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September 1st, 1939... War had come to Europe again, and the Polish Army was fighting for survival as the Germans unveiled a new form of warfare... blitzkrieg. In the so-called "Polish Corridor", the German 20th Motorized Infantry Division was surging eastward toward the vital crossroads at Chojnice. The Polish 9th Infantry Division had fought the vanguard to a standstill, but casualties were mounting and ammunition was low. The famed Uhlan of the "Pomorska" Cavalry Brigade were ordered to extricate their countrymen. Little did they realize that German armor was also nearing the scene.

April 9th, 1940... Now it was Norway's turn. The capture of the Norwegian King Haakon would be a coup of the first order, and plans were instituted to take him at his capital. But German plans were torn asunder by the torpedoes that ripped the Bluecher. In desperation, the German air attaché to the embassy in Oslo rushed to Fornebu, commandeering two companies of German paratroopers landing there. Loaded aboard buses, they set out to capture the King—who was fleeing to the Norwegian Army headquarters at Hamar. But, along the way, the Germans ran headlong into a rag-tag band of heroes who were determined that they would not pass.

May 10th, 1940... Operation Niwi was an audacious German plan to land several hundred men of the SS Regiment "Deutschland" by light plane to seize vital crossroads deep in the Ardennes. One group, coming to ground near the village of Witry, moved forward through the deep woods. Would boldness and cunning be enough to overcome the Belgian Chasseurs d'Ardennais charged with denying the roads of the region to the enemy? Or would the elite Belgian troops, adept at operating in the forests of their homeland, give the SS a bloody nose?

April 9th, 1941... Caught unprepared by the invasion of 49 enemy divisions, the Yugoslavian army was trying desperately to mobilize. But in this country of divided loyalties and poor communications, confusion and despair were endemic. On the third day of the Balkan blitzkrieg, leading elements of the 8th Panzer Division descended on Alibunar—mobilization center for several Yugoslavian formations. Never short of courage, the 5th Yugoslavian Cavalry Regiment launched a desperate charge to divert the German iron fist.

This is THE LAST HURRAH—the sixth ASL module. The eight scenarios contained herein focus on historical situations involving the early German blitzkriegs of World War II and the many nationalities that fought against the invaders. Paratroopers, armor, air power, audacity and courage were the tools with which Germany planned to overrun the neutral nations of Europe. And in less than two years, in actions as far apart as Norway and Crete, the German military accomplished all they had set out to do. For the most part, the invaded neutrals (Poland, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia and Greece) were defended by hastily-mobilized reservists stiffened by a few elite units. The actions depicted in THE LAST HURRAH will challenge veteran ASL players to match the tenacity, audacity and victories on both sides in eight scenarios, recreating the German march of conquest. Experience—as only ASL can let you—the desperate fighting of these first days of World War II. Whether commanding German armor, Polish cavalry, Greek infantry, Belgian Chasseurs, Norwegian reservists or Luftwaffe paratroopers, if you're an ASL grognard, you're bound to find something pleasing in the wide spectrum of scenarios included in THE LAST HURRAH. There is even a scenario pitting those age-old foes, the Poles and the Russians!

THE LAST HURRAH contains eight scenarios, one countersheet of Allied Minor infantry and support weapons—and two boards: 11, with revised artwork; and 33, which features open terrain and a large grainfield. ASL, BEYOND VALOR and YANKS (for two scenarios) are needed to play these scenarios.

THE LAST HURRAH is now available for $18.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add the usual 10% for shipping and handling expenses (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
The response wasn't impressive (only some 323 forms returned, representing less than 3% of the subscriber base), and a fair number of titles (20 to be exact) didn't garner enough to be listed, but the latest effort to update the Readers Buyers Guide gives us some new numbers to chew over. Since only two of the titles that didn't make the "cut" can be considered wargames that have been in our line long enough for players to be familiar with them (PLATOON and KNIGHTS OF THE AIR, and since I suspect that 300+ hard-nosed reviewers still give a pretty accurate and impartial collective judgment, we can certainly incorporate the updated RBG into our pages to help buy players considering an Avalon Hill or Victory Games title some indication of its strengths and weaknesses.

Before proceeding with the number crunching, a word on the RBG is in order to preface this discussion. As explained in AH Philosophy 125 (Vol. 24, No. 5), the titles here evaluated have been ranked according to the reader-generated Overall Value, ranging from the best accepted downward. In general, the lower the numerical rating for a title in a category, the better the cumulative view of the respondents. However, in the case of Completeness, the lower values represent games of adjudged ease mastering; in the Game Length category, the lower values indicate shorter times necessary to play the game to conclusion (in terms of the minute multiples). The column Sample Sizes merely lists the total number of readers who rated that particular title, and is not to be taken as any form of popularity rating. The entries for Year and Type are self-explanatory. Now let us turn to comparison of some of the ratings.

It appears that the "sizzle"—the packaging and artwork (in short, the appearance) — of the game is still of great importance to players. The components often form, and dominate, the first impression of a game for many buyers. The attention to detail and graphic excellence of Avalon Hill's fine cadre of artists has long been acknowledged; I make no bones about my views that Charlie Kibler is the industry's leading master of mapboards and counters. Supplementing his talents are the efforts of a number of free-lance artists as well, meaning the designers here have the best of both worlds in presenting an eye-pleasing gaming treat. But components have to be functional too, or the game degenerates into an unplayable mess of pretty pictures. No matter how nice the rulebook or counters appear, if you can't make heads or tails of them, they serve no purpose. The close cooperation between Mr. Kibler and the various designer/developers is reflected by the fact that the maps and counters and rulebooks, as pretty as they are, are all extremely utilitarian. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the same titles that are among the "top ten" components-wise also appear on the other lists that follow. The following, the ten titles with the best ratings in each of the Components categories, are therefore truly remarkable in utility and artistic appeal:

**Components:**
1. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 1.77
2. 1830 2.00
3. SQUAD LEADER 2.11
4. FLIGHT LEADER 2.20
5. UP FRONT 2.24
6. RUSSIAN FRONT 2.33
7. MAGIC REALM 2.44
8. EMPIRES IN ARMS 2.45
9. FLATTOP 2.47
10. DUNE 2.48

**Mapboard:**
1. RUSSIAN FRONT 1.68
2. SQUAD LEADER 1.69
3. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 1.76
4. FLIGHT LEADER 1.87
5. MAGIC REALM 1.91
6. TITAN 1.95
7. RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE 1.97
8. FLATTOP 2.12
9. 1830 2.38
10. THUNDER AT CASSINO 2.40

**Counters:**
1. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 1.68
2. SQUAD LEADER 2.08
3. EMPIRES IN ARMS 2.12
4. FLIGHT LEADER 2.20
5. 1830 2.32
6. 7th Fleet 2.44
7. GLADIATOR 2.56
8. RUSSIAN FRONT 2.56
9. UP FRONT 2.60
10. MAGIC REALM 2.63

**Rulebook:**
1. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 1.92
2. 1830 2.33
3. CIVILIZATION 2.41
4. THUNDER AT CASSINO 2.64
5. BRITANIA 2.81
6. STORM OVER ARNHEM 2.82
7. 7th Fleet 2.83
8. PANZERGRUPPE GUDERIAN 2.85
9. UP FRONT 2.85
10. B-17 2.92
11. DEVIL'S DEN 2.92

To my mind, as I've said before, the software— the rules and systems— of any game are vastly more important than the hardware—the components. The physical components of a game can be updated with relative ease; not so the intangibles. Often no amount of development skill can save a game with unplayable systems, vague and contradictory rules, or that is neither competitive nor enjoyable to play.

Nothing is more exasperating for the novice (and the veteran too, for that matter) than rules which raise more questions than they answer, or that have flaws and faults obvious even to an untrained eye. The newcomer could do no better than to look to the Completeness, Playability, Excitement Level and Play Balance categories on our RBG if he is entertaining thoughts of wargaming his hobby, and using our games as his vehicle. Again, the lower ratings indicate a truly superior game for him to cut his teeth on, depending on which of these aspects he values most. These categories, rather than judging the artists' efforts, looks at the skills of the developers. Many game submissions, in the raw form that they arrive from the designers, are truly horrendous examples of fuzzy thinking and fractured English and ad nauseam trivial detail; but the developers here have developed the knack of looking past all this to see the gem that may be buried below. Their task is to retrieve it and polish it. When they succeed, you have games like the following:

**Completeness of Rules:**
1. CIVILIZATION 2.03
2. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 2.11
3. NAVAL WAR 2.18
4. DIPLOMACY 2.69
5. 1830 2.72
6. THUNDER AT CASSINO 2.73
7. B-17 2.83
8. AFRIKA KORPS 2.84
9. STORM OVER ARNHEIM 2.84

**Playability:**
1. NAVAL WAR 1.60
2. CIVILIZATION 1.72
3. WAR AT SEA 1.87
4. AFRIKA KORPS 1.88
5. VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC 1.91
6. B-17 2.00
7. 1830 2.04
8. BRITANIA 2.07
9. WIZARDS QUEST 2.15
10. WATERLOO 2.21

**Excitement Level:**
1. UP FRONT 2.00
2. THUNDER AT CASSINO 2.24
3. RUSSIAN FRONT 2.36
4. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 2.40
5. FLATTOP 2.40
6. EMPIRES IN ARMS 2.42
7. 1830 2.43
8. STORM OVER ARNHEIM 2.52
9. SQUAD LEADER 2.55
10. BRITANIA 2.57

**Play Balance:**
1. CIRCUS MAXIMUS 1.47
2. 1830 1.81
3. TITAN 1.81
4. GLADIATOR 1.93
5. AIR FORCE/DAUNTLESS 2.08
6. WIZARDS QUEST 2.12
7. AFRIKA KORPS 2.20
8. ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER 2.32
9. UP FRONT 2.32
10. DOWN WITH THE KING 2.36

For the historian-gamer, the "simulation" is the key to enjoyment. And, make no mistake, the historical aspects of our titles provide much of the fascination for novice and expert player alike. Avalon Hill has often been criticized for the "accuracy" of...
Darn... the British have done it to us again.

They voted RuneQuest "best role-playing system" at Games Day 5... their equivalent to a GenCon® Game Fair!

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TACTICAL AIRPOWER DOCTRINE
Guidelines for Managing Airpower in TAC AIR

By Gary C. Morgan

TAC AIR, short for TACTical AIRpower, was created to fill the void which has existed in modern operation wargames—they don’t realistically replicate tactical airpower, including troop air defenses. Some games have approached a good simulation of individual jet/flight airpower and small company/battalion air defense on the tactical level, but only covering the Close Air Support (CAS) role right on the front lines. Examples include aircraft like A10s and MiG27s against man-portable shoulder-fired Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs), armored personnel carrier mounted infra-red SAMs of the SA-9/13 and Chapparal class, and an occasional ZSU 23-4 Self-Propelled Anti-Aircraft Artillery.

Prior to the past couple of years, very little tactical airpower or opposing air defenses were seen in conflict simulations. Airpower was a factor considered in the games, but highly abstracted and unrealistically applied. It was considered as off-map artillery with some small regard to counter-air or air superiority, and little or no concept of penetrating an Integrated Air Defense System (IADS). TAC AIR now gives the wargamer all the classic tactical air missions, representative air units to use, and detailed troop air defenses for engaging hostile airpower, all on top of an intense mechanized ground battle! This article will describe the combat air functions that the game simulates, and should give you some basic guidelines for the tactical air missions your fighters will need to fly to achieve success in the game.

THE GROUND WAR

All air missions in some way support the soldier on the ground. Only the army can take and hold ground, aircraft only support these efforts. “If you take off and shoot down every MiG in the sky, return to your base and find a Soviet T-80 sitting in your aircraft shelter, you’ve lost the war, Jack!”

The preceding is a favorite quote, and is certainly appropriate to lead off discussion on how the air battle and the ground battle interrelate. TAC AIR functions on two dimensions: first the ground war on the operational level, replete with armor, mech infantry, artillery and attack helicopters (which are a hybrid of the ground and air environment, and can be considered belonging to both). To complement the ground battle, tactical fighters support their ground forces by performing the myriad classic air missions, and troop air defenses accompany the ground units to engage hostile airpower. This creates a second dimension of an air battle which overlays the ground battle and interacts totally.

The player must think in both ground and air commander frames of reference. Fixation on one, to the exclusion of the other, will lose the game. This special feature makes TAC AIR a superb multi-player game. With at least two players to each side, one can act as air commander while the other acts as ground commander. Winning at TAC AIR is accomplished by refining the subtle cooperation required in the prosecution of modern air-land combat. It is highly challenging and difficult to master... but easy to learn. One can quickly appreciate the years of experience, judgment and vision required of a tactician in either the army or the air force. TAC AIR poses many of the decisions, challenges, and considerations these generals could face on the battlefield of tomorrow.

While many GENERAL readers may feel confident playing mechanized ground wargames from World War II to modern day, some caution is advisable when playing TAC AIR’s ground battle. The Advanced Game adds command and supply units to the combat battalions of the Basic Game. These are very “soft” and are vulnerable to attack from either air or ground, thus creating the opportunity to have penetrating missions (“Air Interdiction”). The player must keep them just far enough to the rear to preclude concerted attack by hostile maneuver battalions in a breakthrough attempt, or by artillery or aircraft. However, they must be far enough forward to perform their mission or the ground units they support/command will lose their momentum and staying power. Similarly, air defense units are almost as soft if caught by maneuver battalions too far forward. They are critical protection for your ground units against hostile air attack. Unlike many mechanized wargames, there is now some “tail” to the “teeth” of your divisions. You must now begin to think about logistics, C2 (command and control), and air defense of your rear areas where in the past players focused on just their front lines. You can rest assured that your opposing air commander is watching as well! As you read the following information on the tactical air missions and how they are employed, keep also a ground commander’s viewpoint on how hostile fighters will perform these missions against your own ground forces.

THE AIR BATTLE

Tactical air operations are divided into five combat air functions—Counter-Air, Close Air Support, Air Interdiction, Tactical Air Reconnaissance, and Tactical Airlift. The order of precedence of these five functions is dependent on the threat and the results desired. The fundamental principle is to neutralize the enemy threat having the most profound and continuing influence on the total battle situation. Normally, all five combat functions are performed concurrently because they are mutually supporting.

Tactical airpower is employed to attain a common objective. Selecting, and adhering to, a common objective is critical to successful employment of tactical airpower. Plans need to be continuously...
evaluated for their contribution to attaining the objective, which must be clearly defined. Tactical airpower must take advantage of the principles listed below:

Initiative. It is necessary to create opportunities and to take advantage of those which present themselves. Initiative enables airpower to apply force at the time and place deemed advantageous. The inherent flexibility of tactical airpower enables it to rapidly shift between the various missions and exercise initiative. Keeping an enemy on the defensive may preclude his ability to mount offensive operations.

Surprise. Surprise can be achieved through speed, deception, concentration, audacity and originality. Concentration of force at an unexpected time and place has a high probability of success.

Concentration. Tactical airpower can concentrate power in precise times and locations due to the speed and mobility of flying platforms. Care must be taken not to needlessly concentrate more combat power than is necessary to accomplish the desired objective, or conversely fail to commit adequate resources to get the job done. Air forces must be organized as an entity and controled so that they can be employed in a concentrated manner.

Security. Adequate intelligence is required and the threat must be minimized for the opportunity of success to be realized in any air operation.

Tactical air operations must be planned with consideration to the three factors listed below:

Objectives. The objectives must be set by the ground commander based on the battle situation. Objectives for a force on the attack may differ from the objectives for a defensive stand.

Threat. The threat drives planning. Operations must consider the best intelligence available to minimize the threat to the force. The advantage of tactical airpower is its capability to regenerate, by returning to base to refuel and rearm and repeatedly return onto the battlefield. Aircraft have a geometric effect, since aircraft are not only lost for the current mission, but will also be unavailable for any future missions.

Force Capabilities. The number and type of forces must be considered to attain the objective with minimal loss to friendly forces from SAM and air-to-air threats. The targets, routes, weather, defenses, aircrew skill, and weapon systems must all be factored in planning to insure adequate, but not wasteful, application of combat power.

COUNTER-AIR OPERATIONS

The objective of counter-air operations is to gain and maintain air superiority, preventing enemy forces from interfering with friendly ground and air operations. This requires destruction or neutralization of the enemy’s offensive and defensive air systems. Counter-air operations are targeted against the enemy air threat and may not necessarily directly relate to ground operations. Control of the air is desired. The absence of both hostile aircraft and missiles permits friendly aircraft freedom of movement and offers opportunities for offensive action. Air superiority may be total and permanent if the entire enemy air defense system is destroyed.

Often, air superiority may be local, in a certain area for a certain time period. Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD) involves, for the Americans, specialized "aircraft killers" whose mission is to seek out ground-based electromagnetic emitters and destroy or disable them using standoff weapons or direct attack. This is considered an Offensive Counter-Air (OCA) mission, by seeking out and destroying hostile air power as close to its source as possible. Other OCA missions may include attacking airfields, command and control facilities, fuel and munitions storage for hostile aircraft or SAM systems, aircraft either flying or on the ground, and SAM defense sites. Defensive Counter-Air (DCA) operations consist of employing an IADS of tactical fighter/interceptor aircraft, SAM, and AA artillery, all controlled to protect friendly forces from hostile air engagement.

Air operations over friendly forces require positive coordinated airspace control to minimize interference and fratricide, while efficiently identifying, intercepting and destroying/neuralizing any hostile aircraft attacks. This is normally accomplished by constructed airspace control plans or orders and integration of these orders and plans throughout the friendly AIDs. Counter-air operations take the form of several types of missions:

Counter-Air Strikes against surface targets of the enemy airpower complex may be directed against defensive systems, but should concentrate on destroying the enemy’s offensive air capability if possible.

Fighter Sweeps have the mission of finding and destroying enemy air forces in the air. As enemy fighters are destroyed, friendly air control increases and the threat of hostile air attack decreases.

Fighter Screens restrict enemy air movement by placing air-to-air tactical fighters between friendly forces subject to hostile air attack and the threat, either in friendly territory or along the line of contact.

Combat Air Patrol (CAP). Fighters may be tasked to intercept and destroy enemy aircraft in a localized area. CAP’s are designed to protect the area/force to be protected while screens are imposed between the threat and friendly area/force.

Air Escort. Friendly air forces engage to an objective area subject to enemy air attack may be accompanied by friendly tactical fighters configured for air-to-air combat. The escorting fighters will engage hostile aircraft in order to allow escorted aircraft to pursue their missions with minimal interference.

Air Intercept of enemy and unidentified aircraft should be accomplished when hostile offensive air action is threatened. This interception is normally accomplished over friendly territory, but forward from vital target areas to permit defense in depth.

Fighter aircraft and an integrated ground/air/air radar control system are normally essential.

CLOSE AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS

CAS is air action against hostile targets in close proximity to friendly forces, and requires detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces. Tactical air forces are applied against targets of immediate concern to surface forces when surface combat cannot produce the desired effect with organic weapons. The task of CAS is to provide selective and discriminate firepower, when and where needed in support of ground forces. Thus, CAS must be available, responsive, integrated and controlled.

Availability. The joint force commander (who commands both air and ground forces) daily determines the proportion of tactical air effort to be applied to CAS. The commander must also know the ground commander’s daily mission of the day, number of friendly aircraft, and the number and type of aircraft sorties (missions) he will commit to the CAS effort. The ground commander then prioritizes his CAS requests from each ground unit to support the number of missions allocated.

Responsiveness. CAS missions are flown to support ground commanders. Communications must rapidly process requests. Fighter wings must maintain aircraft on various states of alert to insure rapid reaction and immediate response. Alert aircraft may be selectedly launched based on ordnance loaded and target characteristics. CAS missions may be either preplanned or immediate. Preplanned missions are targeted against fairly static targets, while immediate missions employ alert aircraft against fleeting targets as they become available.

Integration. CAS missions must be closely integrated with the organic fire of the ground forces to achieve mutual support. CAS must also be closely integrated with the movement of ground forces to ensure the availability of CAS forces where required, and to minimize fratricide of friendly troops. This integration is accomplished by air and ground liaison/control systems. Air and ground units exchange personnel to perform these functions.

Control. The mobility of ground forces and the fluidity of modern battle require positive control of CAS aircraft. Target area control is performed by a Forward Air Controller, who insures direct coordination with the ground unit being supported and target identification by the CAS aircraft. The Air Controller may be flying in special aircraft or may be on the ground with the supported ground unit.

CAS aircraft are most effective against hard, mobile targets. Typical targets are enemy troop concentrations, fixed/hardened positions, and mechanized/airmobile elements in the immediate battle area. Favorable opportunities for CAS occur when enemy forces are on the move and exposed to air attack. There are several CAS Operations Concepts to govern the action:

Support of Offensive Ground Operations. Ground forces on the attack provide one of the best opportunities for CAS. It can provide the firepower needed to breach enemy strongpoints, creating an ideal opportunity for exploitation by friendly ground units. Targets are directed against strong defensive positions, enemy troop concentrations, suspected ambush sites, and other centers of resistance. The enemy must not be permitted to regroup or initiate a counteroffensive.

Support of Ground Exploitation Operations. Breaching enemy defenses must be immediately exploited. Enemy forces on the move attempting to reinforce the breakthrough area will be vulnerable to air attack.

Support of Defensive Ground Operations. CAS may be used to prevent friendly defensive positions from being overrun. CAS can also be used to cover forces pulling back in retrograde movements, and may also cover friendly reconnaissance elements probing into enemy territory for information. These types of missions require positive identification of targets and maximum delivery accuracy to minimize friendly casualties.

As for specific CAS missions:

Airborne/Airmobile Operations. CAS is essential for drop/landing zone preparation and suppressive fire since organic artillery is normally not available during the early stages of the drop/landing. CAS may be required to continue necessary fire support of light troops inserted by parachute or helicopter.

Amphibious Operations. CAS may be necessary to support amphibious forces when they exceed the range of naval gunfire, or if naval gunfire is inadequate or unavailable. Air attacks are conducted prior to the assault to reduce enemy resistance. Further support for the establishment of the beachhead, and assisting the landed troops to break out, are additional CAS tasks.

Ground Movements. Movements of columns may require air cover which can detect ambushes, provide warning to the column, and attack the threatening enemy forces while ground units deploy from column to column to battle formation.

Counter-Mechanized Operations. CAS can disrupt and destroy hostile mechanized forces and formations. Special CAS aircraft are optimized with weapon systems effective against armored vehicles. CAS can attack mechanized forces which are enroute to the battle area, or while grouping together in assembly areas.

AIR INTERDICTIO Operations

Air Interdiction operations can destroy, neutral-
ize or delay the enemy’s military potential before it can be brought to bear effectively against friendly forces, and can restrict the mobility of enemy forces by disrupting their lines of communication. Air Interdiction missions do not require detailed integration with fire and movement of friendly forces since strikes are conducted beyond the range of ground artillery support. The effects of a concerted Air Interdiction campaign may not be immediately apparent; however, enemy forces will lose logistical resupply capability and cannot sustain high tempo offensive operations without appreciable supplies of POL, ammunition and replacement personnel and equipment.

Identification of the enemy’s lines of communication is essential to a successful Air Interdiction effort. Air Interdiction may also delay or prevent reinforcements moving toward the front lines. Denying the enemy the swift employment of exploitation forces may bring a breakthrough offensive to a halt, and will allow friendly forces to continue to engage first echelon enemy forces without being overwhelmed by the enemy’s second echelon units in reinforcement. The objective(s) of Air Interdiction must be planning in relation to the ground situation, and will require good reconnaissance and intelligence support. Normally, only a limited amount of aircraft sortie time is available for Air Interdiction, and must be concentrated on specific targets to have significant impact. Air Interdiction missions must penetrate into enemy territory and inherently are the riskiest since they may be engaged by the full extent of the enemy’s IADS. Penetration support and air escort may be required to give the Air Interdiction aircraft reasonable probability of survival.

Air Interdiction may not achieve complete isolation of the area of conflict, but may rapidly reduce the enemy’s battlefield reserves to critical levels and seriously limit his capability to continue effective action. When offensive friendly ground operations are conducted in combination with Air Interdiction, it accelerates the consumption of the enemy’s materiel and capitalizes on his reduced combat effectiveness.

Air Interdiction operations reduce the enemy’s capability to mount an offensive, restrict the enemy’s freedom of action and increase his vulnerability to friendly attack, and prevents the enemy fromcountering an increase in friendly strength. Interdiction is never complete or permanent. Friendly ground action forces the enemy to use up what forces and material that do arrive. Once the Air Interdiction objective has been reached, the amount of effort required to maintain the campaign may be disproportionate to the results achieved. Enemy defenses will optimally utilise the Air Interdiction routes and targets. Air Interdiction takes the form of two types: Air Strikes and Armed Reconnaissance.

Air Strikes. Strikes against specific targets require target intelligence information for planning. The size of the strike force may be calculated along with target aimpoints, attack/navigation routing, and appropriate weapons to be delivered. Targets may be preplanned (bridges, crossroads, etc.) prior to development of the battle.

Armed Reconnaissance. Armed Recce missions are planned when the exact target location is not certain. Armed Recce missions are flown with the objective of locating and attacking targets of opportunity. The objectives may be located in general areas, or along main lines of communication.

**TACTICAL AIR RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS**

Tactical Air Reconnaissance (Recce) provides an airborne means for collecting intelligence for the ground commander. Classic Recce has utilized cameras mounted in high speed tactical fighters to overfly target areas, then have the film analyzed by

**SUPPLEMENTARY UNITS**

TAC AIR depicts operational Air-Land battle in the VII Corps area of responsibility in the southeastern Federal Republic of Germany. The game includes the units most likely to engage in combat in that area. Not included in the game, but comprising additional forces located near the area are the 4th Canadian Mechanized Brigade and the French I/II Corps, and supporting French air units.

While the Canadian brigade may be used as a reserve in the U.S. V or VII Corps areas, the French ground forces’ appearance is more problematic. They could be anywhere along the Allied Forces Central Europe (AFCENT) front, depending on French commitment, strategy and the progress of the war. Since the use of the Canadian brigade and the French air units in the VII Corps area is the most likely possibility, these are the units provided with The GENERAL. In addition, there are a number of new aircraft counters showing airpower which may find its way over the VII Corps skies during the next few years.

**ADDITIONAL TAC AIR UNITS**

1. French Aircraft: If France fights near the VII Corps area, several types of French aircraft could augment the 4th Allied Tactical Air Force (4ATAF). These French air units can be added to the NATO forces in any of the Master Scenarios if the additional PACT aircraft (see 2. and the SU-27 entries below) are also used to counterbalance them.

Jaguar (NATO 51-53): The Jaguar flies in the air forces of France and Great Britain, and would be a regular in the skies further north. The Jaguar is primarily an attack jet (DAS, Interception, and possibly SEAD orders) which carries a limited bomb load.

Mirage F.1C (NATO 54-55): The Mirage F.1C is France’s standard air defense interceptor. It is capable of night/all-weather air combat operations and carries radar homing missiles (see 11.4.1) on air control missions.

Mirage F.1R (NATO 56): This is the reconnaissance version of the Mirage F.1C. It is a dedicated recon aircraft that is used only for reconnaissance missions (RF).

Mirage 2000 (NATO 57-58): The Mirage 2000 is the replacement for the Mirage 3 and F4F ICE (NATO 33-36): The French have significant numbers of these combat-capable trainers and they are the same as the West German units already included in TAC AIR.

2. Additional PACT Aircraft: The new MiG-23 (PACT 31-33) and MiG-27 (PACT 34-36) units can be added to the PACT forces in any of the Master Scenarios if the French aircraft are also used.

3. Future Aircraft: Air orders of battle are constantly changing as new equipment replaces old. These aircraft could be deployed in the near future by both sides.

SU-27 “Flanker” (PACT 25-30): This is a new air superiority fighter/interceptor currently deployed inside the Soviet Union. It is the size of the F-15 and similar in capability, although it looks more like an F-18 in shape. It is capable of night/all-weather air combat operations and carries radar homing missiles on air control missions. Eventually, it should be deployed into the Central Region and could augment forces at war in East Germany or Czechoslovakia. They can all be added to PACT forces in Master Scenario #12 if the NATO future aircraft are used to replace older units in cases where this is possible. Two units can be added (with the additional PACT aircraft above) in any of the Master Scenarios where the French aircraft are used.

Reconnaissance Drones (NATO 61-62 and PACT 36): These units represent unmanned camera platforms and can be added to the forces of both sides in any desired scenario when option 21.0 is used. The units must be used only with “RF” orders and gather “information” the same as manned recon flights. Because these drones use television cameras for “real time” transmission, no collected “information” is lost if the unit is eliminated. Because of their small size and low radar signature, radar air defense units may not be used to engage them in air defense combat and aircraft with radar homing missiles cannot use them to attack drones. A drone unit is eliminated by a half-flight or entire flight combat effect, but abort results are ignored.

Additional Tornados (NATO 43-44): The West German F-104s were included in TAC AIR largely for variety and historical interest. They may be replaced by these additional Tornado units (which have the same numerical designations) in any scenarios in which they appear.

F-4F ICE (NATO 33-36): The West German F-4Fs are currently being updated with new wings and radar to permit their effective use into the next century. The updated aircraft will be able to carry radar homing missiles on air control missions. The F-4 ICE units can be used to directly replace the F-4F units with the same numerical designation in any scenarios in which they appear.
F-15E (NATO 21-22): The F-15E “Strike Eagle” is approaching “Initial Operational Capability” and should eventually be deployed to U.S. Air Forces Europe (USAFE). The F-15E, with a crew, has a new weather capability, Synthetic Aperture Radar for almost photographic ground mapping ability, computer aided weapons delivery and navigation, and an awesome weapons payload and range. Useful for close air support, the F-15E can alternatively be changed from mission-to-mission for use in “Foreign” (GF) missions, or can carry radar homing missiles for air control missions. The F-15Es can be used to directly replace the A-10 units with the same numerical designation in any Tournament or Master scenario in which they appear.

F-15G (NATO 10-11): Strike Eagle Follow-On Wild Weasel (FOWW) variant is also being considered for the future. These follow the usual Wild Weasel rules except that they can exploit their large bomb load to launch an ARM attack up to every Air Route, rather than only once. The F-15Gs can be used to directly replace the F-4G units with the same numerical designation in Master Scenario #12.

F-117A (NATO 23-24): The supersecret F-117A “Ghostrider”/“Frisbee” stealth fighter, on which hard data is unavailable, invites speculation regarding its probable capabilities. Hard to “see” electronically, it would have to carry a very limited load of ordnance to keep its low radar cross-section. Its relative invisibility will last while using its laser designator to guide other aircraft’s attacks using laser guided bombs. The F-117As can be used to directly replace the A-10 units with the same numerical designation in any scenario in which they appear. Special rules required for this unique aircraft are as follows:

a) The F-117A basically can’t be seen by radar, but is generally attacked by radar air defense units or by radar homing missiles. Still a target for guns or infrared missiles in daylight, the planes are almost invulnerable at night or in bad weather.

b) Despite its underlined “A” factor, the F-117A does not carry radar homing missiles. The underlined “A” factor is, in this case, shown to indicate that it can attack for air combat (fly air control missions) at night or in bad weather.

c) To use its laser designator to guide other aircraft’s laser guided bombs, an F-117A unit’s “B” factor may be added to that of any other single air unit’s factor for air support combat by other air unit if the F19A is within two hexes of the target when the other unit attacks. This can be done repeatedly with different other units and in addition to the F-117A’s own attack.

4. Canadian 4th Mechanized Brigade: This formation can be added to the NATO forces on in Master Scenario #12.

Editor’s Note: The counters for these new units are found on the accompanying die-cut counter sheet (enclosed for SUBSCRIBERS only). Those readers who are not subscribers may purchase the counter sheet—which contains 130 variant counters for upcoming arms races as well—direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please specify the counter sheet “The GENERAL, Vol. 25, No. 2” and enclose $3.00 (usual shipping and handling charges apply).

Photo-interpreters. Photographic Reconnaissance is still a primary mission for most Tactical Air Reconnaissance units. It is being supplemented by new sensors which can detect information at night or at greater distances than were possible with standard photographic means. Also, new means of getting the information back in real time, or near real time, have made it possible to minimize the delay inherent with a returning aircraft and photo processing/analysis. Even if the aircraft is lost to enemy defenses, the information has already been sent back for utilization.

More emphasis is currently being placed on unmanned recon drones which make smaller targets and can overwhelm adversary air defenses by sheer numbers. Modern technology has continued to introduce more sensors (such as the U-2, SR-71, FOXBAT, etc.) which collect imagery or electronic emissions from deep battlefields at long range. With detailed airborne intelligence, ground and air commanders are better able to plan friendly operations and counter enemy air defenses. Air reconnaissance supplements the intelligence and recon information derived from ground sensors and units such as Long Range Recon Patrols, electronic intelligence, forward observers, and combat reports from ground units in action.

Tactical Air Reconnaissance is a dedicated operational mission to many squadrons in air forces worldwide with specially configured aircraft mounting cameras and sensors. Other air forces prefer to add this as an additional mission to attack or air superiority squadrons by mounting special recce pods on the aircraft when reconnaissance missions need to be flown.

The former concept offers usually more capable, dedicated recon squadrons. The latter concept offers flexibility by configuring aircraft for another role when it is not flying Recon missions. Dedicated recon platforms usually need all the speed possible, and the phrase “Alone, Unarmed, and Afraid” has become the motto of reconnaissance. Aircraft flying recon pods may or may not be armed, and adversary fighters may avoid engaging such Recon sorties, mistaking them for armed aircraft on other missions.

There are several Tactical Air Recon missions, among them:

Battlefield Surveillance. Recon aircraft may be tasked to overfly or fly near suspected enemy assembly areas, to identify possible attacks. Overflight of assault objective areas and routes may reveal the presence of enemy defenses, their type and strength. Reconnaissance missions over marshaling yards and along lines of communication may show enemy intentions for an upcoming offensive, or the flow of reinforcements/replacements in a particular sector of the battlefield.

Pre/Post Strike Reconnaissance. Pre-strike recon is used for the “before,” while post-strike recon is used for the “after” with air strikes are planned and conducted against enemy targets. By comparing the condition of the target just prior to attack with its condition just after the attack, an accurate assessment of actual target damage can be concluded.

Strike Control and Reconnaissance (SCAR). SCAR is a concept which puts a recon aircraft in the role of a type of flying forward air controller, only against interdiction-type targets farther behind enemy lines. The recce arrives in the target area first, identifies targets, and passes targeting information to the inbound attack aircraft for engagement.

TACTICAL AIRLIFT OPERATIONS

Tactical Airlift performs the obvious mission of airdrop resupply. This may be the movement of material and men from airheads or ports to forward staging/resupply points. Other resupply may be to airborne, airmobile or amphibious forces who may depend totally on airlift for logistical support, having no other line of communication. Tactical Airlift may also be used to evacuate wounded or troops cut off from any other form of retreat. Tactical Airlift’s most direct contribution to the airborne delivery of special forces, airborne or airmobile troops—normally behind enemy lines.

BALANCING THE TACTICAL AIR MISSIONS

This article can’t presume to tell you how to specifically employ your fighters in TAC AIR. The above synopsis of tactical air doctrine will give you some general guidelines for ways to approach the problems. If you read and understand what has been presented above, you will have an advantage over an opponent who has never heard of these concepts and is unfamiliar with the missions over a modern battlefield. Doctrine differs from tactics in that it lists things to consider which should work well in the majority of situations. Tactics specifically apply doctrine to the particular situation at hand. Only you can begin to formulate your own doctrine or apply that described in this article, bear in mind two things: what is happening with your own forces, and the enemy’s forces/intentions. One of the secrets of successful employment of tactical airpower is second-guessing the opponent and what you are up to.

The Advanced Game of TAC AIR has the full gamut of tactical air missions. We have tried to give you at least a small appetizer of each mission when possible in the Basic Game. Of vital significance even in the Basic Game is CAS! Whether you are the Soviets on the roll, or NATO on defense, CAS will be a major factor in the ground battle with immediately apparent results. Each side has a limited number of special CAS jets (A-10 or FROGFOOT). Major CAS efforts will necessitate drawing your other fighter-bombers away from Counter-Air or Air Interdiction missions.

Tank and Mechanized battalions are fairly hard targets, and it will take some significant CAS assets to hurt them severely. Artillery is somewhat softer and CAS can damage it more effectively. Depriving your opponent of his artillery will make a big difference! CAS attacks on soft command units can be deadly, and can create confusion of brigade/brigade REGIMENT size. If brigade/regiment supply units poke too far forward, CAS can quickly eliminate them, causing manpower units to lose their staying power. This is called “Battlefield Air Interdiction”, which is a hybrid of CAS and Air Interdiction. When employing your CAS forces, watch out for the deadly troop air defenses! Concentrations of mobile SAMs can quickly devastate your vital CAS aircraft. Also, watch out for major counter-air efforts by your opponent to clear the skies of your jets so he can begin his attack campaign. Remember the principle of concentration! Identify and built up your major forces, and direct your CAS to key targets. CAS can knock out enemy defenses. You won’t achieve much by spreading your CAS aircraft thin all along the front.

Before ground forces engage, one of the best missions for your airpower is Counter-Air. The shallow depth of the Tactical Air battle field doesn’t depict the airfields in the rear areas, nor does it allow attacking them. TAC AIR was designed to show combat in the Forward Edge of the Battle Area (FEBA) its former name as an Air Force game. With airfield attack out of the picture, you may elect to fly Fighter Sweeps with your jets loaded up for air combat, or you might try to conduct a SEAD campaign by knocking out some key SAM sites which will later take their toll on your CAS and Interdiction missions. If you think the enemy will be trying to soften up your forces in anticipation of an impend-
ing attack, you may decide to send up some CAP flights to stay over your own lines and engage enemy attack flights. Again, concentration is essential. Task your strongest air combat jets in the Counter-Air role—normally jets are strong in either air combat (air-to-air) or attack (air-to-ground), but usually not both. Newer aircraft like the F-16, F-18, F-15E Strike Eagle, and UH-60A Black Hawk are being produced with strong capability in both roles and offer the air commander ultimate flexibility.

Air Interdiction and CAS both come into high demand once the battle has been joined, and the primary main effort has been identified. Counter-Air continues to be significant, both for intercepting and destroying enemy attack missions and for the escort of friendly attack missions against hostile intercept. Escorting fighters are limited in flexibility by being tied to the attacking aircraft, but can help ensure the success of their mission against enemy engagement. Combining escorted attack forces with Fighter Sweeps as a part of the Escort portion of the Interdiction role—usually jets are a dual role—makes sense. They can provide some tactical intelligence about what is happening to combat power, Tactical Air interceptions will do the job, but only succeed if the right aircraft is in the right place at the right time. So, you must have enough good air combat jets to do both. You can't fly your jets every game turn; they must stand down the following game turn for fuel and ordinance. You must have a plan in mind for which jets will fly particular combat turns. You can use a small number of good jets over the battlefield by rotating flights in the air and on the ground. Your other option is to surge and fly everything in one game turn—"The Gorilla".

Although you as the player can see most of what's going on down on the battlefield (unless you are playing an "Umpired" game), you would need behind enemy lines to consider launching Air Interdiction missions. You can attack hard combat units on roads moving toward the front and cause some minor disruption, or you can hit division command and supply units toward the rear. Air Interdiction fighters are exposed to more unpredictable elements of weather and airborne air defenses, making them a much riskier proposition.
In the past, we’ve dazzled you with the brilliance of experienced players maneuvering skillfully in more “Series Replays” than we care to count. This is fine if you’ve mastered a game sufficiently to follow the flow and understand what the heck the “experts” are talking about; but what if your level of play is less than that? What can you really expect from a first playing? That’s why Mr. Taylor decided to try something completely different when I pestered him for a SR for this issue.

In this article, a bizarre experiment that slipped by a napping editor, we look at a dark side of wargaming that few wargamers wish to discuss in mixed company. Yes . . . we’re talking less-than-brilliant play. Before anyone can play really good, even the most experienced gamer must first, sometime and somewhere, have played really bad—even if only in his first session with a new game. Any game is mastered through repeated playings and the hard knocks delivered by unforgiving opponents. This replay is the reporting of a game in which three experienced gamers flailed around until they had completed playing TAC AIR for the first time. Craig and they have concentrated less on their exact movements and tactics than previous replayers (although the chart reports all these), and more on first impressions: what the newcomers liked, what they disliked, and what they learned during their first playing. These observations might save the attentive reader from making the same common mistakes during his own first playing of this fascinating new game.

Bruce Korn took the part of American commander. The Soviet comments are the combined observations of Jay Wissmann (who commanded the Russian ground forces) and Mike Montemorano (who ran the air defense and air units). All three are long-time players from our weekly miniature game sessions, and though perhaps unfamiliar with this particular game as yet—have many years of gaming experience behind them. And all three are quick at thinking on their feet. Craig Taylor provides the voice of calm reason; his comments are in italics.

TAC AIR integrates direct land combat, artillery, air defense, command and supply with air operations through some unique mechanics and the sequence of play. Briefly, to help in understanding the game, these systems operate as follows:

**Preparation Stage:** Basically, this is a “busy work” stage, with a number of steps. “Disruption” (combat hits on units) can be removed automatically (by being a headquarters unit or being adjacent to one) or by a die roll that can be made only if supplied (i.e., within the supply span of a supply unit). Supplied air defense and artillery units may be flipped from their depleted/sold sides. Air units are advanced on their readiness tracks (effectively, this means air units are available for operations every other game turn) and, if ready, moved into boxes that define their missions for the upcoming turn. Just before moving his own ground units, each player flips all the eligible ground and helicopter units to their “moving” side. Units which are beyond their headquarter’s command span and all those with “2 + Disruption” must be flipped to their non-moving side.

**Maneuver Phase:** One side does this, then resolves all resulting combats, followed by the other side repeating the procedure. During this phase, all ground and helicopter units capable of movement (flipped to their moving side) are moved. Helicopter units in range and line of sight of air defense units may be fired at as they are moved. Everytime an air defense unit fires, there is a roll for “depletion” to see if it expends its ammunition, but otherwise these units may fire as many times as desired and possible. Before maneuver combats (i.e., direct ground combats between adjacent units) are resolved, any artillery in range may be fired at involved units, or for the non-phasing side use “counter-battery fire” to neutralize firing enemy artillery. Since disrupted units cannot attack, successful defensive fire can seriously influence the odds of an attack (or even totally prevent it). Successful offensive artillery fire can result in extra disruptions on a defending unit and “set it up for the kill” when the ground forces roll in. Artillery
may be fired only once per turn, after which it is flipped to its "fired" side. Ground and helicopter units may not be stacked—since every unit is in full view, this eliminates remaining command control and supply relatively quick and simple.

Air Phase: After both sides have performed their Maneuver Phases, the Air Phase is performed in ten "Air Rounds." All air units must enter or exit the mapboard from prescribed board edges during the course of this phase. During each air round, the players alternate attacking units. As with helicopters, defense units may be fired at air units in their range of sight as the air units are moved. Air units that were placed in the "Air Control" box during the Preparation Phase are basically used to intercept and attack enemy aircraft. Air units that were placed in the "Close Air Support" box during the Preparation Phase can have a variety of air missions (air defense suppression, reconnaissance, interdiction, etc.), but in a scenario of this size are most likely to have a "Direct Air Support" mission to attack enemy ground units. An air unit may be used to attack only once per turn, and there may be one or two air units per hex. A "Direct Air Support" mission requires a cavalry/recon, headquarter or helicopter unit close enough to the enemy target to act as a "forward air controller" for the attack. This FAC unit was secretly noted during the Preparation Phase (if eliminated, the air units cannot attack). Probably the most unusual feature of TAC AIR is the number of times a unit may be attacked in one turn. The same target unit can be blasted by artillery, directly attacked by ground units, then repeatedly bombed by air units. Four disruptions equal an elimination. Other important factors for players include taking a close look at the command and supply structures and the locations and ranges of the air defense units of the enemy force—looking for vulnerable targets for air attacks that can greatly affect his play. New players frequently concentrate their air support on enemy front-line units but, as Bruce shows on Turn 3 of this game, there are often more valuable and more vulnerable targets.

INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

After cleaning out the Taylor larder like so many ravenous wolves, the players arrange themselves carelessly around the table and prepare to play Scenario 1. Ignoring the instructions to play the Basic Game first, the players are going right into the Advanced Rules.

American: The game appears pretty challenging. I'm impressed by the overall look of the game, especially by the amount of information on the counters. Unfortunately, Carig's lighting system throws a glare on the map and hex numbers are somewhat hard to read here. [Someone must like these cheap dining room chandeliers; there's been one in almost every apartment that I've ever rented.] The game looks as pretty straightforward, but I wish I knew the rules on how to play a "game of record." Soviets: Neato! the game system seems an interesting mix of old reliable concepts and new innovations. Simulating the mixing of air and land units has always been difficult at best. One either gets generic "air points," or—at the other end of the spectrum—provides ground units only as targets for plunder. TAC AIR looks like it may be a bit more ... we shall see.

SET-UP

The Americans are set up first in this scenario, followed by the Soviets. Experienced players of this scenario fall into two schools of thought for setting up the NA/ID sides. One school favors setting a forward defense (the strategy adopted by Bruce in this game) for maximum delay but risking unit losses; the other favors a tight defense around the objective that is easier for the air units to support (but risks a quick defeat with no room for maneuver and the consequent Soviet capture of the objective).

American: I will attempt to set up a perimeter defense, "collapsing" (hopefully, not a poor choice of words) toward the objective hxx T22. The engineer can be trained to stuff the defense of the town at Q15, then fall back to spread the bridges toward T22. I foresee problems in my air defense, since I have only the one unit—although it is very long-range.

Soviets: 6th Guards Tank Division Briefing stresses that Hex T22 is the objective hex. Each ground unit on the hex gets two disruptions (a "D2" victory point). The biggest problem is the large section of "dirty" terrain in the center of the board. The possible approaches are: 1) the road M11 through Dreisch-seckidorf to T12, 2) the road R6 to T22, 3) a wide right hook through Hassfurt, or 4) breach the Main at Lichtenfels and motor down the left bank. Option 1 runs through a three-hex city, so we’ll avoid that. Option 2 has merit—maybe. Option 3, running around grandmother’s house with a time limit—no, not tonight. Option 4 sounds good, especially coupled with a secondary force using Option 2 to keep the capitalistic swine off our right flank.

Americans: (Again): Oops! Mistake number one as the Soviets set up. I realize that the corner of Board A is actually part of East Germany and is, in fact, eligible for enemy unit placement.

TURN 1

The Soviets move first in this scenario.

Preparation Phase: Not much to do during this phase at the game’s start. The Soviets give both MIG-29 flights direct air support orders. The American puts F-16 flight #14 into air superiority and gives direct air support orders to A-10 flight #10.

Soviet Maneuver Phase: The 3/51 Tank Battalion is moved adjacent to the Main River, and the 2/22 Motorized Rifle units are threatening the C/2C Armored Cavalry Squadron with encirclement. The only weak point is our holding the corner with just the 3/51 Tank. No combat.

American Maneuver Phase: Some adjustments to cover those forces coming out of the corner that I didn’t realize was East Germany. I’m using my helicopters to cover the Main River approaches.

Soviet Air Phase: Entering at hex Y1, the two MIG-29 flights operate together. I’m sending them in to lift some scalps in front of our heroic Artillery! Blasts the 2C helicopter unit for "D1", and I wasf the 22nd helicopter unit as their FAC.

American Air Phase: The F-16 fails to catch the MIG-29s and the A-10 unit attacks 2/51 Tank Battalion and misses. At least my air defense unit didn’t realize was East Germany. I’m using my 2C helicopter unit (one disruption) and clear out the 2C helicopter unit is in trouble. Two disruption levels, so the unit can move or attack and loses its zone of control; it also had to be flipped to its non-moving—weaker side. At least a disrupted unit doesn’t have to attack adjacent enemies due to its lack of a ZOC.

Soviet Air Phase: I sent the moving Apache helicopter unit with my SA-13s (air defense unit 51) as Bruce moved it during his Maneuver Phase. My capitalist-seeking air defense missiles successfully targeted one for me, but frankly, I got scared the entire air raid klaxon goes off. My Frogfoot manages to avoid the Hawk air defense unit (A/3/7) this time and get a “D1” on the 2C Armored unit.

American Air Phase: No air movement this turn. It’s amazing how even one disruption can turn a unit in this game in a "munitions magnet." Can I blame one on the dice?

TURN 2

The NATO defense line looks very porous. Bruce is trying to hold a very long line and may get some units encircled.

Preparation Phase: The 2/2C Armored Cavalry Squadron is unable to remove its one disruption (a unit with one disruption cannot attack). The Soviets give direct air support orders to both SU-25 units and the American decides to keep his two available flights on the ground while the aircraft used on Turn 1 are readied.

Soviet Maneuver Phase: Bruce is moving to cover my approach but, perhaps, not quickly enough. C/2C’s disruption remains—we attack! The 2/6 Artillery Battery blasts C/2C—a miss. Then the 1/51 and 2/51 Tank Battalions attack the 3/2C Motorized Rifle Battalion in maneuver combat—a “D2”, yaah! This makes for a total of three disruptions, so C/2C is in big trouble. The 1/6 Artillery misses the enemy 2C helicopter unit, but the maneuver combat against it by the 3/51 Tank causes a “D2” (on a roll of “1”). However, the American sky artillery fired defensively to push through it is worth a victory point. The American 3/51 Tank and 2/22 Motorized Rifle battalions then attack, getting a “A1” (which I put on the 2/22d).

American Maneuver Phase: Well, my 2C helicopter unit survives another turn, but just barely. My line is certainly “collapsing”, but not as I had hoped. However, there is a chink in his armor that I hope to exploit during the Air Phase. His 51 SAM unit missed my moving helicopters again—guess...
he'll just have to shoot the battery commander. My 223rd helicopter attacks the 1/6th Artillery Supply unit (each artillery battalion has its own supply unit), and a supply unit with two or three disruptions cannot be used to flip the artillery unit from its fired side—i.e., no supply and puts "D2" on it. [both supply and headquarters units have low factors, being 'soft targets' and almost any combat unit can easily add a good attack on them], as well as moving within six hexes of their division headquarters (i.e., close enough to "see" it, so acting as a FAC). The Soviets have nothing in the air this turn. The Americans have all four flights ready to attack in two groups—one with the two A-10s and one with the two F-16s. Soviet Air Phase: I just came to the horrible realization that the division headquarters is back too far. It's not covered by our air defense umbrella and the entire USAF seems to be coming in loaded for this turn.

American Air Phase: Using my 223rd helicopter unit as my forward air controller, I figure there is a bit of one-third chance that I can destroy the Soviet division headquarters and stop his advance in its tracks. [The Soviet division headquarters is the Soviet's "overall" headquarters in this scenario. If eliminated, the other subordinate Soviet headquarters will have to be flipped to their non-moving sides and left there for the duration. Although this will not totally stall the Soviets, it will prevent any of their combat units from advancing beyond the ten-hex command radius of the headquarters and greatly restrict the Soviet ability to maneuver.] The F-16s lose a half-flight to his only in-range air defense unit, but go in and get "D1" on the headquarters. Then, the A-10s roll in and get "D2" on the headquarters—a total of three disruptions, but I missed the essential elimination.

**TURN 4**

Preparation Phase: The Soviet divisional headquarters automatically removes one disruption level—it will not be able to move, but still exists. Die rolls also remove a disruption from the 6th helicopter unit. All other die rolls fail or recovery is not possible and the units maintain their disrupted status.

Soviet Maneuver Phase: The KGB pushes me forward, ignoring the 223rd helicopter unit. I surround it from a distance, cutting it off from its headquarters so it won't be able to move anymore. My attacks have some small success, and the American cavalry should now move forward pressure.

American Maneuver Phase: The 223rd helicopter unit is cut off and unable to move; the 2C helicopter unit, now with three disruptions, is doomed, but will last a turn longer than I thought. My engineer also absorbed three disruptions—they're great fighters in towns but (with these die rolls) in woods they have the defensive skills of tryaps. Craig thinks we have enough for a fair article now [full scenario length is eight turns] so I am allowed to surrender gracefully.

**FINAL COMMENTS**

Bruce: To paraphrase, "Getting there is half the fun." I liked the game, but was really excited TAC AIR to be more of FLIGHT LEADER. More accurately, it should be titled "OP (for operational) AIR". The game definitely has some unusual features. The rules are well written, which is frustrating to the dedicated "rules lawyer". Many of the optional rules look very interesting. Without simultaneous movement, the side with the initiative gets essentially an extension of their air mission ranges. Thus, on Turn 1, the Mig-29s were able to come on, bomb, and get away before my air control F-16 could reach them. For this scenario, this may make it more attractive for the NATO player to set up south of row 17.

The inability of units with two or more disruption levels to move (to retreat, in my case) takes some getting used to. In combat, the attackers seem to have quite a large advantage. The worst that can happen to an attacking ground unit is an "A1" result. This enables a single hit allowing any number of defenders, while other attackers mass to get large "D" results.

All-in-all, with just a little imagination, it is easy to see that the key to this game is combined arms attacks/multiple air attacks. This can eliminate units in two numbers. Pure defense has to be combined with judicious counterattacks for the Americans to win this scenario.

Jay: In general, my initial impressions were borne out. TAC AIR displays the interaction of air and ground units. I do have some reservations (I served for two years with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Germany) concerning the cavalry's ability to disengage. I think that the flank selected for our attack in the best Soviet forces. But I'll reserve final judgment until I've tried the others in future games.

Mike: I think the result would be very different if we were all fully familiar with the system. I think Jay picked up the mechanics more quickly than anyone else, and coupled with his magnificent die-rolling that magnified Bruce's early errors, it showed in the final result. Next time, we could easily leave the countryside littered with burning BMPs. Of the inevitable assistance of Madman Michael, the Commissar, was priceless. I'm going to play this again soon, and next time I'll remember to cover the headquarters with air defense units. Even Russkies can learn from their mistakes!

**TURN-BY-TURN POSITIONS**

The following charts show the hex location of each unit—NATO and PACT—following movement during their respective half of each game turn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NATO Unit</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Set-Up</th>
<th>Turn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9th Engineer</td>
<td>P15</td>
<td>R20</td>
<td>W18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>223rd Helicopter</td>
<td>M13</td>
<td>W15</td>
<td>A11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/7 Supply</td>
<td>Y18</td>
<td>Y18</td>
<td>W21</td>
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<td>2/51 Tank</td>
<td>V12</td>
<td>Y15</td>
<td>Y15</td>
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<tr>
<td>15th Artillery</td>
<td>S13</td>
<td>U16</td>
<td>T18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/6 Artillery</td>
<td>S16</td>
<td>T19</td>
<td>T23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONTEST #144**

Every wargamer knows how important the initial set-up can be, and for TAC AIR this may be even more true than usual—especially when playing in a cut-out. Bruce's 2nd Turn in the Replay in this issue points out, an overlooked factor can lead to a disaster that even the best play cannot avoid. Game-winning strategy demands efficient use of all assets, and this begins with the set-up. The premise of this contest is fairly straightforward: set up the NATO ground forces for Scenario One of TAC AIR in the best possible manner to win. All rules of the game and for "Deployment" for this scenario must be adhered to in crafting a set-up. (Note that, while there is no "perfect" or "correct" set-up, there are certain precepts of good strategy we will be using in judging the entries.)

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or as a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Simply indicate the hex location of each NATO unit in the space available. Ten winning entries will receive a merchandise credit voucher 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 contest. The solution to Contest 144 will appear in Vol. 25, No. 3 and the list of winners in Vol. 25, No. 4 of The GENERAL.

**REVOLUTION**

If you've played and enjoyed KREMLIN, but miss all the fun fellows that brought Communism out of the dusty corridors of academia and into the hearts of the people, you're just the thing for you. You'll want to expand your horizons with Avalon Hill's deck of historical variant cards for the game, depicting caricatures of such lovely folk as Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky, Lauretta Beir and old Vladimir Lenin himself. In all, 26 new politicians crawl out of the pages of history to help you purge, plot and power your way to the top in Revolution, the KREMLIN variant. And if you need help getting them to the top, Don Greenwood included a complete set of new Intrigue cards, designed to reflect historical realities. If the historical characters don't appeal to you, the Revolution variant cards will greatly enhance your play of the contemporary game through the added possibilities of a combined Intrigue deck to draw from.

The Revolution Variant Kit is available for $8.00, plus the usual 10% for shipping and handling (20% for Canadian, and 30% for overseas orders). It can be ordered direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Hartford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

Well, there you have it—the likes of gripes and lessons learned in the initial contact with an innovative new game. Despite the fact that I was present at the game, the boys picked up on it very quickly and I had few questions to answer. As a matter of fact, I spent most of my time reading a book. As stated at the start, this type of article is a new approach to Series Replays, so we'll be interested in getting the readers' reaction to the new format. In some ways, even though he lost, Bruce did much better than I did the first time I played TAC AIR, but I'll just end this article on that observation and not elaborate.
Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I realize of course that The GENERAL is primarily a wargaming magazine, and as such concentrates primarily on the "games" aspect of wargaming—as well it should. But in Vol. 24, No. 6, Jon Mishcon's "Squad Leader Clinic" strayed into the realm of reality when he described some of the effects of shaped-charge weapons work. Unfortunately, he left readers with the wrong impression on how HEAT really works.

The first thing one must realize is that "HEAT" is just a useful acronym and shaped charges do not burn through armor plate. A HEAT projectile would not melt or burn through the armor plate of an object using an oxy-acetylene torch how long it would take for that oxygen-acetylene torch to melt or burn through the armor plate of an object. An oxy-acetylene torch is a very inefficient and unproductive method of doing this. The explosives and collapses a hollow cone toward the explosive and collapses a hollow cone toward the target, and as such, the explosive does not have the time to melt or burn through the armor plate of an object. If one proceeds as in the actions listed in Rule 12.5, the Normans now hold three options to melt or burn through the armor plate of an object. If one proceeds as in the actions listed in Rule 12.5, the Normans now hold three options. If one proceeds as in the actions listed in Rule 12.5, the Normans now hold three options.

Thornton. Colorado

E. Y. Stone

Dear Don:

I agree with most everything you had to say about the Avalon Hill Championships. I like tournaments where I can compete against the best players, but I no longer have the time to commit to a PBM tournament. I like the contra...
people on moral grounds, but South Africa can be Western industry to allow human rights to be the very good place to make money. Furthermore, South Africa’s fortunes are tied less to the overrated force of world opinion than to its own vast natural resources and the tenacity of the Afrikaner people. Inconvenienced the South African government may be by world opinion and sanctions; still it is in control of its own destiny.

The foremost South African natural resource is its location on the Cape of Good Hope. The first Dutch settlers came to the Cape in 1652 to establish a way station for ships plying the trade between the Netherlands and the East Indies. Today, enormous amounts of oil flow from the Middle East, around the Cape, and to ports in Europe and North America. Though domestic politics might make it expedient for the United States and Western Europe to sever all contact with South Africa and watch dispassionately as varied ethnic and ideological factions vie for control, the Cape is strategically too important to concede to other parties possibly hostile to the West and its economic interests. Thus, despite all of the West’s anti-apartheid rhetoric and talk of divestment, South Africa enjoys at least its tacit support.

South Africa’s underground resources are similarly vital and increase its importance. It is the world’s leading source of gold, producing three-quarters of the non-Communist world’s output during the seventies. Diamonds are another leading asset, as are strategic minerals such as chromium, manganese, nickel and uranium. These fuel an economy that, despite periodic slowing, is the strongest and most vibrant in sub-Saharan Africa. This makes it a profitable and generally safe area for foreign investment. Divestment may make good sense to many people on moral grounds, but South Africa can be a very good place to make money. Furthermore, South African mineral exports are too important to Western industry to allow human rights to be the only concern of foreign policy.

The South Africans have adroitly used the blessings of nature to insure the security of their country. The economy is an excellent example. There are other countries in Africa with comparable natural resources, but they lack the cohesiveness and economic aptitude of the South Africans, white and black. States such as Zaire, the Sudan and Angola labor under the burdens of rampant tribalism, economic misinvestment and mismanagement, and (especially in the case of Zaire) rampant corruption, as well as the tribalism and ethnic competition that is present over nearly the entire continent. Even if one allows for the factor of intrusive foreign influence, the bottom line is that South Africa has proven far more capable of tapping its resources than any other country south of the Sahara. Unpalatable as it may be to white South Africa’s many opponents, it is a major reason for its continued existence.

As well as a major economic force, South Africa is a regional military juggernaut. It has been able to circumvent international arms embargoes, and what it has not been able to purchase abroad it has manufactured at home. Furthermore, Afrikaner identity and cultural traits give the South African Defence Force (SADF) a high degree of cohesiveness and excellent morale. Together with excellent mobility, flexibility and firepower, these make the SADF’s Africa’s best military establishment.

South Africa’s population is 33,241,000 (1986 estimate). Whites number only 18%, but are the only people to enjoy full citizenship and completely dominate the country. Asians, primarily Indians, are 3% of the population; and mixed-race “Coloureds” are 10%. The tri-cameral legislature has separate houses for Asians and Coloureds, but only the whites have the power to pass nationally significant legislation. Blacks constitute 68% of South Africa’s people. They are denied both enfranchisement and the rudiments of citizenship, and their role in the economy is primarily one of cheap and abundant menial labor. The objective of apartheid is to perpetuate this situation and prevent the blacks from effectively challenging the whites for any type of power.

Officially, South Africa tends to blame all facets of its conflict with most of the rest of the world on the struggle between Western liberty and capitalism and Communism. To an extent, this is true—as the USSR and its allies are interested in the Cape and its resources, simple because anything so important to the West would attract the attention of its rival. But the primary factor is ethnicity. Blacks generally want citizenship and meaningful power in South Africa, and the Coloured and Asian populations wish to improve their own subordinate positions. The Afrikaner-led whites aim to forestall the blacks, make minimal concessions to the others, and preserve their status as the rulers and owners of South Africa. Communism does play a part in the struggle in South Africa because ethnic conflict provides a perfect opportunity. Race is, without doubt, the independent variable.

Moreover, there are ethnic divisions that affect social dynamics within even the black cause. The blacks are divided into distinct ethnic groups (for example, the Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana and Sotho). Ethnic considerations can have profound effects on the prospects for black unity. The most important example of tribalism in politics is the ongoing feud between Inkatha, the Zulu-dominated movement led by the Zulu chief Golsha Buthelezi, and the most powerful black organization, the African National Congress (ANC). Relations between Inkatha and the ANC have long been strained, and there have been instances of violent clashes between members of both organizations.

Likewise, the white population is hardly an ethnic monolith. Some 57% of white South Africans are Afrikaners, 39% are of British extraction, and 4% belong to other ethnic groups (such as Portuguese and some non-British Jews). Though other white groups are vital to South Africa, it is the Afrikaners who dominate it. The Afrikaners are so inexorably tied to South Africa that Afrikaner nationalism and South African nationalism are virtually one and the same.

AFRIKANERS AND APARTHEID

The Afrikaner nation has its roots in the seventeenth century, when colonists from the Netherlands landed at the Cape of Good Hope. In the centuries to come, the Dutch, isolated from the far more settled and liberal mother countries, evolved a
Apartheid was a policy of segregation and discrimination implemented primarily in South Africa from 1948 to 1994 by the National Party, which sought to maintain the social, economic, and political dominance of Afrikaners, the White South Africans of Dutch origin. It was based on the racial ideology of apartheid, which divided South Africa into a black-ruled homeland, a separately administered Black Nationalist homeland, and a white-ruled state. The policy institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination in every aspect of South African life, including education, employment, housing, and law enforcement.

The black people of South Africa were systematically excluded from the political process. They were denied the right to vote, hold public office, or serve in the military. They were also subject to racial segregation in all aspects of life, including education, housing, and employment. The policy was maintained until the late 1980s, when international pressure and internal opposition led to its abolition in 1994.

The threat of the Afrikaner homeland is Africa. They have not been extended to the Khoikhoi (Hotentots) and incoming Xhosa. Indeed, the British were only trying to Anglicize the Afrikaner people. That the blacks were also subjects of the same British cultural chauvinism was of no comfort. The Afrikaners rebelled in 1806 and in 1812, in neither case with any success.

However, the armed revolt was not the archetypal Afrikaner response to British domination. The response most vivid in the collective Afrikaner memory is the "Trek". The Trek was led by the Afrikaners who populated Cape Colony, to which the Afrikaner people pulled up stakes and migrated into the as-yet-ungoverned interior. To South Africa, the trek wagon is even stronger a national symbol than is the very similar Conestoga wagon to the western Americans.

The Voortrek, the single greatest migration of Afrikaners from Cape, took place from 1834 to 1856. Although general British superiority was the underlying cause, the specific issues driving the Afrikaners north was race. Britain halted the importation of West African slaves in 1807 and extended internal protection to blacks the next year. Emancipation came to the Cape in 1833, and some Afrikaners promptly left. The trekkers represented a distinct minority of the Cape's Afrikaner population, and were mainly the poorest farmers from the northern frontiers. In the 1850s, the two countries founded by these trekkers, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, were recognized by Great Britain.

The relationship between the Afrikaners and the blacks is of crucial importance. The traditional Afrikaner view assigns blacks to two types of roles: subordinates or enemies. The first colonists brought West African slaves with them. In 1879, there were 1100 slaves to only 1800 Dutchmen. By 1795, slaves came to outnumber whites by about 17000 to 15000. (By this time the whites were thinking of themselves as Afrikaners, and not just as Dutchmen who happened to live outside the Netherlands.)

Blacks continued to serve as inexpensive labor even after the end of slavery. Menial labor became the domain of blacks (even as it did in the United States), and unbecoming the dignity of the white man, which he thought himself as born to rule. The corollary was that the better jobs were unquestioningly reserved for whites. In the nineteenth century this was connected with the linguistic practice of calling black Africans "kpepsels" ("creatures") as opposed to men ("people"). The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa supported the subjection of blacks in 1797, and even the rejection of this doctrine was done in such a way as to hardly be mistaken for an unequivocal endorsement of racial equality.

The second essential view of the black is as a mortal enemy. As the Afrikaners trekked north, they encountered migrating blacks that desired the same land. The blacks had the advantage of numbers and, especially the Zulus, could be well-organized and competently led. Nor did the Afrikaners have a monopoly on courage.

If the first view of the African blacks has a basis in contempt, the second has its roots in fear. Enemy blacks are perceived as subhuman horrors, terrible foes of God's chosen people, who in the end might be overwhelmed. The enduring cultural image of the response to black enemies is the laager. Literally, the laager is the circling of the trek wagons, then主帅 a wooden fort. On another level, it reflects the stubborn resolve of the Afrikaners to fight against a foe more some and barbaric enemy. Retreat is not an option. No allies are going to come and save the day (as the U.S. cavalry did for beleaguered American wagon trains in the movies). All depends on the ability of the people within the laager to persevere. This image applies as readily today, as the Afrikaners see themselves surrounded by a multitude of determined enemies, as it did during the voortrek era.

One Afrikaner characteristic must always be borne in mind when analyzing events in South Africa. The Afrikaner homeland is Africa. They have not been Dutch since sometime in the eighteenth century, and the Netherlands is even less of a homeland for the Afrikaners than England is for the Americans. There is no longer a place for them to trek away from their problems, and there is no retreat to Europe. Today's Afrikaner nation is not sufficiently able to survive, than at any other time in its history, and when South Africa's foreign opponents have moved on to newer and trendier moral outrages, the Afrikaner survival urge will not have diminished.

Apartheid is the reason why South Africa has become a partial state. It is the political and legal enforcement of discrimination on South Africa. It is a peculiarly Afrikaner problem. It is much more than simple segregation or institution-"ized racism, however. Apartheid and the very efficient enforcement of its sometimes draconian strictures are major components of the modern laager. It defends the crafty quest for a traditionally recognizable black African as needed workers and as dangerous rivals.

Apartheid has its roots in the early nineteenth century, when internal passports were first required of blacks. It was formalized in the early 1950s as a coherent official policy. The first of two critical laws was the "Rolls Act of 1950", which allowed the government to create segregation where it did not previously exist by forcing people in the "wrong" areas to move. The "Bantu Authorities Act of 1951" established the ethnic-based "homelands" for blacks. For the most part, these end up either being under the control of a region where much of the terrain is unkind to tracked vehicles. These are principally the French Panhard and the very similar South African Land Rover. For training purposes the South African army also owns Soviet-built T-34/85, T-54, T-55 and PT-76 tanks, as well as some BRDM-2 armoured cars.

The army's fire support is centered on advanced howitzers. Italy has reportedly sold South Africa's military may be fairly small, but it meets very high standards, despite foreign arms embargoes and chronic manpower shortages. It is the best in the region, and one of the best in the world.

The SADF's manpower is divided into four categories according to terms of service. The "Permanent Force" is its professional core and, although it consists overwhelmingly of white males, includes some white female and black units. Instituted in 1968, "National Service" is the category of white men aged 18-25 serving compulsorily for two years initial military duty. Upon discharge from National Service, they go into the "Citizen Force" for twelve years. This is a reserve that also includes some volunteers. "Commandos" are local defense units in the tradition of the Afrikaner militiamen. White men must serve until age 55 in the Commandos, which also includes many white women and black volunteers. Of the Citizen Force and the Commandos, the former provides most of the trained part-time military forces and supplies units to the army, navy and air force. All service categories underwent massive expansion during the 1960s and 1970s.

### Table 1: SADF Expansion

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<td><strong>Permanet Force</strong></td>
<td>11500</td>
<td>13000</td>
<td>21500</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>40000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Service</strong></td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>23000</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>27000</td>
<td>60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citizen Force</strong></td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>23000</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>27000</td>
<td>60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commandos</strong></td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>75000</td>
<td>90000</td>
<td>120000</td>
<td>150000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Before 1968, National Servicemen were selected by a ballot system.

Source: Richard Leonhard, South Africa at War: White Power and the Crisis in South Africa (Westport: Lawrence Hill, 1983)
Africa American M-109 howitzers, and an American company has supposedly sold extended-range guns capable of firing nuclear shells. South Africa also manufactures its own G-5, which uses ammunition developed with American and West German help. It is also entirely possible that South Africa has acquired a nuclear capability. Difficult as South Africa may find it, South Africa is also known for its weapons production. One method of alleviating shortages is the sort of universal, white male conscription that the country currently employs. Another is to increase the role of non-whites in the SADF.

This is understandably the most serious issue to the South African defence minister, who in 1972 decried the fact that for two decades South Africa has had a military service, however, that blacks served as support troops, gunners and sailors during World War II. They were demobilized afterward and excluded from service. The Cape Coloured Training Corps was reactivated in 1963. The navy also began to recruit blacks, and by 1979 a fifth of its Permanent Force personnel were Coloured or Indian.

The army began training black volunteers in 1974, but a year later this program only included 35 native Africans. In 1975 the army nevertheless managed to form a black battalion, the 21st, which had 375 blacks up to the rank of corporal. Plans call for the formation of more black units in the 1980s. But, still, the SADF is an overwhelmingly white:

### Table: Racial Make-up of the SADF, 1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>92.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>1.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>5.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>1.09%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


A 1982 White Paper on defense and armament supplied that the SADF was mainly dependent on arms from the U.S., France, West Germany, and South Africa. But in 1979, due to the Cold War, the South African government recognized that it could not build weapons as sophisticated as the Mirage III and Mirage II. The South African army also possesses an excellent mechanized transport capability. Its tracked vehicles include American M-551 Shermans, Singapore-built M-551 Shermans, and several variants of the Swiss Puma. The army has a large number of light and medium tanks, including the Soviet T-54 and T-62, and thousands of armored personnel carriers. It has also received large numbers of American M-113s and M-60s, British FV-432s, and French AMX-30s.

The navy is the smallest arm of the SADF. It was formed in 1965, when the British Colonial Command was dissolved and the Royal Navy’s South African commands were transferred to South Africa. The SADF has seven destroyers, five frigates, and a number of patrol boats and minesweepers. The navy has access to the vital base and facilities at Simonstown, which is the home of the Royal Navy’s Medway-class frigates.

NAMIBIA

A lot is at stake in Namibia, also known as South-West Africa. Besides forming an expansive buffer between South Africa and Namibia, it is another treasure trove of natural resources. Namibia is the world’s leading producer of diamonds and is Africa’s principal source of base metals. It is also so rich in uranium that it supplies about a sixth of the world’s production.

Defence Force leader, the South-West Africa in 1848 and almost immediately began skirmishing with the Herero people. Open revolt broke out in 1904. Three years later 65000 out of the original Hereros were dead, with losses in the thousands also inflicted on the Namas and Damars. The rich diamond fields were discovered in 1908.

With the passing of the German overseas empire, the new League of Nations gave a mandate for South-West Africa’s administration to South Africa. The mandate came into question when the League officially ceased to exist in 1946. The United Nations insisted that it has succeeded to the supervision of the South-West Africa mandate, something that South Africa vehemently denies.

Unrest again flared in South-West Africa. The South-West African People’s Organization (SWAPO) was founded in 1960, and became the strongest opposition to rule from Pretoria. SWAPO formed a military wing, the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and commenced an initially ineffectual guerrilla war in 1966. In that same year the UN, acting as the successor to the League of Nations, revoked the South African trusteeship. On 21 March 1972, the United Nations imposed a Security Council resolution demanding that South Africa withdraw from Namibia by 1978.

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The majority of the people live in the border region, where their traditional settlement is a cluster of circular huts within a kraal of labyrintheck stick walls. An inheritance from early tribal conflicts, the interior walls can be moved to change the passage of people and goods across the frontier. They were largely left alone by the Germans. This would indicate that its support, headed by 26 “area force units” similar to Commandos. From its inception, it included whites, and their agreements were waived for Ovambos, Kavangos and Tswanas. Also, elements of the Cape Corps Service Battalion have been in Namibia since 1976, and the black 21st Battalion was deployed there two years later.

The end of Portugal’s African empire was due to two causes. Insurgencies in Angola and Mozambique, especially the former, taxed the Portuguese. In Angola, the Europeans relied on defended villages called aldeamentos and airpower to hold off the guerillas. But despite the consistent Portuguese ability to attain tactical superiority, there were never enough airplanes or helicopters to maintain adequate surveillance. The other factor in the equation was the restoration of democracy in Portugal itself. After the 1974 coup, recovering from a long night of dictatorship was viewed as far more vital than waging expensive colonial wars far away.

Over five times the size of any other group, the Ovambos are by far the most important ethnic group in Namibia. They are concentrated along the northern border, leaving the rest of Namibia very sparsely inhabited. Their traditional settlement is a cluster of circular huts within a kraal of labyrinthine stick walls. An inheritance from early tribal conflicts, the interior walls can be moved to change the passage of people and goods across the frontier. They were largely left alone by the Germans. This would indicate that its support, headed by 26 “area force units” similar to Commandos. From its inception, it included whites, and their agreements were waived for Ovambos, Kavangos and Tswanas. Also, elements of the Cape Corps Service Battalion have been in Namibia since 1976, and the black 21st Battalion was deployed there two years later.

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ious promises of assistance to the FNLA and UNITA. This left South Africa in the lurch, and the SADF pulled back to Namibia. UNITA was soundly routed and the remnants of the FNLA took refuge in Zaire.

The MPLA triumph resulted in a fundamental change in the balance of power in southern Africa. Instead of a Portuguese colony to the north of Namibia, South Africa now faced the People’s Republic of Angola. The new regime enjoyed excellent relations with Cuba, whose expeditionary force did not leave, and an economic dependence on the USSR that caused Soviet domination of foreign policy. Even worse, Angola provided a haven for SWAPO. Whereas the SADF once had to guard only a short border with Zambia from infiltration, now the entire northern frontier had to be screened. A decline in South African fortunes was inevitable.

But Angola’s border security deteriorated badly in 1978. The May SADF attack on Cuizinga signalled the beginning of a new South African aggressiveness, something that Angola’s armed forces could not counter. Also, UNITA underwent a revival in the southwest. This significantly reduced the SADF’s burden of protecting its frontier and established an indigenous military opposition to the Marxist-Leninist regime in Luanda.

Ethnic animosities have been instrumental in the resurrection of UNITA. Its power base is among the Ovambo who are the source of SWAPO’s strength. Regardless of ideology, they resent government by the Portuguese to the north. Therefore, UNITA is not only a source of democratic resistance to Leninist tyranny, but a tribal and regional entity.

SADF pressure increased. “Operation Protea” in August 1981 was the largest South African incursion to that point. Mechanized and airmobile forces thrust 150 miles into Kunene province, occupying virtually all of it, including the capital of Ongiva. Neighboring provinces were also struck. Angola claimed 45,000 South Africans had massed on the border and that 15,000 had actually invaded with tank, armored car, 35mm artillery and air support. Even if Angola’s claims are inflated, Operation Protea was a major undertaking. South Africa claimed that at a cost of ten dead SADF, a thousand SWAPO and Angolan troops were killed and $200 million of war material destroyed. Another major push into Angola occurred in November.

Yet the SADF effort was not limited to these two big operations. The European Economic Community, South Africa conducted a total of 200 operations in Angola in 1981, and that the SADF displaced 3,000 people and inflicted severe economic damage between 1975 and 1980. SWAPO’s claim that the SADF was a constant presence in Angola was probably the truth.

South Africa would be overjoyed to inflict a military defeat on Angola or cause its government grief of any kind. Yet the MPLA regime is not the target of South African operations in Angola. The SADF’s primary objective is to make Angola a dangerous place for SWAPO and to destroy its activities on the border. Yet the MPLA is falling back to Luanda and the于是才有机会去移动并摧毁阿兰达的基地。SWAPO needs timely assistance from the SADF and the Namibian government to hold the border and prepare for a counterattack.

While the SADF’s high quality and aggressiveness are beyond question, the same cannot be said of UNITA. One South African journalist wrote that the MPLA and the SADF were matched in terms of capabilities, supplied, and controlled 40% of Angola. But there were doubts about UNITA’s proficiency and resolve. Trevor Edwards, a Briton commanding 3rd Battalion of the South African army, said: “The point is that UNITA is a lot of crap. They hang around in the south-east where their tribe is and they can defend themselves, but they can’t get tanks. They take a place like Savate [Angolan town captured by Edward’s unit, then handed over to UNITA]. We do it for them because it improves their bargaining position, gives them more talking power.”

UNITA’s actual character probably combines aspects of both accounts. It has been able to control large areas of Angola, or at least deny them to the government. Edwards is entirely correct in pointing out its ethnic orientation. Also, a force can combine good, plentiful warfare with a serious lack of initiative when it might count the most. UNITA benefits from the support of the SADF and does not need the same degree of determination that the SADF would need without the South African support. Despite these advantages, UNITA is definitely2. The MPLA’s primary objective is to bring the war home to the SADF and SWATO forces. Offensives north of the border are not intended to extend the area of Angola under Luanda’s control as the primary objective, but to hopefully overextend South Africa’s forces and facilitate SWATO infiltration. But the war in Angola is wearying and expensive for South Africa as well. Besides the direct costs of waging the conflict, Angola has suffered terrible economic damage. The main east-west railroad to Benguela is controlled by UNITA just as it was raided by the MPLA before independence. Worst, the war has arrested the rapid economic development that occurred in the years of Portuguese rule. Recovery is dependent upon peace.

This last issue has divided the MPLA into two factions. One espouses a hard line and is more willing to fight UNITA to the bitter end. The other is willing to enter into negotiations with Savimbi. Just as the war in Angola is dependent on the war in Namibia, so peace is dependent on South Africa’s willingness to withdraw. As long as SWAPO is based in Angola and the Namibian government is not resolved to withdraw, this is highly unlikely. Moreover, South Africa insists that a pullout is out of the question unless Castro’s regime is forced to withdraw. Thus so long as the Cubans are the insurance policy for the continued existence of the People’s Republic of Angola.

RESISTANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Understandably, white rule and apartheid have earned the hostility of wide sectors of South Africa’s black population. So far the bulk of the struggle has taken the form of political action, riots and general unrest.

Sometimes a specific government action or policy is enough to set off a round of disturbances. One of the most famous and important cases of this occurred in June 1976, when the government announced plans to use Afrikaans in all schools. Riots exploded in the teeming black township of Soweto, and within days the government had rescinded its policy of teaching blacks the language so closely identified with the Afrikaner nation and apartheid. About 500 blacks and two whites were killed in the violence. A work stoppage, with a 70% absentee rate, was enforced by black vigilantes who burned cars and cleared the streets of people who kept on working. Johannesburg was denied of its black menial labor—at least for a time. More serious than occasional episodes of black rioting is the chronic hostility that increasingly
Jailed ANC leader, was supported by 76% of the clergy to Communists, one is dominant. This support, of the blacks. Despite apartheid and its simmering among the black population. The white problems in the townships.

The ANC is the group best able to capture the imagination of black South Africans, and Durban and Johannesburg would vote for an ANC rejected the multi-racialism of the ANC, from which the 1940s. The ANC declared in 1943 that its aim was "to attain the freedom of all African people (at least among countries in the public eye). As the Afrikaners' home country is in Africa, its founders broke. It planned a campaign of "positive non-violence" to end white rule by 1963, which the government responded with stiff measures countering possible recyling of the SADF and police make operations that hinder South Africa's ability to purchase new weapons systems to its enemies. The Mirages and Oliphants may be very effective in which white paramilitary farmers in border areas report suspicious movements by radio, bringing in a mechanized or airmobile force. In addition, the high quality of the SADF and police make operations within South Africa highly difficult and dangerous under any circumstances.

African revolutionaries have hardly helped their own cause with their internal strife. The PAC too was outlawed in 1960. Both organizations have military components, and neither has been able to spark an insurgency in South Africa. Countering possible infiltration is a program in which white paramilitary farmers in border areas report suspicious movements by radio, bringing in a mechanized or airmobile force. In addition, the high quality of the SADF and police make operations within South Africa highly difficult and dangerous under any circumstances.

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The Angolans, SWAPO and UNITA use the standard armament of Soviet-made weapons. The quality of squad-level units appears to have remained fairly constant since 1975; it is in terms of quantity and larger unit cohesion that these forces have improved or deteriorated. The Cuban units are the best in the Communist coalition, although their defen-
sive mission and the presence of the SADF have prevented them participating in a maximum number of engagements or from disposing of UNITA. The South Africans are excellent, both in material and in human terms. Commandos are organized similarly to regular infantry units. The SWATF is also very effective and has seen important duty in northern Namibia. In equipment it differs from the SADF in a greater propensity for Soviet weaponry, especially in the counterinsurgency units.

**Scenario Conditions**

The following scenarios represent actual battles and campaigns in Angola and Namibia between 1975 and 1987.

**“OPERATION ZULU 1975”**

Alarmed at the prospect of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Angola, which would serve as a base for SWAPO and possibly others to subvert Namibia, South Africa intervened in the Angolan civil war. In this scenario, mechanized elements of the South African army engage unprepared MPLA units in the early stages of the invasion.

A. **MAPBOARD TERRAIN:** Ignore all walls, hedges, buildings and well. Hills are height "1" and depressions are height "-1". Roads are unpaved.

B. **SPECIAL RULES:** Game length is 5 Turns. MPLA units may only exit the north mapboard edge, and SADF units may only exit off the south edge. SWAPO player sets up first within four hexes of the Unita units. The SWAPO player receives two "bonus" impulses to enter the mapboard. Any desired actions may be performed during these bonus phases, following which the normal draw of sequence chits commences.

**WEATHER:** Normal.

**VISIBILITY:** Condition 1 (Night).

**FIRES (OP):** Wet.

C. **OPPOSING FORCES:**

a. **Attackers:** SWAPO Guerrillas enter onto the north edge via bonus impulse phases (634-512-122 points).

1st SWAPO Guerrilla Squad (+): 4/2; 1C; 1s; 1xLM76; 1xRFL1; 2xRGN1; 3xLMG10; 4xRFL5; 3xMG10 (Sten, Sterling).

b. **Defenders:** South African Army soldiers set up in any whole hex on panel 3, defensive units (DFX, TWR, DWR, WIR, PMN) may be set up on any whole hex on panel or on panel 2 south of hex row 4. (451-348-103 points).

1st SWAPO Infantry Squad: 5/2; 1s; 1xLM76; 1xRFL1; 4xRGN1; 2xRGN4 (451-348-103 points).

**EXTRA EQUIPMENT:**

- 3xRFL4, 3xLMG10, 8xLMG15, 1xLMG20, 1xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

- Extra Equipment: 1xRGN2, 4xRGN1; 1xLMG10; 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 8xRFL1.

2nd SWAPO Infantry Squad: 4/2; 1s; 1xLMG10, 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 2xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

3rd SWAPO Infantry Squad: 4/2; 1s; 1xLMG10, 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 2xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

**TERRAIN:**

Roads are unpaved. SWAPO units may only exit the north mapboard edge.

**WEATHER:** Normal.

**VISIBILITY:** Condition 3 (Night).

**FIRES (OP):** Wet.

D. **VICTORY CONDITIONS:** Each side receives two points for each surviving, unwounded soldier and two points for each fallen prisoner.

**“TROUBLE IN OVAMBOLAND 1978”**

The MPLA victory in Angola resulted in a crisis for South Africa. Although an excellent force, the SADF was easily overextended and a long, hostile border between Angola and Namibia did just that. SWAPO infiltration increased dramatically, and the organization reached the peak of its power and offensive capacity. Here a SWAPO force assaults a South African outpost in Okondjato and Namibian border area during the rainy season.

**B. SPECIAL RULES:** Game length is 4 Turns. SWAPO units may only exit the north mapboard edge, and SADF units may only exit off the south edge. The SWAPO player receives two "bonus" impulses to enter the mapboard. Any desired actions may be performed during these bonus phases, following which the normal draw of sequence chits commences.

**WEATHER:** Normal.

**VISIBILITY:** Condition 3 (Night).

**FIRES (OP):** Wet.

C. **OPPOSING FORCES:**

**b. Defenders:** South African Army soldiers set up in any whole hex on panel 3; defensive units (DFX, TWR, DWR, WIR, PMN) may be set up on any whole hex on panel 3 or on panel 2 south of hex row 4. (451-348-103 points).

1st SWAPO Infantry Squad: 5/2; 1s; 1xLM76; 1xRFL1; 4xRGN1; 2xRGN4 (451-348-103 points).

**EXTRA EQUIPMENT:**

- 3xRFL4, 3xLMG10, 8xLMG15, 1xLMG20, 1xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

- Extra Equipment: 1xRGN2, 4xRGN1; 1xLMG10; 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 8xRFL1.

2nd SWAPO Infantry Squad: 4/2; 1s; 1xLMG10, 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 2xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

3rd SWAPO Infantry Squad: 4/2; 1s; 1xLMG10, 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 2xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

**TERRAIN:**

Roads are unpaved. SWAPO units may only exit the north mapboard edge.

**WEATHER:** Normal.

**VISIBILITY:** Condition 3 (Night).

**FIRES (OP):** Wet.

D. **VICTORY CONDITIONS:** Each side receives two victory points for each building destroyed and two victory points for each building controlled at the end of the game.

**“BUSHMEN AT WAR 1979”**

In 1974 the San Bushmen became the first Namibian ethnic group to be recruited by the South African Defense Force. The 31st Battalion exploits the tracking and ambush abilities of the San soldiers. In this action, elements of the 31st ambush a SWAPO unit attempting the increasingly difficult border by night.

**A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN:** Only mapboard panel 2 is used.

**B. SPECIAL RULES:** Game length is 4 Turns. SWAPO units may only exit the north mapboard edge, and SADF units may only exit off the south edge. The SWAPO player receives two "bonus" impulses to enter the mapboard. Any desired actions may be performed during these bonus phases, following which the normal draw of sequence chits commences.

**WEATHER:** Normal.

**VISIBILITY:** Condition 3 (Night).

**FIRES (OP):** Wet.

C. **OPPOSING FORCES:**

**a. Attackers:** SWAPO Guerrillas enter onto the north edge via bonus impulse phases (634-512-122 points).

1st SWAPO Guerrilla Squad (+): 4/2; 1C; 1s; 1xLM76; 1xRFL1; 2xRGN1; 3xLMG10; 4xRFL5; 3xMG10 (Sten, Sterling).

b. **Defenders:** South African Army soldiers set up in any whole hex on panel 3, defensive units (DFX, TWR, DWR, WIR, PMN) may be set up on any whole hex on panel 3 or on panel 2 south of hex row 4. (451-348-103 points).

1st SWAPO Infantry Squad: 5/2; 1s; 1xLM76; 1xRFL1; 4xRGN1; 2xRGN4 (451-348-103 points).

**EXTRA EQUIPMENT:**

- 3xRFL4, 3xLMG10, 8xLMG15, 1xLMG20, 1xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

- Extra Equipment: 1xRGN2, 4xRGN1; 1xLMG10; 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 8xRFL1.

2nd SWAPO Infantry Squad: 4/2; 1s; 1xLMG10, 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 2xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

3rd SWAPO Infantry Squad: 4/2; 1s; 1xLMG10, 1xLMG21, 1xRFL5; 2xRGN2 andlor HGNS.

**TERRAIN:**

Roads are unpaved. SWAPO units may only exit the north mapboard edge.

**WEATHER:** Normal.

**VISIBILITY:** Condition 3 (Night).

**FIRES (OP):** Wet.

D. **VICTORY CONDITIONS:** Each side receives two victory points for each building destroyed and two victory points for each building controlled at the end of the game.
within four hexes of the west board edge; UNITA units within four hexes of the east board edge. WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 1.


C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. Cuban Infantry Squad: 4/1, IS; 1xLMG13, 1xMPL20, 6xRFL1; 1xBNC, 2xPST3 (for LMG, MPL), 7xMPL20AMO, 30xHGN3 (289-242-47 points)

b. UNITA Guerrilla Squad (+): 3/3, IS; 1xLMG12, 1xMPL20, 10xRFL1; 5xMPL20AMO, 27xHGN3 ("G" only) (289-252-37 points)

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Each side receives two points for each surviving, unwounded soldier on the opposite (i.e., past the mapboard fold) side of the mapboard at the end of the game. If one squad has panicked at the end of the game, the other automatically wins regardless of the victory point count.

"OPERATION SUPER 1982"

South Africa has both the will and the means of fighting SWAPO in Angola instead of Namibia. Operation Super was an airmobile attack on an assembling SWAPO infiltration force in Angola, north of Kaokoland. Taken by surprise, the SWAPO guerrillas fell down a series of ravines. There they met SADF "stopper groups".

A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN: Only mapboard panel 1 is used.

Hills are height "3"; depressions are "-2". Roads are unpaved.

B. SPECIAL RULES: Game length is 3 Turns. Attackers exit off either side or both short sides of the mapboard. Defenders exit off either or both long sides of the mapboard. Players decide on which side the attacker enters by agreement or competitive die roll. Defender sets up secretly as per "Ambush" special rules (on page 45 of FIREPOWER Battle Manual). Attacker enters in accordance with the same set of special rules.

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 3 (Night).

FIRES (OP): Dry.

C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. Defenders: 31st Battalion Squad: 4/2; IS; 1xLMG15, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL5; 1xBPD, 5xMPL20AMO, 2xPST2 (for LMG, MPL), 20HGN3 and/or HGN5 ("G" only) (190-157-33 points)

b. Attackers: SWAPO Guerrillas (441-345-96 points).

1st SWAPO Guerrilla Squad: 4/2; IC, IS; 1xLMG12, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL1, 1xPST3.

2nd SWAPO Guerrilla Squad: 4/2; IS; 1xLMG12, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL1.

3rd SWAPO Guerrilla Squad: 4/2; IS; 1xLMG12, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL1, 1xRFL8.

Extra Equipment: 6xPST3 (for LMG, MPL), 60xHGN3 ("G" only), 15xMPL20AMO.

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Each side receives two points for each building controlled at the end of the game. If one squad has panicked at the end of the game, the other automatically wins regardless of the victory point count.

"UNITA RESURGENT 1980"

UNITA was soundly defeated by the MPLA during the civil war following Portuguese withdrawal from Angola. But it rebounded in the later seventies and early eighties, assisted by Ovambindu tribalism and an alliance with South Africa. The Cuban army has been the MPLA's shield since the first, frantic appeal for help during Operation Zulu. In this scenario, UNITA guerrillas, on their way to raid Kaokoland, meet a Cuban patrol.

A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN: All dark green hexes, as well as tree hexes, are trees. Hills are height "2"; depressions are "-2". Ignore all buildings, fences, hedges, walls and well. Roads are unpaved.

B. SPECIAL RULES: Game length is 5 Turns. UNITA units may only exit off the east edge; Cuban units off the west edge. Order of set up is determined by a competitive die roll. Cuban units set up the long sides on Turn 3. The SWAPO player automatically wins, regardless of victory points, if the South African squad is panicked at the end of the game.

"OPERATION PROTEA 1981"

Operation Protea was a SADF August 1981 airmobile and mechanized offensive against Kunene and neighboring Angolan provinces. In this scenario, Angolan troops defend a small village against a South African mechanized column.

A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN: All buildings are of wood plank construction, and all fences are of log construction. Hills are height "1"; depressions are "-1". Roads are unpaved.

B. SPECIAL RULES: Game length is 4 Turns. Angolan units may only exit off the east edge; SADF units off the west edge and/or any other which they enter the mapboard. Angolan units and fortifications must set up first within four hexes of any building hex; non-fortification units and mines may be placed anywhere except within four hexes of the south, west and north mapboard edges. At least one SADF motorized infantry squad must enter on the south edge of the board; others may enter the south, west or north edges. The South African Eland mortar vehicle may be withheld from the map, in which case it may be use indirect fire at maximum range. South African radios do not require a clear line of sight to communicate, although a clear LOS must still exist between the spotter and the target hex. South African units entering the north or south mapboard edges receive one "bonus" impulse phase, and may activate mines at this time; units entering on the west edge receive two "bonus" impulse phases.

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 1.


C. OPPOSING FORCES:


1st Angolan Infantry Squad: 4/2; IC, IS; 1xLMG21, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL1, 1xPST1.

2nd Angolan Infantry Squad: 4/2; IS; 1xLMG21, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL3.

3rd Angolan Infantry Squad: 4/2; IS; 1xLMG21, 1xMPL20, 7xRFL3.

Extra Equipment: 1xBNC, 4xPST3 (for LMG, MPL), 14xMPL20AMO, 75xHGN3; 2xBPD, 2xDFX, 2xSMG7, 1xPST, 5xWIR, 2xPST1, 2xVMN1.


1st SADF Motorized Infantry Squad: 5/2; IS, 1xLMG3, 7xRFL4.

2nd SADF Motorized Infantry Squad: 5/2; IS, 1xLMG3, 7xRFL4.

SADF Ad-hoc Vehicle Squad: 5/2; IS; 1xIFV, 1xRCV1 (Eland), 5xSMG7.

Extra Equipment: 2xRFL3, 5xHGN5 ("M" only); 1xSCP, 2xWIR.
"A DEFEAT FOR THE SADF? 1987"

South African forces have frequently fought the forces of SWAPO and Angola. Less frequent are encounters with the Cubans. A battle in southeast Angola in the local spring of 1987 between the SADF and a combined Angolan-Cuban force may have resulted in a South African bloody nose.

A. MAPBOARD TERRAIN: Hills are height "1"; depressions are "-1". Ignore all buildings, walls, fences, hedges and wells. Roads are unpaved.

B. SPECIAL RULES: Game length is 5 Turns. Cuban units may only exit off the west edge; South Africans off the east. South African units set up first within four hexes of the east board edge. Cuban units set up second within four hexes of the west board edge.

WEATHER: Normal.

VISIBILITY: Condition 1.


C. OPPOSING FORCES:

a. SADF Infantry Squad: 5/2; 1S, 1A; 1xLMG3, 10xRFL4; 1xNBC, 1xPST2 (for LMG); 33xHGN3 and/or HGN5 ("G" only) (3573-335 points).

b. Cuban Infantry Squad (+): 5/3; IS, IA; 1xLMG21, 1xMPL20, 6xRFL1, 1xRFL9; 1xNBC, 2xPST3 (for LMG); 5xMPL2AMO, 37xHGN3 (3573-320-50 points).

D. VICTORY CONDITIONS: Each side receives two points for each surviving, unwounded soldier on the opposite (i.e., past the mapboard fold) side of the mapboard at the end of the game. If one squad has perished at the end of the game, the other automatically wins regardless of the victory point count.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:


FOOTBALL STRATEGY.

Once again, it's football season, and time to dust off the football games which have been packed away since last fall. On of the games which may have collected the most dust is FOOTBALL STRATEGY. If there is a reason for this, it may have to do with age. This game is approaching 30 years old, a fantastic record for a game of its kind! There are definitely signs of age when you open the box. Pro football is just not what it once was. As a game, however, FOOTBALL STRATEGY still is one of the best for a quick simulation of football, and is still a favorite at tournaments. In order to give the game the rejuvenation it needs and to bring it in line with the game as it is played today, a few changes are necessary.

First, let's concentrate on the game's strong point—the play matrix. Pro football has indeed changed, but you still run and pass to advance the ball. The simulation of scrimmage plays is the heart of the game system, and a much copied feature. The shifts in theory and rules over the years have pretty much kept the passing/running balance in the game as it was when FOOTBALL STRATEGY was first designed. If there is any perceived imbalance in the charts, it is in the "Long Pass" game. Present zone defenses have lessened the chances of this type of gain, but it is the excitement factor in the all-or-nothing approach that demands that offensive choices "17" through "20" be retained.

The same cannot be said for the two punting choices. The kicking game, with its associated special team players, has changed the way punting fits into the modern game. The substitute matrix below will handle six cases: a normal fourth-down punt, a fake punt, an out-of-bounds punt, a quick-kick, a short punt attempt, and an all-out block attempt by the defense. The procedure is as follows:

1. For a non-fourth down punt, use the "Quick Kick" column. If the defense has chosen card "C" or "H" (the blitz cards), the kick is automatically blocked.

2. On fourth down, the defense must still choose a card. If the offense is running a fake punt, the offensive player will indicate which type of punt to be attempted (Normal, Out-of-bounds, Short). If the defense has card "C" or "H", use the "Rush" column.

3. After determining whether the punt may be returned (any punt to the goal or beyond may), the receiving player may make a roll on the "Return" column. Note that this is optional; a "fair catch" may be made. Players will also note that two dice are now required for resolution—this to give a better spread of results and to make room for more variation.

4. A player may take an automatic fair catch rather than attempting a punt return. The ball is dead at the point of reception.

5. Recovery of a blocked punt will still result in a change of possession on fourth down.

The kick-off procedure is modified as follows. The receiver will choose a defensive card. Either "C" or "H" (to conform to the punting rules above) will indicate that an onside kick is expected. The kicker will then choose either "Onside" or "Normal". If both players expect a Normal kick, use the "Normal" column. The return will then be resolved on the Return column. If the kicker indicates an Onside kick, use the Onside column. If the kicker selects "Normal" and the receiver has picked "Onside", the receiver gets the ball at the 20. An Onside kick is not returned. An out-of-bounds kickoff is re-ralled and five yards added to the result. The O/B result gives the receiving team the choice of the ball at a point 10 yard from the kick, or a re-kick with a 5-yard penalty.

For convenience, the Long Gain table is listed here. Also, introduced is the Other Return table. This column is used for attempts to return fumbles or blocked kicks. In the case of a "Fumble", the recovering team may also take a chance on advancing the ball, using another dice roll on the same column. A player may elect to take the ball at the point of the play rather than attempting the return.

KICK OFF

By Jim Burnett

<table>
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<th>Normal Kick</th>
<th>O/B Kick</th>
<th>Short Kick</th>
<th>Rush Kick</th>
<th>Quick Kick</th>
<th>Return Yard</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>-20</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O/B=Out of Bounds
Penalty (Return)=10 Yards (Illegal Block)

The O/B result gives the receiving team the choice of the ball at a point 10 yards from the kick, or a re-kick with a 5-yard penalty.
Field Goals are also modified. Refer to Figure 3 to resolve field goal attempts now. The return result uses the kick-off return table and is computed from the goal line.

Figure 3: Field Goal Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die</th>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Extra Point</th>
<th>0-10</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>G+5</td>
<td>G+5</td>
<td>G+5</td>
<td>G+10</td>
<td>G+5</td>
<td>G+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>Miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Return</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G/+5=Good, or accept 5-yard Penalty (Kicker’s Choice)
-5=5-yard Penalty

The greatest change in the game, however, occurs in using the new time chart below. While there have been no real changes in the way plays are timed in the NFL, the greater reliance on the passing game and the greater outside speed of both offense and defense have resulted in the way plays consume time. Indeed, the critical observer might some suspicion that up-the-middle running plays are merely attempted to gain a bit of rest for all concerned. While the number of plays run in a game has increased in recent times, a pile-up in the middle of the field seems to take an inordinate amount of time to unstack and resume play.

The changes to be made are fairly simple. Your time chart is broken up in 7.5-second increments. We will subdivide this into 7.5-second intervals, giving essentially eight boxes per minute. The record keeping for this is simple. When required to mark off 7.5 seconds, put a “+” through the box. To complete the box (either for a full 15 seconds or for a second 7.5 seconds), put a “−” resulting in an “X”. The full time Chart is given in Figure 4. Note that a player wishing to spend less time at the end of the half may institute a “hurry-up” offense. These plays will use less time due to the lack of unstacking time. If a player runs the same play as the preceding in a hurry-up offense, the play consumes only 7.5 seconds (no time wasted in making the call). One more option is the “grounding” play. This simulates the intentional grounding pass in the NFL. This play takes no time, gains no yards, but does use a down.

Figure 4: Time Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Time (seconds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Run</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-Bounds</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interception</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Turnover</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Possession</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Kicks</td>
<td>7.5 (9 seconds for O/Kick-off)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penalties</td>
<td>7.5 (vs Offense, use play time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Outs</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding Pass</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurry-Up Offense</td>
<td>15 (Same Play=7.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdown/Safety</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Point</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I include two other optional rules here for those who want a bit more realism. These are recommended only for those players who wish to add more “chrome” to their FOOTBALL STRATEGY games at the expense of quicker play.

First is the “Measurement Rule”. Any time a possible first down or safety is made by exactly the yardage required, two dice are rolled. If the result is even, the offense has barely made the yardage; if odd, the defense has held by inches. Note that a 10-yard gain on first down would only be another first down if the subsequent dice roll were even. Also note that a gain running play causes another dice roll, but an incomplete pass does not. Consecutive 5-yard penalties are always a first down. It is possible to be on either the 0-yard line (an odd result on the opposite goal is a safety).

This was the theme for this month’s GENERAL, and the theme I was requested to write upon. All well and good, but we do not have any games on the new release list related to modern warfare. There are some new entries in the works that will fill in this gap (as well as some modern variants of existing games) but the releases for 1989 jump from World War II to the near future, conveniently avoiding the modern. So, rather than write on this, I would like to use the opportunity to open some lines of communication with those readers who are computer game enthusiasts. One way is to give you some of my ideas on what makes a good computer game and see how they relate to your own.

Start with the age-old question: what makes a good game (or more precisely, a good computer game)? My attitude is that there are four overall elements to a computer game (and a lot of technical elements which I’ll go into at another time) which comprise a good game. They are fun, ease of play, originality and finesse. I’ll quantify these a bit more.

FUN—No matter what anyone tells you, this is the most important facet of the game. If people have to put up with a dull game just because it is on a theme they are interested in, it is not the success it should be. People generally know when they are enjoying themselves. In fact, when they are not, they will let you know by not buying your games.

One index of how fun a game is has to be how many times you tell yourself, “Just one more turn and then I’ll save it and go to bed.” Another is how much time you spend talking about it with your friends, and what kinds of things you say about it. In any event, you know when you are enjoying yourself.

As a game designer, it is important to play many games (even games unrelated to your specific interest) and try to figure out why you’re having fun. This is not an easy thing to do, for by the time you are wrapped up in the game you don’t wish to stop and be clinical—and those are the games you want discussed.

EASE OF PLAY—Think about this one. Computers were designed to take care of repetitive tasks and to store large amounts of information indexed for easy access. There is no reason that the player must do this, is there? Moving pieces around the board and attacking other pieces should be no more difficult than moving the pieces in a checkers game. Movement points, strength points and related values should be taken care of by the computer so that all the player need do is to say to the computer, “Take this piece and occupy this location.” If the move is legal, the computer will allow it; if not, it won’t. Not that the information should be concealed from the player (unless the game system dictates that it should be), but the need to have that detailed information just to put in orders is not desirable. As a player, I find that when the computer requires an elaborate command string or accepts an order which is not legitimate and then just ignores it, I am irritated. If used properly (in terms of strategy games), the computer should free the player to concentrate on the problem at hand rather than trying to figure out the mechanics of the game.

ORIGINAlITY—This is pretty simple to see, but is often missed by game developers. Originality does not mean just to find a subject nobody has touched upon before, but to take an approach no one else has yet. The game can be on any subject, the level of game play can be anywhere from single-player simulators to multiplayer global strategies. No matter what, if the approach is fresh and bright, the game will be fun and entertaining (and lucrative for the designer hopefully). Naturally, there is the trap of mistaking an obscure approach with a new approach (imagine a Civil War game that gave you battle reports in heliographed Morse code). This common affliction of game designers can be avoided if you remember that you must keep the game easy to understand and play. Frequently this can head off a stupid approach to the game.

FINESSE—Just because a game is easy to play does not mean that it should be easy to win. A tactical game must allow the player to use local terrain to hide actions; a strategic-level game should be flexible enough to allow the player to use believable diversions and feints. “Finesse” is that quality in the game that lets the player set up elegant strategies and see a positive reaction to them. Then a sense of control comes into the play. A feeling of control adds a whole dimension to any game. One example is taken from three years ago when the submission for the SPITFIRE 40 flight simulator was first received. I was flying along, amused by the game (but not sold on it) when a BF-109 appeared in my rearview mirror. Instinctively I kicked the rudder hard and rolled starboard to watch the enemy plane move into my right forward quarter, snapped around in a tight turn and flamed him. This was the first time I had ever flown a simulator where this worked! Up to then, the programs I had seen precluded skidding, the split “S” turns didn’t work correctly, and many other artificial limitations were placed in the program. Computers (by now) are so sophisticated that finesse should be a standard part of all games; unfortunately, the designers and programmers are only beginning to grasp this.

One of the approaches to design I have found that is very successful is the “Electronic Sandbox”. This is a system whereby the laws of the universe your character is created in the structure of the game. On a practical level this means that you don’t need a lot of special rules—just one global rule (like gravity, line of sight, etc.). This is a much more difficult way to program a game, but does not place

Continued on Page 31, Column 3
INTO THE JUNGLE

Player's Notes on PLATOON

By James P. Werbaneth

PLATOON is designed to be "user-friendly" for the novice wargamer. It has only two pages of standard rules, and these are relatively simple. Combat consists of easily-resolved fire with personal weapons (similarly with grenades and off-board artillery) and melee. The map has only two main terrain types, clear and jungle, with trails and a stream that aid or hinder movement respectively.

Yet for all its apparent simplicity, PLATOON demands an extraordinary care and tactical thoughtfulness. Moving soldiers around at random and shooting at every target that looks good for the moment is seldom enough to win a scenario. PLATOON proves that simple rules do not necessarily make for a simple game.

At the core of its deceptive complexity are the aspects of limited intelligence and the denial of omnipotence to both players. Employing the expedient of placing counters upright on plastic stands so only aspects of limited intelligence and the denial of omnipotence to both players. Employing the expedient of placing counters upright on plastic stands so only the novice wargamer. It has only two pages of standard rules, and these are relatively simple. Combat consists of easily-resolved fire with personal weapons (similarly with grenades and off-board artillery) and melee. The map has only two main terrain types, clear and jungle, with trails and a stream that aid or hinder movement respectively.

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At the core of its deceptive complexity are the aspects of limited intelligence and the denial of omnipotence to both players. Employing the expedient of placing counters upright on plastic stands so only the owner can see them, the limited intelligence rules test a player's ability to guess and estimate the identities of unrevealed units from those that have been revealed previously.

The game uses a system of impulses similar to Craig Taylor's earlier released FIREPOWER—although simplified greatly. In PLATOON each player may perform one action with one soldier (or group of soldiers with a leader) for each drawn chit. Often a minority of soldiers on both sides will do the decisive fighting, due to the incremental pace dictated by the impulse system.

Fields of Fire

One of the most important lessons for the PLATOON player is the absolute necessity of maintaining clear and optimally lethal fields of fire. A player who blocks his own machineguns and grenade launchers with Fakes (blank counters used to confuse the opponent) or +1 fire-modified riflemen without a compelling reason does a lot to help his enemy. Soldiers with these weapons should be deployed to take best advantage of their firepower and range. The same holds true for +3 fire-modified riflemen and "Bunny", with his sometimes devastating shotgun, and North Vietnamese RPGs. These units do have much shorter ranges and smaller fields of fire, and leaders with these traits such as "Barnes" and "Elias" are normally better suited to lead groups or direct fire support.

Terrain is equally important in determining fields of fire. Jungle is a great equalizer in that it can cut the range of a machinegun or M79 grenade launcher to that of a shotgun. The +3 target modifier of a jungle hex effectively diminishes the firepower of all weapons firing into it, and the reduction of range can make unsupported soldiers vulnerable to melee. On the other hand, clear terrain is an excellent place to be eliminated. The combination of undiminished weapon range and lack of target modifier makes it quite dangerous, and generally a good place to avoid. A single soldier with at least a +2 fire-modifier and a clear field of fire over open ground, with a willingness to commit an action chit to fire, can effectively deny that clear terrain to the enemy.

Units covering open ground are very difficult to overwhelm if they are in jungle or defensive works and the enemy is forced to enter the field of fire to get at them. The limitation of one action per impulse and the uncertain draw of the chits threatens to cause an advance across open ground to be erratic, with the soldiers picked off one by one. Furthermore, a player who expends action chits trying to neutralize one or two troublesome soldiers likely does so at the expense of potentially more productive efforts elsewhere.

The best example of open ground's lethality is also the one first encountered by many players. In the "Protect the Flank" firefight, one American in hex T10 can deny about two-thirds of the clear terrain on board B to the North Vietnamese Army player. As the victory conditions reward the NVA for exiting units through T10 and the adjacent clear hexes, this has a profound and immediate effect on play. In fact, "Protect the Flank" can be an exercise of "Elias" staying in T10 and stopping waves of NVA single-handed, while the other three Americans guard the jungle to his left. "Elias" often is the only American soldier to fire his weapon. (See Illustration #1.)

Soldiers should be kept in the jungle at almost all times. As they are crucial for masking one's dispositions and intentions, Fakes should likewise remain in the jungle. Although they cannot fire or initiate melee, Fakes have a unique value of their own and are not to be squandered. A foxhole or bunker can make a clear hex just as safe as one in the jungle. But a defensive work in the jungle can be practically impregnable to fire instead of only adequately safe, as it would be in the open.

Shooting at Shadows

For the player there is seldom a clear picture of the other's dispositions and intentions. Instead he faces a nebulous mass of blank counters, each of which could be a soldier, a group of soldiers, a Fake, or a claymore mine or booby trap (depending on the nationality). The substitute card can indicate the size of any groups on the map, but Fakes can be used to deceive here too. What one guesses to be a formidable group can prove to be less than overwhelming, and vice versa.

Illustration #1: Elias' Field of Fire in "Protect the Flank". Clear hexes within the field of fire are effectively denied to the NVA player.
This lack of intelligence is a two-way street. In every scenario, both players have to penetrate the "fog of war" while minimizing the opponent's intelligence. Though it sometimes works more for one side than the other, it is always important—just as much so as firepower.

Finding the best targets for fire combat can be difficult. Again, "Protect the Flank" contains the most obvious example. In that scenario, half of the American order of battle consist of Fakes. Unless the NVA player knows for certain that his target is an American soldier, there is a fifty percent chance that he is wasting his action and only revealing the identity of his own soldier or group that shoots at a Fake.

Players should engage in fire combat with no more units than are prudent. This is especially important early in the game, when intelligence is at the highest premium. Each unit that reveals its identity is a bonus for the other side, especially if it does so repeatedly.

But the best units should not be kept quiet overly long in the interest of keeping them hidden. The best results are to be had from the best units, and one man with a machinegun or grenade launcher can do more than a greater number of average riflemen. In addition, a good unit can draw enemy fire and thereby acquire more targets for himself. A machinegun in a good defensive position and covering a large field of fire is likely to be entered by enemy soldiers as the most valuable unit that one can have. But its value drops to nothing if it sits idle when it might be used.

Fakes are vital components of the order of battle. They can imitate soldiers and groups to draw enemy fire without the risk of ensuing enemy victory points. Fakes can also be used to make groups look larger. They can also imitate more than just soldiers. They can be dummy booby traps and claymores. Normally an opponent has to guess which are just Fakes and which are nasty surprises. The only sure ways of discovering which are which are by subjecting the hex to fire combat or by moving soldiers into them to conduct melee. The first means expending an action chit and revealing at least one soldier, and the second is a major gamble that the hex indeed contains a Fake.

There are forms of combat that combine acceptable firepower with minimized intelligence revelations. Effective and always available are grenades. Effective and always available are grenades. The first means expending an action chit and revealing at least one soldier, and the second is a major gamble that the hex indeed contains a Fake.

Illustration #2: Grenade Attack and Limited Intelligence. In one action, two American soldiers in A7 and C7 make grenade attacks against the NVA soldier in B7. The NVA player knows that either American counter is a substitute for a leader and at least one soldier. The other hex contains a soldier, a fake, or a group. The NVA player then continues each action to have only a limited picture of American dispositions.

Illustration #3: Claymore Attack in "Night Ambush". NVA Group A has tripped the American claymores in D7. The American player elects to direct the blast toward B6 and D5, thus catching Group B in B6 and the RPQ gunner in D6. Thus the American player is able to lure the NVA claymore attack against seven NVA soldiers, instead of the two leaders—all without expending an action. The NVA player might not have been able to prevent the claymore attack, but certainly could have reduced the hazard by not bunching up so many valuable units.

One optional rule that should be adopted by players immediately after mastering the basic PLATOON system is that for hidden claymores and booby traps. This is much more realistic and changes the character of the game. Fakes no longer can be confused with mines, and are decoys only for soldiers. Hidden booby traps and claymores do not hinder the lines of sight and do not break up fields of fire. Perhaps most important, there are fewer clues of their placement and their activation comes as an even bigger surprise. If no other optional rule is ever used in your games, this one should be.

The War of Increments

PLATOON is truly a game of increments. The limitations of one action per unit sharply cuts familiar fire and movement tactics into a series of micro-actions likely to be interrupted by the draw of an enemy chit and his own successes. Although a single impulse’s fire combat can wreak havoc, the game system allows less of a “master stroke” than most others. The player should think of the impulses as little pieces of a turn, not little turns in themselves.

The impulse system also hinders players from adhering to their own tactical plans. It is one thing to maintain a coherent plan over the course of four game turns; it is quite another to do so through sixty-four friendly and enemy impulses. An impulse can bring unexpected successes or improbable reverses. Though one should always be ready to adapt to changing situations, it is vitally important to distinguish between the decisive outcome and the merely ephemeral. As noted in the game’s "Hints on Play", it is necessary to keep one’s objectives in mind; the ultimate objective is always reaching one’s victory conditions.

In three scenarios the NAV player can win by exiting soldiers, either by fulfilling a minimum exit requirement or by accruing victory points. There can be great opportunity to exit soldiers before the final stages of the game, but this is often counterproductive. An exiting soldier can no longer gain victory points by eliminating enemy units. It is normally better for units to stay on the map and continue fighting and gaining victory points, at least until they run the risk of elimination themselves or the firefight ends.

Eliminating enemy units is always a goal. Unless one’s opponent is unskilled or unlucky, enemy losses tend to be the result of sound tactics and an
ability to cut through the "fog of war". Casualties represent the most frequent direct route to victory, especially for the Americans, and can certainly affect the NAV player's ability to exit soldiers.

NAV victory conditions in "Return to the Black Virgin" may appear anomalous, but are really not. The evacuation of eliminated Americans is a function of their elimination. The only difference between this scenario and the others is that some eliminated Americans are worth more than others, depending on the NAV player's follow-through. NAV tactics may change to prevent evacuation, but the victory conditions remain essentially the same.

Conclusions

PLATOON rewards tacticians and punishes players whose understanding of the game is no deeper than the letter of the rules. Play is often a matter of firing at shadows and coping with limited intelligence; comprehending the deeper intricacies of the game system is necessary to surmount these obstacles and the incremental structure of the turns. For instance, the possibilities of regulating enemy intelligence are great, and confusing the opponent to confuse Fakes with more lethal units to using only one soldier in a group in fire combat to conceal the presence of a leader.

Herein lies the core of its sophistication. PLATOON is not (nor does it pretend to be) the last word on small unit operations in Vietnam. It is intended as a bridge for interested and intelligent mass-market gamers to enter wargaming. Yet the dynamics of PLATOON are surprisingly complex. PLATOON is one of the best examples of how a wargame is played on two levels. On the objective level, there is a mapboard and a set of counters, which are moved rationally and in concert on the mapboard toward given objectives understood by both players. No less important is the subjective level. This is that plane of guesses and estimates based on limited knowledge of an opponent who cannot do anything he wants to at once. It is where PLATOON becomes a "shell game", as revealed units move among others and other units open fire. The subjective level accounts for how Fakes that are quite convincing as large groups and groups that move unhindered because the opponent thinks that they are Fakes.

All wargames have this dual nature, whether or not it is readily apparent. It is one of the primary attractions of all games of strategy and tactics, from chess to ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER. Even a game without limited intelligence rules operates on the subjective level, as both players have to speculate to some degree on each other's strategies and luck. Only solitary gaming lacks these subjective aspects, and this absence is sorely missed.

Somewhere on both levels and between them is the impulse system. Players quickly learn to act according to what probability states will be the next best drawn. For example, in a firefight in which both players have eight hits, an American who has seen seven straight NVN chits drawn will generally assume that he is in for a run of American impulses and will plan for a limited North Vietnamese ability to react. On the flip side are those who will gamble against probability on the next draw.

Its objective simplicity is what makes PLATOON look like a simple game for the novice wargamer. In fact, Craig Taylor combined simple mechanics with complex dynamics to make it look easy.

MBT (Main Battle Tank) will soon be the newest addition to Avalon Hill's growing series of modern-era games. MBT is a tactical level simulation of combat in Western Europe between the forces of the United States and West Germany against their Warsaw Pact counterparts. Combat units represent individual vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft, rotary-wing aircraft, artillery batteries, infantry squads, and a myriad of support units. In total, forces of company- and battalion-sized formations, along with their supporting assets, can be fielded by the opposing players. Over 55 vehicles, 25 aircraft, and assorted infantry guns and crew-served weapons are included in the 400+ two-sided counter mix. Examples of some of the units included are the M1A1 Abrams, M2A2 Bradley, M901 Improved TOW Vehicle, A10A Thunderbolt II, AH-64A Apache, UH-60A Blackhawk, Leopard 2, Marder, the Jagar 1 and 2, M4A2G2AZ Tank Destroyer, Gepard, BO-105 PAH-1, Tornado IDS, T-80A, T-72M1, BMP-1, ASU-85, SA-13 Gopher, ZSU-23-4 Shilka, Mil Mi-24 Hind-E and the Su-25 Frogfoot.

All combat units are represented by individual Data Cards that include all the pertinent information necessary for the highly detailed nature of modern combat. The specific information for vehicle units include, for example, speed, maneuverability, weapon types, ammo options, armor, defensive capabilities, size and extensive notes. This level of detail has also been extended in the representation of the aircraft and infantry units.

In addition to the counters and data cards, the game will include four mounted mapboards, three geomorphic map panels can be used to simulate a wide variety of terrain types, from heavily wooded to urban to virtually open terrain. A series of colors will be used to represent the major terrain types. By designating these colors as different terrain from scenario to scenario, a wide variation is achieved. In addition, the map panels can be joined to form many different combinations.

The introductory rules folder, which is a scant four pages, carries all the information necessary to get an MBT engagement underway quickly. The Battle Manual expands on the introductory rules. MBT offers the advantage of placing the level of complexity in the hands of the individual players. Each scenario can be made as simple or as complex as desired.

Speaking of scenarios, MBT includes an extensive mix of "what-if" engagements that take advantage of the wide variety of combat units included in the game. Multiple variations of meeting engagements, defensive battles, mobile assaults and amphibious assaults have been devised. In addition, the game lends itself very well to the design-your-own approach. The extensive list of TO&Es should cover just about all possible combinations.

The scale is 100 meters per hex, along with a fluid time frame that represents from 30 seconds to five minutes of real time per turn. The game system utilizes a quasi-simultaneous movement system that is based upon command order chits—no written orders are necessary for all the basic commands. Of course, options such as artillery fire, armored vehicle fire, and fuel limits, and target acquisition do require a certain degree of writing. But these options are just that—they are employed only if desired.

I feel MBT accurately represents the unique nature of modern combat. The rule today is to spot the enemy before he spots you, since virtually all units have the capability of knocking out any other unit on the battlefield. Very few units possess the degree of immunity that seemed to prevail during WW2; Tiger IIs are a thing of the past (although the M1A1 Abrams certainly comes close).

Command control is just as important as concealment on the modern battlefield. MBT effectively presents the complexity of the modern command process. A command "point" system, in combination with the command order chits, is utilized to simulate the frustrations the modern commander must face, yet does not overly complicate the game to the detriment of its playability. A wide variety of combat headquarters and headquarters formations have been included in the TO&Es to facilitate the command control function. Again, since single units are utilized in MBT, TO&Es and XOs and support commands are represented as individual units.

Doctrine plays as important a role as command control, especially in fielding the Warsaw Pact forces. That doctrine is much more rigid than the American or Western doctrine. The specific information can have far-reaching effects on the degree of flexibility these units can employ during a battle. Yet, the Warsaw Pact player will more than likely have a numerical advantage—there are trade-offs for everything.

The sequence of play is straightforward, yet effectively encompasses all necessary aspects of combat. The sequence of play includes:

Comand Phase
First Aircraft Phase
Direct Fire Phase (including steps for gun and ATGM weapons)

Movement Phase
Second Aircraft Phase
Artilley Phase
Adjustment Phase

Depending on the level of complexity desired, some of these phases may not even be necessary. If aircraft and artillery are not used, for example, three of the seven phases could be eliminated.

Some other aspects of modern combat included in MBT: specific vehicle facing and armor locations; specific ammo types (APFSDS, SPDS, HEAT, HESH); overwatch fire; reactive armor; camouflage; rangefinder systems (from optical to CO2 lasers); individual ATGM speeds and the ability to dodge missiles; visual and/or infrared screening smoke; night fighting; and adverse weather and ground conditions; thermal imagers, image intensifiers, and spartchlights; troop quality; area and point effect
ALL-STAR REPLAY

For those readers who follow Mr. Burnett’s column “Sports Special” but who may not be familiar with the defunct ALL-STAR REPLAY, it was an irregular periodical edited (at various times) by Bruce Milligan or Joe Balkoski. The following is a listing of the contents for the nine issues of ALL-STAR REPLAY for which back issues remain in stock. Common abbreviations are used for the sports games, to wit: Baseball—BB; Basketball—BkSt; Bowl Bound—BB; Challenge Bridge—CB; Football Strategy—FBfS; Paydirt—PD; Pennant Race—PR; Pro Grid—PG; Speed Circuit—SC; Statis-Pro Baseball—SPBb; Statis-Pro Basketball—SPBb; Statis-Pro Football—SPFb; Statis-Pro Basketball—SB; Statis-Pro Baseball—SB; Statist-Pb—SPb; Statist-Pro Football—SPFb; Superstar Baseball—SB; Title Bout—TB; USAC Auto Racing—USAC; Win, Place & Show—WP&S.

The subject code is also fairly straightforward: Design—D; Strategy—S. We should note that issues of ALL-STAR REPLAY and HEROES. If the reader should need a copy of an article from the GENERAL, the Avalon Hill Game Company does provide a photocopying service. The charge for this service is $1.00 per page, with a minimum order of five pages required. Please specify the article title, volume and number it is for. The Avalon Hill Game Company does provide a photocopying service.

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THE CASE FOR PLAYING BY MAIL
An Introduction to PBM

By Tom Oleson

Surely no one is better qualified to author a discussion of play-by-mail techniques than Tom Oleson. Author of Avalon Hill's "Code of Conduct" rules by which AREA play has been governed for the past decade, Tom has been playing wargames by mail longer than a reader of this magazine can remember. With a Philadelphia Post Office Box and a steady stream of mail, Tom is one of the most seasoned PBM players of all time. He has amassed an enviable number of scores by playing virtually all comers at practically any game while others tend to submit only their best games to rating. His experience is by no means limited to Avalon Hill games; having sampled a wide range of what the hobby has to offer in terms of varying publishers and periods. Gamers who feel that they are not getting as much out of gaming as they used to due to lack of time or capable opponents owe it to themselves to listen to Tom's sage advice on the "other way to play".

Apart from the obvious difference in subject matter, what is the difference between a game like Monopoly, and the typical wargame? There are several not obvious at first glance. I doubt that anyone has a key to any game while his wife is watching the game. In contrast, some of the most celebrated figures in our hobby rarely play. For example, I would be surprised if Richard Berg, Jim Dunnigan or Rodger MacGowan have actually played a wargame in a decade, and yet they are among the most deservedly respected names in the hobby. Another difference is that I doubt very much if any one plays Monopoly solitaire, and yet many enthusiastic wargamers like, or even prefer, solitaire play.

So if you are one of the many enjoying our hobby without actually playing against an opponent, this article is not for you. Then again, maybe it is especially for you. I've tried some of the games designed for solitaire play and must admit they are pretty good. However, despite the recent advances in the design of solitaire wargames, I dare say none that I've seen can compare with the excitement of playing a skilled opponent. Regardless of your time available or geographic location, the perfect opponent is as close as your nearest mail box.

That's where Play By Mail (PBM) comes in. It is the best way I know to contact opponent with the perfect temperament who will make wargaming really come alive for you because it greatly multiplies the number of opponents available to you from which to choose. Joe down-the-street doesn't like Civil War games? No bother, Bill in Tennessee listens. Bill hasn't learned the new impulse-games movement; so what, Jeff in Georgia knows his stuff. Of course, this is not the only advantage of PBM. You can do a PBM turn at the most convenient moment for you and your family, who may have different ideas about how daddy or fiance should spend the evening or weekend, something other than an all-day Face-To-Face (FTF) wargaming session. I don't know anyone so henpecked he can't slip away with his wife and kids after watching the latest "Dynasty" episode to do a PBM turn, and it is so much more exciting than today's TV! Moreover, given the length of many of our wargames, it is often more convenient to reduce them to bite-size proportions by taking one turn at a time rather than trying to finish them all at once in one marathon session. Moreover, you never have to worry about Joe Gamer sneezing in your face, eating you out of house and home, or wanting to play on your bowling night. You play when you want.
able in FTF play. How many of you have sworn off playing anyone again because he took too long? In PBM you can take all the time you want without inconveniencing your opponent, and in the process you will discover countless tricks and superior strategies not readily apparent before.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

In this age of high tech, Play By Mail can take many forms. Moves can be made by telephone, FACSM machines, or computer modems with any of the numerous electronic Bulletin Board services that are available for user fees. The medium doesn’t really matter. The important thing is that they each allow you to bridge great distances to reach an opponent, otherwise being impossible to you, and allow you to take your turn at your leisure. While the above methods tend to be more expensive, they have the advantage of getting your moves to their destination faster. Given the more leisurely pace of PBM, I’ve never considered this much of an advantage—although I can see where two fellows on opposite sides of the country who wanted to play each other an entire game during the course of a weekend might find great advantage in the instant communications these electronic media provide. I understand some of the electronic bulletin board services even provide random number generation for the resolution of combat. Certainly this is a form of PBM we will hear more of in the future, but you don’t have to be well versed in the computer revolution to use the telephone.

Gamers in major urban areas can especially use the telephone to good advantage to play “by mail” faster and more cheaply than they could through the mails. Don Greenwood is currently playing the new STALINGRAD game one impulse at a time with a friend on the other side of Baltimore. They live more than 50 miles apart and see each other infrequently; but because it’s still a local phone call, they exchange impuluses daily for free. The impulse system games are especially good for play-by-phone because so few units are usually moved each “turn” and the problem of slurring or writing grid-coordinates is lessened. Dice rolls can be resolved simply by stating a page number from your common phonebook. Your opponent then responds instantly with a column and a number—so quickly that it remains any doubt that he has had time to actually look up the page and column in question. You can then both look up the page quoted, go to the proper column, and count down the cited number to the randomly selected phone number. Use the divide-by-six method to determine a random number from 1 to 6 by dividing the last four digits of that phone number. Any other dice rolls required can be taken in order down the page provided you’ve specified them in advance. If you live in the same television viewing area or even the same state, you might want to use the numbers from your local television lottery shows. A simpler solution is just to use the Random Number sheet method described later in this article.

WHERE TO KEEP THEM

Regrettably, I must concede that PBM is not for everyone. You will probably rapidly come to the same conclusion if your PBM debut is attempted without a game set up between turns. Although there are many fine PBMers who don’t leave their games set up between turns, it is not recommended. Not only is it a nuisance and time consuming to have to reset each turn, but the possibilities for error are multiplied. So if you absolutely don’t have a place where you can leave games setup perhaps you had best forget about PBM. But don’t be so quick to use this as an excuse!

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With a little effort and very little expense, most living space situations can be adjusted so that leaving one or more games set up need not be cumber-
sheets for use in club matches. (Despite the similarity of the same, AHKs has no connection with Avalon Hill so if you have a problem with them don’t take it up with the boys on Harford Road.)

The real beauty of Random Number Sheets though is that virtually anyone can get one for the price of a newspaper. As explained in the accompanying Code of Conduct article, the listing of New York Stock Exchange transactions, printed in most newspapers, can easily be used to generate dice rolls. However, you need not use them in the traditional manner in conjunction with a CTD—thus requiring ready access to virtually any paper.

Get in the habit of saving a few newspaper stock listings. Pick them up, order, the better. At this point, pick ten stocks and add their total sales-in-hundreds. Advise your opponent of your ten stocks and their total sales. This constitutes a “fingerprint” for your newspaper sheet. It is unlikely that any two stock lists for different days will have this same total. Thus, your opponent is assured that you will be using the same Random Number Sheet throughout the game.

It must be acknowledged that this system is not without its flaws. An industrious and unscrupulous player could cheat by spending hour upon hour pouring over old stock results until he found one that matched his fingerprint. By providing your opponent with only the total sales of your ten stocks rather than the individual sales of each stock, the cheater would not be able to decipher your newspaper—laboriously totalling columns of numbers trying to find the right combination. Frankly, anybody who wants to win this badly is really sick and has my pity. I gladly concede the win to anyone handicapped by such an under-developed conscience. However, you needn’t be so scrupulous. It is easy to remove, even this small element of doubt. Here’s how. When a player selects a stock for resolution, he includes with his selection a digit between 0 and 5 as an additive randomizer. The result for combat resolution is the “sum mod 6” of the stock volume and the additive randomizer. For example, suppose the player selects AT&T as the stock entry and 4 as his additive randomizer. If the AT&T final sales result is a “2”, the result is 2+4=6. This way, even if your opponent can predict the next stock you will select, you have the opportunity of unknowingly changing the result.

A bigger drawback to my mind is what happens when your wife inadvertently throws out your old newspaper with the spring housecleaning? That takes some pretty tall explaining . . . “uh, sorry Rolfe, we’ll have to do that last bunch of attacks over again—I lost my Random Number Sheet”. When that happens, you must in good conscience offer to resign the game—and don’t be upset when your opponent accepts.

Another drawback to the use of Random Number Sheets is the lack of immediate verification. When you use the CTD method, you verify every attack and victory result for the attacker against you. If your opponent finds a discrepancy in the results you must gladly concede him the win. Many gamers do not like this system because they don’t want to jeopardize a win to an error in basic math. Personally, I prefer it. With calculators so cheap today, there is no excuse for even the most pathetic mathematician to be unable to correctly divide a three- or four-digit number by six and then multiplying the result by six to double-check his work.

Many of the same rules for the selection of stocks when using the CTD method apply also to a stock random number sheet. For example, if a certain stock is missing or lacks a three-digit result, use the next unsuitable stock. Be sure to mark off on your sheet stocks you’ve already used in one color so that you won’t repeat them in a later turn. Circle the sales-in-hundreds results used by your opponent with a notation of the die roll each generates in a second color. This aids your opponent in keeping track of the conflicts against him using the same stock twice. If you wish to really be helpful you might note the turn each die roll was generated in the margin in still another color.

There has been much discussion of possible pitfalls in using the “do-it-yourself” Random Number Sheets. Player A can cheat and only require a few minutes per game—the problems are minimized. The advantages are that it is cheap and very convenient. If you happen to be playing several people simultaneously as most PBM’s do, you don’t have to worry about them picking the same CTD and thereby requiring you to scurry about getting extra copies of the same paper as verification. Regardless of any delay in receiving your opponent’s turn, your die roll sheet is right there waiting.

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 readerships such as tournaments or events utilizing The Avalon Hill Game Company’s games 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 encouraged to contact the listed groups for further information before making plans to attend.

MARCH 17-19
OWLCON X, Houston, Texas
Contact: Jon Benzenuus, RSFAFA, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251.
Note: Tournaments in DIPLOMACY and CIVILIZATION among others.

APRIL 14-16
PENTECON, Ithaca, New York
Contact: Robert Kurban, Cornell Strategic Simulations Society, 5553 North Campus #5, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

APRIL 15-16
WINDS OF WAR ’89, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Contact: Piedmont Area Wargame, P.O. Box 72, Kernersville, NC 27285.
Note: ASL Regional Tournament.

APRIL 29-30
UMF-COM, Farmington, Maine
Contact: Table Gaming Club, Student Life Office, 5 South Street, Farmington, ME 04938.

MAY 26-27
GAMECAUCUS ’89, Concord, California
Contact: Mike Wilson, P.O. Box 4887, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. (415) 228-0764.
Note: Tournaments include TAC AIR, UP FRONT, TITAN, B-17 and 7TH FLEET among others.

JUNE 16-18
MICHOCON ’89, Southfield, Michigan
Contact: Barry Jensen or Mike Barnikowski, Metro Detroit Gamers, P.O. Box 656, Wyandotte, MI 48192. (313) 591-2300.

JULY 28-30
DIP-COM XXI, San Diego, California
Contact: Larry Peery, P.O. Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102. (619) 295-6248.
Note: The premier DIPLOMACY tournament in the States, featuring individual and team and variant competitions.

HEROES

A number of folks have written to us lately requesting a listing of the contents of HEROES, Avalon Hill’s defunct role-playing magazine. For those readers who may not be familiar with HEROES, it was a bi-monthly, 48-page periodical of gaming contents (at various times) edited by Buachaille of Richard Snider. The following is a listing of the contents for the ten issues of HEROES that appeared. Common abbreviations are used for the role-playing games, to: Wipers & Perils—WIP; RuneQuest—RQ; James Bond—007; Lords of Creation—LOC. Many issues also contained one or more articles on one of Avalon Hill’s science-fiction or fantasy boardgames; these have not been abbreviated. The subject code is also fairly straightforward: Fiction/Background—F; Scenario—Sc; Variant—V; Design—D; Strategy—S. Readers wishing to obtain one or more of these back issues of HEROES may obtain them direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214) for $4.00 each plus the usual 10% shipping and handling. (Maryland residents, please add 5% state sales tax.)

Vol. 1, #1: 007-V; D; P&P—P; D; LeC—Sc; Amanda Wars—S
Vol. 1, #2: 007—D; LeC—V; RQ—F; V; P&P—Sc; Eroc—Sc; F
Vol. 1, #3: 007—V; LeC—V; RQ—V; P&P—V; S; Mystic...
THE REVISED AREA BRIEFING
Changes to the AREA System

By Don Greenwood

The AREA Player Rating system is now entering its 15th year of existence. Although it can’t be said to have reached its maturation point, it would appear of completely culling the bad guys from the ranks of postal play, neither has it been a dismal failure. There are still incidents of poor sportsmanship and outright fraud, not to mention disappearaging opponents who drop out of sight when games start to go bad. However, judging from the number of such reports received in recent years, it would appear that the frequency of these instances has decreased. Whether this relative calm upon the waters can be attributable to the “Big Brother is watching you” syndrome of AREA or simply the granting of the hobby a matter of opinion. It does appear likely however that the publication and widespread acceptance of a code of ethics regarding postal play where none existed previously has had at least a contributing effect. No matter how distasteful it may be to “snitch” on an errant opponent, the possibility of being reported to a neutral higher authority and dismissed in disgrace must influence at least a few to adhere to the straight and narrow. Playing someone with an extensive AREA background is not a guarantee of an enjoyable game played to conclusion, but it is certainly a better percentage bet than trying someone with no track record at all.

Skill and personality aside, one of the best qualifications an opponent can have is honesty. All too often PBM rookies take defeat personally or as a test of their gaming “manhood”. Learning to lose graciously is what sets aside the practiced, mature competitor from the “win-at-any-cost” mentality of someone trying to feed his ego. A player with an extensive AREA record is someone who has been through the wars already and probably met defeat before and knows that it is nothing to be ashamed of. The real reward in these games is not just winning, but the friendly comradery of a hard-fought contest. In that sense, AREA has been a success and because of it we are embarking on a new era of AREA play in which we are attempting to shore up its shortcomings and give it a new, more active role. This, and the accompanying articles on PBM and Playing Aids, kick off our campaign to give AREA the facelift it needs to carry it into the ‘90s and help revitalize competitive gaming in our hobby again.

Henceforward AREA’s shortcomings could be lumped into three general categories:

1. LACK OF PUBLICITY: Despite administering the system and publicizing the AREA Top 50 list, we did little to actually relate what AREA was on an ongoing basis. In 15 years of existence, this article marks only the third time that the system has been extensively explained to the readership. All references to it must have been somewhat mystical to new readers not versed in what AREA does. Consequently, hereafter we will be publishing a regular AREA AFFAIRS column by leading AREA competitor Don Burdick to keep the readership posted of AREA activities and actions on a regular and detailed basis.

2. NON-FIT APPEAL: AREA was designed with the Face-By-Face (FBF) nature in mind and did little to appeal to those interested only in live Face-To-Face (FTF) play. With the growing sophistication of the “state-of-the-art”, new games that are easy to play by mail have been few and far between—which contributed to a declining rate of postal wars being conducted. For all of its virtues, PBM has one big drawback: the time it takes to bring games to a conclusion—as so vividly demonstrated by the two-round AREA postal tournaments, some of which have been run for years now. Obviously, if AREA is to be a force in the mainstream of the hobby it must do a better job of catering to FTF players as well. Some year, we hope to address this shortcoming with an annual Championships convention.

3. LACK OF DETAIL: In trying to cover all facets of Avalon Hill gaming, we spread ourselves too thinly. The system as presently constructed rates a player for all reported games played; but because the system does not presently distinguish between the games played, a rating does not tell anything about which games a player is proficient at—only that he has played some game(s) a specific number of times. A great TACTICS II player may be a terrible RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN player. It is possible that the highest rated AREA player has gained his place on the Top 50 list playing nothing but TACTICS II and under his own terms. We are now going to address that shortcoming as well.

For longtime readers who are familiar with AREA and PBM procedures or who have no interest in them, we apologize for usurping so much of your time. As a group—rather than in specific games. That sort of match-up is the “fadeaway” opponent has been the chief gripe of those who play by mail ever since the postal gaming, we spread ourselves out far too many points or not winning any due to their low rating. Consequently, we now start all new entrants at 1500 and allow competition to decide their true level. In reality, an AREA rating means nothing until it is “verified” by having played ten rated games. Until then, a player’s rating is considered “provisional”.

Scoring is simple. Players agree to play a rated game, exchange a signed Code of Conduct agreement containing all the details of the match, and at the conclusion the loser signs the winner’s Victory slip, adding the date and his membership number. The winner then sends the Victory slip to Avalon Hill to be fed into the rating system. Points are won and lost according to the dictates of the Provisional Numerical Rating Chart.

PROVISIONAL NUMERICAL RATING CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difference in rating points:</th>
<th>If higher rated player wins:</th>
<th>If lower rated player wins:</th>
<th>In case of a draw:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>high player gains</td>
<td>high player loses</td>
<td>low player loses</td>
<td>low player gains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many points above</td>
<td>how many points below</td>
<td>how many points</td>
<td>how many points</td>
</tr>
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<td>0-50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>51-100</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<td>201-250</td>
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<td>251-300</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>130</td>
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<td>651-700</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>701-750</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>70</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Any Verified player (10 rated games) will be assigned a rating between 900 and 1200, after which they can move up or down as their results warrant. Should a player have won three of his last five games, and lost two of his last five, his rating would be 1000. His average rating over the last five games is 3/2 or 1.5. If a player wins the next two games, his rating will be 1125; if he wins one and loses one, his rating will be 1100; if he loses the next two games, his rating will be 1075. The best a player can do is win all five, and his rating would then be 1250.
A Verified player’s gains/losses are halved to give his rating more stability. Provisional players ratings are kept volatile on purpose so they can reach their true level of competition faster.

Starting in 1989, AREA will also rate multi-player games. The only additional requirement is that the winner must collect a signed victory slip from each player, staple them together and forward them as a unit to the AREA technician with a statement that all of the slips compose a single ratings claim for an X-number of games. Each player should write the word “multi-player” across his concession slip. The Area technician will then award and subtract points as he would for a single two-player game except that all points won/lost are divided by the number of players in the game (fractions rounded up).

EXAMPLE: Assume player A with a verified rating of 1600 wins a four-player game of KREMLIN. The losers are rated 1500, 1400, and 1300 respectively but player B’s 1500 rating is provisional (less than ten recorded games). Player B loses 17 points (.25 of 65), player C loses seven (.25 of 28; as a verified player his point gain/loss is halved, and player D loses six (.25 of 24). Players A who is verified will gain nine points from A, seven from C, and six from D for a total gain of 22 points in one game.

FORFEITS

Forfeited games do not result in victory points for either side. A "Forfeit" is defined as any game in which a player refuses to finish a game which has been started with the mutual understanding that it will be submitted for rating. Players may successfully terminate a game at any time by signing their opponent’s copy of the rules and informing the AREA technician of the results. Areas are lumped into one overall rating.

Unfortunately, games already rated as part of a current General membership cannot be counted towards establishing a Specific membership. Therefore, all Specific memberships must be Provisional until a player plays ten rated games that specified title. We will be printing “Top 10” lists of rated gamers in The General for each game as they become available. Rated members will receive top seeds and/or byes at the future Avalon Hill Championships. We believe this system offers even more opportunities for players to earn recognition in their hobby while publicizing just who the best players are and setting up “dream” matches between players of equal skill.

CHOOSING SIDES

AREA does not get involved in assigning opponents or sides. Starting a rated game is up to the initiative of the individual player to find an AREA rated opponent with similar desires. The General want ads are a good place to start. Failing that, you can obtain a listing of four other AREA members in your vicinity by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a $1.00 fee. There is no guarantee that the members listed will be still active in AREA play or receptive to your proposals or even previously unknown to you. No refunds or alternate names will be furnished.

When setting up a match it is always best to list the optional rules or play balance refinements with which you wish to play and then offer your opponent his choice of sides. Failing that, the best solution is to agree to play two games—one with each side. If playing by mail, such a series should probably be done simultaneously rather than trusting the other fellow to be in the mood at the rematching time at any rate a game lasting several years.

QUALIFIERS

The letter qualifiers appended to a player’s letter card should be safeguarded as replacements of blowing the whistle on someone else, but there are some irreversible situations where the best efforts of diplomacy and fair play have failed to get an opponent to live up to his obligations, AREA encourages you to report the offender so that we can informally inform him that such behavior is not tolerated in the AREA player pool or advise you that you are in the wrong.

EXAMPLE: An AREA rating with a Qualifier of CCB has been rated in 11-15 games against 4-5 opponents of whom two have been played by mail.

GRIEVANCES

There are circumstances under which the game was started by providing us with a copy of the Code of Conduct agreement exchanged by both parties prior to the start of play of each agreement was signed, you have no recourse for complaint. You need not exchange a Code of Conduct agreement for every game played. Longtime acquaintances will seldom go to that formality. However, if you have not exchanged such agreements specifying the terms of your match, you have an obligation to render a judgment regarding your complaint. If you did not exchange such an agreement beforehand you cannot make a complaint. Your only recourse is to chalk up the game to experience and scratch that opponent from your list of compatible playing partners.

2. WARNING: Never complain to AREA unless you have first tried to resolve your problem with your opponent to no avail. If that fails, always give your opponent a warning that your next action will be to file a grievance and give him two weeks to respond before doing so.

3. OPPONENT’S COPY: When filing a grievance, always send a copy of that grievance to your opponent. If you expect a reply of any kind from AREA, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Otherwise, you will never hear the outcome of your grievance.

4. MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: Always include the complete Membership Number and address of both yourself and your opponent when filing a grievance.

For the record, if we decide your grievance is valid, we will warn your opponent by mail to comply. Failure to do so constitutes a forfeit and removal from the system. Again, no points are earned for a forfeit—no matter how lop-sided the situation when the game terminated. Any game which does not end with a signed Victory Slip is not a completed game and earns no points or qualifiers. Victory is not the most important part of a rated game; completion of it in a friendly manner is.

PROCEDURES

1. MEMBERSHIP CARD: Each AREA member gets a membership card containing his membership number. Every multi-player game is entered in pencil so that you can update it. Your membership card should be safeguarded as replacements must be purchased. If you change your address, you must report it and purchase a new membership card—which will probably result in a new membership number as well. There is a $1.00 fee for this card which will be mailed to you. Do not submit victory claims/losses with an invalid address/membership number.

Continued on Page 38, Column 2
CODE OF CONDUCT
Official AREA check list for AREA matches

Avalon Hill suggests you make photocopies of this form to fill out and exchange with your opponent prior to the start of every AREA postal match.

Name
Address
AREA Number: Phone Number:
Area (Include Area code & preferred local time to call)
Date: Approximate AREA rating:

I have read the article "RULES OF CONDUCT" by Tom Oleson, which appeared in Vol. 25, No. 2 of The GENERAL, and agree to abide by its rules for good postal play. Apart from the general rules, we agree to the following specific arrangements:

1. Game & Edition:
2. Scenario & applicable options:
3. Side each is playing:
4. Errata agreed to:
5. Other Agreements (such as second game w/exchange of sides):
6. Judge to handle disputes if other than AH:
7. Permitted time limit between the receipt of your opponent's turn, and the postmark of your reply:
   - 1 week
   - 2 weeks
   - 3 weeks
   - 4 weeks
   - Chess Clock
8. Timeouts allowed to each side:
9. Time Span of timeouts:
10. The possible combat and movement thereafter results of each turn must be fully specified in advance when the turn is mailed. Note here any deviation permitted from this rule:
11. Combat Resolution System:
   - divide by 6
   - special PBM base 10 table
   - other (specify):
12. If using a back issue newspaper stock sheet as a random number sheet, specify:
   A. Name & edition of newspaper:
   B. "Fingerprint" of sheet you are using:
   C. Any special procedure for selecting stocks:
13. If using a current date newspaper stock sheet for each turn, specify:
   A. Name & edition of newspaper:
   B. Minimum interval between postmark of letter and CTD of stocks:
   C. Alternative CTD if invalid CTD chosen:
14. Attacks to be resolved by:
   - defender
   - attacker in subsequent letter using CTD after postmark of last letter
15. Penalties for returned moves:
   - none
   - bonus die roll
   - return of same move for correction three times results in concession.
16. Special Arrangements not covered above:
17. Signatures of both players:

THE LAST RESORT
Official AREA Complaint Form

All complaints regarding AREA play are to be filed on a photocopy of this form or a typed or printed facsimile. All information contained on this form is required to file a grievance with AREA. All AREA grievances are resolved in accordance with the Code of Conduct article printed in Vol. 25, No. 2 of The GENERAL. Do not expect help from AREA if your problem is caused by conduct other than that listed in the aforementioned article.

ACTION TAKEN: I understand that I cannot gain AREA points by gaining a forfeit win over my opponent. All that can be gained is a possible prompting of my opponent to fulfill his AREA obligations and consequently to resume our game, or failing that, his disqualification from the AREA rating pool.

REQUIREMENTS: 1. To file a complaint you must first have written your opponent trying to resolve your problem at least twice without success at two week intervals and must send him a copy of this complaint.
2. Do not file more than one complaint per form or per attached separate piece of correspondence.

NATURE OF COMPLAINT: Explain below or per attached correspondence.

Your Name
Address
AREA Number
Opponent's Name
Address
AREA Number

Game Being Played:
Date Begun:
Number of Turns Played:
Date of last correspondence from opponent:
Date of last unanswered correspondence to opponent:
Number of unanswered inquiries sent at bi-weekly intervals:

ACTION TAKEN: I understand that I cannot gain AREA rating points by gaining a forfeit win over my opponent. All that can be gained is a possible prompting of my opponent to fulfill his AREA obligations and consequently to resume our game, or failing that, his disqualification from the AREA rating pool.

NATURE OF COMPLAINT: Explain below or per attached correspondence.

I certify that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge, and that this claim is filed as a last resort and in the best interest of fair play in the AREA Rating Pool.

Signature
The Rules for AREA

By Tom Oleson

1. TIME LIMITS: Agree on time limits, date your turn, and also indicate which game turn it is. A common interval is one or two weeks. The interval doesn’t matter as long as you agree beforehand. Don’t consider such intervals sacrosanct. The purpose of time limits is to keep a game going—not to see if you can win on a technicality. Don’t cry foul if an opponent violates your weekly intervals by taking eight days. But if those weekly intervals start becoming bi-weekly or monthly, it’s time to remind him of his agreement and suggest that he take a timeout, or resign, or perhaps that you should renegotiate the required time interval.

2. TIMEOUTS: Rare is the gamer who can invariably reply within a week (or whatever time interval has been agreed), so specify a number of “timeouts” and their duration. No one should expect his opponent to ignore vacations, work or any of the multitude of life’s problems in order to keep to a PBM schedule. However, every gamer has the right to expect his opponent to show him the courtesy of dropping him a card stating that he will be unable to continue for a month or so. The frequency and duration of such timeouts shouldn’t be excessive but each gamer must decide for himself what is excessive. If you’re not willing to delay a game for more than a month, state so in advance. If you violate the agreed time limits, offer to resign without complaint.

3. CHESS CLOCK SYSTEM: An alternative to the timeout system for those a little more serious about keeping a game going is the “Chess Clock” system. FTP players often dread playing someone who seemingly takes forever to make his moves. The problem is solved in PBM play with the use of a Chess Clock. Each player keeps a Chess Clock log. He must return the postmark of the game committed to memory. A longtime subscriber to the theory that good fences make good neighbors, I hereby take advantage of the current AREA face-lifting to once again present the rulebook for AREA postal play.

Before beginning, let’s take time to state what should be obvious but which is nonetheless the most important rule: Be a good sport. The purpose of wargaming is enjoyment. We are playing games. Nothing more. Of course we take them seriously and wish more people did likewise, but it is more important to gain the respect of a fellow gamer than to win any game. When faced by someone who doesn’t subscribe to this theory, don’t give in to the impulse to treat him in kind. Continue to play and give him the same respect and courtesy that you would like to receive. Then, after concluding the match, mark him off your list of opponents. There are many mature gamers out there looking for a good PBM match; there is no need to continue your association with someone whose personality you find abrasive. The ultimate end to any game should not necessarily be a victory, but neither the hearty congratulations of the loser while asking for another game. If you don’t get that, then you really haven’t won anything.

4. TELEPHONE: Exchange phone numbers and a suggested time to take calls. No one is requiring you to make a long distance phone call, but you may discover that you want to during the course of a match to correct a move rather than returning it. Then too, with foreign postal strikes, rising postal rates, and falling long distance phone rates it is no longer considered exorbitant. Do use some common sense though. If you forget the difference in time zones and phone your opponent at 3AM local time he, or more likely his wife, may not appreciate it. Generally speaking, it is a good idea to invest in a phone call to try to resolve any problem before referring it to Avalon Hill in the form of a complaint.

5. RECORDS: There are many different PBM styles. Some are very casual, using any scrap of paper or postcard. Others regard such informality with disdain, and use elaborate OoB sheets such as those sold by Avalon Hill. If you do insist on a certain standard of record keeping, make that clear in advance. Otherwise, you have no complaint as long as the move is legible. Print your move in ink. Invest in some carbon paper and keep a copy of every move so that your opponent doesn’t have to return your move. If he does likewise, you’ll both have a complete record of the game, and should a move go astray there will be no problem in restarting the game from the point of interruption.

This is a good point to mention AHIKS—the oldest wargaming club in existence—which consists primarily of players who play by mail. Among other services, they provide detailed OoB sheets for PBM and Random Number Sheets for the resolution of dice rolls. The current membership secretary is Bill Salvatore (19985 Wild Cherry Lane, Waters’ Landing, MD 20874-1015).

5. OPPA, U.S. AHIKS! Apart from the different ways in which you may record your turn, there are numerous ways to play a PBM turn. Avalon Hill supplements instructions for PBM in general and specific rules for a few of their older games that are espe-
cially suitable for PBM. One of the differences between FTF and PBM is that in FTF you must decide the consequences of each action (such as casualties, advancements, retreats) before proceeding to the next turn, whereas in PBM you can make these decisions after the fact. Rather, it is customary to arrange the PBM turn to approximate a FTF game as nearly as possible. Therefore, when you mail your PBM turn, you should:

A. List the order in which combats will be resolved, even though the combat results may make this not the most advantageous order.

B. List in advance all the possible results of each combat. This permits you to collaborate, particularly in a complex game with a number of combatants. If you do not mention a possibility, you lose it. For example, if you intend to advance after combat or foresee the possibility for a second combat, you must so specify in advance. If you neglect all this, the complexities of such systems, Avalon Hill has not found a satisfactory way. To my knowledge, no one actually uses this method.

C. Decide whether to send your opponent your opponent's turn for him to resolve combat at his end using his paper, or whether you may first mail your turn a few days later resolving combat at your end, then mailing him the results with a copy of your turn. Doing this is an option usually employed only in double-impulse movement games or when you wish to see the results of a preliminary attack before designating the orders for subsequent attacks. It is also a viable option if one of the players has trouble gaining access to a paper—although it is rarely employed because it involves twice as many mailings.

2. CONCESSION: The loser should submit his signed AREA slip directly to the winner. If you have lost, simply wait to hear back from your opponent. Then make a presumption of truth in any PBM paper or it might not have started in the first place, but it is unnecessary to take it on faith that your victory has been recorded. It has sometimes happened to me that my opponent acknowledges his loss, but for some reason does not send the concession slip. Sometimes I have had to send repeat reminders over quite lengthy periods to obtain the slip. In theory, I guess the game continued. The temptation was to get a little annoyed over the lack of courtesy, perhaps to resort to sarcasm or harsh words, and perhaps that was justified. Instead, I have found that in most cases my opponent is just anxious to get on with the next move and will eventually send the slip, particularly after he has been prodded by repeated reminders.

RESOLVING COMBAT

1. HONOR SYSTEM: There are several forms of honor system ranging from "rolling your own" to composing a Random Number Sheet from a newspaper stock exchange listing. There is a major disadvantage to such systems, and it is not dishonesty. Any experienced gamer knows that bizarre streaks of luck—both good and bad—occur. If, at a key moment, you roll three "1"s, what do you do? If you honestly report them to your opponent, you can lose the trust and respect of a friend, or at least sow a seed of doubt. If you worsen your own die rolls, you are cheating yourself. Then what if you roll three "6"s? For that reason, no matter how much you trust your opponent—don't use the honor system; there are simple and readily available alternatives. If you don't want to use the CTD method of stock results—and many don't—resort to a Random Number Sheet. "The Case For PBM" elsewhere in this issue will give a more extensive discussion of the subject.

2. DIVIDE BY SIX: The most common form of die roll resolution uses the stock exchange listings in the daily paper. The Sales-in-Hundreds column is consulted for a particular stock on a given date to arrive at a random number. The cited date is referred to as the Closing Transaction Date—thus the usual name for the system: CTD. However, as most games use base-6 charts to cone to dice rolls, the number must be divided by six to arrive at a base-6 number. The remainder is the equivalent of your die roll (off 0 to 5) of a die roll of "6". A few games have base-10 CTD charts provided in the PBMs kits that AH sells. Either system can be used as long as it is agreed to in advance.

2A. EDITION: I can't stress too strongly that it is imperative to agree in advance exactly which edition of which newspaper is to be used. Don't just say "the morning paper"—it is not verifiable. Even if you genuinely couldn't get the morning paper—although it is rarely employed because it involves twice as many mailings.

2E. EXCUSES: Sometimes there is an unexpected problem: the market may close early, there are transmission problems, etc. It is understood that in such a case, you will use whatever figures are published. Invariably the paper will note on the stock sheet the reason for the discrepancy which should be included in your verifying clipping. On the other hand, telling your opponent that the dog ate your paper for that day just won't cut it. If the paper unexpectedly prints results from a different hour or doesn't print results at all, that is unexpected and verifiable. Even if you genuinely couldn't get the paper, you can use the transaction at an hour when closing prices are unavailable, so they print volume figures corresponding to another hour. It may be inconvenient to get a paper with closing prices. You can use the transactions at an hour other than the close if it is clearly agreed in advance.

Using a non-closing stock list without notifying your opponent of that fact before he selects his CTD is not allowed.
2F. POSTMARKS: The essential difference between using stocks to generate dice rolls and an alternative system is that you must select the stocks before knowing what their Sales-in Hundreds result will be. Therefore, it is essential that you mail your turn so that the envelope will be postmarked at least the day before the date chosen to generate the dice rolls. Err on the side of safety and choose a date at least two days in advance of the dispatching of the letter. There is probably little harm in using a postmark with even the same date as the CTD but why add that element of doubt? Infrequently the postmark is illegible. In such a case, return the unopened letter (after checking the back for that elusive postmark). A hassle? You bet. Another good reason to use a Random Number Sheet. Occasionally a letter bearing the results of a turn will arrive before the letter containing the turn, which, in a perfect world, the post office would have delivered first. In such a case, you need only check the postmarks. If they are in the proper sequence, then the inverted delivery is your opponent’s fault, and you have no cause for complaint. If the postmarks prove that the proper interval between turn and results has not been observed, return them to your opponent for a complete redo of the turn.

2G. SUNDAY SUMMARIES: There is no reason not to use the weekly summary of stock transactions appearing in the Sunday paper provided you’ve checked with your opponent about his preference. The Sunday summary will probably be delivered to you regular gets one. It’s quite convenient, as many Sunday papers are available Saturday, so it gives your opponent most of the weekend to do his turn, if he wishes. When using a Sunday summary, your letter should be postmarked no later than the preced- ing Thursday.

2H. CONTINGENCIES: Sometimes a CTD is selected for which there are no figures—usually because it is not a working day. In this instance, it is understood that the same stocks should be used, but for the very next day that the market trades. Another common error is forgetting to name a CTD. In this case use the next available date in which the market trades after the postmark on the letter in which the turn was mailed. Was it not for the problem of illegible postmarks this might well be the method of choice for selecting CTDs. If there is no legible postmark on the envelope, return the move for a redo but be sure to return his envelope too to verify the lack of a postmark.

2I. STOCK SELECTION: There are several things to keep in mind when selecting stocks. First, it is understood that the list used is that of the New York Stock Exchange, absent agreement to the contrary. To avoid confusion, use stocks which appear only once. For example, there is only one “Playboy” but there are seven different classes of “Philadelphia Electric” stock traded. Of course, if you do not name specific stocks, but describe how to find them (e.g., start in the “P” column and proceed down the list, using only stocks with at least three digits sales-in-hundreds), you can and will use stocks such as the many classes of “Philadelphia Electric”. Some gamers have alleged that certain lightly-traded stocks generate non-random dice rolls, and it is true to a small degree that very inactive stocks will generate more lower numbers than higher ones. To avoid this problem, select stocks which consistently trade in three or more figures. Any stock listing in the hundreds like the 100,000 (10,000 shares) is considered invalid and replaced with the next suitable stock beneath it in the listing not already cited for use during that turn. If a stock listing has the notation “z”, that means that the sales figure is not in hundreds, but rather the total sales. Such stocks are also invalid. This contingency agreement also comes into play when the selected stock is garbled or deleted.

It also happens that in the excitement of making a move, a player will forget some of the clerical details and forget to list one or more stocks for the contents he has specified. Rather than return the move for that information, players using the CTD method should understand that it is accepted AREA practice to use the listing of “Most Active” stocks for that day’s transactions to select any necessary stocks. If only one such stock is required, use the one his choice in the absence of other provisions for the letter. If more than one, use them in declining order of volume—skipping any stocks which may have been specifically named for other resolutions. The Most Active List must then be part of the clipping you send your opponent for validation.

HOW TO HANDLE MISTAKES

A number of systems have been used by gamers to rate PBM and FFT sessions. Behind these systems are two basic divergent philosophies. At one extreme are those who argue that if you make a mistake, you are stuck with it. War is hell. If a commander writes down an order incorrectly, he is responsible for the consequences. War is a simulate war, so your ability to play without error should enhance your success and vice versa.

At the other extreme are those who say that the important thing in wargaming is sportsmanship, camaraderie and the excitement of a well-played match—not the clerical precision with which it is recorded. Therefore, mistakes should be corrected—punished. Of course, most wargamers would take a stand somewhere between these two extremes, but finding someone who agrees exactly with you on where that point should be is often difficult.

The official AREA Code of Conduct requires that if you receive a turn with an error in it, you must return it for correction. You are free to play AREA matches by any other covenant you wish, but be advised that if a dispute arises which you wish to have Avalon Hill resolve, their one and only answer will be that incorrect turns are returned for correction. Even this simple policy could stand some elaboration:

1. DEFINITION: The AREA definition of a legal turn is as follows:

A. All units in the OoB of the player whose turn it is are located, and only those units.

B. The location of all units conforms to the rules of the game.

C. All combats, or other events requiring dice rolls, are correctly listed correctly calculated and conform to the rules.

D. Any other information required in the turn in question, for example declaration of a game option, is listed.

E. The turn is done in the agreed format, as already explained in great detail.

A legal turn is not necessarily a well-done turn. If you send your opponent a turn conforming to the above definition, but containing an error in judgment, he is under no obligation to return it because errors in judgment are never clearcut. For example, you may mis-note the hex grid of a unit in such a way that the result is a legal move which leaves a gap in your front. Among opponents who are also friends, it is customary to return such a move, but this is not a legal rule. However, if you failed to attack a weak point overlooking, it is probably the most common error is forgetting to name a CTD. In this case use the next available date in which the market trades after the postmark on the letter in which the turn was mailed. Was it not for the problem of illegible postmarks this might well be the method of choice for selecting CTDs.

2. REDO: If you receive a turn not conforming exactly to the definition above, it is an illegal turn and you are obliged to return it for a complete redo, including completely new dice roll resolution. Choose the illegal turn permitted as well: it may be completely or partly redone, as the erring player prefers. The word “exactly” is stressed because turn mistakes come in all shapes and sizes. Some are great whales; others tiny minnows. We can’t get into the morass of trying to decide what is trivial and what is significant. In short, if you receive a turn within an AREA, a mistake is a mistake; all are equal. You are free to play AREA-rated games without abiding by this policy, but don’t refer disputes to us if you develop and you have not followed these procedures. Don Greenwood and I have been playing each other AREA-rated games postally over a decade and we both make more than our share of errors. We rarely return a move for a redo because we both trust the other to correct obvious errors in the other’s best interests. That kind of trust usually doesn’t come early in a PBM relationship.

It comes from years of camaraderie and placing the spirit of the game above the importance of winning. Until you’ve developed that network of compatible opponents, you would do well to stick to the letter of the rules.

3. APPROVING ILLEGAL TURNS: Suppose that you receive an illegal turn, but do not realize that it is illegal, or prefer to deliberately ignore it, perhaps because you believe it is in your favor. You then play on that turn, sending your own turn to your opponent. There are two possible outcomes:

A. If your turn is legal, or has an error that could be corrected independently of your opponent’s turn preceding, then you have lost your chance to insist that your opponent correct his immediately preceding, illegal turn. By using it as the basis of your own turn, your unauthorized use of it has already been done.

B. If your turn is not legal, and you can prove that it cannot be corrected without correcting the preceding opponent’s turn to which it is a sequel, then your turn and the preceding turn’s opponent must both be corrected.

To put it another way, the maximum number of turns which may have to be redone as the consequence of an illegal turn is four per player. Errors going further back than that are no longer grounds for complaint. Sometimes it is hard enough to notice your own mistakes, let alone your opponent’s, which may be overlooked, and not because it helps to do so. Nonetheless, let it be clearly understood that if such a turn is an AREA-rated turn, you are morally obliged to conscientiously check it for errors and return it for a complete redo if any turn up. The word “morally” is stressed because there is no practical way to prove whether you failed to notice an error deliberately, or inadvertently.

4. PENALTIES: Constantly returning moves for correction is a hassle no PBMer enjoys and an opponent who regularly makes such mistakes is not often appreciated. The problem is where do you draw the line as to what a suitable penalty should be for inconveniencing your opponent? No one, including any other an AREA, can make that decision for you. It is a matter for each gamer to decide between himself and his opponent the degree to which the cause of such inconveniences should be penalized, if at all. However, it is wise to come to an agreement beforehand on this subject. Otherwise, if you make no pre-match agreement on errors, you will have suitably good reason to treat as a non-compliant opponent you have the misfortune to play. Following are two possible recommended courses of action:

4A. BONUS DICE ROLLS: Whenever an opponent makes an error requiring that a move be returned for correction, that inconveniences has earned you a bonus die roll. You earn one bonus dice roll for each turn returned, not for each error that turn contains. Should you fail to point out one
or more errors while returning a move for correction of other faults, you may not earn additional bonus die rolls for later pointing out that same error if the redone move still counts. Bonus die rolls must be used as soon as possible. A player who has a bonus die roll coming to him specifies his use of it by listing two stocks. Only the best of the two results applies. No more than one bonus die roll may be applied per resolution and all must be predesignated. A player cannot see the result of a die roll before stating that he wishes to use his bonus die roll to change it. A bonus die roll can be carried over from one turn to the next only if he makes less die roll resolutions during that turn than he has accumulated bonus die rolls.

WHEN COMMON SENSE FAILS

Most wargamers are aware that the last decade has been at best a holding operation for our hobby, which has lost many respected figures to economic necessity. What I think many may not realize is the extent to which the very existence of the hobby is threatened by the new breed of player who tries to make a living publishing the games and magazines which comprise it. Nobody is getting rich in wargaming, and most of those who work in it could do better elsewhere. If a typical wargaming professional were to calculate his true per-hour pay, the minimum wage might look attractive. For those whose pay is low and hours long, only the satisfaction of doing something they like makes it all worthwhile.

Something which the people at Avalon Hill don't like is sorting out problems relating to AREA play. Avalon Hill loses money on AREA and the whole area of wargaming as a result of the behavior of a few people there who love the hobby. For that reason, if we want AREA play to continue, we should turn to Avalon Hill to sort out our problems as little as possible. And what are those problems? First, rule interpretations; second, unsportsmanlike conduct.

We've all seen the standard policy statements Avalon Hill regularly prints in their games regarding the submission of questions. Mundane as they seem to be, I am told they are ignored with regularity. Yet, those same games are incensed when the answers to their questions are delayed. Perhaps the list bears repeating.

1. If you expect a reply of any kind, you must enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope (SASE). If living outside the U.S. with no access to U.S. stamps, purchase an International Reply coupon from your local post office. Do not send foreign currency or checks as the cost of collection is prohibitive.

2. If you are going to discuss more than one subject, you'll need to send a separate SASE for each. Let's pause for a moment to consider why. As the number of games grows and the faces at Avalon Hill change, those once familiar with a certain title are often no longer available to answer your inquiries. AH tries to maintain a list of volunteers willing to answer queries on old games that their current staff are no longer familiar with, but there are limits. If you have related questions on five different games in the same letter, your SASE may be making a round-the-world trip stopping in every port. Above all, keep such correspondence separate from orders which are handled by different people in a different location.

3. Keep your game because of simple reasons: you don't want to lose it. Falling back upon rules like these is true for most contests. Any misbehavior escapes me. Most wargamers would like to retain the respect and the goodwill of their opponents, for that reason they do not want to be arbitrary. Even rules much longer and more elaborate than these could not truly reflect the actual conduct of a game, whether PBM or FTF, since that is done under an unspoken understanding based on common sense. This is true for most contests. Any football referee will tell you that holding could be technically called on virtually every play. Basketball isn't supposed to be a contact sport, but you couldn't prove that by watching a game. These are the rules if you want to win, and if you insist that your opponent does, it is your right.

5. CONTRACT: On Page 34 of this issue is a checklist which summarizes the rules which have just been explained. We urge all AREA members to make photocopies of this form and keep them readily available. When you start an AREA game, you and your opponent should by mutual agreement fill out this form together. If a mistake does occur, having done so, you'll have agreed upon the parameters of how the game will be played and have put your fences in order. It is unlikely that you will then have any problems. But if you do have a dispute, don't bother to bring your complaints to Avalon Hill to resolve unless you can also send a photograph of this properly filled out form. It serves as proof that both players entered the match fully aware of all restrictions and options.

2. VICTORY SLIPS: Games can be reported only on official AREA Victory slips. No copies or facsimiles will be accepted. Additional Victory claim sheets may be purchased in quantities of 40 for $5.00 ppd at any time from the AREA system or Avalon Hill. Each victory claim must be signed and countersigned. Each berth number must be used only once and the membership numbers plus information for the four categories: "Game Played", "Verified or Provisional", "Live or PBM", and "Rated previously vs same opponent". It is the winner's duty to report the game. If the game played is one of the players' Specialties, a particular berth number must be used. Provide a Specific Membership Number for that game; otherwise he should just use his General Membership Number. If you wish to be informed of your new rating or receive any other type of reply you must submit a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your victory slips.

3. RATING CHECKS: You may request a check of your current rating or that of an opponent at any time by sending the obligatory, stamped, self-addressed envelope. However, every additional check beyond one per envelope will require a $1.00 service charge.

4. PAYMENTS: As a matter of convenience, players may pay any service charge in US postage stamps rather than sending currency through the mail.

5. SASE: Always include a separate stamped, self-addressed envelope when you expect a reply from AREA of any kind. Replies cannot be sent with orders for merchandise, answers to game questions, etc.

6. VERIFIED: Remember, once you've played ten games you lose your Provisional standing and become Verified. Sign your Victory slips accordingly.

7. APPEALS: All decisions of the AREA technician are final. There is no appeals process for what you may feel is a mistake in your rating.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT: Players may play rated games by any set of standards or rules they can agree to. However, the only format that AREA recognizes as binding is that put forth in the Code of Conduct. Briefly put, the Code of Conduct requires that any PBM move containing an error must be reported to the opponent for a solution. Any PBM move containing an error must be reported to the opponent for a solution. Written appeals may be made possible by the sacrifice of those who try to make a living publishing the games and magazines that have lost many respected figures to economic necessity. What I think many may not realize is the extent to which the very existence of the hobby is threatened by the new breed of player who tries to make a living publishing the games and magazines which comprise it. Nobody is getting rich in wargaming.
PLAY CONVENTIONS FOR RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

Plugging the Holes in PBM

By Robert J. Costelloe

Living as we do in an imperfect world there are some questions in life which simply have no right or wrong answers. Standards of conduct are not in the nature of things, and I cannot begin to enumerate all the errors that can occur in any game. It's not surprising that there is a large area of uncertainty as to how to handle them.

As a case in point, consider THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, one of the favorites of PBMers. Although The Avalon Hill Game Company provided instructions with THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN play-mail (PBM) kit, they are not nearly adequate to cover the situations which inevitably arise from player oversights and errors. The guides and conventions which I devised are intended to fill this need in an optimum manner (i.e., in a way which is reasonably uniform and with the intent of keeping the game flowing, if possible). They also provide a competitive incentive for minimizing player error. But, they cannot be a substitute for the sense of fair play and cooperation, without which a gaming relationship cannot prosper. Communications, then, is still the key ingredient for making this system a success.

The error-handling conventions which I've devised are designed to remediate the failings. These are designed exclusively for TRC, but they can provide a framework for other games as well. Although this specific set of conventions has not been extensively playtested, it is being tested now—and it is not a one-shot effort. I have been formulating and playing different methods of handling errors ever since I started playing by mail. Playing six to eight games simultaneously gives me some ability to do this, although frankly I'm not trying to sell myself as a seasoned gamer. But there is such an obvious need in this area that some must begin. The significant aspect about this work is that it is not so much the detailed elements of the convention mechanics themselves, but rather the error handling philosophy which underlies them and which is set forth in the section under the heading Promises.

Perhaps, at this point, a bit of background would help. My research indicates that there are three basic error handling systems in common use. The first is the "non-system" officially espoused by the AREA. No move can be accepted that contains an error. Although this sounds simple and direct as I write it, it is utterly unworkable in practice. The reason is that there are simply and inevitably too many errors in a game like TRC for there to be much else going on besides return mailings. Very few gamers adhere strictly to this system. Those that do face enormous pressures toward leniency in some form in order to keep the game moving. Then, when such leniency occurs, hard feelings are likely to eventually develop over when to be lenient and when to be strict. I don't understand why you returned my last impulse over this piddly little movement error. It's exactly like the last one of yours that I overlooked."

The second system, and by far most common in use, is what I'll call the "buddy-buddy" system. Here, the players are free to correct one another's errors by trying to deduce what he intended. Or he makes some correction which is relatively "revenue neutral" in terms of who benefits. The big advantage that this system has over the "non-system" is that it tends to keep the game moving. And without too much effort the gaming relationship can be kept on friendly terms. This system is widely used because it can be made to work. But it does have its weaknesses. It is hard to apply the corrections in an even-handed way. And many gamers have a hard time resisting the temptation to take advantage of a system which is so unstructured and lenient. I'm involved in a game (TRC) in which Player A received an impulse with the stock CTD specified incorrectly for Wednesday, November 11. But the final was a Monday. He had received the mailing on that Tuesday; the combat results, using Monday as the CTD, were terrible for his opponent. Upon phoning, Player B assured him that he had meant to mark Wednesday, November 13 as the CTD; and that's how they played it. But Player A eventually waxed resentful. He suspects to this day that his opponent took advantage of him by contriving a way to get two attack opportunities against a key objective. And, needless-to-say, the gaming relationship didn't last through the game.

The third system of conventions, like the one I've devised, appear to be rarely used. Based on my own play experience thus far, they offer big advantages over the other systems. They tend to keep the game flowing smoother, and they provide a systematic and even-handed way of dealing with errors. But they are not without disadvantages. These conventions provide a starting point and a framework for handling errors, but they cannot be complete enough to handle every error situation. No convention can succeed without a strong sense of fair play, compromise and a willingness to negotiate.

The most innovative aspect of these conventions, and their keynote feature, is the "penalty" system. It has also been the most controversial. Some gamers have objected, mainly on philosophical grounds, to being penalized for errors or to benefitting from the errors of others. My answer is that the system is reasonably objective in application; it actually gives the gamer more choices in error situations; and, let's face it, penalties for error is much more realistic in modelling the wartime situations which our games try to simulate. There is no "buddy-buddy" system in warfare. If generals have to live with their own and their troops' errors, shouldn't wargamers also?

These conventions are not without their disadvantages, the main one being their complexity. They are, after all, yet another set of rules with which gamers must familiarize themselves. Proper groundwork and study is definitely required. The only instances of hard feelings that have arisen in using conventions of this type have occurred when one of the players couldn't be 'bothered' to understand the results and hence was shocked and dismayed to find that he had to live with the consequences of his errors. The manner in which the TRC conventions are written is designed to combat this problem. The second system may be expected to have become apparent in play-testing the system thus far. One is what I'll call the "competitive impact." Under this system, the ability to avoid errors has competitive significance. That, and the process of negotiating over errors, adds a degree of realism to the gaming relationship. The game which many find exciting. The competition can definitely be enhanced by proper use of this system. The other benefit is the effect on the number of errors. In every case that this or a related system has been playtested, the frequency of errors has plummeted. And this certainly has improved the quality and timeliness of my PBM.

As you might suspect, these conventions were not born fully developed. They have evolved as a result of play-testing various arrangements over a period
of 18 months. This specific system has been tested, but not as extensively as I would like. The system which follows, then, can be a substantial help and improvement if the players are willing to invest their time and effort in it. However, as mentioned above, my system can surely be improved upon. The author would appreciate any suggestions from readers as a result of play experience.

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

Play and NonOptional Error Conventions

This section contains conventions which players should apply uniformly and without option.

1) Postmark same as CTD is acceptable. This is justified in the Central and Eastern time zones because by the time that the financial data are available, the Post Office has already gone to the next day’s AM postmark (usually around 7 PM).

2) On Mud moves, when a “Contact” combat result is obtained, unless otherwise instructed, use the same stock and next day CTD from first impulse CTD.

3) In case a specified stock is not listed (usually only the 1500 most active are listed) or an opponent forgets to specify any stock, go to the top of the alphabetical list (usually starting with AARs). But skip any stocks already used, or to be used that impulse. Use this procedure in the order specified on the combat sheet (e.g., first stock for Archangel if forgotten, second stock for first battle’s stock which wasn’t listed, etc.).

4) In case the Axis player forgets to specify stock and CTD for the Archangel die roll as part of his second impulse (or first impulse on mud moves), then the Soviet player goes to the top of the alphabetical stock listing (as in the convention “3” above) with the same CTD as specified by the Axis player. Also use this convention for forgotten weather rolls.

If no CTD was specified, then the player must make an additional mailing (or phone call), informing his opponent of which future CTD he will use.

5) A player is always entitled to disqualified a stock listing which is in any way misspelled or misspecified. He would then use the convention for missing specified stocks (see “3” above).

6) Losing normally has choice of sides in any rematch.

7) If a player hasn’t received a return mailing (with a move) in four weeks or more from the date of the mailing of his last turn, or he has not received a second impulse mailing in this time frame, then he is entitled to send his opponent written notification of the situation. The offended player is then entitled to a forfeiture (with full AREA points awarded) if the opponent hasn’t gotten an impulse mailing to him within two weeks of the day he mailed his notice.

8) Illegally placed partisans are simply removed from play for the duration of the turn.

9) If a player hasn’t used all of his rail capacity, and he makes a move which could only be legal if he had moved that unit by rail, then the movement is allowed.

Optional Error Conventions

1) Postmark same as CTD is acceptable. This is justified in the Central and Eastern time zones because by the time that the financial data are available, the Post Office has already gone to the next day’s AM postmark (usually around 7 PM).

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Premises for the Conventions:

First, errors are an inevitable part of any human endeavor and competition. Second, although it is futile and counterproductive to “condemn” war errors, error-making should entail a penalty appropriate to the situation. Such penalties are designed to benefit the opposing player and to provide a competitively stimulating incentive to minimize errors in play.

Third, there is value in employing conventions which not only deal with the errors themselves but to do so in such a way as to minimize lost time and, if possible, to keep the game in motion. This is preferable to simply demanding a game be halted to correct any error whatsoever.

Fourth, players may wish to consider (and this convention in fact proposes) that gamers be free to accept “gift” errors (i.e., those that benefit the offended party). An example would be an opponent’s incorrect computation of his own first impulse combat which die roll was actually a “6”. Such a contention would be consistent with the overall system presented here. And, in substance, it is no different than accepting a chess piece left en prise.

Protocol for Dealing with Errors:

The offended player always has the first and overriding option of accepting an “error”. He may accept or some errors committed against him on a given impulse/turn. However, in the event of the necessity of redoing a turn, all aspects of the impulse/turn are redone and must be accepted.

If the offended player elects not to accept some or all of his opponent’s errors as fair play, then the players must mutually agree on a course of action.

In general, three courses are available:

A) Players may agree, or may have previously agreed, to use the conventions presented in this article, if applicable.

B) Players may agree to redo a turn or an impulse (in which case the new version takes precedence as stated above).

C) Players may negotiate a settlement, including penalties, which fit the unique error situation and which best satisfy player needs.

If the offended player elects not to accept errors as “fair play”, then the offending player always has the option of a redo, provided he is willing to accept the penalties.

Errors against an opponent are automatically and permanently forgiven unless the player takes action to do otherwise before mailing off his next impulse/turn. (Players are always better off discussing any errors by phone.)

Redo Penalty:

An error or errors requiring that an impulse or turn be redone requires a two replacement factor penalty. These factors are added to or subtracted from the next turn normal Soviet entitlement on a one-time basis. Redo penalties are cumulative: one costs two factors, two in the same turn cost four.

Illegal use for second impulse combat of those replacements factors that he is entitled to, then his opponent is entitled to specify retreats which are suitable for automatic application towards second impulse battles.

Illegal use for second impulse combat of those replacements factors that he is entitled to, then his opponent is entitled to specify retreats which are suitable for automatic application towards second impulse battles.

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

Optional Error Conventions

It is best recognized at this point that many types of first impulse errors are not amenable to automatically applied conventions because such action would be too disruptive to the second impulse. First impulse errors will therefore more often require player dialogue. However, the conventions which follow can serve as a guide for settlement—and some are suitable for automatic application towards second impulse errors as well.

1) In case of a conflict between what a player specifies on his OB chart (front page) and what he specifies in his attacks (back page), the OB chart always takes precedence. Combat odds may have to be recalculated, and retreat routes may be affected.

2) If the opponent overstacks units in a hex, then the offended player removes units of his choice to bring the stack back within legal limits. Removed units re-enter the game as replacements on the opponent’s next turn.

3) If the opponent specifies a movement which is illegal, then the offended player has the choice of the following options:

a) He may, of course, forgive the error and allow it to stand.

b) He may specify that the offending unit be removed from the board for the remainder of the opponent’s turn. Such removed unit(s) re-enter the game as replacements on the opponent’s next turn.

c) He may specify that the offending unit remain at the last position it occupied before the error in movement occurred.

Note that in all of the above options, battle odds and retreat routes may be affected.

Players may also wish to consider this convention for the situation in which a player overspecifies his rail movement capacity. Thus, if a Soviet player specifies six units to move by rail instead of the allowable five, then his opponent could elect to apply this convention to the sixth unit listed.

4) If a player forgets to specify or illegally specifies retreats for any of his second impulse battles, then his opponent is entitled to specify retreats which are in his own best interests.

5) If a player overspecifies the number of replacement factors that he is entitled to, then his opponent may specify that next turn he is to subtract the amount of the overage plus 50% (fractions rounded up) as a penalty. If insufficient replacement factors are available, then reinforcements must be sacrificed as required.

6) If a player incorrectly specifies combat odds, composition, or results on the second impulse, then his opponent is entitled to correct the error, being sure to inform the offending player in his next mailing.

7) Illegal use for second impulse combat of those units already used for first impulse automatic victory attack is a situation which usually requires negotiation. One suggestion would be to award penalty replacement factors equal to 150% of the combat losses suffered as a result of attacks by such offending units.

Optional Special Rules:

1a) In 1941 only, a “Mud” roll in Sept/Oct is played as “Lt Mud” and a “Clear” roll in Nov/Dec is played as “Lt Mud” — OR

1b) In 1941 only, always play Sept/Oct as “Clear”, and Nov/Dec as “Snow”.

2) Modified Campaign Victory Conditions: To win a player must eliminate the enemy leader and occupy the enemy capital, or occupy the enemy capital and control every other city on the mapboard except one.

BINDERS

“Out with the old; in with the new.” In short, the old style of binder for your precious copies of The GENERAL (those with the metal rods locked into a spring at top and bottom) are no longer available. As part of our expansion of Avalon Hill’s magazine, a new binder was developed to hold the six thicker issues comfortably. Both higher and wider than the old version, the new binder makes use of the patented “Max-Text” post lock mechanism. This utilizes short, plastic posts to hold an issue firmly, without crimping or tearing the pages as occurred at times with the older style binder. Only the new binder is available, and may be ordered direct from Avalon Hill (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214) for $7.00 each (plus 10% for shipping and handling).
STORM IN THE PACIFIC
Strategy and Tactics for 7th FLEET
By Jim Eliason

7th FLEET extends Joe Balkoski’s popular series on modern naval warfare games began with 6th FLEET and 2nd FLEET. Its scale is strategic since the three map sheets cover the western Pacific from Guam to China and from Kamchatka to Vietnam; however, its feel is very tactical in play. Units represent individual submarines, individual surface ships (patrol craft and corvettes are in flotillas) and squadrons of 10-20 planes. What really gives the game its tactical feel is not the number of men and machines each counter represents, but the wide variety of the strengths and weaknesses of the various units. Some subs are armed with an impressive array of anti-ship and cruise missiles but are badly overmatched by enemy subs. Other subs are fast, quiet, and good at torpedo and ASW attacks, but have no long-range attack capability. Interceptors usually have high air-to-air strengths but short ranges. Long-range bombers are very effective against ships and bases but are dead meat when opposed by enemy fighters. Some ships, like the Ticonderoga or the Kirov-class cruisers, are excellent and others, like the Canadian frigate Kootenay, should stick to chasing cod poachers.

I’m sure this description makes it sound like the game is an unplayable monster—but it isn’t. It is not a game for beginners, but all of the nine basic scenarios use only one map and can easily be completed in an afternoon. The four advanced scenarios use all three maps and almost the whole counter mix, but will seldom take up more than a long weekend.

The essence of good tactics is to keep your units doing what they do best and to prevent your opponent’s units from using their strengths. The essence of good strategy is to force your opponent to fight in situations where you have the tactical advantage. The purpose of this article is to give some initial thoughts on how to turn these tricks into winning play. For those who don’t have the game, I’ll describe some of the key rules as I go along. For those who do, don’t complain if the explanations don’t seem quite right—I’ve over-simplified in places for clarity.

TACTICS

I’ll discuss tactics first, starting with the plays one can use to take maximum advantage of the sequence of play. In 7th FLEET is organized in “three”:

three turns per day and three Action Segments per turn. In addition, each turn has Detection and CAP Launching Phases before the Action Segments and CAP Landing and Detection Removal following them. Several special phases (including strategic air missions) occur before the first turn of each day and others (including base repair) occur after the third turn. Many of these other phases apply only in the Advanced Game.

The Action Segments are well named, since all movement and most combat occurs then. In each segment a die is rolled to determine which player goes first. The first player then “activates” (moves and/or attacks with) all of his subs (one at a time) or all of his surface ships (one at a time) or all of his surface ships (one hex at a time). The other player then has the same choice. Each player must activate a different unit class in each of the three Action Segments of a turn and the two players can activate their classes in a differing order.

The choice of which unit class to activate first is often crucial and is influenced by several factors. The first player in the first Action Segment has a chance to strike some hard blows before his opponent can respond. There are several ways to take advantage of this opportunity. Some targets are available at once. Do not delay moving your subs, for example, if you have a chance to move. For example, a weakly defended convoy has just been detected by a strategic air mission and is one turn from port. It should be attacked in the first Action Segment with whatever class of unit can deliver the most potent attack. Hammers will not be missed and in your opponent’s case may be necessary to sink as many ships as you can. If you wait for the second Action Segment, your opponent can activate surface units in his half of the first segment and receive the convoy’s large cargo of victory points. Perhaps the convoy is out in the middle of the ocean, but is between a pack of your subs and its destination. If you don’t move the subs before the convoy, it will move out of range and you won’t be able to attack it this turn, nor next turn unless you get to move first again. Always look for targets that are about to move into port, out of range, or into the protection of air cover, a powerful surface group, or a close defense hex, and attack them before they get away.

A variation of this theme is often available to the Allied player with his powerful carrier-based air groups. If an important enemy task force (TF) is just out of range of an air strike, activate surface units before air units and close the range before launching. This guarantees an attack if the enemy TF has already been activated. Another good time to move second in an Action Segment is in the following Action Segment, you may get to move first, thus getting a double move and getting off your strike before the enemy has a chance to escape. There are often times when a target is guaranteed to be there for the whole turn, but it is still important to attack it as soon as possible. Suppose now that you are the owner of the weak convoy, that it is two turns from port this time, without air cover, and in range of several enemy bomber units loaded with deadly missiles. You can’t attack the planes directly, but you can damage their base, which prevents them from flying. If you launch a reasonable attack against the bomber’s base, you should do so immediately to prevent the attack on your convoy. Opportunities for this kind of preemptive strike occur every turn. Always be aware of which enemy units are threatening you the most and do unto them before they do unto you.

While it is usually good to move first in the first Action Segment of a day, it is often even more important to move last in the last Action Segment. The reason for this is that it allows you to maintain detection of key enemy units or to let your units break contact. Units must be detected to be attacked. Bases and airbase air units are always detected. Surface ships and subs are detected in essentially identical fashion, except that surface units are automatically detected when the conditions for detection are satisfied while subs are detected only after a successful die roll, and usually only if the detecting units have an ASW strength of “6” or more. Surface units (battleships excepted) are detected for the rest of the turn at least) and strategic (which lasts the rest of the day). Strategic detection usually occurs as the result of strategic air missions [more on that later].

Local detection can occur at the start of a turn, or during the Action Segments. For example, a unit adjacent to an enemy naval unit at the start of a turn is detected. A ship is detected if it attacks an adjacent enemy unit or moves from a hex adjacent to an enemy naval unit to another hex adjacent to the same unit. Actually, all the pieces are on the board in full view of both players. Presumably there is enough information available from satellite reconnaissance to give the rough location of enemy ships, but since each hex represents over 1600 square miles of ocean, more detailed information is needed for a “firing solution.” After the third Action Segment, local detection markers are removed from units that are not adjacent to enemy units. Any detected unit that move last in that segment can break off contact simply by moving away from all enemy units.

In the following turn they will not be detected and will be safe from attack. Conversely, any enemy units can be detected for the following turn simply by moving next to them after they have moved. A typical situation is for Russian submarines to play “cat and mouse” with Allied TFs, spotting them for long-range bombers as well as for themselves. The Allies often delay moving surface units till the third segment, hoping to move last and break contact, while the Russians will delay moving subs till last hoping to maintain contact.

Of course, there will be conflicting demands on your resources and you may want to move the same class of unit both first and last (e.g., you want to launch a cruise missile attack from some subs to damage a base, but you also need to maintain contact with an enemy convoy). Sometimes you can get everything you want without breaking the rules by being clever, or if your opponent makes a mistake. The best way to do this is to present your opponent with the same kind of hard choices. For example, if you want to maintain contact with a key surface group, encourage your enemy to move surface units early in the turn. Put an expendable TF just out of reach of your opponent’s carrier-based air units so he will be tempted to pursue it and launch an air strike. Position a sub just behind a key TF so that TAG can evade attack from that sub this turn if it moves before your subs. You lose one sub’s attack this turn, but may gain more attacks next turn. If he doesn’t bite and moves surface units in the last half of the third Action Segment, you can attack this turn and have lost nothing. If your opponent can derive a significant advantage by activating a certain class of units early in a turn, set things up so that it will cost him dearly in another part of the board.

For example, the U.S. player has two convoys at sea, each with a group of Russian subs buzzing around it. One is detected but only one turn from port, while the other is undetected and in the middle of the ocean. The Russian gets to move first and can attack the detected convoy with either sub or aircraft, either of which can cause about the same amount of damage. In most cases it pays to attack with the air first since it can never be used to spot targets for next turn; but in this case the Russian should attack with the subs first, since he can then guarantee two attacks. The subs attack the detected convoy and surround the undetected convoy so that it can never be used to spot the air. If the U.S. player moves his damaged convoy into port, the undetected convoy must move now (allowing air attacks on it this turn) or not at all (it is guaranteed to be detected for the following turn). The U.S. player could delay moving surface units, hoping to move the undetected convoy after the Russian air moves, but then the detected convoy is finished off instead.

I have discussed attacking convoys a lot and it’s high time to discuss how to do it. In attacking con-
voys it sometimes pays to attack the escort before the cargo ships. This strategy takes advantage of the mechanics of combat. Whenever surface ships are attacked, they get to make a "defense roll". If a sub is launching a torpedo attack, the sum of the three best ASW values of the ships in the target hex is cross-referenced with the defense roll to determine the negative modifier that the attack suffers. A key modifier to the defense roll is the number of defending ships. If there are four or more defending surface combatants (a task force), the defense roll gets a bonus of "+2", while if there are less than two ships, the defense roll is penalized by "-2". The modified combat roll gives a result from "-9" to "+9" or to greater than the defense value of the target (not the ASW value of the hex), the target is sunk; if it is half the defense value of the target, it is damaged. And if it is less than half, there is no effect. A damaged ship that is damaged again is sunk. If there are four frigates escorting several cargo units and you will be able to make many attacks on the convoy before it can get away, it will be to your benefit to attack the escort first. As the defense weakens, your attacks will suffer smaller negative modifiers and your hits will pile up with accelerating frequency. If you will be able to get in only a few licks, then hit the cargo ships since that is your best chance.

As an aside, I should mention that the second hit on a unit is more valuable than the first. Damaging a ship doesn’t give any victory points (thought it reduces the VP value of a cargo ship that reaches port by 25% to 33%)—which is fair enough. However, I was very surprised by the obvious game design decision to reduce the combat values of damaged ships only slightly. In no case is a damaged ship’s speed or attack values reduced to less than half of the undamaged values. Reductions of only one-third are common, and many damaged ships lose no speed at all. After a single hit (plus a dud), the USS "Stark" had a combat value of a bathtub; and the British lost several ships in the Falklands to single hits. Modern ships are very good at avoiding hits, but not very capable of functioning well when damaged.

After you have decided which type of ship to attack, you now have to decide how many—and which ships in particular. Since the attack points of the attacking unit(s) can be split up in almost any way the attacker desires, this is not always an easy decision. For attacking convoys, subs are the most straightforward choice. The easiest way to protect convoy is to let the subs do their work. If the combat value of the unit selected is greater than the defensive combat value is not dependent on which ships are attacked. Hit the highest priority target at the highest possible column on the CTR, and use any remaining attack points against the best ship among those with the lowest defense value. The secondary target is almost sure to fail, so just give yourself the best chance to hit something. Of course, ships with defense values of "3" are the same as those with "4" for this purpose, since a result of "-2" is required to hit either. Splitting the attack strength more equally is seldom good play, and is a bad gamble against anything that might be stronger than it. If you elect to attack the escort, the ship that is contributing most to the defense. If most of the subsequent attacks will be from the air, attack the ship with the best AA strength; while if attacks will be by subs, knock out the best ASW vessel. Don’t automatically use subs to improve their own chances. Make them be team players, and not all that powerful. Occasionally the choice is also dependent on defensive considerations. If one of the escorts carries cruise missiles, attack it first. The same principles apply when attacking carrier battle groups, but the defense and ASW values of the carriers are so high that it is necessary to redirect the escort before subs have a realistic chance of success. For example, the USS "Vincennes" can repel the strongest Russian torpedo attack (22 attack points) 88% of the time without any escort at all (the realism of this is certainly highly questionable) and 99% of the time with the escort provided in the Advanced Game. For the weaker carrier, the Midway, the corresponding numbers are 70% and 94%.

In missile combat, attack and defense values are usually higher and the tactics for both sides are more subtle. The defense strength is the sum of the area AA (if applicable) and the close AA values of target ships and the ships stacked directly under them. Unlike torpedo combat, a missile attack can hit up to half of all the ships in the target hex, but the choice of targets is not completely free. The defender rolls a modified attack roll which determines which half the attacker can choose his targets from. There are two basic philosophies for setting up the defense to a missile attack. The first is to stack the units with high close AA values under the targets you want to protect the most; this can increase the defense modifier. The other is to put all the important targets in one half of the stack and hope that the attacker can’t hit that half. The former works best when you have a strong TF undergoing a weak attack and you can hope to prevent any damage at all. The second works best when the attacker can “deep-six” any one or two ships that he likes. Of course, neither of these combinations is a good play, and is a bad gamble against anything other than two unescorted cargo ships. If you elect to use subs to improve their own chances. Make them be team players; the bombers are more powerful.

The mechanics of combat. Whenever surface ships are attacked, they get to make a “defense roll”. If the bomber unit uses all 75 of its attack points that can be allocated only among the three kinds of defense value the attacker can choose his targets from. There are two basic philosophies for setting up the defense to a missile attack. The first is to stack the units with high close AA values under the targets you want to protect the most; this can increase the defense modifier. The other is to put all the important targets in one half of the stack and hope that the attacker can’t hit that half. The former works best when you have a strong TF undergoing a weak attack and you can hope to prevent any damage at all. The second works best when the attacker can “deep-six” any one or two ships that he likes. Of course, neither of these combinations is a good play, and is a bad gamble against anything other than two unescorted cargo ships. If you elect to use subs to improve their own chances. Make them be team players; the bombers are more powerful.

When the attack is made, the defender rolls a modified defense roll—which is the total AA value plus the modifiers gained from close AA fire worthwhile. From the mechanics of combat it is clear that the attacking force can launch a weak missile attack, attack with missiles first to soften up the defenses and reduce the risk of bomber losses. In general you should think nothing of launching a weak missile attack against a strong enemy. It usually costs little, and you might get lucky. A bombing attack should have a good chance of success to make the risks to AA fire worthwhile.

Missile attacks are usually very straightforward since there is never a defense roll and only one sub can be attacked at one time, but there are a few things to consider. Since a sub can only be attacked once in a surface attack, you do not want to get it into the optimal attack. If more than one TF can attack the sub, make sure that you use the best one, consistent with your larger goals. It never pays to detour with a convoy escort to hunt subs. If you have several ASW aircraft at the same base and several spotted subs, make several weak attacks if the subs are weak, and make fewer concentrated attacks if the subs are strong. One ploy that can make life more difficult for enemy subs trying to mass against a large TF is splitting the TF and recombining. At the start of the surface Action Segment, split the TF into task groups of three ships, the maximum that can fire in one Action Segment. Each task group starts the Advanced Game at sea has been stripped of is CAP by the Midway air group and is being attacked with missiles by the B-52s from Guam. The area AA is 58 and the U.S. Player has 75 attack points that can be allocated only among the three DDs (defense value “4”, close AA “6” or “7”). Attacking one DD results in a 30% chance of sinking it. The expected hits are 2 and 28 points attack results in 0.8 expected hits and only a 0.3% chance of sinking both DDs. The moral of the story is to split your attack when the defense is weak, but concentrate when the defense is strong. Note that all the ways of allocating attack points are nearly equally effective. A lot of thought went into that. The second TF is at Midway. The AA defense more than three times as strong reduced the damage by less than a factor of two. The best defense is still a good offense. If you have a stack of missile units, you can launch one large attack or several small ones. For causing general mayhem, one large attack is best since the enemy AA only gets to fire once. However, if there is one high priority target in a weak TF, several weak attacks may be better since one strong attack has only 50% chance of being able to hit.

Bombing attacks have the best characteristics of both: speed and more than one target. There are no restrictions on the number or choice of targets. Many more airplanes can make bombing attacks than missile attacks (though BMB units can attack ships only with missiles) and bombing attacks tend to be stronger. A U.S. carrier air group can bring up to 205 attack points to bear. However, unlike torpedo or missile attacks, the attacker can take losses if defense roll result is “4” or more. Attack and defense tactics are the same as for missile combat, except that the ploy of hiding all the vulnerable targets in one-half the stack doesn’t work. If you plan on attacking an enemy TF with both bombing and missile attacks, the Action Segment, attack with missiles first to soften up the defenses and reduce the risk of bomber losses. In general you should think nothing of launching a weak missile attack against a strong enemy. It usually costs little, and you might get lucky. A bombing attack should have a good chance of success to make the risks to AA fire worthwhile.
In 7th FLEET the only ways to attack air bases are with cruise missiles and bombers. Cruise missiles can only attack bases and Harpoons can only attack ships. Cruise missiles are few in number and fairly weak, but the only defense against them is to sink the carrier that launched them. (However, if they can be launched. Bombers are strong but must risk CAP and AA fire. If your opponent is serious about defending a base, knocking it out will often require using both. Start with a dawn cruise missile attack.

At the end of the turn, the CAP must land and cannot take off again until the base can be repaired at the end of the next turn. If the defense misses or are unavailable, or if CAP from a nearby base can also defend it, send a fighter escort along with your bomber strike. Since only four units can make up the combined mission, this often results in a weak escort or a weak strike, or both. If a strong escort defeats the CAP, a weak accompanying strike may not be likely to damage the base; but follow-up strikes in the same Action Segment can then hit the base with no CAP to worry about. The attacker’s problem is that CAP cannot be forced to fight, and can simply refuse to engage a strong escort, trusting to the base AA to repel the weak bombing attack. The defender’s problem is that he often doesn’t know if the escort is strong or weak, since most interceptors can be used as fighters or bombers. (The rules make it clear that the attacker must specify which role the interceptors will play when the mission is launched, but do not say when the defender is allowed to change his mind, or whether the CAP must commit before finding out.)

When attacking a TF or base defended by CAP, check out the air-to-air values of the CAP and your own units carefully and assign your interceptors to fighter, fighter-bomber and bomber roles to minimize your own losses (or at least know your good odds against the CAP. If you need three of four air units at a base for a good attack, send all four. Allow for surprises and losses to AA fire. The single remaining unit will not be likely to make a good attack on its own. Bluff occasionally by sending all your interceptors in the fighter or the bomber role.

The CAP opponent may make a disastrous decision. If the attacker controls an airspace within four hexes of the target, he is in a much better situation. In 7th FLEET a CAP mission of the attacker can join any air-to-air combat within four hexes of its base. Thus, a carrier that moves to within four hexes of an air base, can end up attacking such units as F14s, an F18 and an E2 to act as ‘escort’ for a strike force of an F18, an A6 and E6G (which gives a -2 modifier to both the air-to-air and AA die rolls). This attack is a heavy favorite to defeat any single squadron on CAP and is enough to get the best possible bombing attack on the CRT even if the A6 is damaged by the base AA fire. If enemy air units have not moved yet, this attack can be risky since losing the air-to-air combat leaves the carrier without air cover for the rest of the turn. In some Advanced Game scenarios the strong Allied air forces in Soviet distant base and the whole North Korean air force in a couple of days by a similar method, even if every available North Korean interceptor is placed on CAP.

Strategic air missions are vital to successful play since they are the only ways of locating enemy units without risking detection in return. The most important strategic missions are Reconnaissance and Interception. Recon missions are launched to find enemy units in one of the 14 large areas on the three maps. Each air unit on recon can detect one enemy surface group or attempt to detect one sub. If successful, the detection lasts for the ensuing three turns, eliminating the target from the map. The end of the third Action Segment to maintain contact. Interception missions repel enemy recon missions. If both sides have interceptors in the same area, the interceptors have air-to-air combat. The winner gets to make his reconnaissance unimpeded, while the loser gets his recon missions “bounced” before they can see anything.

Since detection is so important, it is tempting to insure it by putting the bulk of your air units on strategic missions. This is a mistake. It is just as vital to keep the enemy from the area as it is to detect him. CAP, and a strong strike capability. Units on strategic missions cannot be activated in the following three turns, and there is no point in detecting so many enemy units that there are not sufficient forces available to attack them all. Leaving enemy units undetected and waiting to pounce on them with a large air force can deter attacks on your own ships, since a less than overwhelming attack will likely leave your enemy detected and subject to a devastating series of counterstrikes.

There are also two other strategic air missions: Tactical Coordination and Mining. The latter is an optional rule; and the former is seldom used, especially by the Allied player. A tactical coordination mission allows you to add one to your die roll for one attack. I would, however, much rather use the CAP mission of the attacker

Tactical Coordination mission. This is a heavy favorite to defeat any mission of the attacker

A tactical coordination mission allows you to add one to your die roll for one attack. I would, however, much rather use the CAP mission of the attacker

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A tactical coordination mission allows you to add one to your die roll for one attack. I would, however, much rather use the CAP mission of the attacker
priority targets and usually have short life expectancies. Even the mighty _Missouri_ will have difficulty surviving repeated air attacks. Sometimes an attack can be launched with SSMs, but this is seldom decisive except in the basic scenarios where there are no XVs.

Air units pack the most powerful punch of any of the classes of units, and their long range also makes them very flexible. The ranges of heavy bombers, especially, are impressive. The Russian T30 can cover the entire board from its base near the northwest corner. However, against a wary foe, the opportunities to attack at long range will be limited by the availability of submarine or air recon and the necessity of detouring around or defeating nearby CAP missions. Even if they don't do much attacking, long range bombers exert a great deal of pressure on enemy forces. If the Russian Blackfires and Blackjacks are lost or imobilized, the numerous Japanese DDs can hunt subs with impunity and fewer Allied fighters need be sent on strategic interception.

Proper use of interceptors is crucial to making use of bombers. Keep a strong CAP at important bases to restrict enemy movement and protect your own bombing attempts. Long range CAPs provide bases that can defend another. If two CAPs can attack, it usually pays to attack separately rather than together. Try to keep a centralized long-range intercept-bomber combination together that can threaten many places at once. Try not to break up large stacks of interceptors by assigning some to long range strategic air missions. It dilutes the strength of the strikes that base can launch. Use interceptors from bases with only a few planes, and use the base purely for strategic missions and CAP. However, beware of concentrating your forces too much if the enemy has cruise missiles or a large advantage in interceptors. Large stacks of recon units should not be broken up either. A stack of four P3s is very flexible in the strength and number of ASW attacks it can launch and can deliver a potent missile attack against any TF without air cover within 37 hexes of its base.

Submarines have several advantages over surface ships, the most important being the fact that they are harder to detect. They are valuable for spotting since they can frequently detect an enemy surface group without being detected themselves. Their defense values are high; their anti-ship capabilities are generally low. They are formidable when they can operate in the open sea, and it is much better to have a submarine at the surface and loiter for an hour or two than to lose it in a long range air attack. Submarines may only get one attack, so be sure to make it is a good one. These boats also tend to have miserable ASW values and if left alone, the first news they get of an enemy sub is an incoming torpedo. Keep them in stacks with a total ASW value of at least "6" so they have a chance to detect an enemy SN.

**STRATEGIES**

I won't go into the strategies of the basic game scenarios, but I would like to give a few thoughts on how I currently see the strategy for an Advanced Game Scenario. There are four of them, each with low, mid, and high states of readiness, so there are really 12 in all—and each scenario will require a slightly different approach. I am most familiar with "Invasion of Japan" starting at high readiness, so these notes should be read primarily with this in mind.

The strengths of the Russian forces are their long-range bombers and their nuclear submarines. The other forces are not trivial, but will serve a subsidiary role. The SNs should be used primarily to attack convoys and spot them for bombers. Deploy several subs around the convoy that start in the North Pacific and Central Pacific zones for attacking, and keep a marker of the convoy is being attacked. If the subs are detected, they should be attacked vigorously and will be rapidly destroyed unless a U.S. carrier battle group intervenes. Ignore the convoy in Guam for the time being. There will be plenty of time to deal with it later. Maneuver your SNs in packs since some will be lost to the convoy escorts and CAP. The T26s and T30s are hard to hit, and not likely to be successful. If the Russian player is lucky enough, though, such a policy can go a long way toward winning the game. You can make some headway attacking the carrier's escorts, but convoy units are three times more valuable. The T26s often make a good spotting in case the air recon is bombed out. The T26s and T30s should concentrate almost exclusively on long-range missile attacks.

The ideal targets are carriers, ships carrying cruise missiles, and convoys—but don't pass up any surface target that can be attacked without risk. They are too valuable to lose and should bomb bases (and risk AA fire) only if the target is very important and there are no others available. The T16s can also be used for missile attacks, but their shorter range often makes this impractical. They and the S24s are good for attacking the Allied bases in northern Japan after the CAP has been forced down by cruise missile attacks. If the Americans have many submarines, it makes the northern Russian bases more secure; it greatly improves the chances of getting VP for air superiority over Hokkaido (or at least deny them to the Allies); the absence of CAP there extends the range of the Russian bombers; and it makes it much easier to detect and destroy the _Missouri_ and _Indies_ before they get into cruise missile range since few Allied planes will be able to fly interception in the NW Pacific zone. Look for a chance to punch a hole in the Allied CAP screen in the Japanese Home Islands. If it can be done, it is damaging one base, by all means try it. This may let the T16s launch many more missile attacks.

The Russians have as many convoy units as the Allies, and in general are closer to their destination (Kamchatka) than the Allied convoys are to theirs. Don't even think about trying to send any convoys or sub-laden TFs all the way to Midway at this point; they will be destroyed before they get there. Instead, send out several subs around the convoy, CAP from the airlanes in Sakhalin, Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands is vital to give your convoy a decent chance of reaching their destination. Defend these bases as best you can. Essential aircraft for Backfires, the CV Minsk and any other available surface vessels.

_**Strive to keep the Soviet basion area free of Allied subs to keep the convoy undetected and deny the Allies victory points for harassing the Soviet ballistic missile subs (which are not included in the game).**_ SNs that must start the game in port and recon aircraft are the best units for this.

_**The Novorossiysk/Riga task force is strong enough to hold out a long time against anything short of a determined campaign by a carrier battle group.**_ It should be kept as far away from the main force as possible, and a force should go straight for it, then and should try to lose itself in the ocean and pick up points for "sea denial". It then leads a U.S. carrier on a long chase far away from the main scene of action or causes havoc in the rear areas. If unidentified, it can even take its victim's place as a threat to the Allied base in Guam or Iwo Jima, or join in attacking convoys.

The North Korean air units will be hard pressed to survive a determined and skillful air offensive. An evacuation to the airbases near Vladivostok should be considered, so the Allies cannot use CAP as escort for airbase attacks. Putting all eligible North Korean air units on strategic missions on Turn 1 is one way of doing this, and they can do some useful spotting. This has the advantage of preventing any attacks on them, but delays their re-entry two turns; and this might be one turn too many. After the mandatory five-turn hiatus setting up new ground forces, the Allies can replace long-ranged Russian fighters on CAP.

The elderly North Korean diesel subs can get a few victory points for penetrating the Tushima Straits if they try hard enough; but in the long run, they might lose more VP's with this strategy than they gain. Keeping them in being is the best use of them, to keep the Allied units tied up watching them. The same can be said for the Russian diesel subs. Most of them at least have the advantage of being able to operate in the open ocean. Hide them preferably in the Japanese zone, collect victory points for sea denial, and if the Allies chase them spot for them and CAP their group. In a while, they will get a chance to do some damage to a convoy as it nears Japan.

In Vietnam, keep every eligible squadron on CAP to hold off the Vinson's air group as long as possible. Keep the DDs in port unless you can move them and attack with SSMs in the same segment—and even then only if the enemy air units have already moved that turn. The subs in the South China Sea should try to sink the _Artietis_ before it can launch all of its cruise missiles, and then try to keep the _Vinson_ TF under surveillance if it tries to get close to Cam Ranh. SSMs from the destroyers are probably the best chance for attacking a convoy after a contact is made. The alternative is to try to escape to the open sea and perhaps deter a convoy from trying to resupply Subic Bay.

The strengths of the Allied forces are their carrier battle groups and their advantages in geography and interceptors. The commanding position of the Allied bases in the Philippines, Japan and South Korea forces Soviet surface vessels to operate mostly on the far western edge of the board. The big carriers can provide local air superiority anywhere desired. The multiple locations of the Allied airbases and interceptors prevent successful attacks on friendly bases after the Russian cruise missiles are exhausted, and allow the Allies to carry the fight to the enemy.

_**The Midway group can start almost anywhere you please; but Midway is not as strong as her big sisters, she is powerful enough to go in harm's way.**_ Arrange for the North Korean air units to keep out of range and let the Midway go after Russian airbases. Vilyuy in Kamchatka can be attacked at dawn on Day 2 and is a good place to start since its only interceptor is an M31 that the Russian would love to use on strategic interception; and it also holds two squadrons of interceptors in back: One in the north, her air group can hit the airbase at Yuzhno-Kurilsk and/or the convoy that starts in Korsakov. The main alternative is to stay in the Hokkaido zone and aid in the defense of the northern Japanese bases and the destruction of the Soviet convoy and air-
bases in Sakhalin and the Kuriles. This has the advantage that the Midway and Kitty Hawk can support each other, freeing interceptors for strike escort. It is possible to use the Midway to guarantee the safe arrival of a convoy, but she cannot protect all of them and it is a waste of the Midway's offensive potential to be tied to escort duty so far from the action.

The Kitty Hawk should first escort the accompanying amphibious assault ships to Hokkaido, and then look for something to kill. Ideal targets would be the Minsk, a convoy vessel that is not protected by the Midway, and some other options are the airbases on Sakhalin and Kunashir islands that defend the Soviet convoy route.

The Vinson group that starts in the far southern reaches has two basic options. The first is to belly up to the coast of Vietnam and try to destroy the seven air units and seven destroyers to collect the VP and make the South China Sea safe for democracy. With the help of the cruise missiles of the subs Springfield and Bremerton, plus those of Antietam and Leftwich, this should be accomplished in about three days. The other option is to ignore the Russian southern forces, which can do little damage to the Allied warheads, and land the amphibious assault units in Korea and then join in the annihilation of Kim Il-Sung's forces. It will take two days to get into position, however, and I prefer the first option. Don't try to do both by sending the amphibious assault ships off on their own while the warships stay to booze away the Vietnamese and their Slavic patrons; the assault ships will need the protection of the Vinson's CAP.

The Allies have some hard choices to make in where to deploy their air units. The F18 squadron that can deploy on either the Midway or Iwakuni should start on the carrier, since one squadron of F18s is enough to provide CAP at the airbase and the range of the Hornets is so short that they can't do anything else there. The P3s should be concentrated in Kanoya and Kadena to provide powerful, flexible stacks in a central position. They will not need to do much anti-sub strategic recon, since many Russian subs will be detected when they try to attack your convoys. Wait for them to come to you, then pounce. The F111 should be deployed in Kusan; Misawa is a better base for offensive operations, but it is often destroyed by Russian attacks. The F18 that can be deployed in Misawa, Iwakuni or Atsugi should deploy in the latter since otherwise damage to the airbases should leave the F18s on the CAP screen over Japan. The F4s that start in the Philippines are of no real use there and should redeploy to Okinawa on the first turn. When they have established themselves there, the F15s already there can redeploy further north. The F4G at Clark should redeploy to Japan, where it will be useful in strategic interception missions.

Insuring the convoy's safety is a high priority, but don't be so preoccupied with them that you neglect the offensive. The first line of defense is strategic interception. Invest a lot of interceptors and some ECM equipment in trying to spot and attack the Russian bombers at bay. Some convoys will be spotted by subs even if your interception is successful, and some will be lost despite your best efforts. Set up a continuous line of CAP from Hokkaido to Korea to restrict the bombers' movements as much as possible and consider extending this screen with carrier CAP (especially if this will prevent a detected convoy out of range of a Backfire squadron). Move surface ships fast to try to escape detection. The best way to deal with the bomber threat is to launch a vigorous air offensive against Soviet airbases starting with cruise missile attacks to minimize CAP. The Allies should use CAP as escorts for bombers launched from further south. Use the cruise missiles elsewhere. The forces at hand should suffice to do the job. If the North Koreans bug out, evacuate the bases that may fall to a North Korean ground attack and try to do in the Soviet airbase complex just north of Vladivostok, assisted by the cruise missiles of the Missouri and Jones. Meanwhile, try to pick off the North Korean patrol aircraft. The BS2 unit should attempt to stay out of harm's way and risk AA fire only for very high priority targets. It is the only unit the Allies have that can intimidate surface units anywhere on the board like the Russian battleships.

The Japanese and Taiwanese surface ships should concentrate on staying out of the way of the Russian bombers, and trying to hunt down some Russian subs—or join a carrier battle group if possible. Some should be in position to escort the tankers coming from the South China Sea, protected by CAP from Okinawa, Taiwan and the USS Wasp. Don't collect the VP for landing the Wasp in Korea; use its CAP for protecting ASW groups and convoys. The South Koreans and a few Japanese should fight off attempts by North Korean and Russian subs to threaten the Taiwan EEZ. The Allied SNs are highly capable ships. As with the carriers, think ahead about their deployment—and be aggressive with them, because it is bad play if they are left idle for any length of time. The boats with cruise missiles should be placed to damage Soviet airbases in the first couple of turns. Top priority targets are those with good interception ranges that can be destroyed before the next day by bombers. A couple of subs should shadow the Novorossiysk, and a few can be used to try to break up concentrations of Russian subs in defense of convoys or carrier battle groups.

The diesel subs should mostly be used for defending the Tsushima Strait and spotting Russian surface vessels entering the Sea of Okhotsk from the south. Deploy as many as you can north of Hokkaido where there are no Soviet close defense hexes between them and the Soviet bastion area. Move them into the bastion to listen for SSBNs and to interdict the convoy route. Like the Russian SSs, they should be used in stacks to provide a detection capability against enemy subs.

I have mostly ignored the effects of the optional rules. The logistics create a lot of bookkeeping, but the added realism is worth the effort and their use requires dramatic changes in a lot of the tactics and strategy of the game. Some of the other optional rules are interesting as well, like a lot of the tactics and strategy of the game. Some of the other optional rules are interesting as well, and they must be the subject of some future articles. I hope that these thoughts help you to get started toward playing FEEL. It is a very enjoyable game, one that I suspect is even more subtle than I have yet realized.

MEET THE 50

Mr. James Spontak is 41, single, holds an MD and is a physician in Chicago, Illinois.

FAVORITE GAME: GOA

AREA RATED GAMES: GOA, TSC, 3R

AREA W-L RECORD: 18-0

GAMING TIME/WEEK: 8 hours

GAMES: Chess, Golf, History

PET PEEVE: Inconsistent PB opponent

PLAY PREFERENCE: PB

Dr. Spontak offers a few suggestions to potential PB gamers:

"Do not be afraid to write any opponent in the 'Opponents Wanted' section and ask them to exchange PB. Many people are shy because they feel it is probably too complicated. PB is really not complicated, and just about everybody will help—and our hobby will remain strong. I believe that before one starts a correspondence gaming relationship, a set of rules should be discussed. These rules should include the PB's proposed setup, some rules for making delays, but it only takes five minutes to send a postcard saying 'I need more time.' Anyone can spare five minutes."
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The title may be a little dramatic, but I already titled an article written in 1981 (see Vol. 18, No. 3) "Minefields and Booby Traps". Long-time readers may well want to peek back at that article just to contrast what I had to say then with the current state of affairs. It was rather interesting for me to do so. For those lacking that article, it briefly reviewed who used what kind of mines (U.S. and German forces used manufactured mines while the Japanese made do with what was available) and the German approach to mine tactics. A brief reprise of those historical concepts is in order before we turn to ASL mine usage.

German mine policy specified usage of mines both offensively and defensively. On offense, hastily-laid mine screens were used to shield the flanks of an advance and protect key rail/road junctions that had been overrun.defensively, minefields were emplaced to slow enemy advances, channel attacks into sited "killing grounds", and permit greater defensive troop concentrations in the unmined areas. In all cases great stress was laid on ensuring adequate firepower to protect the fields from hasty breaching.

The Germans preached relatively few keys to successful mine use. First, where mines were laid they must be of adequate depth and number to intimidate enemy movement. Second, mines are not a rigid barrier. Rather, they serve as a psychological obstruction. Third, the intent of minefields is to ensure that the employer will have adequate time and troop concentration to counterattack vigorously. Lastly, the effectiveness of any given minefield varies directly with the ability of the troops behind it to protect the field.

Standard German minefield construction involved surveying each and every mine location and type. The edge closest to the enemy was composed mostly of anti-tank mines. This was to protect the anti-personnel devices from harmless detonation by an AFV. The core of the barrier was composed of staggered rows of anti-personnel mines interspersed with anti-tank devices. Specific channels were left open to allow safe passage of patrols and counterattacking troops. These channels were changed periodically. Time permitting, potential enemy cover beyond the mine belt was laced with booby traps. Although spreading the mines increased the difficulty of mine removal, and obviously widened the area of defense, the use of mine patches was condemned as being too easily bypassed.

ASL scenarios may give players a fixed number of mine factors which may be allocated in three manners: anti-personnel, anti-tank, and booby traps. In the standard ASL rules these are always hidden (unless placed upon a hardtop surface—B28.53) from enemy view. The WEST OF ALAMEIN module has updated the mine rules with four paragraphs that deal with "Known" and "Dummy" minefields—special applications which may appear in any scenario, but which historically were used most often in North Africa. Due to the mobile nature of that campaign, minefields were often marked with signs (the German ones usually read "Achtung Minen!") and/or perimeter wire. Often the enemy could see these indications of a minefield, yet not know its strength or even if it was just a "dummy". The new rules (F.7-.7C) cover these possibilities.

We'll take a moment to review ASL anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines, and booby traps before discussing the pros and cons.

Anti-personnel mines are low power explosive devices designed to go off under minimal pressure. They may be placed in concentrations of six, eight or twelve factors per hex. They can immobilize an AFV, kill or break troops. They can even take out unarmored vehicles. They go off whenever any unit enters or leaves their Location.

Anti-tank mines are available at a cost of three anti-personnel factors per anti-tank factor. These mines are big and powerful enough to rip the treads off a tank—perhaps even blow through the bottom plate armor. Because of their size, they're expensive. Thus, they're adjusted only to detonate under the kind of ground pressure generated by a vehicle. Anti-tank mines can be laid in strengths of one through five per hex. Don't go off until a vehicle enters/leaves their Location and a die roll ≤ the AT mine concentration is made. They always attack on the 36+ column of the IFT. Obviously, a KIA result kills an AFV, while a K or MC immobilizes it.

Booby traps are low power explosive traps that are often concealed above ground. Generally they are not set off by pressure, but rather triggered by an action (opening a door, flushing a toilet, straightening a picture—that kind of thing). Booby traps are available in three levels. Each level costs 10 mine factors. They cause Casualty Reduction on Task Check die rolls of "12" (level C), "11" (level B) or "11 and 12" (level A). Anti-personnel mines are your "best buy". Undoubtedly they will be the overwhelming majority...
of mines purchased. First and foremost, you know they’ll always go off whenever a unit enters/leaves their Location. Even a six-factor minefield is a considerable threat to foot sloggers. Second, they really are a threat to AFVs. AFVs with any hull armor factor of “0” are treated as unarmored versus mines, and even medium tanks generally have about a 16% chance of being immobilized moving through the hex.

Anti-tank mines are probably only worth the expense if you face more than one AFV. If you do face a bunch of steel monsters, the anti-tank mines are valuable indeed. They can be planted in density as low as one per hex (wide coverage, but still about 30% chance of going off if a vehicle tries to move through). They don’t go off if just infantry or cavalry move through. That means that maniacal HS zipping along hoping to expose mines won’t reveal your little anti-tank trap unless it searches.

Best of all, when AT mines do go off they always rack up some damage.

Booby traps are both wonderful and terrible. As they depend on Task Check rolls of “11” and/or “12”, you can go through a whole scenario and they never have any effect. On the other hand, we’ve seen tough guys cut up badly by some nasty booby traps. Reductions. When booby traps go off, they can affect any unit (except a crew taking an Immobilization Check) and always hit (none of this “MC” jive), and it should be pointed out that booby traps can be “detonated” only by enemy units—not by units of the side with the booby trap capability. Your use of mines should tend to follow standard patterns much aiken to German mine policy.

First, ensure that the minefield is laid out in adequate depth and breadth. Mining single hexes just means that your crafty opponent will search them out and go round. This means that most of the time, you’ll be using much lower mine density. More mined hexes means more shots, more clearing, and really gives you your best odds of doing some damage.

Second, if you think your opponent is likely to use AFVs to make the hole, try to put anti-tank mines in front of your anti-personnel minefields. This “leading edge” can really put a crimp in his breaching.

Third, if you think your opponent is likely to use mine clearing, then invest in Level B booby traps (assuming he is not Inexperienced Infantry). That’ll mean dice rolls of “11” or “12” will both clobber him.

Fourth, don’t try to mine everywhere. You’ll end up with fields too shallow to divert the attacker. Last but not least, minefields must have some firepower protection. As a rule of thumb, I try to use mines to guard one-third or one-half my line with their Location. Even a six-factor minefield is a considerable threat to foot sloggers. These notes continue the series of commentaries in the Clinic pertaining to the scenarios published with the previous installment of the column (in this case, with Vol. 24, No. 6). The intent is to provide the ASL player with one of the 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 scenarios, the reader can now compare his findings.

After Action Report—Rock’s Red Glare

GERMAN: Place an 8-0 with squad and LMG in 3L4; squad and LMG in M5; crew and PKS in Q5; the 9-2 with three squads and HMG and MMG in R5; a single squad in U6; an 8-0 leader and squad with LMG in W8. Place the crew and artillery piece in N8 facing M5/N7. Put the FlakPz in P8 facing O6/P8 and the StuG in R8 facing R7/S8.

AMERICAN: Relatively straightforward—the 9-2 and three squads with two MMGs and Baz44 and PF in T1; the 6-0 plus three squads with Baz45 and PF in X3. All the rest enter on 11.

ATTACKER’S TACTICS: Use your AFV only to prevent the Germans from gaining any second-level positions; it is too vulnerable to throw into a duel with the German armor or infantry. Try to concentrate on getting a second-level fire position which hinders the German movement and then move all your forces to the attack the other building in close combat. Remember, you only need one building to win.

DEFENDER’S TACTICS: Use your firepower to delay or hinder the American movement. Use the tactics of “fallback defense” until the U.S. player commits his assault to one direction—and then hunker down around that building.

Even as you read this installment, our effort on the "ASL Annual '89" (due for release at ORIGINS) enters its final stages. Articles have been selected and edited, and some 20 scenarios are ready for a printing. Given that no game can ever be a "perfect" simulation of war, some seemingly approaching some of these, contact Rex A. Martin by post and specify whether you’d like to test the proposed ASL Deluxe, ASL or original SL scenarios.

AH Philosophy . . . Cont’d from Page 4

On the other hand, I employ a simpler judgment. If the numerical rating is below "2", then the game is truly outstanding in this aspect. If below "3", it is very good—a solid presentation and better than most. If in the range of "3-5", I judge it to be average. And we won't even speak of those entries that rate below "5". A crude method of evaluating worth, but it does help me perceive how the collective readership (or at least, those who responded to this survey) judges our efforts. For the designer/developers of Avalon Hill and Victory Games, these values should indicate what is well done, and what needs improvement, when they are working on a game similar to one of these in scope or subject. Hopefully, such an effort on the part of 323 dedicated hobbyists can help us make the product better for all of you. My thanks to those 323 for their time and trouble.

Before closing, a few observations on the results of our quinquennial updating of the RG. I was mildly disappointed that some 20 titles didn’t make it onto the rating list, due to a lack of response. However, some of those that may be explained by subject. Five were fantasy or sci fi titles or unfamiliarity (two, KREMLIN and TAC AIR have just recently been released); but surprising was the high number (11) of Victory Games titles that didn’t make the "cut". The only explanation can be that the readership has not yet
had the chance to try these games, something we hope to rectify by providing a bit more coverage for them in these pages in the future. Another surprise, given the reviews and comments from dedicated players, was the less-than expected ratings for "Authenticity" for the VG line in general.

Comparison of the latest ratings to those for some of the games on the listing for the last five years also is an intriguing study, with many comments possible about the increasing sophistication of the hobbyists. Of more interest to me is the fact that a number of games make several appearances in the nine "top ten" lists above (four of which judge the components, four of which judge the titles as a "game" and one category which looks at it as a "simulation"). For comparison, ASL and the comprising 1830 show up on eight of these lists, and UP FRONT on six. Given that 35 of the 69 rated titles appear on at least one list, and that 21 of those appear on two or more, this says quite a bit about the strengths of these titles.

I am sure that a great many other observations can be made about the 1989 RBG. Unfortunately, I've neither the space nor time to do so. So, I'll leave it to the good readers to draw their own conclusions and suffer their own blinding insights. If something does strike you as noteworthy, we'd sure like to hear it. Perhaps in a "letter to the editor"...
THE PIECES OF ARAB-ISRAELI WARS
A Unit-by-Unit Review

By David Howery

ARAB-ISRAELI WARS is the third in the PB series—but it is more of a cousin than a brother. A IW has extensive rules additions to allow for modern weaponry (such as missiles and helicopters) and the speed of modern armored combat. It is undoubtedly the most realistic game of the series, particularly with regard to artillery and movement. And the optional rules add extra dimensions to the game; all of them should be used for the full flavor of play.

This article follows the format of its two predecessors: “The Pieces of PANZERBLITZ” by Larry McAneney (in the Wargamer’s Guide to PANZERBLITZ) and “The Pieces of PANZER LEADER” by Robert C. Clark (Vol. 23, No. 2 of The GENERAL). Uniformity is maintained. My thanks to both these gentlemen for blazing the trails.

The discussions below assume that the Advanced Rules are in use. Another rule that should be instituted is the artillery field-of-fire experimental rule introduced in PANZER LEADER. This rule requires that ATGs and howitzers be oriented so that the top of the counter is the front facing the field of fire. The two Arab howitzers (25 lbr. and 122mm) must have a track in their hex to change facing. Any AT/howitzer unit that changes its facing cannot fire in the same turn. This rule adds an extra touch of realism, and it has been instituted in my games.

Some general points about AIW to remember. H and M units that Direct Fire at non-armored units have their Attack Factor doubled. Infantry units can now Direct Fire at armored targets in the one- to two-half-range 0. G-class weapons can attack only armored targets. AA-class weapons can attack air-craft, but nothing else. Wrecks are placed on roads, bridges and in towns—not in empty countryside. Finally, morale levels are used to undisperse; it’s not automatic anymore.

In addition to the regular units in ARAB-ISRAELI WARS, this article will also consider the three new units from “Lebanon” by Michael Anchors (Vol. 21, No. 6 of The GENERAL): the T-72 tank, the Merkava tank, and the Gazelle helicopter.

1. Forts; Improved Positions
Forte: Defensive bonus.
Foilie: Stability; you can’t move them later, if you change your mind.
Threat: Channelizing. The enemy will prefer to go around rather than through.
Pals: Artillery units inside, and outside to cover the approaches. Infantry; anyone can make good use of an I.P.
Enemies: These units have no particular enemy, since they simply augment the defense of whoever is residing there. However, forts do tend to draw concentrated Indirect Fire and airstrikes.
Fate: Survival.
Loss: Impossible.
Deployment: On roads, behind terrain lines, at artillery positions; anywhere that you want to have a unit fight from one position for several turns.

2. Blocks
Forte: Slow the enemy down considerably.

3. Mines
Forte: You don’t have to calculate combat odds.
Foilie: Immobility.
Threat: Channelizing.
Prey: No one will chance going through a 2:1 or 3:1 field. A 1:1 minefield might be chanced, but the mines can’t kill by themselves.
Range: It costs to create them.
Execution: Dispersal forever. A 1:1 minefield has only half a chance to disperse enemies.
Pals: Artillery to cover them.
Enemies: Engineers and flail tanks.
Fate: Survival, unless your opponent decides that he needs to open a gap where your minefield is located. Even then, it takes some effort to remove it from play.
Loss: Damaging if the field was holding back a horde of enemy troops. Shruggable otherwise.
Deployment: Roads or anywhere that you want to create an obstacle. Minefields should be an integral part of the defensive bulwark, not isolated out in the open. One of the best uses is to place them in front of a gun position, so the enemy cannot CAT or overrun the position.

4. Wrecks
Forte: Stack effects; two wrecks block a road, four wrecks block the whole hex.
Foilie: If you can get to them.
Threat: Channelizing.
Pals: Artillery to cover the path around them.
Enemies: Battle tanks, who can move them.
Fate: If they are in the way, they’ll get moved. Otherwise, no one will bother; battle tanks have other tasks to perform.
Loss: Annoying: after all, you had to go to some effort to put them there.
Deployment: You can purposefully sacrifice your armor to create wrecks where you want them. Otherwise, it is up to the gods of chance.

5. Trenches
This counter represents either an anti-tank ditch or a cut in the banks of the Suez Canal. Trenches can be bridged, but not destroyed. As an AT ditch, the defender needs to prevent enemy bridging tanks from getting next to the trench for a full turn. As a cut, trenches are necessary for amphibious units; protect them with infantry and AA.

6. Canal Bridge (Pontoon, Infantry)
Forte: They get your troops across the canal.
Foilie: None really; they do the job they are designed for very well.
Threat: Pressurizing. Bridges can funnel your units across quickly.
Pals: Construction Engineers, infantry and AA.

Enemies: Massed artillery or airstrikes.
Fate: Usually will survive, since the owning player will do all he can to protect the bridges.
Loss: Shocking, could be terminal if there is no other way across.
Deployment: Very carefully. Pontoon bridges can only be placed at a cut in the canal, but infantry bridges are built in any hex without a cut. There is normally only enough time to build one in a scenario, so watch where you put it.

7. AT Ditch Bridge
Forte: Allows armor to cross the obstacle.
Foilie: Again, none for its purpose.
Threat: Pressurizing. An unexpected gap is opened in the defensive lines.
Pals: The bridgelayer, of course.
Enemies: Massed artillery and/or airstrikes.
Fate: Will probably survive and be left behind as the battle progresses.
Loss: Serious if you’re not across the ditch yet.
Deployment: Usually, there’s not much choice on this. Bridgelayers are vulnerable, and must go where they can stay out of enemy fire for a turn or two.

Since they can’t hide or ambush, anti-tank guns have a hard time in this game system. The ATGs are all Arab, and they are facing Israeli tanks that actually can shoot further. In addition, all ATGs are weak in defense factors. Consequently, it is difficult to deploy ATGs effectively. They don’t dominate the ARAB-ISRAELI WARS as they did the battlefields of WW2.

8. Arab 85mm AT
Forte: Attack factor. And the mobility is high for an AT gun.
Foilie: Range and defense factors.
Threat: Pressurizing; the light Israeli armor will stay out of range.
Prey: Transport and light armor.
Range: 1-8 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal, with a kill possible.
Pals: Trucks for transport and infantry for protection.
Enemies: Infantry and heavy tanks; the latter can shoot out the gun at a distance.
Fate: If something gets close enough to shoot, the 85mm usually dies. But the gun can use its mobility to stay away from enemy infantry. However, any armed vehicle in the counterhex can easily catch it and overrun it.
Loss: Annoying. The attack factor is simply too big to shrug off.
Deployment: In fort, wood or town hexes; right next to roads if possible.

9. Arab 17 lbr. AT
Forte: Attack factor.
Foilie: Defense and movement factors.
Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Transport and armor.
Range: 1-10 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal, with a possible kill at times.
Pals: Trucks and infantry, for the same reasons.
10. Arab 107mm RG

**Forte:** Attack and movement factors.  
**Foilble:** The abominable range renders this weapon near impotent.  
**Threat:** Little. It is easy to stay out of range or shoot the gun as it moves closer.  
**Prey:** Well, if any enemy armor does happen to blunder into range.  
**Range:** Too little, 1-4 hexes.  
**Execution:** Dispersal or kill, depending on the range and target.  
**Pals:** Any transport, infantry, G-class weapons and other AT guns.  
**Enemies:** Again, battle tanks can shoot this gun down from a comfortable distance.  
**Fate:** Death.  
**Loss:** Annoying.  
**Deployment:** Don't use this gun to try to protect a position. It works better as a companion to other units. For example, the gun could travel with the Sagger units to cover the "dead zone" of one to two hexes. This gun is also a handy companion for the commando units; they have the same movement and range. The gun adds a stiff lead-in punch to the commando's CAT attack.

Once again, the howitzer counters in A1W belong only to the Arab player. But each side has off-board artillery to call upon for Indirect Fire. Howitzers are the greatest traditional killers in warfare. In this game, their main victim is infantry, but armor is not entirely safe. A deficiency common to howitzers is their lack of mobility.

11. Arab 25 lb. Howitzer

**Forte:** Range.  
**Foilble:** Defense factor.  
**Threat:** Pressurizing; infantry will have to keep a wary eye out for these.  
**Prey:** Infantry and light vehicles.  
**Range:** 6-35 hexes, but try to stay at the long end of that for obvious reasons.  
**Execution:** Direct Fire will probably disperse infantry; Indirect has half a chance to do so.  
**Pals:** Spotters, infantry, trucks to move, and AA.  
**Enemies:** Mortars and OBA, heavy armor and aircraft.  
**Fate:** Killed if caught, but the Arab player will usually try hard to protect it.  
**Loss:** Damaging.  
**Deployment:** At long range; or in forts. Keep as many terrain features as you can between the gun and the main battle area.

12. Arab 122mm Howitzer

**Forte:** Range and attack factors.  
**Foilble:** Defense factors.  
**Threat:** Pressurizing.  
**Prey:** Mainly enemy infantry and light vehicles. If Optional Rule 1A is used, armor also becomes a prime target.  
**Range:** 12-48 hexes.  
**Execution:** Dispersal or kill on infantry; dispersal on armor.  
**Pals:** Spotters and trucks; AA to cover them from above.  
**Enemies:** Mortars and OBA, armor and aircraft.  
**Fate:** Usually survival, due to distance and protection.

13. Off-Board Artillery

**Forte:** Invulnerability; the enemy can't attack it.  
**Foilble:** Indirect Fire only; no targets of opportunity.  
**Threat:** Artillery, artillery, and dispersed target.  
**Range:** Anywhere you can spot a target.  
**Execution:** Kill possible; dispersal likely.  
**Pals:** Spotters—no one else is needed.  
**Enemies:** None.  
**Fate:** Survival of course.  
**Loss:** Impossible.  
**Deployment:** Out of the player's control.

Even the smallest mortars have a bigger role in A1W than in PL or PB. Mortars are doubled in range. This makes the small ones just big enough to get a 1:1 attack on infantry. In addition to the units on the mapboard, the Arab player has a 240mm mortar which is available as OBA.

14. Arab 82mm Mortar; Israeli 81mm Mortar

**Forte:** Range, particularly for the Israeli unit.  
**Foilble:** Defense factor.  
**Threat:** Pressurizing.  
**Prey:** Trucks and artillery; infantry with Direct Fire.  
**Range:** 1-12 hexes for the Arab; out to 19 hexes for the Israelis. Try to fire at the long end of the range.  
**Execution:** Kill trucks and weak artillery; dispersal on all others.  
**Pals:** Forts, I.P.s, infantry. Spotters are helpful, too.  
**Enemies:** Tanks and infantry.  
**Fate:** Killed if caught, but that's not so easy to do.  
**Loss:** Annoying.  
**Deployment:** If these units can roam around a bit and do some long-range damage, turn them loose. Otherwise, keep them in the back near your artillery.

15. Arab 120mm Mortar

**Forte:** Range.  
**Foilble:** Damage factor and immobility.  
**Threat:** Pressurizing.  
**Prey:** Infantry, light vehicles.  
**Range:** 8-23 hexes.  
**Execution:** Dispersal.  
**Pals:** Spotters, infantry and trucks.  
**Enemies:** Mortars, tanks, infantry and OBA.  
**Fate:** Survival, since it is well in the back lines. Of course, if the Arab player meets with total disaster, the mortars are likely to be killed along with the rest.  
**Loss:** Damaging.  
**Deployment:** As with howitzers, in artillery positions. Keep these at long range.

Historical: This ordnance was of WW2 vintage, but was still cheap and effective. Even the Israelis used a version of this old warhorse.

16. Arab ZPU-4 Anti-Aircraft

**Forte:** Attack factor.  
**Foilble:** Range; it's much too easy for enemy aircraft to stay out of the way.  
**Threat:** Only to aircraft who wander too close.  
**Prey:** Aircraft.  
**Range:** 1-6 hexes.  
**Execution:** Dispersal.  
**Pals:** Infantry to guard them. Trucks to move them.  
**Enemies:** Any ground combat units.  
**Fate:** Picked off at long range.  
**Loss:** Could be serious if no other AA is available and the Israeli air force is overhead.  
**Deployment:** The ZPU-4 is weak by itself. Deploy it with other AA units in an integrated defense. Protection should be given to likely targets for the enemy: forts, bridges, etc.

17. Arab S-60 Anti-Aircraft

**Forte:** Range.  
**Foilble:** Defense factor.  
**Threat:** Pressurizing. Aircraft can never be safe from the S-60.  
**Prey:** Aircraft.  
**Range:** 1-48 hexes.  
**Execution:** Dispersal.  
**Pals:** Ground units to guard them and trucks to move them.  
**Enemies:** Anyone that can fire.  
**Fate:** Killed if attacked, but the S-60 can often be placed out of harm's way.  
**Loss:** Damaging if the Israelis have airstrikes left.  
**Deployment:** Deep in friendly territory, with the long-range artillery. Keep a truck nearby.

18. Israeli 20mm AA on M3

**Forte:** Attack factor and mobility.  
**Foilble:** Defense and range factors.  
**Threat:** Only to those aircraft that come too close.  
**Prey:** Aircraft.  
**Range:** 1-6 hexes.  
**Execution:** At best, dispersal.  
**Pals:** G- and A-class weapons.  
**Enemies:** Armor; the enemy infantry can be outrun.  
**Fate:** If there is room to run away, the gun will survive.  
**Loss:** Serious. There are only two of these guns, and they are the only AA in the Israeli camp.  
**Deployment:** Around likely airstrike targets.

19. Arab Shilka

**Forte:** Attack and movement factors.  
**Foilble:** Defense factor.  
**Threat:** Pressurizing.  
**Prey:** Aircraft.  
**Range:** 1-10 hexes.  
**Execution:** Dispersal possible on jets; can kill a UH-1.  
**Pals:** Ground combat units to guard them.  
**Enemies:** Armor; again, infantry can be outrun.  
**Fate:** Survival—the Shilka will run away from danger.  
**Loss:** Damaging, if the Israeli is still in the air.  
**Deployment:** As with the ZPU-4, around airstrike targets.

Anti-aircraft weapons in the PANZERBLITZ and PANZER LEADER tend to get hijacked for duty as anti-infantry weapons. Not so in ARAB-ISRAELI
are the branch that hold defensive lines together and crack open enemy lines. Armor can rarely do the job alone. Scenarios S-7, 8-8 and S-9/10 show what happens when armor is committed alone. The CAT attack is deadly to armor in AW due to the improvements in infantry AT capability. Although infantry can now even Direct Fire at armor in the one-to-two hex range, it is rarely worth the effort to do so, when the CAT is so much more effective.

20. Combat Engineers
Fortes: CAT bonus. Can also build blocks and remove enemy blocks and minefields.

Foibles: Foible factor is weak.

Threat: Antagonizing or mobilizing. If the engineers get close to a minefield or a block, the enemy will strike back. If accompanying other infantry, enemy troops tend to concentrate.

Prey: Anyone when CAT attacking.

Range: 1 hex.

Execution: Dispersal possible; automatic clearance of mines and blocks.

Pals: Friendly infantry.

Enemies: Artillery, airstrikes and infantry.

Fate: Destroyed in action.

Loss: Damaging.

Deployment: Stacked with infantry near the front, with access to transport.

21. Arab Commando; Israeli Machine Gun
Fortes: Defense strength.

Foibles: Attack factors.

Threat: Antagonizing.

Prey: Artillery and transport.

Range: 1 hex.

Execution: Dispersal possible.

Pals: Other infantry and friendly transport.

Enemies: Artillery and infantry.

Fate: Inevitably lost in combat.

Loss: Annoying.

Deployment: These units should not be stacked with other infantry. Instead, they serve as spotters or are mounted in armored transports.

Historical: Commando units are the elite of the Arab infantry. A good optional rule would have them operate at a morale level at least one higher than the rest of the army. Otherwise, they are simply weaker infantry without any saving graces.

22. Arab Construction Engineers; Israeli Pontoons
Fortes: Building infantry bridges is their only real function. Other operations take too long; who's going to play AW for 60 turns?

Foibles: These platoons are not meant to fight, and their own factors reflect this. They are much too weak on their own; and they can't use CAT or OF.

Threat: Antagonizing; if building a bridge or spotting for artillery, the enemy will try to take them out.

Prey: None.

Range: 2 hexes, if they have anything to shoot at.

Execution: Dispersal with amazing luck.

Pals: Other infantry, artillery to cover them while they work, and transport to get them where they are needed.

Enemies: Almost everyone, but especially the enemy mortars and artillery.

Fate: Slaughtered while spotting.

Loss: Damaging if you need a bridge built.

Deployment: On the canal of course. Keep their transport nearby. After the bridge is up, spotting is the only thing left for them to do. Be careful where you place the bridge, though. There is usually only enough time to build one.

23. Infantry Companies
Fortes: Defense factor, CAT ability.

24. Arab Sagger; Israeli Cobra

Fortes: Attack and range factors.

Foibles: G-class weapons can't harm infantry, and there are a limited number of shots.

Threat: Pressurizing.

Prey: Armor.

Range: 3-12 hexes.

Execution: Dispersal, with a kill possible. If you bunch these, a kill becomes probable.

Pals: Transport and infantry guards.

Enemies: Infantry and artillery.

Fate: The survivors run out of ammo and are blown away while spotting.

Loss: Serious if they still have ammo left. Shruggable otherwise.

Deployment: These units are excellent for both attacking along the front lines, and for defending choke points, where the enemy armor is expected to pass.

Historical: Technically, these units can only attack armor. But it would be realistic to allow G-class weapons to also attack unarmed vehicles (if the player wants to waste a shot on them). Any weapon that destroys a tank should be able to kill a truck.

These are the least glamorous units in war, but their role is vital. Infantry and artillery simply can't keep up without them. In PB/PL/AW, however, transport is often wasted as spotters (except tanks, of course). This is unrealistic in the extreme, as battlefield commanders value their transport very highly. Out of the battle, they carry supplies and wounded, as well as troops. Note that the bulk of the amphibious units in the game are transport.

25. Truck

Fortes: Movement Factor.

Foibles: Defense strengths.

Threat: Mobilizing or pressurizing, depending on what they are carrying.

Pals: Infantry and artillery.

Enemies: Any weapon.

Fate: Killed if caught.

Loss: Serious, for it slows your development.

Deployment: Keep them for use as a shuttle service on roads.

26. Israeli M3 Halftrack

Fortes: Movement factor.

Foibles: Defense factor.

Threat: Mobilizing or pressurizing, depending on what they can overrun.

Prey: Trucks; can overrun infantry with luck.

Range: 1-4 hexes.

Execution: Dispersal.

Pals: Friendly infantry.

Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.

Fate: Killed while spotting.

Loss: Should be serious, but no one seems to think so.

Deployment: Near the front lines, close to their passengers.

Historical: This is another piece of WW2 vintage equipment with a good record on the modern battlefield. The Israelis made excellent use of all they had, including mounting all manner of weaponry on them (like missiles, mortars and AA guns).

27. Arab BTR 152; Arab BTR 60

Fortes: Movement factor. BTR 60 can swim too.

Foibles: Off-road penalties.

Threat: Pressurizing.

Prey: Enemy trucks.

Range: 1-8 hexes.

Execution: Dispersal; kill possible.

Pals: Infantry.

Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.

Fate: May be sacrificed to create wrecks or as spotters.

Loss: Mildly annoying.

Deployment: As with the trucks, try to keep them on the roads. The BTR 60 may be necessary to ferry troops across the canal, so position them accordingly.

28. Arab BTR 50; Arab OT 62

Fortes: Transport ability. The OT 62 has a nice AF for a transport. Both can swim.

Foibles: Movement; this is slow, for transport, and both can consequently be caught by tanks.

Threat: Pressurizing.

Prey: Trucks and artillery; light armor for the OT 62. Both can overrun infantry.

Range: 1-4 hexes.

Execution: Dispersal.

Pals: Infantry.

Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.

Fate: Often killed while spotting or retreating.

Loss: Serious.

Deployment: Put your less important infantry on these if you have other transport available. Both are useful for the commandos to ride, and can be mounted fire. Both types also serve as ferry service across the canal.

29. Arab M113; Israeli M113A1

Fortes: Movement, and both are amphibious.

Foibles: Defense strengths.

Threat: Pressurizing.

Prey: Trucks and artillery.

Range: 1-4 hexes.

Execution: Dispersal.

Pals: Infantry.

Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.

Fate: Killed if caught.

Loss: Moderately serious.

Deployment: Put them on or near the front line, near their passengers. The Israelis will often have enough to use some as spotters. The Jordanians never have enough to spare.

Historical: Both of these vehicles are made in the United States. The Jordanian vehicle is older, and has only one machine gun, while the Israeli unit is newer and mounts two MGs.

30. Arab BMP

Fortes: Movement factor. The AF is also excellent, and the vehicle can cross the canal.

Foibles: Range, which doesn't allow you to make much use of its excellent Attack factor.

Threat: Mobilizing. Things tend to get out of the way.

Prey: The BMP can overrun almost anything.

Range: 1 hex.

Execution: Dispersal or kill, depending on the target.

Pals: Infantry.

Enemies: A- and G-class weaponry.

Fate: Often shot down by enemy tanks or hit in air-strikes.

Loss: Damaging.
Deployment: On the front; don’t use the BMP as a reserve. They are easily the best transport unit in the game, and have a healthy combat value in their own right.

This catch-all category—“Light Armor”—includes three miscellaneous units. Note that there are no armored cars or assault guns in A.I.W. But these units can serve many of the same functions as armored cars. The two jeeps in the game are the fastest ground units (the truck, BRDM-1 and BTR-60 all have the same movement factor as the jeeps, but these three unit types have off-road penalties attached.)

31. Israeli Scout Jeep
Forte: Movement.
Foible: Everything else.
Threat: Antagonizing; if the jeep is spotting. Otherwise, just an irritant.
Prey: Anything with a Defense Factor of “1”.
Range: 1-4 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal is most likely.
Pals: The 106mm jeep is a nice companion, if available. If not, don’t bother giving this jeep any help.
Enemies: Anyone who gets close enough to shoot.
Fate: Killed after being cornered, or picked off by a long-range shot.
Loss: Shruggable.

Deployment: This unit is best at making a nuisance of itself. It can run around in the enemy backfield, outrun the competition, take potshots at trucks and use SMF to get away. And, worst of all, it can be pressed on a cut, of course, but the player usually has the choice of where to place the cuts.

32. Jeep-mounted 106 RR
Forte: Movement and attack factors. The Arab unit is the only one that has split-move and fire.
Foible: Range and defense factors.
Threat: Antagonizing; the enemy will usually shoot at this jeep as it closes in on a shot. After all, there’s no much chance of running it down.
Prey: Transport. The Jordanian unit can be used to chase down the Israeli scout jeep.
Range: 1-4 hexes. Don’t bother getting closer; the attack will be either normal or doubled, depending upon the year and the nationality.
Execution: Dispersal, even kills possible. An almost automatic kill on enemy transport.
Pals: The Israeli one can hang around with their scout jeep, if available. Otherwise, neither should have any companions. Nothing else can keep up with them anyway.
Enemies: Anyone with a weapon.
Fate: Killed, usually while moving in to take a shot.
Loss: Annoying for the Israeli; serious for the Arab.
The attack values are too large for its loss to be shrugged off.
Deployment: The Israeli unit can harass the enemy transportation lines. The Jordanian unit is needed elsewhere. At Iribid (S-3) the doubled AF and SMF ability means that the jeep is dangerous to the Syrian T-34s and T-55s. At Jenin (S-5), the Jordanian is facing an uphill task, and that jeep is necessary to hold the front line.

33. Israeli Armored Infantry
Forte: Movement and attack factor; can use amphibious mode.
Foible: Defense factor; F-class weaponry. Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Any unarmored target—which are to be overrun.
Range: 1-6 hexes. Massed Direct Fire at weak targets can be deadly, even at maximum range.
Execution: Good chance for a kill.
Pals: Tanks, to provide some A-class support and covering fire.
Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.
Fate: Some will be lost. If more than half are killed, you are doing something wrong.
Loss: Serious; in 1973 and later dated scenarios, the armored infantry makes up the large part of the Israeli forces.

Deployment: Armored infantry must often take the place of regular infantry for the Israeli player. However, unlike regular infantry, they must stay out of the way of tanks/missiles. Armored infantry role-25 hexes to break into the enemy backfield as well as to overrun enemy infantry positions on the front lines. These units should run in packs.

34. Israeli 120mm Mortar on M3
Forte: Range.
Foible: Defense strength.
Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Infantry and artillery.
Range: 8-25 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Tanks, AA and any spotters.
Enemies: Enemy armor.
Fate: Survival usually; the M3 can run from danger.
Loss: Damaging.
Deployment: Artillery positions, under cover if possible.

35. Arab 140mm Rocket Truck
Forte: Attack and range factors.
Foible: Defense factor; off-road penalties when moving.
Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Infantry and light vehicles.
Range: 8-36 hexes.
Execution: Direct Fire will slaughter infantry in the open. Indirect Fire will probably disperse them no matter what.
Pals: Spotters and any AA you can provide.
Enemies: Almost everyone. This unit is weak and unarmored, but a terrible threat.
Fate: Due to its range, the rocket truck is usually out of danger. Occasionally, it is surprised by roving Israeli jeeps or planes.
Loss: Shocking.
Deployment: Keep it way in the back with the howitzers. If necessary, it can move forward to pulverize some target in the enemy rear.

The engineering vehicles are defined as units which have one special function each. Losing them can be critical at the wrong time. All must be deployed with great care.

36. Arab MTU-2; Israeli M60 AVLB
Forte: Bridgelaying.
Foible: There are only two of them in any scenario.
Threat: Neutralize trenches.
Pals: Tanks for cover while the bridges are laid.
Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.
Fate: Often killed while moving forward to the trench line.
Loss: Damaging to lose one; shocking to lose both if there is no bridge down yet.
Deployment: These must stay out of enemy fire. Tanks to escort them are necessary. Pick your target to be bridged very carefully.

37. Arab PT-54 Flail; Israeli Sherman Flail
Forte: Clearing minefields.
Foible: Limited numbers available.
Threat: Neutralize mines.
Pals: Covering fire from friendly tanks and artillery.
Enemies: Whatever is covering the mines.
Fate: Depends on what is covering the minefields.
Loss: Damaging.
Deployment: Close behind the front lines, to be ready for quick use.

38. Arab GSP Ferry; Israeli Motorized Ferry
Forte: Crossing the canal.
Foible: Agonizingly slow; two full turns to ferry one unit across.
Threat: Antagonizing. There will be a slow build-up of troops on the far side of the canal. The enemy will attack before too large a force is moved over the water.
Pals: Give the ferries whatever they need for complete protection—tanks, infantry, AA, etc.
Enemies: Artillery and airstrikes.
Fate: Will survive if given heavy protection.
Loss: Shocking, could be terminal if there is no other way to get non-amphibious units over.
Deployment: Very carefully. The ferry has to go on a cut, of course, but the player usually has the choice of where to place the cuts.

39. Arab PMP
The PMP’s sole purpose is to carry bridges. Think of it as a slow truck. The PMP should try to stay on roads, and must have an escort at all times. If destroyed, the Arab player will have no other way to move the bridge.

40. Arab MLG
The MLG is a minelaying vehicle. Although this sounds like a useful function, in practice the MLG will be restricted to laying minefields to protect secondary lines that you plan to retreat to, or in front of artillery positions. It is much too thinly protected to go into the front lines.

There are two distinct types of aircraft in Arab-Israeli Wars—jets and helicopters. The main purpose of both is to deliver airstrikes. The targets are usually secondary positions or areas in the enemy line where you want to open a gap. Remember that airstrikes are limited in numbers; use them wisely and sparingly. Helicopters also have a secondary role in spotting or transport.

41. Arab Mi-8; Israeli UH-1
Forte: Transport and airstrike capabilities.
42. Arab Gazelle
For: Airstrike.
Foible: Uselessness after airstrike; nothing to do but spot.
Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Armor.
Range: Maximum range—six hexes.
Execution: Dispersal or kill.
Pals: None.
Enemies: AA guns.
Fate: Survival.
Loss: Shocking.
Deployment: Up front, to attack the enemy armored front line.

43. Israeli Huey Cobra
For: Airstrike and intrinsic attack strength.
Foible: Range of intrinsic Attack Factor.
Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Armor.
Range: Depends on airstrike type; the cannons' range—six hexes.
Execution: Dispersal or kill.
Pals: None.
Enemies: AA guns.
Fate: Survival.
Loss: Shocking.
Deployment: Up front, to attack the enemy armored front line.

44. Arab/Israeli Jet Aircraft
For: Airstrike.
Foible: Limit on airstrikes.
Threat: Pressurizing.
Prey: Armor.
Range: Maximum for G-2 strikes; 0-2 hexes for all others.
Execution: At least a dispersal.
Enemies: AA guns.
Fate: Sometimes dispersed; rarely killed.
Loss: Damaging.
Deployment: Attack either enemy artillery positions or front line troops.

45. Arab SU-100
For: Almost everything; a very well-balanced unit.
Foible: Range; not quite enough to trade shots with some Israeli tanks.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Armor.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Infantry (if overrun) and armor.
Enemies: Enemy battle tanks, any G-class weapons.
Fate: Might survive, as it has a higher than average movement allowance.
Loss: Damaging.
Deployment: At the cutting point of any attack.
Historical: This is yet another WW2 survivor, which was used to good effect in the Arab-Israeli wars.

46. Arab T-34/100
For: Attack strength and range.
Foible: Defense factor is painfully low.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Enemy armor.
Range: 6-12 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Tanks and infantry.
Enemies: Armor, of course.
Fate: Killed in battle.
Loss: Damaging.
Deployment: Due to the weak defense factor, this tank destroyer should be just behind the front lines, trying to score on long-range shots.

47. Israeli 90mm ATG on M3
For: Attack factor.
Foible: Range and defense values.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Armor.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Tanks and infantry.
Enemies: A- and G-class weapons.
Fate: Inevitably killed in battle.
Loss: Announcing; but the battle tanks are so much better, you hardly miss the ATG much.
Deployment: At the point of attack. Get what you can out of it while the 90mm ATG is alive.

48. Arab BRDM-1; Israeli SS11 on M3; Israeli TOW on M113A1
For: Attack factors, the largest on the mapboard. The TOW and BRDM can swim.
Foible: Defense factors, G-class weapons can't harm infantry. The BRDM has severe off-road penalties.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Armor.
Range: 10-12 hexes. No use getting any closer; the odds don't improve.
Execution: Dispersal with some kills possible.
Pals: Tanks and infantry.
Enemies: Infantry, if they get too close. Armor at all times.
Fate: Can be lost in combat if cornered. Otherwise, these can usually avoid serious trouble.
Loss: Damaging and disheartening.
Deployment: Just behind the point of the attack, to use missiles at long range.

49. Arab PT-76; Arab T-34/85
For: Attack factor—not much, but it will do against the right targets. The PT-76 is amphibious.
Foible: Range and defense factors, especially the PT-76.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Transport.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Bigger tanks and Sagger positions.
Enemies: Even bigger tanks.
Fate: Killed in combat.
Loss: Announcing.
Deployment: Potential use as spotters or overrunning enemy light units.

50. Arab T-55
For: Large numbers; they’re weak, but they can gang up on the biggest enemy.
Foible: Range, attack and defense factors.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Usually, the T-55 is forced to take on Israeli tanks since there is no better one available to the Arabs in many scenarios. If given a choice, go for the Israeli transport.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Sagger and stronger tanks to coordinate with.
Enemies: Tanks.
Fate: Large numbers are killed. Some should survive, if only to run away.
Loss: Merely annoying until losses mount too high.
Deployment: En masse; if committed in small bunches, most or all will be left burning.

51. Arab T-10M
For: Attack factors, low but sufficient.
Foible: Everything else.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Any armor that comes into range. Enemy infantry can be overrun.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Pals: Other tanks and Sagger positions.
Enemies: Main battle tanks.
Fate: Caught and killed.
Loss: Serious.
Deployment: Due to its speed, it is usually a straggler. Infantry may be all it can catch.

52. Israeli AMX-13
For: Attack and range factors. Movement is better than average, too.
Foible: Defense factor is a bit too low for comfort.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: Transport and any enemy tank weaker than a T-72.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal or kill.
Pals: Infantry and other tanks.
Enemies: Any enemy tanks stronger than a T-62, Sagger, Sagger-100s.
Fate: A few will be lost.
Loss: Serious, especially if that’s all you’ve got.
Deployment: On the attack. Although it is a “merry” light tank, the AMX-13 can take a shot with T-62s and is superior to anything weaker. The speed allows it to chase down transport off roads, since it doesn’t incur the cross-country penalties.

53. Arab T-62
For: The attack value is better, but the main advantage still lies in numbers.
Foible: Range and defense factor; no improvement over the T-55.
Threat: Antagonizing.
Prey: It will have to take on tanks, since it is often the best tank the Arab player has.
Range: 1-6 hexes.
Execution: Dispersal.
Jordanian tanks have the edge on the Syrian armor, so it must move out quickly to attack. 

54. Israeli Sherman Mk 50; Israeli Sherman Mk 51 and Sherman Mk 51 HV

Forte: Attack factors.
Foible: Movement and defense factors. Range, if only because the Israeli player is used to better things.

Loss: Serious; damaging in the case of the 51 HV.

Deployment: At the front. The Sherman can be outrun by enemy tanks, and will have to settle for attacking infantry.

55. Arab T-72

Forte: Attack factor.
Foible: Range; still no improvement on the T-55. (What are those Russians doing with their time?)

Threat: Antagonizing.

Prey: Armored forces in infantry action.

Range: 6-10 hexes. These tanks are weak enough that it doesn’t always pay to stay at a six-hex range.

Execution: Dispersal or kill.

Pals: Faster tanks.

Enemies: Faster tanks and Saggers.

Fate: You will probably lose a few, whether on attack or defense.

58. Israeli M48A5; Israeli M60A1; Israeli Patturion and Merkavah

Forte: Everything.

Foible: None, in and of themselves.

Threat: Antagonizing and mobilizing. Weak units will get out of the way, while the stronger Arab units must fight back.

Prey: Anyone, especially if these tanks work in pairs.

Range: 3-6 hexes.

Execution: Armor is demolished; infantry is at least dispersed; guns are obliterated. Even helicopters must take pains to avoid them.

Pals: Infantry support is needed.


Fate: The bulk will survive—with infantry support. Without it, destruction will come after a long and bitter struggle.

Loss: Depends on how many the Israelis have. In situations like Kunietra (S-11), each lost is damaging. At Deversoir (A-5), the Israeli player has plentiful supply, and each loss is only a bit serious.

Deployment: Most should be attacking, but keep a few as a mobile reserve.

Historical: All of these units use some form of the 105mm gun. Jordan used the M48 in 1967, but with a 90mm gun. The Israelis used their antique Shermans to destroy Jordan’s M48s. Lebanon was the baptism of fire for both the T-72 and the Merkavah. As mentioned earlier, it was a triumph for the Israelis.

57. Israeli TI-67

Forte: Almost anything. Is easily capable of taking on any Arab armor.

Foible: Only a +1 on hulldown; a minor problem, but this fact is annoying for the Israeli.

Threat: Antagonizing.

Prey: Armor.

Range: 3-6 hexes.

Execution: Kill!
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ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER

A11.52 How does Infantry carry an armoured and manned, unarmored vehicle?

A. Assuming the vehicle is stopped, the attacking unit applies the Commissar's additional DR to its CC DR (in addition to any other applicable DRM).

A12.11 & A12.2 If a scenario OB gives a side a number of "*" counters, can the player choose 6% or 6% if the OB picture only a 6% or 6% counter?

A. Yes.

A12.15 May a unit in an A-P minefield location conduct a Search?

A. Yes, but the presence of the minefield allows the DEFENDER to make a Counterattack (A12.154).
While the issue featuring *THUNDER AT CASSINO* (Vol. 24, No. 6) didn't rate as highly with the readers as other issues in the past (perhaps I was looking ahead to the Anniversary issue and did not give this one the attention it deserved), still-and-all it garnered a respectable Overall Rating (3.45). And, of course, the lead articles—along with Mr. Nixon's excellent piece on *THIRD REICH*—dominated the polling. Based on a random sampling of some 200 reader responses, the ratings for all the articles are as follows:

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From Ken Peel (8708 First Avenue #T2, Silver Spring MD 20910) comes a copy of his first issue of Diplomatic Contraband. This first newsletter introduces the concept of a gaming organization for any American posted abroad at a U.S. diplomatic or consular post or parent department agency in Washington DC. Mr. Peel has himself been a professional staff member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for some years, and hopes to bring his love of Diplomacy to his co-workers and colleagues. At the very least, he hopes to feature PBM DIP games involving diplomatic personnel posted so far from home. He may also expand the concept of Diplomatic Contraband to cover other games of similar ilk. Any readers who may be in service in the U.S. Foreign Service (USIS or State) that are interested in his effort, Mr. Peel asks that you please contact him directly.

The Boardgame Challenge is a new 'zine devoted to our brand of gaming from Edward Campisano (P.O. Box 724, Norwood, MA 02062). The first (?) issue certain indicates that it has the potential to become one of the premier efforts in amateur publishing. Besides a most interesting editorial on inbounding, designers, reviews of new books and games, new scenarios, with the occasional touch of history of the period, makes it most interesting reading for any gamer enamored of the Civil War. The quality of the production is as high as that of the content. And there are even "classified ads" of items and opponents on the back cover. Subscriptions run $10.00 for one year (four issues) and $18.00 for two years. They may be had by contacting the editor, Mr. Bill Koff (146 Chimney Lane, Wilmington, DE 19803).

This summer past, two major DIPLOMACY conventions provided plenty of opportunities for skull-duggery and treachery an ocean apart. First came DIP-Con, the rotating national championship held this year in San Antonio, Texas. When the dust had settled in the several rounds of play, Dan Sellers (of Chapel Hill, NC) was the new North American champion. Shortly after the festivities in Texas, the first "World DIP-Con" was held in Birmingham, England. Both individual and team play were judged. Phil Day, a Britisher, beat out 187 other players to claim the individual title. An all-British team from the "War & Peace", a popular English pub, took the team title over some 25 other teams (including one international team). Accord, the "Visit Sanatorium" card is always a good card to play. The key to solving this puzzle was to lay Smoke in Area 27 with the artillery, and to use the tank to try to draw the Advantage chit from the opposing player. The actions of the various other Indian infantry, once these had occurred, were pretty obvious. However, most who responded tried to use the artillery to blow open Area 31 or 27 with brute firepower—which would not give the Allied player his highest chance of taking a VP area for the win.

In Contest 143, your best chance to save of Leonid is to play the "Visit Sanatorium" card immediately. By making him inactive, the ranking Active politician becomes KGB Head Schukrutoff, and that means that Blue will be the last player to place his extra VP. This is vital because as Blue is already showing a pair of sights on Schukrutoff and Karrienko he must have his (undeclared) nine or ten on one or both of them. You cannot take the chance that Blue will declare his 10+ on Karrienko before you do because you haven't enough sure votes in the Politburo to stop a Spy Trial charge and vote. A hostile Defense Minister will be the end of Bungaloff, so you must declare your recorded 9P on Karrienko plus your two new VP and go to 10+ plus them.

With the Defense Minister thus secured, Bungaloff's main detriment to a safe convalescence is the KGB—who barring play of favorable Intrigue cards has a 15% chance of purging Bungaloff (30% if he's at the Sanatorium) and a 30% chance to get rid of Karrienko. Using your other Intrigue card to assassinate Schukrutoff only passes the purge power to the Ideology Minister. While you currently control Palavrian, your hold is weak and liable to fail during this Influence Declaration Phase. By attempting to assassinate Palavrian instead while you still control him, you can denounce Schukrutoff for the attempt with a 10% better chance of eliminating him indirectly! If the assassination and condemnation attempts both succeed, the Ideology post will be vacant—preventing any purge attempt in the coming year if Bungaloff returns from the Sanatorium or Manjak goes to it. More importantly, if the assassination attempt fails, Palavrian will be the politician automatically progressed by age to fill the KGB vacancy. If your feeble control over him holds up (a decided possibility given your two additional undeclared VP on him), you'll hold the three seats of power. This play should be made immediately following the successful play of your "Visit Sanatorium" card before someone else takes control of Palavrian. Your hold on Bungaloff himself can be assumed secure with three additional undeclared VP on him. Anyone with enough influence over him to take him away from you would almost certainly have done so before he waved twice. Thus entrenched, you can hope Bungaloff recovers sufficiently in Year 4 to wave and win in Year 5.
Pick one game that's as exciting SOLITAIRE as it is head-to-head or with 6 players... you pick MERCHANT of VENUS!

Now it is the 32nd century, two centuries after the fall of the First Galactic Empire, and a young, lusty civilization is bursting forth into the Galaxy with the newly-discovered star drive. It is the heyday of the independent interstellar merchant, a time when a few daring entrepreneurs can make fortunes and build trade empires.

In MERCHANT OF VENUS you play the part of such a merchant, exploring a cluster of stars to find what remains of the civilizations that once dwelt there. The map portrays a small cluster of star systems, where 14 intelligent species lie hidden in the ruins of the First Empire. Each species is the dominant culture of a different system, but after centuries of savagery, no one knows where each culture dwells. As you discover the cultures you can trade with them, buying and selling exotic trade goods and special devices. In your journeys you can also stumble across other remnants of the First Empire, including unique treasures and weapons that automatically attack passers-by.

MERCHANT OF VENUS is a game of luck and skill. You start with a small spaceship racing to accumulate wealth by transporting, trading and investing. You make money by buying trade goods from one culture and selling them to other cultures. You can use your profits to buy bigger spaceships, with high-speed drives and shields to protect you from the dangers you will meet! As your profits increase, you can build ports and factories to make trading more profitable. As the game progresses, profits will accelerate until one merchant accumulates enough wealth to win the game. The optional rules allow you to play a darker version of the game, in which the cluster is torn with strife and warfare. These rules introduce weapons, forts, swindles, revolts, piracy and the Rastur, an army of xenophobic megalomaniacs who are trying to conquer the Galaxy.

MERCHANT OF VENUS is a design with remarkable versatility. Few, if any, games can claim to be equally exciting whether played solitaire, head-to-head or with three, four, five or six players. Not only can this game claim that distinction, MERCHANT OF VENUS uses it to vary the strategy dramatically as the number of participants change.

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WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are always in vogue—be the subject books, television, shows, movies or even games. The public seems never to tire of seeing how its favorite way of spending its leisure time stacks up against the competition. So, to cater further to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity), this is The GENERAL's version of the gamer's top ten. From the responses to this form the editors produce the regular column "So That's What You've Been Playing" found elsewhere in this issue.

We aren't asking you to subjectively 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 fewer) games which you've spent the most time playing since you received your last issue of The GENERAL. With the collation of these responses, we can generate a consensus list of what's being played by our readership. This list can serve both as a guide for us (for coverage in these pages) and others (convention organizers) trying to judge which games are currently popular.

Free to list any game of any sort regardless of manufacturer. There will be, of course, a built-in bias to the survey since the readers all play Avalon Hill games to some extent; but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other periodicals with special-interest based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's own discretion.

1. 
2. 
3. 

CONTEST 144

Indicate the starting locations of these NATO units in Scenario One of TAC AIR (abbreviations are as per the Series Replay on Page 13):

9th Engineer:
223rd Helicopter:
3/7 Air Def HQ:
A/3/7 Air Def:
3/7 Supply:
2C HQ:
2C Artillery:
2C Air Supply:
2C Helicopter:
2C Armored:
A/2C Cavalry:
B/2C Cavalry:
2C Supply:


 issue as a whole ______ (Rate from 1 to 10, with "1" equating excellent and "10" terrible). To be valid for consideration, your contest entry must also include the three best articles, in your view:

1. 
2. 
3. 

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CANNES, FRANCE, 23 August 1944: Generally the American advance through Southern France was so swift that it was rare when the Germans stayed and fought. However, the swiftness of the advance often caused German elements to be cut off and faced with the decision either to fight on in an isolated pocket or to surrender. Outside Cannes on a small hill, one such group set up a well dug-in perimeter and seemed determined to hold out. To dig them out, the Americans committed elements of the 509th Parachute Battalion, supported by heavy weapons and the guns of the 463rd Parachute Field Artillery.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win immediately when they have amassed ≥ 16 Casualty VP. Otherwise they win at game end if they have at least one east- or west-edge road hex within the LOS and normal range of a Good Order German MMC or SW/Gun that is functioning and manned by a Good Order German unit.

TURN RECORD CHART

SPECIAL RULES:
1. EC are Moderate, with no Wind at start.
2. The Americans receive two OBA modules: one of 80+mm battalion mortar, and one of 100+mm.
3. The German AT gun must be set up within a pillbox.

AFTERMATH: The attack was well coordinated by one company of the airborne battalion which used flamethrowers, demo charges and tank support to systematically reduce the bunkers. Casualties were heavy but not excessive. Finally, after half the bunkers had been reduced, the remaining Germans surrendered en masse, disheartened by the futility of their stand.

BALANCE:
★ The German player must amass ≥ 20 Casualty VP to win immediately.
★ The AT gun need not be placed in a pillbox (negate SSR 3).

BALANCE:
The Germans win immediately when they have amassed ≥ 16 Casualty VP. Otherwise they win at game end if they have at least one east- or west-edge road hex within the LOS and normal range of a Good Order German MMC or SW/Gun that is functioning and manned by a Good Order German unit.

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HITDORF, GERMANY, 6 April 1945: As the Third Reich collapsed, many American leaders became bold to the point of recklessness. Often, a daring stroke by a small group of GIs yielded a vast gaggle of demoralized German prisoners. But sometimes the Americans pushed their luck too far and the Germans, like a wounded animal, would lash back with stinging effect. At early dawn, Company A of the 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Regiment crossed the Rhine and advanced toward the town of Hitdorf. Unfortunately, elements of the 62nd Volksgrenadier Division had just linked up with lingering remnants of the 11th Pz. Division, and these Germans were not yet willing to lay down their arms. The landings went easy enough, but as the paratroopers entered the town, they were met by an enemy company that had been rushed to the sector.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The Americans win if at game end they Control ≥ two stone buildings on Board 3 and the German player has amassed no more than 24 Casualty VP.

**TURNS RECORD CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn</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>
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<td><strong>German Sets Up First</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>American Moves First</strong></td>
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**SPECIAL RULES:**

1. EC are Moderate, with no Wind at start.
2. All units of the Hitdorf Garrison (the German units that commence play on Board 3) may use HIP.
3. The Germans receive one module of 80+mm battalion mortar OBA.
4. The Americans receive one module of 100+mm OBA, but may not roll for Radio contact until Turn 4.
5. U.S. squads may create a total of two infantry SMOKE counters in the course of the game; the SMOKE limit is per scenario, not per MMC.

**AFTERMATH:** The Germans quickly brought down a heavy mortar barrage. Reeling back, the paratroopers blundered into a minefield and were taking the worst of it until requested artillery and reinforcements arrived. A 105mm battery, despite initial confusion, succeeded in quieting the German fire until the arrival of German armor provoked a major withdrawal. The paratroopers fell back to the river, piled into their boats, and staged a "mini-Dunkirk." The Americans had suffered heavy casualties but were now far wiser when approaching the Germans at bay.
Final Ballot for the Origins Awards 1988
Presented by the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design

1. Best Historical Figure Series, 1988
   - 1200 AD Aztec Army, Ral Partha Enterprises
   - Biblical Period Chariot Miniatures, Stone Mountain Miniatures, Inc.
   - Blandford Warriors, Citadel Line, Games Workshop, Inc.
   - Riel's Rebellion, 25mm, RAFM
2. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Figure Series, 1988
   - Citadel Plastic Kits, Games Workshop, Inc.
   - Julie Guthrie's Fantasy Personnelliess, Grenadier Models, Inc.
   - Renegade Legion - 25mm Circus Imperium Figures, Ral Partha Enterprises
   - TSR's AD&D Series, Ral Partha Enterprises
   - Warhammer 40,000, Games Workshop, Inc.
3. Best Vehicle or Accessory Series, 1986
   - BattleTech Mecha, Ral Partha Enterprises
   - Blood Bowl, Games Workshop, Inc.
   - Napoleonic Villages, 15mm Hovels Line, Stone Mountain
     Miniatures, Inc.
   - Ral Partha Armed Assault Vehicles of the 41st Century, Games Workshop, Inc.
   - Barbarossa '25, Command Decision, Game Designers' Workshop
   - Combined Arms, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
   - To the Sound of the Guns, Johnny Reb, Game Designers' Workshop
   - Warhammer 40,000 Chapter Approved, Games Workshop, Inc.
5. Best Role-Playing Rules, 1988
   - Ars Magica, Lion Rampant
   - Bullwinkle and Rocky Role Playing Party Game, TSR, Inc.
   - Cyberpunk, R. Talsorian Games, Inc.
   - GURPS Basic Set, 3rd Edition, Steve Jackson Games Incorporated
   - Space Master: The RPG, Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc.
6. Best Role-Playing Adventure, 1988
   - Battle for the Golden Sun, Star Wars, West End Games
   - Castle Greyhawk, AD&D, TSR, Inc.
   - Harkwood, GURPS Fantasy, Steve Jackson Games Incorporated
   - Koll Hounds, Mech Warrior, FASA Corp.
   - Orion Rising, Top Secret/S.I., TSR, Inc.
   - Unnigh, GURPS Space, Steve Jackson Games Incorporated
   - Kharadron, Mech Warrior, FASA Corp.
7. Best Role-Playing Supplement, 1988
   - Chullu Now, Call of Cthulhu, Chaosium, Inc.
   - Field Guide to Monsters, Cthulhu, Chaosium Inc.
   - Freelancers, Top Secret/S.I., TSR, Inc.
   - GURPS Handbook of the Marvel Universe, Marvel Super Heroes, TSR, Inc.
   - GURPS Space, GURPS, Steve Jackson Games Incorporated
   - Kara-Tur Trail Map, AD&D, TSR, Inc.
8. Best Graphic Presentation of a Role-Playing Game, Adventure or Supplement, 1988
   - Bullwinkle and Rocky Role Playing Party Game, TSR, Inc.
   - Field Guide to Monsters, Cthulhu, Chaosium Inc.
   - Kharadron, Mech Warrior, FASA Corp.
   - Kara-Tur Trail Map, AD&D, TSR, Inc.
   - Tatooine Manhunt, Star Wars, West End Games
9. Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame, 1988
   - Enemy Armageddon, The Avalon Hill Game Company
   - Gettysburg, The Avalon Hill Game Company
   - Grand Army of the Republic, Task Force Games
   - The Horse Soldiers, S&T #119, SW
   - Indian Mystery, S&T #121, SW
   - Lee vs. Grant, Victory Games
   - Manchu, S&T #116, SW
   - Zulu War, Battleplan #7, 3WDTI
10. Best Boardgame Covering the Period 1900-1946 for 1988
    - Great Pacific War, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
    - Kremlin, The Avalon Hill Game Company
    - Open Fire!, Victory Games
    - Raid on St. Nazaire, The Avalon Hill Game Company
    - Tokyo Express: The Guadalcanal Naval Campaign, 1942.
11. Best Boardgame Covering the Period 1947-modern day for 1988
    - Chieftain, Assault, Game Designers' Workshop
    - Desert Falcons, Air Superiority, Game Designers' Workshop
    - The Hunt For Red October, TSR, Inc.
    - Seventh Fleet, Victory Games, Inc.
    - Sniper Special Forces, TSR, Inc.
    - Test of Arms, First Battle, Game Designers' Workshop
12. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Boardgame, 1988
    - Assault on Hoth, West End Games, Inc.
    - Buck Rodgers Battle for the 21st Century Game, TSR, Inc.
    - Dragonlance, TSR, Inc.
    - Mertwig's Maze, TSR, Inc.
    - Sky Galleons of Mars, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
13. Best Graphic Presentation of a Boardgame, 1988
    - Assault on Hoth, West End Games, Inc.
    - Blood Bowl, Games Workshop, Inc.
    - Buck Rodgers Battle for the 21st Century Game, TSR, Inc.
    - Dragonlance, TSR, Inc.
    - Sky Galleons of Mars, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
    - Continental Reils, Graaf Simulations
    - Feudal Lords, Graaf Simulations/Flying Buffalo, Inc.
    - Heroes of the lance, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
    - Neuromancer, Interplay Productions
    - Pool of Radiance, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
15. Best Military or Strategy Computer Game, 1988
    - Battlehawks 1942, Lucas Films
    - Battles of Napoleon, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
    - Decisive Battles of the American Civil War, Volumes 2 & 3, Strategic Studies Group, LTD
    - F-19 Stealth Fighter, Microprose, Software, Inc.
    - Red Storm Rising, Microprose, Software, Inc.
    - Universal Military Simulator, Firebird
    - Battlehawks 1942, Lucas Films
    - BattleTech, Infocom
    - F-19 Stealth Fighter, Microprose, Software, Inc.
    - Heroes of the lance, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
    - Pool of Radiance, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
17. Best Professional Adventure Gaming Magazine, 1988
    - Challenge, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
    - Dungeon Magazine, TSR, Inc.
    - Gateway's Jaf Publications
    - Polyhedron, TSR, Inc.
    - ETO, Bill Stone
    - Midwest Wargamer's Association Newsletter, Hal Thingburn
    - Savage & Soldier, Lynn Bodin
    - Sorcerer's Scroll, Tony Berquist
    - Volunteers, The Newsletter of Civil War Gaming

Signature:
Address:

These are the final nominees for the Origins Awards for 1988. Vote for only one nominee per category by checking or marking the line proceeding your choice. Fill in your address and sign your ballot. Mail the completed ballot to: Origins Awards, 150-55th ST., Oakland, CA 94608.

The deadline for return of the ballot is June 10, 1989. Ballots postmarked after the deadline will not be counted. The Origins Awards will be presented at Origins '89 in Los Angeles, June 28-July 2, 1989. The awards ceremony will be Saturday, July 1st at 8pm. Members of the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design will receive a final ballot in the mail. If you have any questions concerning the ballot or the Academy, please write: Origins Awards, 150-55th ST., Oakland, CA 94608.