, 584-5857.

Wanted opponents for DIP on Cleveland's far east side. All experience levels welcome. Peter Shannon, 7A R3, BB'81, PB, W&P. Also ftf or pbm for games-no role playing. Newsletter, tourna- ment information available. Greg Mock, 462-8900.

Are there any wargamers out there? I'm a fair player. Good opponents wanted; ftf or pbm. Many AH games available--13-years and up. Stationed in Schwabish Gmund, Germany. Der Grosse Feldherr Aller Zeiten (current issue #43) wishes to contact anyone interested in WWII ABMw. Fenton R. Zeller. P.O. Box 526, Killeen, TX 76541. (817) 287-6031.


Wanted opponents for DIP, CN, 1830, 3R, SF, for pbm opponents only. Please. Larry (07131) 629065, after 6.

Adult gamer new to Richmond seeks opponents for DIP on Virginia Beach area. Peter Shannon, 7A R3, BB'81, PB, W&P. Also ftf or pbm for games-no role playing. Newsletter, tournament information available. Greg Mock, 462-8900.


Adult gamer new to Richmond seeks opponents for DIP on Virginia Beach area. Peter Shannon, 7A R3, BB'81, PB, W&P. Also ftf or pbm for games-no role playing. Newsletter, tournament information available. Greg Mock, 462-8900.


RAID ON ST. NAZARE

4.82 Can a demolition attack be made in the same game turn that its Preparation roll is passed?
A. Yes.
6.1 Can Gun and Searchlight units with a Disrupted or Out of Action marker roll to remove it if Commandos occupy the same area?
A. Yes.
8.4 Is the Lock Gate in Area 313 a single target than 9.5 and 11.7 What happens if a fourth Armored
A. No—if you attack the gun, the breach attack affects no other units in that zone.
11.6 Will a grenade attack eliminate any infantry accompanying a Gun in a Land Zone?
A. Yes.
12.2 Is there any effect on German units in an Area when the VP target there is eliminated?
A. No—unless it is an “over-water” Area (as per 12.5).
12.4 If a Demolition Attack against an already damaged target results in another “Damaged” result, is the Prepared Charge eliminated or—because it has no effect—does it remain in place?
A. No. However, if a Prepared Charge has been used in causing the “Damaged” result; remove it. It is the effect of multiple damage results that has no additional effect—not the non-detonation of the charge.

AH RBG RATING CHARTS
The following games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game’s ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title’s strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly.

YANKS
The American Extension of the ASL System

$35.00

As with its brethren, YANKS dominates most of the categories in our Readers’ Buyers Guide. Unfortunately, not enough responses were received from the hard-core fans to place it on our ongoing RBG Chart. (Of course, the upcoming five-year revision of the RBG will likely change that sort of affair.) Looking at the responses uncritically, the “Overall Value” (1.22) for this latest game would have placed it first on our survey. And, as usual, it was graced with superior graphics from Charlie Kleiber, giving it high marks for “Components”, “Map” and “Counters.”

Interestingly, the reader-generated “Complexity” rating (0.27) was considerably higher than for other entries, including the ASL Rulebook. Likely, the inclusion of Rule Chapter E and the inclusion of scenarios featuring night combat, river crossings, weather, air support and such makes this one tougher to assimilate. On the other hand, the “Excitement Level” (1.53) is considerably lower while the length of time to play the range of scenarios (two-and-a-half hours to six-and-a-half hours each) is comparable to those of BEYOND VALOR. Perhaps the most notable difference in the ratings of these two modules would be that for “Play Balance”; either the scenario designers are becoming more justly adept at their task or the Americans of YANKS make a tougher foe for the Germans than the Russians of BEYOND VALOR.

The complete ratings for YANKS is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Value</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Map</th>
<th>Counters</th>
<th>Player’s Aids</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Rule Chapter E</th>
<th>Excitement Level</th>
<th>Play Balance</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Next Year</th>
<th>Sample Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>2822</td>
<td>8825</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the reasons for RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN's popularity is doubtless its relatively short playing time in the postal format. Not only has the AREA RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN tournament ended, but the champion—Pat Flory—has successfully defended his title against the first challenger, Dale Garbutt. Challenge matches take the form of dual games with each player playing both sides. In the case of a split decision, the winner is the player who won his game first or with the most victory points. Such unfamiliar titles sound intriguing to you, stop by our booth. We are offering a free surprise gift for those who try them. We usually have on hand a set of the latest games, a box, and software to give you a chance to try your hand at both proposed alliances in the East, it is possible that you will become obvious that your preferred enemy must be Turkey and your preferred ally must be Russia—at least for the short-term.

Contest 138 proved to be quite a challenge, more so than we'd expected. The response to it was extensive, and sorting through the many proposed solutions was something of a task. In the end, we disqualified all that used naval firepower in any manner (19.9) or that used SAC to bomb the Orne bridges. Still we were left with some hundred entries, so we looked for certain key elements in the solutions offered—namely an attack on the 3rd Luftwaffe and 275th Infantry with a carpet bomb-modifying warhead and for the American infantry units to land on the beach head at Galicia. It was none of the intended. The sole criteria for a successful response lay in seizing as many centers from your selected enemy as possible. Look at both proposed alliances in the East, it is now clear that this gains Italy at least for the short-term.

If allied with Turkey against Russia, you can gain Budapest without much trouble. The Italian moves as follows:

- Army Apulia to Venice
- Army Trieste to Budapest
- Army Venice support A Trieste to Budapest
- Fleet Aegean Sea to Ionian Sea
- Fleet Ionian Sea to Adriatic Sea
- Fleet Tyrrhenian is irrelevant

Meanwhile, the Turk—under your complete control, makes the following moves:

- Army Armenia to Sevastopol
- Fleet Ankara to Black Sea
- Fleet Bulgaria to Rumania
- Army Serbia support F Bulgaria to Rumania

Thus, Russia loses two centers (Budapest and Rumania), while Italy and Turkey each gain one. Not the best of situations, as your erstwhile ally remains as strong as you (indeed, possibly stronger if he takes Sevastopol) and in a position to readily attack Italian holdings if he should so desire. Worse, the Russian army dislodged from Budapest can retreat to Galicia to bedevil you further. You've gained Budapest and moved into position to support Trieste, but things would have been better if you had attacked Turkey first.

With Russia as an ally, you can look covetously at both Serbia and Greece. The Italian moves are obvious:

- Army Apulia to Greece
- Fleet Ionian Sea convoy A Apulia to Greece
- Fleet Aegean Sea support A Apulia to Greece
- Army Trieste to Serbia
- Army Vienna to Trieste

Contest 139 offered a straightforward tactical exercise in DIPLOMACY. Although many folks seemingly looked for some sort of trick on our part in the exercise, none was intended. The sole criteria for a successful response lay in seizing as many centers from your selected enemy as possible. Looking at both proposed alliances in the East, it becomes obvious that your preferred enemy must be Turkey and your preferred ally must be Russia—at least for the short-term.

Inflator's Report

Even before spring reaches out, thoughts turn to ORIGINS here. Held this year in Milwaukee in mid-August, The Avalon Hill Game Company is already planning a strong showing at the convention. Several designers will be on hand, hosting tournaments in such varied fare as ASL, PLATOON, BRITANNIA, FLIGHT LEADER and KREMLIN, ENEMY IN SIGHT, MERCHANTS OF VENUS, DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD and TAC AIR. Bill Peschel will be around to answer your questions on our computer games, and will have the hardware and software to give you a chance to try your hand at Computer WS&IM. If some of these unfamiliar titles sound intriguing to you, stop by our booth. To show our appreciation, we’ve even put together a free surprise gift for those who do. Just clip the AH gift coupon from the convention program and present it to any of us at The Avalon Hill Game Company display. We’ll plan on seeing you there.

Contest 138 proved to be quite a challenge, more so than we’d expected. The response to it was extensive, and sorting through the many proposed solutions was something of a task. In the end, we disqualified all that used naval firepower in any manner (19.9) or that used SAC to bomb the Orne bridges. Still we were left with some hundred entries, so we looked for certain key elements in the solutions offered—namely an attack on the 3rd Luftwaffe and 275th Infantry with a carpet bomb-modifying warhead and for the American infantry units to land on the beach head at Galicia. It was none of the intended. The sole criteria for a successful response lay in seizing as many centers from your selected enemy as possible. Look at both proposed alliances in the East, it is now clear that this gains Italy at least for the short-term.
0122 hours, March 28, 1942!
One of history’s most gallant military actions is about to begin. Only this time, you will recreate the combat, adventure and heroism of the daring British raid on the German-occupied French port of St. Nazaire in the relative safety of your game room.
Still . . . you will become so mentally involved in the drama and tenseness of the moment that it might be difficult to believe it’s only a game.
But what a game!

Using a unique blend of area movement to depict the naval action and a point-to-point system to simulate the land battle, you are able to command the British forces in a recreation of this historical action against a programmed German defense that varies every game. We say “programmed” German defense because RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE is a solitaire game. Let’s not even consider how nerve racking this game would be if you were playing against a live opponent . . . it’s exciting enough just playing it alone.

In fact, people in therapy should pass on this one. There are just too many realistic elements to think about in planning your strategy: demolition squads, torpedo boats, assault teams, flak towers, shore batteries, and the Stosstruppen which seemingly appear at the most inconvenient times, just to name a few.
But you get more than just a few playing pieces — 260, ½” die-cut pieces in all — along with a realistic 16” x 33” aerial view map board and various playing aids.
For just a 22-dollar bill you get to feel the excitement of leading 611 Royal Navy and Army Commandos into Charpentiers Channel with the bravado reminiscent of another noble 600 nearly a century earlier at Balaklava. Unlike Lord Cardigan’s cavalry of 1854, you will not be immortalized by Tennyson but, if successful, will win five Victoria Crosses and cancel forever the Nazi threat of a Bismarck-style dash into the Atlantic by the battleship Tirpitz.

Available in all better game outlets, or direct from

The Avalon Hill Game Company
DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.
4517 Harford Road ★ Baltimore, MD 21214

For Quick Credit Card Purchasing call TOLL FREE 800-638-9292
RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE $22.00
Solitaire Simulation of the Greatest Commando Raid

INSTRUCTIONS:
Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 5 in the appropriate space to the right. Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of FRANCE 1940, enter '1.5' for category '7.a.' For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vols. 19, No. 4. Sub-categories are indicated by italics. Empty ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for Complexity and Year of Publishing have been provided; do not rate these categories.

1. Overall Value
2. Components
2a. Mapboard
2b. Counters
2c. Player's Aid
3. Complexity
3a. Complexity
4. Completeness of Rules
5. Playability
5a. Excitement Level
5b. Play Balance
6. Authenticity
7. Game Length
7a. Basic/Shortest
7b. Advanced/Longest
8. Year of Publication

Opponent Wanted 50c

Contestants are to indicate the moves of the three units below in a manner to give Bradley the best chance to destroy the Lock Gates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Move To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodgson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTEST #140

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 gamer'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 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 bias to the survey because you all play our 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. 

NAME __________________________ PHONE __________________________

ADDRESS __________________________

CITY _______ STATE _______ ZIP _______
1988 GENERAL READERS’ SURVEY

As explained in the ‘Philosophy’ of this issue, we are considering a number of changes in the content and format of The GENERAL—and we’d like the input of the readership concerning such changes. And, we’d love to know your views on what we’ve done thus far. After all, you folk are the best and most knowledgeable critics we face. Because we don’t do this very often, we’re willing to ‘pay’ you to fill out and return this survey; any order for 100 or more accompanied by a completed survey may deduct $2.00 from the cost of that order (offer void after 1st August 1988). This is the chance to make your collective voice heard. Please take a few moments to jot down your thoughts.

Some of our regular features have been around a long time. Of course, such columns provide the framework for our longevity. Please indicate whether you regularly read (or would like to see more of) the following by checking the appropriate box:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Expand</th>
<th>Suspend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIM Philosophy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters to the Editor:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents Wanted Ads:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Contents:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Box:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention Calendar:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AREA Top 50 Listing:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AREA Meet the 50:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Contents:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Issue Listing:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Product Ads:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL Scenarios:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So That’s What You’ve Been Playing:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readers Buyers Guide:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are other occasional features that appear that support The GENERAL which entail quite a bit of work. Please indicate if you’d like to see these continue or end.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Expand</th>
<th>Suspend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editor’s Choice Awards:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH Best Sellers List:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL INDEX:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is inevitably a bit of controversy over the ‘types’ of articles we should include or not each issue. Some types of articles have been immensely popular, and others once common have disappeared for lack of interest. Please indicate whether you like, or would like to see, the following types of articles in our pages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Expand</th>
<th>Suspend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy/Tactics:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBM Systems:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical/Analytic:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention Coverage:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variants:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Scenarios:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series Replays:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Briefings/Interviews:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer’s Notes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Book Reviews:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports on Works in Progress:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As anyone who has been reading The GENERAL very long will appreciate, there is also some debate over the types of games from our extensive line that coverage should be provided for in these pages. Would you like to see articles on the following types of games:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game Type</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Wargames</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Non-Wargames (e.g., TV WARS and 1830)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VG: Wargames</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Sports Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Sci-Fi Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Fantasy Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Computer Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: Role-Playing Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past, The GENERAL has featured several on-running regular columns. These have usually been short, and devoted to one game such as SL/ASL or DIPLOMACY. Would you enjoy a regular column on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game Type</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced SL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIPLOMACY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG Classic Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG: (STAL, AK, WAT, IND., WAS, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitaire Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF Fantasy Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIRD REICH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIREPOWER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAGIC REALM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG Leisure Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Era Wargames</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHG Role-Playing Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While we’re at it, there are a number of other format changes that have been mentioned in some of our brainstorming sessions. We’d like your input:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cartoons:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly Die-Cut Counter Sheet for Variants:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations/Maps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger Typefaces:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including “For Sale” Want Ads again:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include VG Wargames in RBG survey:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, a spot for you to sound off—what other kind of material or layout changes would enhance your enjoyment of The GENERAL?

On another, but related subject, we have decided to proceed with an ASL Annual—a 48-page, yearly publication devoted exclusively to SL and ASL. But some questions still need to be resolved. Answers to the following would be helpful in determining format and layout of this project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you play SL and its gamemates regularly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you play ASL and its gamemates regularly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What percentage of such a publication should be devoted to SL as opposed to ASL?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you buy such a publication at $10.00?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you submit articles/scenarios to such a publication?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of the following titles (one only) would you prefer for such a publication:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squad Leader O2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Recruiters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Field</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Minutes Tune</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward Observer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Front Line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Purling Line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptism of Fire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Line of Duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Corporal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sergeant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Squad Leader Briefing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tac Rep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate whether the following would make you more likely to purchase a new game:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vanished (glossy) Counters:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanished (glossy) Mapboards:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookcase Boxes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Boxes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitaire Rating on Box:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity Rating on Box:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBM Rating on Box:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Rules Set:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-player Design:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For THIRD REICH owners only, you would like to see a 5th Edition rulebook offered for sale, or prefer having the recommended changes just printed in The GENERAL? As an alternative, there is more the expensive approach of a THIRD REICH Expansion Kit, which would include the new rulebook as well as updated parts (i.e., counters). Which would you prefer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The GENERAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion Kit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For ASL owners only, you would buy a set of 15 updated SL scenarios revised in the new ASL format for $10.00, or prefer to continue receiving them as free inserts in The GENERAL (or the ASL annual) on an occasional basis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenario Pack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The GENERAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate (i.e.: 1—first, 2—second, etc.; X—not at all) the order in which you would like to see the following products released:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASL Japanese Module</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL French Module</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary ASL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL Solitaire System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL PBM System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“M-11” (a solitaire modern-era version of PATTON’S BEST)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“MBT” (a modern-era squad-level, individual vehicle game)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Red Sky at Morning” (modern-era strategic naval game)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Global Domination” (modern-era CIVILIZATION)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated PB/PL system with new Desert Module</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Rising Sun” (Pacific version THIRD REICH)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Turawa” (solitaire WW2 island invasion, aka ST. NAZAIRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are concerned that the standards of competitive play of our peculiar brand of games has slipped a bit in past years. Would you attend an annual Baltimore-based mini-convention devoted to competition (“Championships”) in Avalon Hill-Victory Games products? Emp. would be on top-level competition and fun, and player fees would be minimal ($5.00 or whatever and no tournament costs). Tournaments would be gamemastered by top players, etc. . . . to test the mettle of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes—I would attend such a “Championship” convention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No—I would not attend such a convention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, a last request. The editors are contemplating a special 25th Anniversary issue of The GENERAL, celebrating this milestone in hobby history. We’re looking for brief columns from among others, readers who can express what their subscription to this oldest of hobby periodicals has meant to them. Please answer the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How long have you subscribed to The GENERAL?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you be willing to draft a few paragraphs on what it has meant to you or perhaps express an interesting anecdot? (Please include your name and address if willing. Thanks.)

Good for $2.00 off if completed and returned with any purchase direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company That totals $10.00 or more. Limit: one to a customer. Offer void after 1 August 1988.
BUCHHOLZ STATION

ASL Scenario I

BUCHHOLZ, GERMANY, 16 December 1944: The original German opening for the Battle of the Bulge was somewhat subdued. German infantry, with little armor support, was to seize key road junctions early so the armored formations could quickly pass through and exploit a breakthrough. One such place was the town of Buchholz, which sat alongside an abandoned railroad. It was held by a company of American infantry who were lined up for chow outside the town when a company of the German 27th Fusilier Regiment came down the road. Neither side expected to find the other here, and there was a dramatic moment of mutual surprise as both sides scrambled to deploy.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The side that forces the other to retreat first is considered the winner. A side is forced to retreat if it has lost 13 Casualty VP. If, by the end of the scenario, neither side has forced the other to retreat, the game is considered an American victory — provided the Germans have not Exit ≥ 9 VP worth of units off the south edge of Board 3 along either road. If the German player does exit ≥ 9 VP off either/both roads, he wins immediately.

BALANCE:
+ Increase the German ELR to 4.
★ Increase the US ELR to 4.

TURN RECORD CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simultaneous Set Up</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>END</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German Moves First</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[120]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advance Company of Fusilier Regiment 27, 12th Volksgrenadier Division [ELR: 3] set up as indicated: {SAN: 2}

Company L, 3rd Battalion, 394th Infantry Regiment, 99th Infantry Division [ELR: 3] set up as indicated: {SAN: 4}

SPECIAL RULES:
1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. All American vehicles start in Motion, and facing due east.
3. The .50-cal HMG must set up as a Passenger in the Jeep.

AFTERMATH: The fighting opened about 0700, but neither side was able to gain a decisive advantage. Losses were given and taken, the battle would probably go to the first side to receive reinforcements. Surprisingly, it was the Americans who were reinforced first when both Company K and a section of M-10 TDs arrived to bolster their position. The Germans promptly withdrew. Tactically, it was a draw with moderate casualties taken by both sides. Strategically, it was another of the small American victories that would add up to German frustration in the early hours of the Battle of the Bulge.
**THE BITCHE SALIENT**

**ASL Scenario J**

**BITCHE, GERMANY, 14 January 1945:** Elements of the 29th Infantry Division had been ordered to continue closing the ring around German forces trapped near Bitche. However, due to poor radio security, the Germans were quite aware of this latest development and had planned a flanking attack by elements of the 11th Mountain Regiment in an attempt to ambush the advancing Americans.

**BOARD CONFIGURATION:**

![Diagram of board configuration]

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** To win, the American player must clear a contiguous road (free of Good Order German MMC on or adjacent) from the east edge of Board 2 to the west edge of Board 4, or amass at least 20 more Casualty VP than does the German player at scenario end.

**BALANCE:**

- Substitute a 9-2 leader for the on-board 9-1 leader, and change the 80+mm OBA to a 100+mm OBA.
- Substitute a 9-2 leader for the Turn 5 9-1 leader, and allow the 80+mm OBA Plentiful Ammo.

**SPECIAL RULES:**

1. EC are Wet with no wind at start.
2. Because they are making a dispersed advance, no American MMC initially placed on board may be stacked together or adjacent to another MMC. No such restriction is placed on SMC/SW.
3. The StuG III is equipped with Schuerzen (D11.2).
4. One module of 80+mm Mortar OBA with Plentiful Ammo becomes available to the Americans on Turn 4. One module of 100+mm OBA becomes available to the Americans on Turn 7.
5. The Germans receive one module of 80+mm Mortar OBA, and one Pre-Registered hex (which must be recorded prior to U.S. set-up).
6. If Battlefield Integrity is being used, it does not apply for German losses until the American Player Turn of Turn 2.

**AFTERMATH:** The GIs were caught off balance, and were hit by accurate artillery fire in conjunction with the flanking attack. To attempt to restore the situation, the Americans quickly committed the 2nd Battalion and elements of the 1st Battalion to support the hard-pressed 3rd Battalion. This American reaction forced the Germans to release their death grip on the 3rd, but the American force had been badly mauled nonetheless; five companies had been effectively put out of action. As a result, the Americans pulled back the entire 175th for a much needed rest.