GUNG HO!
The 9th ASL Module
Also: B-17, Queen of the Skies
AvalonCon ’92 Report
Republic of Rome
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COLUMNS
August 7, 1942:

It is scarcely two months since the American victory at Midway, and "Operation Watchtower" begins with the landing of the United States’ First Marine Division to seize the newly-constructed Japanese airstrip on the island of Guadalcanal. Upon its capture, the airfield was re-named "Henderson Field", and its flyers would win fame as the "Cactus Air Force".

But the Japanese command at Rabaul was not about to accept the American presence on Guadalcanal, and responded with a vigorous retaliatory strategy. The weeks to come would see the first full-on clash of arms between the great land, air and naval forces vying for domination of the eastern hemisphere.

The outcome of that struggle will determine the future course of the war in the Pacific, but this time there is a difference; this time you are in command!

On the Battleboard, Japanese "Val" dive-bombers and "Kate" torpedo-bombers go in to attack the American aircraft carriers.

On the Allied Search Board, your Allied Task Force has incomplete information about two possible sightings. Which is the real Japanese Task Force? A wrong guess could send your air strike on a wild goose chase and leave you open to enemy attack.

The American History Series

Since 1958, The Avalon Hill Game Company has been producing strategy games for adults. Although we publish over 200 titles, the company is probably best known for its fine line of historical strategy games. Over the years, the popularity of these games, rising from their ability to take history from books and bring it vividly to life has brought about the formation of an entire hobby — “Wargaming”. Although very popular with hobbyists, these types of games are known to others only for their often esoteric subjects, long playing times and lengthy and detailed rulebooks.

The purpose of the American History Series, approved and authenticated by the Smithsonian Institution, is to introduce newcomers to this fascinating hobby through strategy games which are smaller, simpler, faster-paced and yet still challenging, and which cover well-known episodes in United States' history. In addition to a colorful mapboard and playing pieces, each title in the series contains a short (two-page) "Basic Game" to allow non-hobbyists to quickly master the game system. A lengthy "Battle Manual" in each game provides a detailed, illustrated account of the historical action, plus additional rules for those players wishing a more detailed and complex version of the game.
Greetings, and welcome to this second issue for the 28th Volume Year of The GENERAL. Rex Martin has been writing this column so well for so long that it will no doubt seem strange to hear another voice coming from this soapbox. It will be no less strange to me, I assure you.

First, to all those fellow hobbyists whom I've had the good fortune to know for years as friends or only for an afternoon as opponents in a tournament, my sincere thanks for all that I have learned and the thousands of hours of entertainment we've enjoyed together. I'll try not to disappoint you. To those of you whose acquaintance I have not yet had the pleasure to make, the following is a brief run-down on my background in gaming before coming to the editorship of this magazine.

When I was sixteen I bought my very first wargame; PANZERBLITZ. (Well; not counting the old Dogfight game from Milton Bradley's American Heritage Series.) I've always been visually oriented, and the box art for PANZERBLITZ was and remains one of the best graphics ever put on a wargame. Besides, "The World At War" had just made it across the pond to American television, and I'd been building the old Bandai plastic kits of German AFV's like there was no tomorrow (sadly for those kits, that turned out to be true).

It took me three days to sort out the concepts presented in those rules, but I did finally learn PANZERBLITZ, and played it until the counters wore out, and couldn't wait for more. I have an uncle who was a Civil War buff at the time, so in a crafty attempt to recruit him as an opponent, my next purchase was GETTYSBURG (1964 edition, with a "friendly" square grid perfect for seducing folks who thought those funny little hexagons looked weird). I was on a roll. I'd figured out how to play PANZERBLITZ; now I could try this one.

I spent the next three days trying to figure out what the heck a "Zone of Control" was. Well, I finally did figure it out; but imagine my surprise at learning that, not only was there a huge number of wargames out there (this was 1974, and yes, three dozen or so titles from a handful of publishers combined was, indeed, "huge"), but that almost all of them used those "Zone of Control" thingies! The next shock was one which I'm pretty sure most of you have shared: There were all these terrific games out there, and nobody I knew cared!

In 1974 I moved to California, and my whole life changed. Part of that change came when, after class, I asked two new friends: "So; are you guys into wargames?" (It was the Seventies; we said things like "into" a lot.) The first guy said "No", but good old Kevin McCormack jumped up off the stage (we were theatre students) with a "Yeah, 'sure am; we play on a sand table!" Huh?

So, in addition to being ushered (read: "thrown bodily") into miniatures gaming, I found myself in weekly marathons of AFRIKA KORPS. But I wasn't complaining. Anyway, through Kevin I met John, Ed and George Kettler, the three brothers who owned the sand table — and who, incidentally, have forgotten more about military history than most people ever learn. The Kettlers introduced me to Jim Murphy, who introduced me to... well, you know how it goes. At this point, your stories and mine are probably pretty much the same.

And that's basically the pattern my experience with gaming has followed; I've sort of come into this hobby and this industry through the back door. From an interest in comics I got into graphic arts; as a graphic artist I worked in financial printing for a while, then went on to do maps for several science fiction novels and anthologies; from doing maps I was invited to write for those anthologies; along with writing for those anthologies I put together a couple of expansion kits for various game companies (one of which, for UP FRONT, was actually published), which brought me into professional contact with Don Greenwood.

Then, last summer, my wife's company offered her a promotion and transfer to the East Coast; as a free-lance writer, I can live anywhere, and this was a position she'd been working toward for five years. The same day we decided that my wife would accept her transfer, I received in the mail Volume 27, Issue Number 2 of The GENERAL with its announcement that Avalon Hill was looking for a new editor. Maybe not fate, but certainly synchronicity.

Since Spring, I've been slowly but surely learning the ropes of producing The GENERAL here at the Hill. Maybe not all that surely, but for sure pretty slowly. I've asked Rex Martin and Don Greenwood some questions that would have brought tears to the eyes of less patient men, although they're both far too gracious to admit it.

One of my prime concerns has been what I would talk about in this first column. My new colleagues have suggested that, after introducing myself, the readership might want to know what my personal tastes are regarding the hobby in general, and what new directions I plan for this magazine, if any; fair enough.

As to my tastes, I like just about everything. The only games that don't much interest me are sports games, because frankly, I'd rather play baseball or football than watch them on television or game them on a board (although I very much enjoy WIN, PLACE & SHOW, because the real strategy in the game lies in the betting, not the racing). My game shelves at home contain almost an embarass de richesse of titles, roughly 90% of which have actually been opened, punched out and played. The shelves are sorted by genre or by historical period, by theatre, subject and scale, and there are a lot of shelves.

In fact, there are very few subjects with games on them which do not interest me, although I admit a preference for grand strategy and small unit tactics. The in-between operational-level stuff tends not to hold my interest, mainly because such conflicts are historically forgone conclusions. If, for instance, the Germans' Ardennes Offensive had succeeded, does anyone seriously believe the Allies would have withdrawn their demand for an unconditional surrender? In fact, the end of the war would simply have been delayed, with the Soviets having occupied that much more of western Germany. An interesting proposition to be sure, but outside the scope of games on the Battle of the Bulge, thus out of my control as a player of those games, and so not really of interest to me.

My prejudices? I could lie and say "None", but I am not about to insult the intelligence of people smart enough to be in this hobby. My greatest aggravation remains the willless elitism of small but vocal factions of the gaming hobby who, rather than getting more people from outside the hobby to join in the overall fun, prefer to rail against everybody else who's not playing their favorite type of game, as if those people with gaming interests different from their own are drawing off resources which could be better spent on their particular pet interest.

Whatever my personal favorite game may be, my opinion on the relative value of types of games is this: No one group in our hobby has a corner on the "best game", and thus nobody has a right to look down on other gamers because they don't play "real games".

In fact, the very phrase "real game" is a contradiction in terms. This is a hobby, folks.
FLASHPOINT: GOLAN

The Middle East is home to some of the largest, most heavily-armed and politically influential military forces on the planet. It is also a seething mass of national, religious and ethnic animosities that have repeatedly set the nations that control those armed forces on collision courses. These factors make the region a likely site for military conflicts in the near future; military conflicts which can erupt with little or no warning, perhaps dragging allied nations into the conflict with them on a scale of cascading aggression not seen since the beginning of the First World War; in threat analysis terms, a "flashpoint".

FLASHPOINT: GOLAN allows you to simulate the course of the most likely of these hypothetical conflicts: A Fifth Arab-Israeli War in the area bounded by the strategic Golan Heights and the Jordan River Valley on Israel's northern and eastern borders. The parameters of the conflict are determined by a Scenario Generation System in a random yet logical fashion. Victory conditions, definition of the aggressor in a given conflict, the support of allied nations, the actions of the United Nations and the likelihood of superpower intervention are all variable from game to game. This system provides FLASHPOINT: GOLAN with a tremendous replay value, since a scenario will rarely start under the same conditions from one playing to the next.

Five Battle Scenarios (playable in one to three hours) serve as an introduction to the game system, while two conventional, set-piece Campaign Scenarios lay out the parameters of major conflicts between Israel, Syria and Jordan.

The Game System

FLASHPOINT: GOLAN features an interactive system of play whereby enemy moves can be detected and reacted to immediately with artillery, helicopters, air strikes, tactical ballistic missiles or electronic jamming. The projection of long-range firepower deep into the enemy's rear areas is the key to victory, pinning and disorganizing his forces before they can come into direct contact with friendly troops. Headquarters play a crucial role by providing vital combat support and logistical assets to the front-line combat units. The importance of retaining the initiative is represented by the concept of Momentum, which shows how an aggressively prosecuted offensive increasingly disrupts the enemy's plans, and therefore accelerates the relative tempo of friendly operations.

FLASHPOINT: GOLAN is now available for $35.00 from your favorite game store or from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). If ordering direct, please add $5.00 to cover shipping and handling ($10.00 for Canadian and Mexican orders; $15.00 overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.
A combat photographer was with L Company one morning on Okinawa after all the units had fought their way through some heavily contested terrain. We had taken a pillbox made of reinforced concrete, and in order to destroy it we decided to use four satchel charges of TNT, a total of ninety-six pounds. We tied primer cord around all the charges so they would all go off simultaneously. The combat photographer was standing up and pointing his camera in the direction of the pillbox when I gave to order to take cover. He did not take cover because he wanted to make sure he got a good picture; he got more than he expected.

The TNT charges went off with a loud crash, knocking the photographer down and sending his camera flying up into the air. It landed near him, and he moaned, "Oh, no. I guess my camera is broken." But he was wrong; not only was the camera not broken, but it had kept taking pictures while it was up in the air.

Later, those same pictures were used in Marine Corps training films. I am told by young Marines training today that they are still being used. (My son, who served in the Marine Corps from 1959-1963, was the first to tell me; the pillbox, incidentally, was completely destroyed.)

On the dark, rainy night of May 9, 1945, my squad and some other Marines at Battalion Headquarters were in an Okinawan burial tomb. Today one would not think that anyone would sleep in a burial tomb after removing the dead; but when it is raining, one will try to sleep in a dry place, no matter where.

We were talking and laughing at some kind of jokes. The Japanese were firing a 150mm gun and the shells were exploding nearby. One Marine had put a candle in a human skull, and as a shell exploded, it would shake the walls and floor of the tomb; the candle in the skull would flicker and it looked like the eye sockets in the skull were moving.

We all knew that death was everywhere around us. Lieutenant Ellington came to the door of the tomb and said, "Ison, get up early in the morning and take your squad up on the line. Captain Smith has a job for you."

Early the next morning, May 10, 1945, we had a cold breakfast of C-rations and went to the ammunition dump to get our satchel charges of TNT, one per man. When we got to the ammo dump, I told the sergeant in charge of the ammunition dump, I just ran down the hill to where my three men were and said, "Come on, fellows, we have to go back to the ammo dump and get our TNT." Again we had to cross Death Valley. We were very angry about this deal, thinking what we were going to say to that sergeant at the dump. But when we got there another NCO was in charge, so being in a hurry to do our job, we just grabbed our satchel charges and headed off to again cross Death Valley.

How we made it, I will never know. All of this was accomplished under intense enemy fire, and reports showed that we suffered one hundred and twenty five casualties in one 8-hour period.

Today I am retired and living out the Autumn of my life in Fort Myers, Florida. I am a member of the Marine Corps League, Lee County Detachment, the Marine Corps Historical Foundation, a life member of the Sea Bee Veterans of America (Island X-8), and an active member of the American Historical Foundation. I am also a World War II historian and do a little writing for our Marine Corps League News Magazine, Lee County.

I hope you have enjoyed reading my story as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

Semper Fidelis,
Paul E. Ison
SEMPER FI!
The United States Marine Corps in ASL
By Steven C. Swann

It sounded so easy. Just go to my local library, look up the Table of Organization (T/O) for a US Marine Rifle Company during World War II, and convert that into ASL equivalents. After performing this chore many times in the past for my previous articles, I believed that it would be a fairly routine assignment. I don't know what I was thinking of... Just like Boot Camp, it turned out to be anything but "easy".

First problem: The US Marine Corps (hereafter, "USMC" or "the Corps") changed the T/O of its divisions every year from 1942 through 1945. To varying degrees, each such change affected every level of the unit - right down to the rifle company. Second: During 1942 and 1943 the Marines had one standard Line Rifle Company OB, two types of Raider (Commando) Rifle Companies and a Marine Parachute Rifle Company. Even with all of this variation, there were also special companies composed of elements of pre-war Marine Defense Battalions and Scout-Sniper units and organized in the field for specific tasks. All this meant that I had to research nine different types of infantry companies and convert all of them into ASL counters to adequately reflect the USMC.

It should be mentioned that the information I gathered about the US Marines has been (or will be) presented in two different articles. This article, Semper Fi!, will concern itself only with the standard Marine Divisions (MarDivs) that were established from 1942 to 1945. Beginning in the 1930s and continuing throughout the war, the Marine Corps experimented with several different types of rifle companies. The T/Os described in this article will include only company organizations that actually saw combat service during World War II. These would include the standard rifle and heavy weapons companies, and the 1945 assault platoon. ("First to Fight!" will be published in the 1993 ASL Annual and will cover the Defense Battalions and other special Marine units.)

FIREPOWER
The ASL system does not use a SMC to represent every officer and senior NCO that is listed in a T/O. If so, there would be a large number of SMC cluttering up our cardboard battlefields. Instead, the SMC that are shown on a scenario's "Order of Battle" (OB) represent the extraordinary officers and NCOs that appear on the battlefield and who perform above and beyond the normal call of duty. The training that every Marine rifleman received upon induction always included the basics of military leadership. American Marines were taught, and expected, to take command in any situation where they found themselves to be the senior man present. Because of the high proportion of officer casualties that occurred in the Pacific war, it was not at all unusual to find platoons led by corporals and companies led by sergeants. To reflect this leadership ability by all ranks of the Corps, the Leadership Generation Number (LG#) for the Marines has been set at "4.5", a considerable improvement over the usual American value. Therefore, the ASL leaders shown on the Marine OBs are representative of exceptional leaders and not of numerical quantity.

There are many men in any military organization or unit who are not front-line combat personnel. Even on a company level, there are some whose jobs do not normally require their presence on the firing line (except under unusual and dire circumstances). Except by SSR, all enlisted personnel of a unit will not be represented by MMC. Personnel that will not be shown in counter form would include the clerks, supply and maintenance personnel, vehicle drivers (inherent in vehicle counter), stretcher bearers and medical corpsmen, company and platoon communication runners, and US Navy personnel. After 1942, all Marine rifle squads are represented by 6-6-8 and 7-6-8 squad counters, while Marine support troops (who were not issued BARs) will be represented by a 4-5-8 squad MMC and respective half-squad counters.

Squad firepower for the Marines was a thorny problem for the ASL design team. In 1942, a USMC rifle platoon had four squads, of which three were nine-man rifle squads and the fourth an eight-man BAR squad. The rifle squads were equipped with one BAR and eight M1903 bolt-action rifles. Equating this to the ASL standard that had already been developed
The Jungle. Surf is NA, and there is a Mild Breeze from the NW. Now a new way of war doesn't look all that complicated now. Mines can be placed only in shallow water, allows a survival DR for all its PRC. The third LCVP is obviously handling our Infantry Division on the morning of 8.

But, that's all the time I've got for this today. The Marines are pushing into the jungle in force now, making for the hill that is their objective, and I need to get moving over to the shore. Hey, Gunny, wait for me!
MacArthur wanted Marines for assault troops because he knew that they could carry the day. The Chinese troops were told by their superiors not to fight the “Yellow Legs” (Marines) because they would not retreat, and it would cost too many troops in relation to the position gained. The Marines were eventually ordered to stop wearing their leggings in order to prevent the Chinese regulars from knowing whether they were fighting the Army or the Marines. Of all Allied POWs during Korea, the Marines surrendered least and broke under brainwashing least of any of the United Nations’ troops.

The Marines have always prided themselves on their self-reliance and fighting ability. Due to the tremendous manpower needs during mobilization following the Pearl Harbor attack, the draft was instituted in December 1941. Many amateur historians might claim that, since the Marines were using the draft, troop quality would surely be the same as that of the US Army. But this line of reasoning turns out to be in error. The Marine Commandant of the time, Lt-General T. Holcomb, assigned liaison officers to all State Governors’ offices and drafted boards to defer all draftees who indicated a preference for the Marines and hold them until Marine training camps could take them. The rest of the story can be best summed up by a direct quote from the History of Marine Corps Operations in World War II (Vol. 2, page 35):

...This program, which was quite successful, resulted in the seeming paradox that most of the draftees in Marine uniforms were still volunteers, in fact if not in name. The intangible but clearly evident atmosphere of a volunteer outfit was retained by the Marine Corps throughout the war. This spirit was especially evident in the units of the Corps’ striking arm — the Fleet Marine Force — where officers and men alike were intolerant of anyone attempting to get by with a marginal performance. The prevailing attitude was that every man had to be a Marine and not complaints were expected when the going got a little rough.

One other attitude prevailing in the Pacific theater was not in evidence in the European theater among the Americans. In the Pacific, America was fighting the Japanese, a people that had attacked Pearl Harbor without warning and without a declaration of war. Most Americans were so outraged that they flocked to join the military services so that they could fight the Japanese. The war in Europe had not touched the lives of the majority of Americans on the emotional level as yet. Thus the Pacific war was a more “personal” war to many Americans at home, while the European war was a distant fight involving a different people. The difference in attitude had a large effect on the determination and mental willingness of a Marine to face combat.

Last, the question of play balance must be considered. Look at the way the Japanese are considered. Of bushido, of fighting and dying even when victory was impossible. The USMC and the Japanese regulars went head-to-head on the beaches and coastal areas many times. While the Army fought its war of fire-and-manuever, this option was not available for most Marine commanders. As amphibious troops, the Marines were expected to take their objectives — usually by direct frontal assaults against an opponent who would fight until the end without mercy expected or given. For this type of simulation, some equalizer was needed to reflect the intensity of the fighting that occurred between these two opposing forces, even on the tactical level. Too, the tendency to ramp up the amphibious assault rules — where the attackers have nowhere to fall back to and rally — necessitated a higher-than-usual morale level.

The morale level of “8” is a justifiable value for the Marines, who were the elite amphibious assault troops of the US forces in the Pacific and whose elan became legendary. Emphasis must be placed on the difference in theory of attack between the Marines and the US Army. The training of the Marines stressed that objectives were to be taken as quickly as possible (the longer the fight dragged on, the longer the fleet had to sit vulnerable off shore), while the US Army’s approach was much more methodical, with much stress put upon taking as few casualties as possible while securing the objective. This is not just an ex-Marine’s view; even the Army’s General MacArthur wanted to retain the Marines for leading his amphibious assaults in the SW Pacific, and in fact kept the 1st and 3rd MarDivs under his direct command as long as he could.

EXPERIENCE

Here again, Bob McNamara was forced to diverge from the existing charts for the Americans as given in the ASL Rulebook. Chapter H (H1.28) provides a chart with ELR guidelines for American forces that is incorrect for the Marine units in the Pacific Theater. The Marines have always considered themselves a breed apart from the other armed forces of the United States. Marines, for the most part, have been volunteers. The men who have answered their country’s call by enlisting in the Marines have a high esprit de corps, one that is raised even higher by the training that they receive.

For many years prior to World War II, individual Marines had been gaining combat experience in the so-called “bandit wars” of Central America. After Guadalcanal, the Corps took the tactical lessons learned there and in Central America and modified the training of all regiments. Some lessons were brought home from the Makin Raid by the 2nd Raider Battalion. Still more insights and new procedures for amphibious operations were learned from the invasion of Attu Island (Alaska) by the 7th Infantry Division, US Army. With the new training and equipment developed through hard experience, the ELR is and should be “5” for all Marine units. The only time the ELR might be lowered would be in a scenario where the American unit is heavily depleted, to represent a very desperate situation, or for the early Marine actions in the Philippines or the Wake Island defense during December 1941.
OFFBOARD ARTILLERY
The selection of OBA values for ASL was made easier by using the Divisional Equipment charts provided. The values offered below are for OBA that is provided by Marine parent units. Other forms of OBA may be provided by US Navy destroyers, cruisers and battleships. Divisional and Naval OBA would always enjoy "Plentiful Ammo" conditions (except for SSR). An exception might be at Guadalcanal, where the Marines were left unsupported on the island by the withdrawal of the Navy before all supplies were offloaded. At Guadalcanal, any US OBA (except mortar) should be shown as having "Scarcely Ammo" until November 1942. During the first two years of the war, the Navy's pre-invasion bombardments left a lot to be desired in accuracy; therefore for the years 1942 and 1943 the placement of United States Naval OBA should require an accuracy of "1" or to be on target (G14.64). The use of Naval Battleship and Heavy Cruiser OBA should also be restricted to scenarios that allow the Japanese an overwhelming number of squadrons. HE FFPs of 350mm (14") and 400mm (16") give a very high KIA value and are just too easy to abuse. Battalion and Regimental OBA could be affected by Scarce Ammo conditions and should be determined by studying the historical references for the scenario in question, while still conforming to all OBA rules as given in Chapter C.
Artillery support provided by parent units of Marine companies was slightly different from that of the US Army, but does not seem skewed by the ASL rules. As an aid to any scenario designer among the readership, two charts are offered giving the level of artillery support from Marine resources and Navy resources afloat. Readers will note that naval guns are usually given in inches while ASL OBA is always designated in millimeters (mm). The naval chart below provides both measurements, as well as the primary type that could be expected from each ship type present.

Marine OBA Chart:
Type Level Year
60mm MTR Company 42-43
81mm MTR Battalion 42-43
75mm ART Regiment 42-44
75mm ART Division 42-44
105mm ART Regiment 1943
105mm ART Division 42-43
155mm ART Division 1943
155mm ART Corps 43-45

Naval OBA Chart:
Navel Type ASL Type Ship Type
5" Guns 127mm ART Destroyer
8" Guns 203mm ART Light Cruiser
14" Guns 355mm ART Heavy Cruiser
16" Guns 406mm ART Battleship

A BRIEF HISTORY
At the time of the American entry into World War II, the US Marines had already begun expanding and reorganizing their divisions based on the triangular concept. This system was based on the fact that all sub-units of a parent unit would be grouped in threes. In other words, a division had three regiments of three battalions, of three companies, of three platoons each. In 1942 this was the form in all USMC formations except the light tank battalions of Marine divisions. (The light tank battalion had four companies of M3s.)

Unlike the US Army, which had small (approximately 15,000 men) and separate infantry and armored divisions, the Corps had true "combined arms divisions" from the very start. Each Marine division was equipped with enough artillery, tanks, support and transport units to insure that each regiment could have its own attachment of each in any combat situation. The regiments without such attachments were termed "Regimental Landing Teams" (RLTs) and were numbered according to the infantry regiment number. An example would be the 5th Regimental Landing Team, consisting of the following units: 5th Marines (Inf), one company of tanks, one battalion of artillery, one company each of pioneers, engineers, transport and supply. Each RLT would also receive its own medical unit to handle casualties. In general, each Marine regiment in an assault could bring any and all types of units with it that were required for it to fulfill its mission.

In December 1941, only two Marine formations would see any combat. In the Philippines and at Corregidor, the 4th Marine Regiment fought the Japanese until ordered to surrender in May 1942 (ASL Scenario #68). On Wake Island, the 1st Marine Defense Battalion withstood the initial Japanese invasion attempt, but eventually had to give way before the overwhelmingly strong Japanese reinforcements. In the absence of a 1941 T/O, the D-Series 1942 T/O should be used for any scenarios concerning these two actions.

At the beginning of 1942 the Corps had only two divisions available for combat: the 1st and 2nd Marine Divisions. As the fighting progressed, the number of divisions gradually increased to six full combat divisions (with supporting elements) by the war's end. During August 1942, the 1st Marine Division landed at Guadalcanal and fought the Japanese to a standstill in a series of "battles of attrition". In November, the 2nd Marine Division and elements of the US Army arrived at Guadalcanal to relieve the depleted 1st MarDiv, which had spent the last four months fighting alone against the Japanese.

For the first few months of 1943, the Marine divisions were unable to assist the American advance in the Solomons Island group. The 1st MarDiv was still in Australia and New Zealand undergoing re-organization, retraining and refitting with new equipment. The 2nd MarDiv was deeply involved with preparations for the Gilbert Islands campaign, where it was to make the Tarawa assault. The 3rd MarDiv was still in the States finishing its training and formation. The burden of combat in the Central Solomons campaign of 1943 fell on the ParaMarines, Marine Raider Battalions and the Marine Defense Battalions. This campaign included battles for the islands of New Georgia, Vangunu, Rendova, Vella Lavella and Kolombangara.

In November 1943, the new 3rd MarDiv and the Marine Raiders were committed to action in the Northern Solomons campaign, beginning with the invasion of Bougainville (scenarios #67 and #73). ParaMarines were moved north and landed on Choiseul Island for a week-long raid as a diversion for the Bougainville operation. Meanwhile, the 2nd Marine Division took part in the bloody invasion of Tarawa (20 November) in the Central Pacific drive through the Gilbert Islands, in the process proving the worth of the new LVTs. Tarawa was the bloodiest combat action for American forces to date, where the 2nd MarDiv averaged 1,000 casualties per day during the three-day assault. The 1st MarDiv, after spending some months recuperating and replacing men lost due to combat and tropical diseases, assaulted the island of New Britain on 26 December, 1943, applying direct pressure on the huge Japanese naval and air base at Rabaul.

The year 1944 was an active one for the Marine divisions, who were all involved in the Central Pacific campaign. On 1 February, 1944, the 4th MarDiv landed at Roi-Namur and secured the islands in two days. On the 18th, the reinforced 22nd Marines began securing the islands of Engebi, Eniwetok and Parry. The fourth Marine Regiment (former Raiders) seized Emirau Island in the Bismarks on 20 March, 1944. Saipan was invaded by the 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions in June. On 21 July, Guam was retaken by the 3rd MarDiv (Scenario #74) and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade (ProMarBrg). The 4th MarDiv landed on Tinian (July 24) in the Marianas. Meanwhile, the 1st Marine Division invaded Peleliu in September of 1944 (Scenario #72) in preparation for the Army's invasion of the Philippines.

In 1945 there were two major Marine campaigns. The 4th and 5th Marine Divisions stormed the black sands of Iwo Jima on 19 February 1945. By the 25th the level of fighting on Iwo Jima was so intense that the 3rd MarDiv was committed. Iwo Jima ... Mount Surabachi ... names that carry an immense amount of emotion for Marines from that day to the present. Here on the sides of a volcanic mountain a Marine company started its trek up the mountainside. Hours later, six Marines and one Navy corpsman survived to place a small American flag on a bent piece of pipe and raise it on the mountaintop so that all those fighting below could see it. A later re-enactment of this flag-raising for the photographers would inspire a monument to those brave Marines that is still visited by thousands each year. The Marine's assault on Iwo Jima prompted the admiral commanding the Navy's fleet to write of the action: "uncommon valor was a common virtue".

The 1st, 2nd and 6th Marine divisions (together, the 3rd Amphibious Corps) invaded Okinawa on 1 April 1945. Here on a "home" island of Japan itself, three Marine divisions and three Army divisions (the 24th Corps) fought a three-month battle that would prove to be the most costly campaign of the war for America. By July 1945, the official end of the Okinawan campaign, American losses were 12,000 dead and 37,000 wounded (against an estimated 110,000 Japanese casualties). Prior to the Okinawan invasion, the two senior regimental elements of the 6th Division (4th & 22nd Marines) had been designated as the 1st ProvMarBrg and had taken part in the Guam
assault. Both Okinawa and Iwo Jima were part of the original Japanese empire at the beginning of the war, and the capture of these islands showed the world that the US Marines had brought the war home to Imperial Japan. The end was near.

This summary account of the USMC’s experience in the Pacific touches only upon the major campaigns. Obviously, there are many actions involving the Corps that can now be gamed. The five scenarios featuring the Marines that are part of GUNG HO! barely touch upon the many unique and bloody battles in which they were involved. The PTO now offers fertile ground for ASL scenario designers.

ORGANIZATION

1942 D-Series (Table 1)

At the time of the invasion of Guadalcanal the Marines were organized under the D-100 Series Table of Organization (T/O). The D-Series Table was officially adopted on 1 July 1942. In this scheme a Marine division was composed of 19,514 men divided into a special troops regiment of 3,031 men (which included the tank battalion of four companies of light tanks), a service troop regiment of 1,946 men, an engineer regiment of 2,452 men, an artillery regiment of 2,581 men and three infantry regiments of 3,168 men each. A Marine infantry regiment had its own H&S company, a heavy-weapons company and three infantry battalions. Each battalion had its HQ company, a weapons company and three infantry battalions. A rifle company included the company HQ section, a BAR squad, and three rifle squads. As explained above, each rifle squad at this time had one BAR, a submachine gun, and six riflemen and a rifle-grenadier. The BAR squad was armed with two BARs, a submachine gun and five rifles.

A normal 1942 series Marine rifle company, using ASL definitions, would be composed of three platoons, each of which would include three 4-5-8 rifle squads, a 5-5-8 BAR squad and a 2-3-8 HQ HS. The company HQ should be represented by one 4-5-8 squad and, using an LG# of 4.5, four SMC (9-1, 8-1 and two 8-0s). Each company had a weapons platoon with a mortar section and a MG section. The mortar section would have two 60mm MTRs and two 2-3-8 HS, while the MG section would be composed of two HS and two MMGs. The weapons platoon HQ could be represented by a 4-5-8 MMC. For combat, the entire weapons platoon would come under the direction of the company CO.

At the beginning of the Guadalcanal campaign, there were a few Vickers LMG (left over from WWI) still being carried about by some Marines. For DYO scenarios that take place between August 7th and November 30th 1942 on Guadalcanal, you might add one British LMG to each Marine infantry company.

Looking at the D-Series T/O, one can see that the weapons company T/O calls for three 20mm guns and one 20mm AA gun counter — but it really doesn’t matter since these 20mm guns did not see combat with the Marines in the PTO (except possibly with certain Philippine militia units in 1941). By August the Marine Divisions had already upgraded to the 37mm AT Gun for the invasion of Guadalcanal.

Any scenarios representing the defense of the Philippines (the original 4th Marine Regiment)
or the first four months of the Guadalcanal Campaign should use the 1942 Marine T/O&E. Armor support available to Marine units under the D-Series organization would include all variants of the M2A4 and M3 light tanks (except the M3A1 Satan).

1943 E-Series (Table 2)

The E-Series T/O was authorized on 15 April 1943. Some of the changes that were instituted by this divisional re-structuring saw the light tank battalion reduced to three tank companies, and the artillery regiment increased by the addition of one 105mm howitzer battalion. Marine parachute battalions were removed from divisional command and became Corps-level units. Under this series, flamethrowers were used by engineer units only, with one company of engineers assigned to each RLT.

The 1943 division had a total manpower of 19,965 men, a 459-man increase over the 1942 D-Series. The special troops regiment (which included the MPs, AA units, and Light Tanks) had 2517 men. The service troop regiment (including Motor Transport, Medical, and the Amphibious Tractor unit) totaled 2,200 men. The engineer regiment of 2,513 men included the Navy "SeaBees" and Marine Pioneer and Engineer battalions. The artillery regiment was increased to 213 men by the inclusion of another Navy medical unit (amphibious assault units proving to be casualty-intensive). The Company HQ section was decreased in size, while the HQ section of the Weapons company was increased. The 81mm mortar platoon had a decrease in personnel without a decrease in the number of mortars. The rifle company weapons platoon was increased by one medium machinegun and one 60mm mortar, now totaling three of each weapon. Each rifle platoon lost the BAR squad, but each rifle squad was increased to 12 Marines and two BARs each.

In ASL terms, the T/Os which came after 1942 are much easier to organize and represent. The company HQ would include a BAZ '43 after October 1943. The increase in the weapons platoon just means adding another MMG and 60mm mortar with their respective half-squads. With the reorganization of the Marine squads, each rifle platoon now numbers three squads; and we can use the 6-6-8 counters for the normal Marine rifle squad universally. The battalion weapons company loses its AT Gun platoon to its parent regiment, a move which gave the weapons company more maneuverability in jungle combat.

The 6-6-8 Marine MMC should be used for all MarDiv combat actions commencing with those involving the 2nd MarDiv in November 1942 at Guadalcanal. These counters will represent Marine units in the Northern Solomons campaign (Bougainville), the Gilberts campaign (Tarawa and Bauriki atolls), the Marshall Islands campaign (Roi Namur, Eniwetok, Parry Island) and the New Britain campaign (Iboki Plantation, Volupai Plantation, and Emirau). E-Series armor support could include all of the M3 and M5 light tank models except the M3A1 Satan, but could even include some of the M4A2 medium tanks which appeared at Tarawa.

1944 F-Series (Table 3)

Even though the F-Series T/O/E was not authorized until May 1944, it was in use in an ad hoc form prior to that month. The Marine F-Series division had a paper manpower of 17,465 men, down about 2,000 from the prior form. The divisional tank battalion took on the numerical name of the parent division (such as the 1st Tank Battalion of the 1st Marine Division). The tank battalions were given the M4A2s, while their scout company was transferred to the headquarters battalion as a recon company. In the divisional artillery complement, the number of 75mm pack howitzers was reduced to two battalions per division. The engineering regiment was reduced to just an engineer battalion and a pioneer battalion. The Navy construction battalions (SeaBees) and amphibious tractor battalions became corps-level troops.

The F-Series infantry regiment had an manpower of 3,218 men. In the HQ company the supply section was increased to platoon size. The 75mm SP (self-propelled) gun platoon of the regimental weapons company was doubled in size to four guns per platoon. All vehicles and flamethrowers were maintained in the H&S Company and issued to the various low-level units as required.

The 1944 infantry battalion saw an overall decrease in personnel with the elimination of the weapons company. The Headquarters company was increased to 213 men by the inclusion...
The use of the 7-6-8 MMC should begin with the Mariana campaign (Saipan, Tinian and Guam). In September 1944, the assault on Negoesbud Island marked the end of the New Britain campaign just as the Marines were hitting the beaches at Peleliu. By the time the F-Series T/O took effect, all armor support except the Scouts was officially designated for the M4 medium tank. The Scout units would still operate the M5 light tanks, and the M3A1 Stuarts finally makes its appearance with the Corps beginning with the Saipan operations.

1945 G-Series (Table 4)

In 1945 the size of the Marine Division was increased to 19,176 officers and men per division. The HQ battalion now included two new units: A war dog platoon of 64 men, 18 scout dogs and 18 messenger dogs; and a rocket platoon of 54 men. The rocket platoon used multiple rocket launchers (rocket OBA) mounted on trucks to provide rapid artillery support. The tank battalions were designated “Medium Tank” battalions and were equipped with M4A2s or M4A3s; each battalion had officially received nine medium flamethrower tanks in their T/O. The artillery regiment was increased in firepower with the addition of a third 105mm howitzer battalion.

The 1945 Marine infantry regiment was composed of a headquarters and service company (H&S with 249 men) and a weapons company (175 men) of one 105mm Howitzer Platoon and two 37mm AT gun platoons at four AT guns per platoon. There were three infantry weapons companies of 966 men each. In the regimental weapons companies, the 75mm SP motor carriages was replaced by the M7 “Priest” self-propelled 105mm howitzers.

Each G-Series Marine infantry battalion now included a new assault (engineer) platoon of 55 men organized into three sections, each with two seven-man engineer squads. These assault units were trained in the use of flamethrowers and demolitions and were allotted as needed to the rifle companies. The rifle companies remained the same, except that each machinegun platoon was increased by two more MMCs (making a total of 14 allowed per company).

In ASL terms, the differences between the 1945 Marine battalion and the 1945 Marine company are slight. The Company HQ section of the Marine company was increased in manpower and results in two 4-5-8 squads being assigned. The HQ company also saw the addition of an assault platoon. The rifle companies were composed of combat engineers with a low number of men per squad (seven), the 4-5-8 squad MMC should be given Assault Engineer capabilities (H1.22) and Assault Fire capabilities in 1945 to serve as dedicated assault squads. You can see on Table 4 that the assault squads were small but were equipped with semi-automatic weapons.

All Marine divisions that took part in the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns were organized under the 1945 G-Series T/O, even though this series was not officially authorized until after the war. The rifle companies now included two MMGs in the machinegun platoons. Again the standard ASL counter mix will not allow battalion-level play without ordering extra squad/weapon counters; the use of 14 MMC per Marine company is not recommended.

The year 1945 marked the final offensive by American ground units in the Pacific with the invasion of Iwo Jima in February and Okinawa in April. For all scenarios dealing with these last two offensives, the G-Series T/O should be consulted for determining the correct supporting elements that could be drawn upon by the typical Marine rifle company. By 1945, the Sherman-based POA-CWS-H1 Flame Tank (US Vehicle Note #21) was available for the Marines, and made its appearance at Iwo Jima along with the normal allotment of the M4 family.

Fitting the Marines into ASL

In all cases, it must be remembered that the full number of counters in an ASL T/O may not actually be used in a PTO scenario. There were always some losses before the beginning of any combat action on the beach or inland. Losses in men and equipment are to be expected during any assault landing occurring under fire. Many landing craft were unarmored and very susceptible to artillery fire while approaching the shore. The coral reefs common in the Pacific could rip out the bottom of the smaller landing craft (LCPs and LCVPs) or cause the craft’s drafthands to wash from the shore. This, of course, increased the number of casualties to the assaulting Marines wading through the surf. Would-be scenario designers are cautioned to carefully study the historical records and accounts before deciding upon the Marine OB in any simulated ground action.

I hope that this information can be put to good use by other ASL players; and especially by hopeful scenario designers. I began this series of “Reference Notes” in response to a query from the then-editor of The GUNG HOI on unit composition. It has been a wonderful learning process for me, and a challenge I do not regret taking up. Never again will I question the historical research that goes into designing well-balanced ASL scenarios.

For my part, with GUNG HO! now available and so many of my comrades designing scenarios for the PTO, I'll just enjoy the vicarious pleasure of pitting the USMC against the best of the rest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5: Standard Marine Rifle Company OB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D-Series</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-1 SMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-1 SMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2x8-0 SMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>10x4-5-8 MMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3x5-5-8 MMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8x2-3-8 HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2xMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2x60mm MTR</td>
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<tr>
<td>LMG*</td>
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* - see article for explanation.

I of the 81mm mortar platoon (76 men), transferred from the former weapons company. The three machinegun platoons from the weapons company were distributed among the three rifle companies, one MG platoon per company. At the same time, the number of machineguns per MG platoon was increased from six to twelve. This gave the Marines the increased firepower needed to resist the Japanese banzai attacks which were becoming common as American forces approached the Japanese homeland. The rifle platoons went from 43 men to 46 men per platoon, with an increase of one man per squad. This one-man increase brought another BAR to each squad (making three BARs) — in ASL terms, this increases the squad FP to "7" and allows Spraying Fire.

Bazookas finally make their way into the formal USMC OB with the F-Series, even though bazookas had first been used by the 2nd Marine Division during its Choiseul Island raid in October 1943. As can be seen on the SW Allotment Chart line for 11/43-3/44, one bazooka was issued per ten squads. Actually, the Marines themselves (including officers and enlisted ranks) were not overly fond of the 1943 bazooka model and were just as likely to "forget" to load it into their landing craft. With the advent of the more reliable and accurate 1944 bazooka, its use became more widespread throughout the Corps.

The major difference between the E-series and the F-series battalion T/O in ASL format is the placement of the units. The HQ company now includes the 81mm mortars and their crews as well as the HQ personnel. You may notice that the MG platoon now has 12 MMC counters and is located in each of the three rifle companies. This means that 36 MMC counters would be needed to fill out an entire battalion T/O. (Compare this to the maximum of 16 MMG/HMG in a Japanese infantry battalion!) The ASL counter mix does not allow this (unless the player wishes to order extra squad/weapon counter sheets), and it is not recommended since giving any nationality that many MMGs would destroy the play-balance of any scenario. Rather, use of the official ASL SW Allotment Chart (G17.151) is recommended except when historical references state that a heavy weapons unit was participating in the combat action being played. The ASL size of the USMC rifle platoons and 60mm Mortar sections remain the same as that of the E-Series.
MORE OLD CHESTNUTS

The Origins ASL Tournament Scenarios, Part II

By Jim Stahler

This is the second installment of a two-part article describing the re-design of four scenarios (see last issue, wherein "The Niscemi-Biscari Highway" and "Devil's Hill" appeared). Jim Stahler updated these SL designs to mate with the ASL system, playtested them, and then used them in his round-robin ASL team tournament at Origins' 91. The four all feature American paratroopers battling the Germans.

THE ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE PEIPER

I did not plan it this way, but each of these four scenarios takes place in a different season (as well as in a different campaign). "Hunters In The Sky" takes place in the early spring; "The Niscemi-Biscari Highway" occurs in the summer; the Americans attempt to take "Devil's Hill" in the fall; and "The Attempt to Relieve Peiper" occurs in the winter, with snow on the ground!

The Battle of the Bulge! Colonel Peiper's famous Kampfgruppe has broken through the American lines but been stopped cold, exhausted its supplies, and is now cut off by fresh troops from the 82nd Airborne Division, who were rushed to reinforce the beleaguered GIs holding the line. In this match, we find troops from the 1st SS Panzer Division trying to break through the thin ranks of paratroopers to reach their comrades.

This scenario didn't turn out as well balanced as I hoped. It seems like there is one "dud" at every tournament, and this one is it. The Germans won 11 games, with the US taking only four. It wasn't so imbalanced as it sounds however, since a lot of the games came down to the wire. I have made a few small changes to help the Americans, playtested the scenario some more, and I believe that this version is an even contest for the readers.

As in all these scenarios, each US paratrooper squad lost a factor as it was updated for ASL, and each German MG gained a factor. Helping the American player somewhat, artillery is much more effective in ASL than it was in SL. It can get more than the old maximum of four missions, and each mission lasts for a complete game turn. In addition, a spotting round is two levels high, making it easier to see. (In SL, spotting rounds always landed out of sight, and it was a rare game in which the artillery actually contributed.) Artillery is the American's most potent weapon in this scenario, as it was in World War II. I also changed the SSR to allow the US to make artillery requests from the start of the game, and I allowed the radio to remain offboard, with its owner secretly recorded. These changes should make up for the reduced firepower of the paratrooper squads.

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To compensate for the increased firepower of the German machineguns, I deleted two of their six LMG, reducing them by six firepower factors. I also removed the German armor leader, and gave the Americans two more foxholes. In the tournament, I allowed US squads to set up in foxholes if they start in suitable terrain. That gave the Americans a total of seven foxholes possible, but it led to strange situations (such as the American player starting a squad on a hilltop just to allow the artillery observer on Hill 621 to be in a foxhole). Now the Americans have four foxholes, but they are not restricted to being set up with a squad.

Another post-tournament change that I have made was to allow the US player to use HIP for one MMC. This adds some extra excitement to the game as well as serves to bring the game to a better balance. The German player must constantly worry about that hidden unit. Needless to say, there are lots of good hiding places throughout the woods.

I kept the number and type of squads the same as in the original, as well as the infantry leaders and the SW - with the exception of reducing the number of German LMG. Of course, the German HMG must start dismantled. The Americans still have ten Concealment counters, and the game is still ten turns long. I gave the Germans the minimal SAN of "2". The Americans are on the defense amid the dense woods, so I gave them a high Sniper number of "5". The paratroopers have their special ELR of "3", of course. The Germans normally have an ELR of "3", but they need a +3 DRM; a hit occurs on a DR of 10, and does some possible damage on a "9". A flank or rear hit is a guaranteed kill, barring a dud. Clearly, the assault guns want very much to avoid the bazookas.

Another factor to consider is the chance of getting that deadly hit. The bazooka has its own To Hit table on the counter. The 1944 bazooka's maximum range is four hexes, but at that range the To Hit number is only "4". The StuH 42s are small targets, and if they are moving then the chance of hitting them is negligible, even if the bazooka is directed by a leader. One hex closer and it becomes a different story. The To Hit number goes up to "7", and it improves by one for each hex of range closer to the target. It goes up way to "11" at range 0, but that is not a likely range in this scenario. Suppose that a StuH 42 makes a dash past an adjacent bazooka in the woods. The To Hit number is "9", with a +3 DRM; a hit occurs on a DR of "6". This is risky play for the German player, but doom is far from guaranteed. Of course, if the StuH 42 comes to a halt, it becomes much more vulnerable. As always in ASL, there are other factors to consider, such as leadership and LOS hindrances. In general, at four hexes there is little to worry about, especially if the vehicle is in motion. Anything closer starts to become dangerous, and moving adjacent to a bazooka should only be done in desperation.

The StuH 42 commander also has to worry about artillery, which can attack the AFV with either an HE concentration or harassing fire. An HE concentration attacks armor on the "20" column of the IFT. None of the DRMs apply. A DR of "3" is needed to eliminate the AFV outright; a "4" or "5" will do some harm, either...
immobilizing or shocking it. An HE concentration is dangerous, but it can be survived more often than not. Note that immobilization is almost as good as a kill in this instance, since an immobilized StuH 42 cannot exit the board and earn victory points.

American harassing fire is a bit less dangerous to the AFV. It attacks on the “6” column. Note that even though it is four columns to the left of the 20 column, the first KIA is only one less than on the 20 column itself. A DR of “2” is required to eliminate the vehicle, but a “5” or “4” does harm it. This is significantly less dangerous than an HE concentration, but it is still to be avoided if possible.

The StuH 42 can, of course, fire back. Suppose that the leader with the radio is in a foxhole on the hilltop. What chance does the StuH 42 have of discouraging that pesky forward observer? The farthest likely range is 19 hexes, say from A6 to Q6. At this range the infantry To Hit number is “5.” If the vehicle is buttoned up, and acquisition cancels out the foxhole TEM, a DR of “4” is needed for a hit. That is not a very good odds, even though a hit would result in a 20FP attack with no TEM. An Area attack ignores the TEM on the To Hit DR. With the AFV buttoned up and the target fully acquired, a “9” is needed to hit. However, the resulting attack is only on the 8-column with a +2 DRM for the foxhole. This is still more effective, overall, than the attack on the infantry target type. If the observer is concealed, as he is at the start of the game, only an Area attack makes any sense.

In this scenario, your tactics begin with the US setup. The premium weapon in this scenario is the American radio. In the previous discussion, I assumed that the leader with the radio is stationed in a foxhole on top of Hill 621. The best spot is Q6. A leader in that hex can see nearly all the board except the far north, which is irrelevant. Of course, the obstacles all over the board create vast numbers of blind hexes. Some interesting hexes that can be seen from Q6 are 5L, 1B and 18 across the clearings in the woods; and C3, B3, B4, A5 and A6 at the southern edge of Board 5; H1, G2, G3, G4 and F3, where some critical fighting is sure to take place.

There are other options for the observer besides being placed on Hill 621, though. Since the owner of the radio is recorded, the 8-0 leader can be placed on the hill to deal German fire, and the real observer can set up HIP (along with a squad now) with LOS to some of the same locations that the 8-0 on the hill can see. Won’t the German player be surprised when the 8-0 breaks and routes away but the FFE still lands?

With that plentiful American ammunition, the US player shouldn’t be shy about drawing an extra card in the attempt to nail German units out of sight. With one black card drawn, there is still a 2/3 chance of drawing another black card and keeping the FFE right where you want it.

The American player must bear in mind that there are four types of FFES that can be called down. The most used is an HE concentration. That is certainly deadly, especially against enemy units in the woods or moving in the open. However, don’t ignore the benefits of harassing fire. This scenario is tailor-made for that option. It affects a much larger area than any concentration (19 hexes rather than seven), and attacks with a respectable six factors. Add to that the air burst DRM of FFMOM/FNAM and it is dangerous enough to cause damage and seriously hinder German movement.

Smoke is normally thought of as protecting the movement of the attacker, but it can be useful in a couple of ways to help the defender in this scenario. For example, suppose that the Germans are face to face with paratroopers across the road running from 2GG6 to T2. If powerful German fire-groups are in ZZ1 or AA1, a likely mid-game situation, a smoke concentration in ZZ1 would be handy. It would disrupt the German fire for two turns, but the road that the Germans must cross remains clear of smoke. If smoke is a good idea, WP is sometimes a better one. Even though the hindrance isn’t quite as much, that initial morale check may break a squad or two. Smoke can also be used to cover a squad’s retreat; and as smoke costs an extra MF to enter, it can slow down the German advance at a critical time.

After the leader with the radio is placed, the next big decision faced by the US player is the composition and location of his HIP force. One possibility is to deploy the squad and hide one of the HS with a bazooka to worry the German armor. This should be somewhere in the rear adjacent to a road that the enemy armor must use. It will be discovered late in the game, if at all, which keeps the enemy wondering where that HIP unit is.

Another ploy is to use HIP for a full squad with the MMG and a leader somewhere in the woods. The hope is that the Germans will blunder into it with some juicy target that can be hit with a punishing 20-factor attack with a “1-1” modifier. I walked into one such a trap in 5L0 and had three SS squads and the 9-2 leader break and run away. Note that this position also covers the road from 2Z1 to ZZ1. These are just a couple of suggestions for the use of your HIP. The point is to be creative and unpredictable.

Look to the SUs. The rest of the US force should be mixed with dummy stacks and be prepared to use a fallback defense. They should start as far forward as possible, but not in locations where they can get cut off. For example, in the first turn the German infantry can move to 515 and advance to I6. This cuts off any units that start in 5E3 or F3. Units in 5C2 or D1 are at risk too. They had better get back to a safer spot on the first turn. If the Germans are about to apply strong firepower on 5F0 and G1, units in 5F1 and G2 had better pull back now or get trapped. Similarly, LOS on hexes 2AA1 and ZO will trap units in 5G1.

Ideally, the Americans can pull back, without sustaining many casualties, to the woods that used to be hill 58 while holding the German player up for about four turns. The paratroopers can defend positions such as 2CC4, AA3, X2 and W2 with lots of fire covering the road, and the threat of bazookas keeping the StuG 42s at bay. This is a good line to fortify with foxholes. However, those foxholes may not be much of an advantage. True, they give a +2 TEM instead of the +1 TEM of woods... but there is a price to pay. In the aforementioned woods hexes units can move deeper into the woods in their movement phase to protect themselves against the German defensive fire, and then advance back into position for the German turn. This doesn’t work if in a foxhole. The unit must expend a MF in its hex to exit the foxhole, at which time it is subject to the very torrent of defensive fire that it was trying to avoid. With all that German firepower, it may be faster to remain outside the foxholes.

If possible, the Americans should have two lines of troops. On the German turn, one line is at the edge of the woods, while the other remains one hex inside the woods after gaining concealment. The Germans must Prep fire at concealed units, who themselves only open fire at units moving in the open. On the US turn, everyone exposed moves into the woods, and the concealed units advance back into position, while the revealed units stay in the rear to gain concealment for the next turn. If it takes the Germans more than two turns to crack this position, their time-table is in severe difficulties.

With the endgame, the Americans must retreat and delay as best they can, and hope for some artilllery to land as the Germans emerge from the woods near their VP exit area. One guiding principle while defending in the woods is to keep at least three hexes away from the Germans. If the Americans are only two hexes away, the Germans can assault move adjacent to the US units, maintain their concealment, and then advance into close combat. If they are three hexes away, the Germans must use non-assault movement to move adjacent to the Americans, and so forfeit their concealment.

It is easy for most players to overlook the anti-infantry role of the bazookas. Since it is too early in the war to fire WP with them, they are limited to HEAT only. And HEAT cannot be used against the Germans in the woods or in the open. However, there are a few places where HEAT can be used. There almost certainly will be Germans in the building in ZZ1 at some point, a prime bazooka target. There is a good chance that a bazooka can fire at 2T1 in the course of the game, and at 2W7 at game’s end.

The US smoke grenades have limited use in this scenario. I wouldn’t expect a US squad to be in a situation where it can use WP. The Americans are not likely to move adjacent to the Germans in this game; and if the Germans start adjacent to a US squad, the Americans will either prep fire or move away too quickly to spend time throwing grenades. Smoke can be useful if the US player finds some of his troops trapped, however. A smoke grenade can give some protection to the retrograde movement and make it a lot easier to exit a foxhole in good order.

Now let us examine the SS options. The German forces have a bunch of advantages in terms of numbers, morale, leadership, range, machineguns and armor support. The high German morale allows them to take risks, and the length of the game allows the Germans to spend a turn or two trading fire with the Americans, applying their superior firepower and leadership.

The Germans must exit 20 victory points. The Germans start off with 18 points worth of squads, seven points from leaders, and 12 points for the armor - for a total of 37 victory points possible. Thus the Germans must exit the majority of their forces. However, don’t forget
that the Germans can take prisoners, who count double for exit purposes.

The German player's greatest headache will likely be the US artillery. There are two ways to deal with this. One is to carefully avoid locations that can be seen from the hilltops. This is not so easy; eventually the German infantry must emerge from the woods to reach the exit area. And harassing fire can be brought down on a hex two away from German units without even drawing an extra battery access card.

The alternative is to find the observer and break him. The two StuH 42s can fire at the artillery observer from the southern edge of the board using either Area Fire or the Infantry Target type. The HMG can fire at the observer with the help of a LMG and the 9-2 leader. From a hex such as S6, this fire group can get a factor attack with 0 DRM while the observer is concealed, and an 8FP (+0) attack once concealed. Most important is to just use the S57 on the first turn: assemble the HMG in the DFPs, and move to S52 or P3 on Turn 2. From there, the squad's inherent firepower can join in the probing attack. Of course, the observer will be "shooting back" with his OBA. It may be safer to abandon the woods for open ground to avoid air bursts. The trick is to dance between the hills and still bring down fire on the observer. If your infantry can't break the observer, perhaps the StuH 42s will.

I like to divide the German infantry into three stacks, plus a couple HS to use as scouts. One stack has the 9-2, HMG, two LMGs and three squads. This engages the artillery observer and then applies its considerable firepower to any enemy squads in sight. A second force has a 9-1, two LMGs and three more squads. This is a powerful force with 24 firepower factors that can make a 12 (+0) attack against a concealed unit in the woods. The third element has the other 9-1 and two squads. The last squad is deployed into two HS that scout ahead and, perhaps, draw some US fire.

A German stack with a leader can get as far as S15 on Turn 1 by entering S110, bypassing S9P, I7 and 16, and ending its MPH in 15. Then it advances to I54, where it cuts off anything in S53 or P3. A HS or two should scout S53, C2 and D1 just to make sure that there are no hidden bazookas that can threaten the assault guns.

The main German tactic in the tournament seemed to be to lull us up to an enemy unit and advance into its LOS with several overpowering stacks. This gives the US the choice of Prep firing with the chance of breaking a German unit but with the near certainty of getting blown away itself, or withdrawing. If the US player is careless, the Germans maneuver to cut off and eliminate enemy units. In this way the Germans work their way through the woods on Board 5, across the road on Board 2, and into the woods that used to be Hill 538. Then they simply march through the woods and off the board.

This route does have the advantage of clearing the road for the StuH 42s. An alternate route goes to the north directly to Hill 621. Units taking this route must deal with the snowy, slippery slopes and must cross the open ground around S51. The northern route has the advantage of being unexpected and is not as likely to be well-defended. It certainly avoids the HIP unit, and allows the entire German firepower to be massed against the artillery observer on the hill. It, however, has the disadvantage of leaving the StuH 42s without infantry support. Only those 42s are an important part of the German forces. Their victory points are important, and so is their firepower. Any paratrooper that becomes acquired had better move somewhere safer. When they are buttoned up, the AFVs are relatively safe; the only long-range American weapon that can hurt them is the OBA, which is probably chasing after infantry in the woods.

It goes without saying that they should keep buttoned up if there is any chance of enemy infantry in the same county. When buttoned up they cannot use their AAMG, which makes them very vulnerable to close combat, so they should keep well away from American infantry. They can still engage the observer at long range. Once the group's inherent firepower is gone, the immediate question is where effective use is to move to a position five or six hexes away from a US unit that has just had a German force move adjacent. Move, halt, and acquire the enemy in the AFPH. It adds one more reason for that paratrooper squad to run away.

If the German infantry chooses the northern route, the StuH 42s can try to run the gauntlet and join them. On the first turn they should move to S56 and B7, remaining in Motion. This move keeps some distance between them and the US infantry. On Turn 2, they can boogie as far as K53 and J3. Note that Ground Snow negates the 1/2 MP movement rate for roads, so the StuH 42 crews do not have the option of exposing themselves to gain speed on the roads (which is not a good idea anyway considering the proximity of the paratroopers at this point). On Turn 3 they are out of the woods and near their little friends on foot, provided that they survive the enemy fire on the road. How likely is that? A bazooka on the road has a very good chance of killing one of the AFV; if the StuH 42 enters the bazooka's hex, the To Hit number is "11" with a +3 DRM (+1 for small target, +2 for motion). This yields a hit on a DR of 8 or less, with damage on an "8" or less To Kill DR. If the bazooka is adjacent to the road, the chances of a hit goes down significantly. If a paratrooper unit is on the road when the StuH 42s go by, it has a chance to make a Close Combat Reaction attack. A squad would need a DR of "4" to immobilize the AFV if the StuH 42 and its crews are in motion, -1 DRM for no MG), provided that the infantry unit passes its PAATC. Depending on what the enemy has on the road, there is an excellent chance that one gun gets through and a good chance that both will, but it is risky.

Since this scenario takes place in 1944, the Germans do have panzerfaust capability. These fire HEAT just like bazookas. They do not have an enemy vehicular target in this scenario, but the PF has some potential use against enemy units in buildings and behind walls. This can be useful if the paratroopers are defending the buildings Z51 or T1, or dug in at the building/wall complex around 2V8. The chance of the PF doing any damage is not great; first the unit must have a PF (a squad needs a DR of "1" or "2" since the target is not an AFV) and then it must get a hit. If the target is in a wooden building or behind a wall two hexes away, a "4" TH DR is needed. However, if the PF hits, it attacks with 16 firepower factors and no DRM! Don't make the attempt if the squad has a MG to fire, or if it is the German turn and a Pin result would be inconvenient, and certainly not if the SS squad firing is already pinned. Still, if the circumstances are right and if the dice are friendly, this shot can break the game open.

Do not forget that the SS squads also have smoke. Their smoke exponent is only "2" and they do not have WP. Nevertheless, smoke can be just the ticket needed to cross the 2FF6-T2 road to get to the woods, or to protect the approach to an American position while in the woods. For example, a stack of three squads and a leader in 2BB1 that would like to get to BB3 could start by placing smoke in BB2. Three tries will normally yield at least one smoke counter. The stack spends two MF in the attempt to place smoke, two more MF to enter BB2 with smoke there, and two more MF to enter BB3. In another situation, that same German stack is in 2BB3 with a US squad in 2S, three hexes away. The Germans move to BB4 (two MF), place smoke in AAS (two MF), and then declare CX to enter AAS (three MF with smoke). If there were no smoke placed (eight chances out of 27), they do not declare CX. There is a risk, of course; each squad that rolls a "6" in its smoke availability dr ends its MPH and remains in BB4.

In summary, the Germans have a lot of tricks to use in this scenario, as do the Americans. It will always be a fluid fight, decided by strategy, tactics and the dice. And it makes a terrific tournament scenario for experienced players.

Hunters from the Sky

Field Marshal Montgomery is poised to cross the Rhine with his British 21st Army Group. The assault is to be spearheaded by two airborne divisions, the British 6th and American 17th. This scenario depicts some of the action involving the US paratroopers in their last combat drop of the war. A company of paratroopers land amid waiting German infantry and AA guns, with more German reinforcements on the way. The paratroopers must take and hold their rally point. The Germans must keep them from doing it, without being quite sure where the rally point is.

"Hunters From the Sky" was originally published in The GENERAL as Scenario I. It is an interesting situation, partly because it starts with a paratroop drop, which randomizes the situation and makes every game play very differently. It also, conversely, makes the scenario hard to balance. There is even more randomization in the selection of the US assembly point and the appearance of the German reinforcements.

In the tournament, it first appeared that there
was a play-balance problem when the Germans won four of the first five games reported. However, the Americans won the last three, and two games were too close to call and went uncompleted. When the dust cleared, the German players had won four games and the US, four. I call that “balanced”. However, if the game ends quickly, it is probably because the paratroopers were shot up by the Germans on their way down, and the game is a German victory. After that, the Americans have the advantage.

Like all the other scenarios in this tournament, each US squad lost an attack factor in the conversion to ASL. To make up for this, I added another US squad to their forces. This also has the effect of filling up the second wing so that both wings have five squads. I gave the Americans another leader, an 8-1, to allow both wings to have two leaders.

I gave the Germans another squad too, since our playtesting showed that the US was doing too well once the paratroopers hit the ground; and I gave them a 7-0 leader, since they seemed too fragile with but one leader. I did take away a LMG, since they now have three factors instead of two. I also gave an 8-0 leader to the German “Reinforcement Group 2”.

I eliminated the part of the victory conditions that gave the Germans an immediate victory if they eliminated six US squads. Historically, paratroopers were frequently able to accomplish their objectives with only a fraction of their strength. Now, the game goes to the side that controls the US assembly point, regardless of losses. I also added a major change: I forced to implement is to allow the US player to keep secret the assembly point until the end of the game. I could see no reason why the Americans would announce to the Germans what their assembly point was to be. And, this keeps more suspense in the game; the German is guessing right until the end.

Another change that I made is to require one wing to land on its predesignated drop point, and the other wing to land on a randomly determined drop point. If both wings land on their drop points, the paratrooper player has a big edge in the scenario; it is too easy when the whole force comes down near its objective. But if both wings land randomly, the Americans can be in big trouble. Some units you can expect to see shot up, and the survivors probably have a long march to get to their assembly point. Thus, half the time the game would be determined after the American player rolls for the drop points (i.e., after only two die rolls). To avoid this situation, the new SSR guarantees one wing to land on target, and the other wing to miss.

With all the randomness in this scenario, every game plays out differently. It is difficult to discuss strategy and critical terrain when you don’t know what the US objective may be, you don’t know where the paratroopers will land, or where the German reinforcements will enter. But I can try.

A key element in the US strategy is to keep the enemy guessing about the location of the objective. Each drop point should threaten two or more possible assembly points. Further, each drop point should be at least six hexes from the nearest board edge, so that there is no chance of an offboard landing. Of course, the closer to the center of the board, the more likely it is that the paratroopers will be subjected to German AA fire which is still tolerable...

If the assembly point is 2W9, 2M9 or 4S2, a good area for the two drop points is in the center of Board 2. There is no large patch of woods; the paratroopers can maneuver their chutes away from any small stand of trees, as long as they are adjacent to open ground. Most of the squad will land within two turns’ march of all three possible objectives. For best effect, send at least one squad to take each of the three objectives, and let the German figure out which is the real one. Hopefully, he will take back two of them, but the wrong two.

If 4110 is the assembly point, reasonable drop areas are the northern end of Boards 4 and 5. The northern end of Board 5 is safer, since it is farther from the center of the board and likely concentrated German AA fire, but it does give away the objective. The northern end of Board 4 threatens both 2M9 and 4S2 as well 4110. Send forces towards all three objectives if there are enough available; at the least, move forces toward two of the possible assembly points.

Hexes 4P6 and 4110 are the tough objectives. The temptation is to place the drop point in the middle of Board 4, near the objective. I did that once. I got shot to pieces. It is much better to land farther away to get down in some order, and then move out for the assembly point. If 4P6 is the VC, your best bet is to land in the northern part of Boards 4 or 5 and feint toward 4110. However, the central position of 4P6 that makes it a tough objective also makes it plausible. Just about any drop point on the board equally good. The paratroopers can reasonably land anywhere but the middle of Board 4 (because of the threat from the Germans) and the southern half of Board 5 (because of the threat from the trees). The odds are that the wing which is forced to a random drop point will be in just as good a position as the wing whose drop point was selected.

I think that 4110 is the toughest objective of all to reach. It is very risky landing too close because the threat from German AA on Board 4 and the woods on Board 5. Reasonable landing sites are the southern end of Board 4 (from where the Germans can also threaten 2W9 and possibly 4P6), but the Germans are not likely to be fooled. Other possible landing sites are the southern third of Board 2 threatening 2W9, and the northern third of Board 5, making a feint toward 4110. Both of these sites are quite risky however, given the long distance the paratroopers must travel on the ground to win.

The German player must make his onboard set-up with no knowledge of the American objective, nor the drop points, nor even the location of his own reinforcements. He can view the game as a defensive battle and place a squad to hold each of the as possible enemy objectives, but they cannot support each other and this arrangement is likely to fail. A better approach is to create a flak trap in the middle of the board with the squad firepower and the AA guns and view the game as primarily a counterattack to retake the assembly point (once deduced) from the paratroopers. The Germans have the advantages of organization at the start of the game, greater range in his squad weapons, machineguns, mobility from the trucks, and, for half the game, they have unopposed armor.

From the selection of the pre-designated US assembly point and the movement of the paratroopers on Table 2, it would be almost impossible to deduce the assembly point, or at least narrow it down to a couple of buildings. Organize the six squads that start on board, coordinated with the reinforcements when they arrive, into a powerful force to retake those buildings. Their advantage in mobility should allow the German player to mass against the paratroopers, and the advantages in range allow the German squads to stand back and blast the enemy from a relatively safe distance. If all goes well, the StuG III arrives to deliver the coup-de-gras and win the game.

Of course, all never goes well. The paratroopers have a lot of inherent firepower and two bazookas to make the armor keep its distance. Five squad can land anywhere and cause all sorts of havoc. It promises to be a tough struggle for both sides.

Weapons that can fire at descending paratroopers include the two AA guns in the scenario and the infantry’s inherent firepower. Oddly, the LMGs may not fire at paratroopers in the air. The AA guns should not be placed in buildings, certainly, since they could not fire at ascending paratroopers at all. If placed in woods, their ROF is reduced by one and their “Case A” DRM is doubled should they have to change the covered arc - so woods are not a good place them either. The AA guns should not be placed adjacent to woods or buildings to avoid having their LOS to targets in the sky blocked by those obstacles. That leaves plenty of good spots for them in the open on these three mapboards. I think that the best places for them are covering the middle of boards 2 and 4. These are the spots away from the dense woods closest to the most possible US assembly points.

For instance, hex 2P8 is an excellent place for one AA gun. It is well away from any blocking obstacle, it can cover a lot of the center of Boards 2 and 4, and it is in LOS of two possible assembly points (2M9 and 4S2). Another good spot for a gun is 4Q4. It can cover much of Boards 2 and 4 also, it is within LOS of the two possible assembly points 4P6 and 4S2, and it also has a very convenient LOS along the hexes 4S2, 4M9, 4S9, and 4110, even though this is hindered by some grain (which is being treated as brush in this scenario). Even though these guns are in the open, they receive the +2 TEM from being emplaced until they relocate.

The German infantry should be set up in a central location so that they can move on any of the possible assembly points. I suggest splitting the squads into three squad platoons, each with a leader. Position one near the border of Boards 2 and 4, near the middle. This force can quickly move on 2W9, 2M9, 4S2 or 4P6. The other force should be placed near the middle of the Board 4/Border 5 border; it can contest 4P6, 4Y9 or 4110. Unlike the AA guns, the infantry has no need to worry about changing covered arc. Single-hex woods are good places for the squads. They have some protection and their aerial LOS is unblocked.

On the drop, your infantry must fire at any paratroopers in range. Even at long range (up to six hexes) the squads each attack with two fac­tories. The Americans are most vulnerable while
still in the air, with no TEM and with the Hazardous Movement penalty. If a couple of US squads can be nailed before they hit the ground, so much the better. Once the paratroopers are on the ground, the German infantry should head for the probable enemy objectives. Occupy the threatened buildings first if able. If the paratroopers get there first, don't engage in an uneven fire fight with them. Trade shots at a range of five or six hexes, where they are halved and you are not. Be patient and wait for friendly reinforcements to arrive. Interdict the enemy movement when possible, to keep them from reinforcing any squads holding their assembly point. The Germans should infiltrate some troops to encircle the Americans and prevent rout. When there are a few squads broken, or if the Germans have a strong local numerical advantage, make the move and attack. If that opportunity does not arise and you must be patient; the StuG IIDG should be able to swing the balance in your favor if your losses are light.

The two trucks are quite important units for the Germans. Vulnerable as they are, they can be used in three ways. Yes, they can attempt to overrun paratroopers that have landed in the open, and that is one use (but not a very promising one). Alternately, they can start the game loaded with squads, giving the infantry "instant" mobility. Unfortunately, the infantry can move nearly as fast on foot as a truck moving off-road, so the roads are not as convenient as they could be. Their best use is to haul around the AA guns. Each truck can be positioned in the same hex as an AA gun, allowing it to be moved to a more convenient spot once the paratroopers have landed.

But the strongest German unit is that StuG IIDG. It comes in late, Turn 5 or possibly Turn 6, so it is available for only half the game. However, by that time the Germans should be concentrated against the US objective, and maybe a few American squads are broken or destroyed. The StuG IIDG should position itself out of range of the deadly bazookas. The bazookas have a To Kill number of "16" versus frontal armor of only "4". And it can be even easier if you can get behind that it is gone. It is too valuable to lose in this way. The obvious use of the StuG IIDG is to fire HE at any paratroopers enencosed in a building. At six hexes, even if buttoned up (a good idea with all the bullets flying around) the gun can hit on a "7" with a -2 DRM for acquisition. When the gun does hit, it attacks on the 12 column with no TEM. The StuG IIDG has another important weapon some players will overlook - smoke. When it is time for the German infantry to make its final assault, place some smoke right on top of the Americans to disrupt their defensive fire. Also, you can use its smoke dispenser to leave some smoke to block US LOS. At the end of the game, if the Germans are desperate, the StuG IIDG could be used to overrun the Americans in their objective building. This has little chance of success, since it has so little MG firepower, but it can be effective in preventing the Americans from firing outside their hex while the German infantry make their last assault. This could also be accomplished by bypassing the building without attempting to overrun it. And don't forget the tactic of Armored Assault, with the infantry hunkering down behind the assault gun as they approach the building.

Once the drop points are chosen, and until the paratroopers hit the ground, the American player has few decisions. All he can do is maneuver his parachutes one hex, mostly to avoid landing in the trees or on top of a building. He has to trust in luck. Once on the ground use defensive fire to shoot at targets of opportunity, if any. The real action starts on the second turn. It is then time to move out.

Move toward all possible assembly points. Only you know the real one. Keep it that way. Take at least two of them, and maybe threaten another one or two. Much depends on where your troops end up on the ground, especially that half that landed randomly. Do what you can to get the Germans from concentrating against your objective. This includes interdicting German movement as much as possible, threatening alternate objectives, and blocking the German reinforcements if you have troops in the neighborhood.

There are three possible entry points for the German reinforcements: 5G5/6, 2Q1 and 4G5/6. The first can be blocked by a squad in the woods or a building. Good positions are 5C6, F6, G4 or G7. If the squad has a bazooka, keep out of the building so that it can get a better shot at the trucks or the StuG IIDG. The 4G5/6 entry can be countered by a squad in either 4G4 or G7. The 4C6 building is a possibility if the squad doesn't have a bazooka, but its LOS is limited by the hedges. Hex 2Q1 is the least likely entrance point. It can be blocked by a squad in any of the nearby woods, which is all the more dangerous with a bazooka.

Speaking of bazookas, they are powerful weapons in this scenario. Since it is 1945, the bazookas can fire WP at infantry in any hex. This can be very effective against a large German firegroup, not only does the smoke reduce the effectiveness of outgoing fire, but the units in the target location must take a morale check. The bazookas can also fire HEAT against infantry in buildings, which is handy if the Germans get to your assembly point first. Of course, they are no use against the StuG IIDG, since they are the only weapons the paratroopers have that can affect it (outside of Close Combat). If the German player is careless, a bazooka can be used against the trucks; if it hits, it is not a pretty sight. And don't forget that a leader can direct bazooka fire.

One important American weapon to consider is their infantry smoke grenades, which can also be WP. If an American squad is pulling back, it is wise to consider throwing a smoke grenade to cover the retreat. On the offensive, when the squad moves adjacent to the enemy, it is time for WP. It has a good chance of breaking the German unit; and even if it doesn't, it significantly hinders the German defensive fire against any other units moving up.

Because of the few units involved, all these tournament scenarios are playable in one evening; but the low number of pieces also requires that each unit to be all it can be. All these scenarios require careful thought, but I believe none more so than "Hunters From The Sky." I hope you enjoy them.

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Of course I won't actually be trying to lose tanks; but I do want to emphasize that tank losses are acceptable provided they can be afforded; that they disclose the location of one of those killer 88s to enable the rest of my troops to react against it; or even if I am just gambling and the potential gain justifies the risk. Every move on the board (or every non-move, for that matter) carries with it some level of risk. The player who best manages the balancing of all these risks will probably be winning ASL scenarios more often than he is losing.

One advantage in attacking along the west edge is that it makes the entrance of my reinforcements a bit safer. If I want, by the time Turn #4 rolls around I ought to be able to bring those Croc on board without worry in the 2AQ10 area, which will have been cleared by my infantry. That's not to say I won't go for an entrance further north after all—if the threat to the northern stone buildings would be of more help. But if I go for the northern location, for example, if the 88s haven't yet been found, the northern entrance loses most of its attraction and I'll probably just drive right into the village and start firing everything in sight. The ideal weapon to prey high-morale troops out of stone buildings, those 36-FP flamethrowers are effective from two-hex range, and still have 18-FP at a three-hex range. Notice that D3.31 allows the FT to fire in Basching Fire at full FP, but D2.42 will halve if the vehicle is in motion. Curiously, during its MPh a vehicle is not "in Motion" for WP. It has a good chance of breaking the FT while attacking along the west edge is that it makes the entrance of my reinforcements a bit safer. If I want, by the time Turn #4 rolls around I ought to be able to bring those Croc on board without worry in the 2AQ10 area, which will have been cleared by my infantry. That's not to say I won't go for an entrance further north after all—if the threat to the northern stone buildings would be of more help. But if I go for the northern location, for example, if the 88s haven't yet been found, the northern entrance loses most of its attraction and I'll probably just drive right into the village and start firing everything in sight. The ideal weapon to prey high-morale troops out of stone buildings, those 36-FP flamethrowers are effective from two-hex range, and still have 18-FP at a three-hex range. Notice that D3.31 allows the FT to fire in Basching Fire at full FP, but D2.42 will halve if the vehicle is in motion. Curiously, during its MPh a vehicle is not "in Motion", only before/after can it be in motion, by definition. Thus, the vehicle can fire the FT during its MPh at full FP, or stop and fire it in APF at full FP, or end its MPh in Motion and fire in APF at half-FP. Take special note of this, for there has been some talk of altering Rule D2.42 such that it applies during the MPh as well, so it will be best to determine how your opponent reads this important rule.

Above I mentioned the British 63% FP rating; but consider what occurs as the reinforcements enter the contest. The British begin a night very weak with 52%, leap to 57% on their turn four and then slide to 63% when the JgPZ enters later than same game turn. Adhering to my expected 63% rating for a successful attack (see sidebar), I believe this helps emphasize the value of using all that smoke capability in the early turns to work your troops forward, despite the fact that the British are about 65-FP sky of what I'd like to have. Forward progress still must be made, and smoke is the key. Once the Crocodiles enter play, the lethality of their FTs can best be gauged if we consider the British would control only 55% of the FP without these two weapons. As any further proof were really needed, this shows the FTs are vital to British victory and demand to be used.

Conclusion: Elite infantry and quality leadership, high-powered guns and flame-throwing tanks promise top-notch action in St. Joost. It's a cold day in Crocodile heaven-only these beasts are impervious to the weather, and to much of what the Germans can throw their way as well.
**Scenario Briefing**

**Player's Notes for ASL**

By Mark C. Nixon

Mark Nixon is a wargamer without peer, and a fine writer. His insightful articles offering hints on the play of ASL scenarios (“Desert Winds” and “Desert Sands” in the pages of Vol. 25-6 and 26-1; “Early Victims, Early Victories” in the ‘91 ASL Annual) have been very popular. When Mark made the offhand suggestion to Rex Martin that an irregular column could be devoted to such, my predecessor wisely did not hesitate. What follows is the first installment of “Players’ Notes for ASL”. Given that there are now some 213 ASL scenarios (with another three dozen or so being added each year), I expect there will be many more.

**ASL Scenario A25**

**Cold Crocodiles**

**Rating:** 60% British

**Attraction:** How could anyone resist seeing those Crocodiles in action? And, the confrontation between Cromwells and Challengers on one side and panzerfausts and barndoors on the other promises high excitement indeed.

**German Advantages:** PFs; 88LL Guns; Stone Buildings; HIP

If you normally play against opponents experienced enough to maintain a goodly distance from your PF-toting infantry, it may actually be that the potency of these weapons seems quite less than it truly is. But never lose sight of the value in scaring the enemy into keeping his distance, particularly in this situation when they are driving AFVs at you which would surely end the gaming lives of any German troops they elected to hammer. When they do try to move in close you can "PF" them; but, for the most part, the British armor will remain about four or so hexes away. Of course the 88s can do pretty well too, and ought to give both the enemy infantry and AFVs plenty to fear. The combination of two HIP guns sporting two ROF, 16 IFT factors and a TK# of 27 guarantee the German can dominate play in two locations—at least for awhile—when these guns enter the battle. Their Large Target size limits set-up choices, but there are still enough available to keep your enemy guessing. Defending stone buildings will, as always, make your "8"-morale troops very difficult to break, and the ability to HIP a squad-equivalent just might be turned into a broken stack of enemy squads or a defunct tank at a crucial moment.

**German Disadvantages:** Outflanked; Mobility; Time

This German force is wonderful, but these three big disadvantages combine to find them, often, overwhelmed by about Turn #6 when the Crocodiles and their escorting infantry drive into their right flank. The problem for the Germans is the need to defend stone buildings, but all the ones south and west of 23O10 (on the west side of the canal) are just about impossible to hold onto without sacrificing the large group northeast of this position—and possibly the bridge as well. The German player who attempts to hold all will soon find his command reduced to a few isolated pockets of hopelessness; and even if he tries to withdraw before the enemy, he will likely find his avenues of retreat cut by the more adroit British and their AFVs. On the other hand, a defense which yields the southern half of the battlefield will invite an early British assault upon the bridge area and building 23O10 (the “break-even” building for the British, as it is the 11th stone building they should normally come upon) and a possible crossing to the east side, with all that entails. In this case, the defense might be well situated to fend off the enemy reinforcements due on Turn #4, but has allowed the “at-start” British contingent too much freedom of action. The Germans are in a bit of a pressure cooker in this scenario.

**German Defense:**

The defense must protect stone buildings and the bridge at 23P7, while also providing optimum fields of fire for the 88LLs, HMG and MMG. This must all be done without excessive concentration in any one area lest the enemy 80mm FFE lambast a major share of your strength at a single blow or, equally devastating, lay in FFE Smoke on the position and allow the British infantry and tanks to overwhelm your troops. Placing those 88s will determine the nature of your defense, assuming you are not going to merely stick them out on their own and not try to support them (a tactic I won’t even discuss here). Notice that Board 23 from hexrows H thru V offers only four wholehex locations where these guns can be HIP: T7, T8, M10 and 18. Avoid the common error of trying to HIP on that orchard-road, for guns cannot be emplaced on paved roads (C11.2) and therefore cannot be HIP (A12.34). Of those four locations, only hexes T8 and M10 would allow the guns to remain HIP once the enemy pulls into LOS. But, happily, there are several decent locations on Board 24 and in the halfhexes shared by the two boards for the big guns. If you like to gamble that the British will bring on the Crocodiles at 24Q10 or north, there are HIP locations galore which can nearly guarantee elimination of at least one Croc, provided the opponent obliges, and neglects to land a smoke FFE in the area to cover their reinforcements. The woods in 24Q2 and 24N1 are a favored place, as is the orchard in hex 24O3. At least these spots allow your infantry to hang in there and support the guns for awhile, since this is the point where the enemy’s attack is most susceptible to getting hung-up as they attempt to traverse that wicked, deadly area from 23S9 to 23O10.

But, of course, that is why you must also expect the FFE to land here, and the British to concurrently sweep through the Board 24 village to come at 23O10 from the west as well. After all, they need to gather in those stone buildings there and threaten to drive on past towards 24J2 and beyond. Because you must expect the British anywhere and everywhere across your entire front, selecting remote but devious locations for the 88LLs will be a very tough decision for you. A spot like hex 23G3...
seems nearly a foolhardy choice, but take a look how it controls key hexes 23S8, R7, R8, Q8 and P7, while effectively screened from all other fire. Unfortunately, once you're spotted, a smoke PFE in the bridge area will eliminate the fire from this ATG long enough to allow the trapped British to escape the kill zone. Another devious spot is 23H10, which not only can cover the northern end of Board 24, but also will see a wealth of targets along the orchard road, and the P7 bridge as well, and can also deal some death to enemy infantry coming through the 23110 woods area. But, again, the LOS are so restricted from this position that the gun can be smoked and hit from multiple directions once found. Therefore, I am putting these guns in more conventional positions from which they ought to be able to lend more of their much needed fire to the conflict. I expect the guns in these outposts to eventually fall to the enemy, but to at least enjoy plenty of fire opportunities while they last.

If I were willing to risk a squad to try to take out a tank with its PF, I might HIP a 5-4-8 in 23V5 in order to take a shot at any British tank which might park itself at 23X4 to control the orchard road and bring fire on 23N9, or in P8 with the intent to lay smoke. But I think it rarely wise to expose a squad in such a place as this from which rout may become impossible. Any of the other orchard road hexes would be safer, and might be just as good. They certainly would be less suspect. In any case, some of my set-up selections will probably register high enough on the "unsuspected" scale to be a surprise. The 88LL ATG at 2403/1 is a normal enough tactic, but the one at 2482/6 might look a bit out of place. However, despite setting up HIP in open ground, the gun will not lose HIP unless the enemy reaches hex 24V1 (a real squeaky LOS)—which is just what the HIP 8-1 and MMG are in place to prevent—or hex 24U5, adjacent hexes or the many hexes north of the "S" row with LOS. I see the gun occupying a spot where the British won't expect it, and enjoying some entertaining command of the bridge area. It can stay concealed when it fires, too!

Unusual, for this scenario, is the absence of both the HMG and the MMG from building 23010 in my placement. The German units in that building actually expect the British to come straight at them, in which case I will pull back and let them come. All the Dummy counters are on Board 23 to try to confuse the enemy (why would there be Dummy stacks way back in L9 and M8?), with the idea that if he believes this area is held in strength, he will assume the Board 24 village is weakly defended. I'd be happy to fool him into coming for the village in strength, for that's where I am waiting and can fight an even battle; but in truth, I expect him to go straight for the bridge after all. When that happens and the PFE and all guns zero in on that area, I am hoping my heavy fire from the west flank will be enough to prevent them crashing through. One thing in my favor is that, as I mentioned earlier, the bottleneck around the bridge will be tough for the British to cross.

If their Smoke works well, there is not much I could do either way; but I am banking on coming out of it better by keeping my strength away from the schwerpunkt in this gambit set-up.

Because the British will show me where they are attacking on their very first turn, I will be able to react and reposition my troops. If the attack comes straight at 23010 as I suspect, peripheral units at 24V7 and 2405 will immediately head for the northeast. They can get themselves in position to hinder the enemy reinforcements, or back-up the 23010 position, or even support the 2403 ATG as needed. The JgPz IVs will not only try to maneuver for some high-odds shots on the enemy armor, but will also keep an eye on self-preservation since I cannot afford to lose their seven CVP apiece. When the game deteriorates to the point where I am taking high risks with these vehicles, I will be sending my opponent a message that I think the battle is nearly lost.

The standard "accepted" defense for "Cold Crocodiles" would see the HMG and MMG in building 23010, with the Germans attempting to stop a British thrust at that point. But I am convinced the British are too strong for such a defense to work well, especially once the smoke starts pouring in. So I am allowing the enemy to reach that area without sacrificing substantial elements of my own force. With my troops to the north and also still holding in the village to the southwest, British infantry who have pushed into the bridge area will find routing a serious problem, and pushing further north perhaps impossible.

**British Advantages:**
- Crocodiles; OBA;
- SMOKE; Firepower; 76LL Guns; Leaders

No big hurry to end this scenario, for the real fireworks don't even enter play until Turn #4 when those two Crocodiles waddle into the picture. Coupled with healthy AF, impressive SMOKE capability, fast-turreted 75mm gun and 4-PP CMG, the BF36 make these among the most imposing vehicles in the entire game system, marred only by their lowly 7MP allotment. Indeed, it can even lead to frustration to have such vehicles available yet have to suffer the tedium occasionally involved in wheeling them into play. But it is worth the wait to give players a chance to experience the "joys" of dealing with such beasts. These British reinforcements bring with them approximately 63% of the firepower in the scenario and enough SMOKE to ensure ample screening to ease your attack forward. In order to deal with German reinforce-
ments we see the 76LL in action, as sure to end the gaming life of a JpPz IV as the 88LL will of any of the British vehicles. Add in two "2 leaders", and I'll take the British.

British Disadvantages: Vehicular CVP Losses, Northeastern Buildings

As those Cromwells and Challengers provide the cutting edge to carve your way to victory, their loss will inflate enemy CVP enough to keep the Germans in the game; and if the Crocodiles fall as well, unthinkable as that may be, it would be a total of 43 CVP for the six AFVs and 9-2 armor leader—quite a deep hole indeed for the British infantry to navigate across afoot. Not that these lads can't afford to lose an AFV to find an ATG, for they have the tools to then dispose of the offending gun and proceed. But enough of this kind of trading, plus a loss or so to PFs and assorted German devilry, and the number of extra stone buildings in the northeast needed to secure a win might escalate out of reach. Not enough of a worry to convince your tankers to hide, but just enough to keep them dispersed at first, until those 88LLs are found, in order to avoid the embarrassment of one lucky enemy gun taking out more than a single tank in one fire phase.

British Attack:

I think the most conventional attack here is to rush up CIX into the 23Y7 building and waded-in area and push on due north from there, hopefully with FFE landing support fire right away (be it SMOKE or HE). Naturally your tanks will initially fire off sm left and right to provide flanking cover, and to hinder potential enemy killer shots from suspected HIP locations (like a 23V5 HMG boresighted on 23AA6, 9-2 leader directed for a 6-PP, 4 DMR). This is probably how the game usually opens; but since my Germans have tried to set up to defy such an attack, let's suppose this British commander has played the scenario two or three time and wants to do things a bit different this time, just to gain a new angle on the encounter. So this time the attack kicks off on Board 24, with just a reduced plate- moving into the big two stone buildings on Board 23 to secure their eight CVP and maintain the look of pressure on that flank. One advantage here is the unlikely event of any harm befalling British units moving up to the 24W6 woods area on Turn #1. There shouldn't be anything much to fear, so the British squads ride tanks and use Armored Assault CX to close with the enemy quickly. Notice the two HS ride the tank to 24Z8 and unloaded in that hex (oversticking as they did so) without CX (disallowed for unloading units anyway) thanks to the peculiar timing of Armored Assault, which actually leaves a world of freedom in the hands of the AFV to spend its MP's quite however it pleases with very limited restrictions. Of course, these tanks are getting as far as they do because they have entered play CE, although they have opted to BU once the road rate has been utilized.

From the positions reached on Turn #1, my Tommies will bully their way on into the Board 24 village over the next few turns while the tanks poke and probe, sticking close to the infantry and remaining dispersed. One tank goes through the 24U8 pass along with my infantry. But only one tank at first until I secure the immediate area. Likewise, the tank on Board 23 will work its way northward in support of the small force there; and a third tank will work the 24U3 road, very cautiously. There is no room to push forward with the fourth tank without exposing at least two of my AFVs to potential shots from a single HIP 88LL or the HIP infantry, so the fourth tank hangs back in the 24X4 area to exploit any opening. It will also be able to provide support fire and smoke, especially in and around hex 23S8, which might be welcome indeed for my weak right flank. In the meantime, the FFE will target the best enemy concentrations found and, hopefully, pile up some CVPs.

I believe I have enough to win the game even without my reinforcements, although the 60% advantage I've claimed would then be history. In such a situation, I don't feel I have to worry about each and every CVP as though its loss could mean an enemy win, so I will be very aggressive with the AFVs. After all, even if I lose one to a HIP 88LL, locating that gun will, from my point of view, also mean locating four German CVPs (the gun crew) which I will nail to nearly even the score—and I may even be able to capture the Gun for more CVP. Therefore, I gain maximum use from my tanks, which will in turn assist my infantry and improve my overall performance. Compare my progress to the overly cautious commander whose tanks will remain safe and secure but not of much help to his infantry, who will find themselves moving very slowly against tough troops with "8" morale in stone buildings.

Continued on Page 18

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**THE PERCENTAGE OF FIREPOWER**

Welcome to my "Scenario Briefing" series, the latest semi-regular column to feature the play of ASL. My two-fold purpose is to review popular scenarios for ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER, while concurrently using each as a means to explore some of the many tactics available to players (experienced and novice alike). Readers will, therefore, encounter occasional references to numbers and probabilities (basic stuff only, I promise), but will frequently come across the "percentage of firepower" wielded by one side or both in these columns. As an introduction to the series, permit me to explain.

The "percentage of firepower" is the raw firepower totals, adjusted for ROF, for the contestants. I use this to gain a rough idea of exactly how much IFT FP advantage the stronger force could theoretically apply against the opposition in a single half-turn at normal range, assuming hits for all TH weapons, average ROF and no malfunctions or cowering. Here is an example of how I calculate ROF-adjusted FP for a hypothetical German force (and thereby derive the "%-FP"):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>ROF</th>
<th>ROF-Adjusted FP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6-5-8</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7-16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50mm MTR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2-IFT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50L ATG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6-IFT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PzVG (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12-IFT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PzVG (MGs)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3/5/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80mm OBA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16-IFT</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>129.5 FP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, a 3-ROF weapon will average 200% of its printed value; a 2-ROF weapon, 150%; and a 1-ROF, about 120% - excluding breakdowns and cowering. Obviously, OBA might affect many locations and not just the single one I assume, but it might also not be available at all on many turns or might be used as SMOKE. Since this is a single half-turn average, I believe counting OBA for only one Location is a fair representation, as expecting it to affect more (or less) than this would be even less realistic. Compared to a British force which fields 79-FP, the above German OB would brandish 62% (129.5/208.5x100) of the FP in the scenario.

Forms of FP that I do not include in such a calculation are:

1. MOL, PF, Psk, Baz and PIAT (too restricted vs infantry and availability/hits too unreliable)
2. Demo Charges (a "one-shot" weapon)
3. SAN, Mines, Booby Traps, PreGame Bombardment (no player control)

These are all important elements of ASL, but must be handled elsewhere in my coverage, and not included in the %-FP. I have a theory that the attacker normally needs about 62% of the FP (calculated in this manner) to hope for success in a well-balanced scenario, and that any substantial deviation from this must be explained by other features of the encounter. For example, heavy fortifications, dense TEM, amphibious operations, time limit, armor-versus-armor actions (or any non-IFT battle), special morale or leadership are some qualities which might allow the %-FP to float above or below my expected level. In the absence of such factors, however, an FP advantage or disadvantage might be the primary reason for the "balance" of the scenario to swing one way or the other. Too, timing of any reinforcements influences the ebb and flow of the percentage advantage. Thus, using these raw figures on occasion will provide a solid point of reference which can act as a standard to aid me in the examination of various unique scenario features.
So what would we do for an encore?
The birth of AVALONCON last year sent ripples through a Board Gaming hobby which had grown increasingly unhappy playing second fiddle to the larger Fantasy- and Science Fiction-Role-Playing branch of the Adventure Gaming industry. All across the country, boardgamers applauded Avalon Hill for setting out on its own to re-establish its birthright as the founder of the simulation game industry by hosting its own national championships. The faithful breathed a collective sigh of relief when the first venture was proclaimed a success, and the doubters must have been dismayed by all the positive vibes flowing from Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

Those who attended the first AVALONCON made that leap of faith because they were hopeful of turning the tide of a hobby in open retreat. However, those who came this year were looking for a good time. They had already been convinced that this "Back to Basics" competitive theme was a concept whose time had come. They had gotten a taste of organized competition and come back for more. AVALONCON had already proven its point to them. Now they were just looking for fun, and that's exactly what they got.

But among those who returned there was even more—a sense of belonging to an event—something in which they had a stake. There was the chance to renew old rivalries and start new ones. In essence, we had formed the biggest gaming club going. The sense of belonging to a band of brothers (and sisters) with common interests was never greater.

Mike Fitzgerald of Norwalk, CT writes: "I just had to write to tell you what a great time my family and I had at AVALONCON this year. ... I had a better time this year than last because I felt more comfortable having known so many of the people. You should mention how the enjoyment level increases the second time. Our club members had such a good time that next year I anticipate another two joining us for a total of six."

The club is growing. The friends Mike made at these past two AVALONCONs will bring him back again and vice versa. That's what it is all about; friendly, quality competition.

What better backdrop than the ongoing games of the XXV Olympiad to frame Avalon Hill's championship weekend with a real sense of purpose? Few, if any, of us can lay claim to that kind of athletic prowess, but when it comes to vicarious thrills on a cardboard playing field, those of us on the wrong side of 40 can still feel young again—if only for a day.

It was an early-arriving crowd. The Registration Desk did a steady business from noon on, dispensing badges so that the line never grew beyond a few minutes wait. Although we stayed open past midnight to accommodate the late arrivals, most players were already in combat by 7 PM.
had moved to Australia. The setup alone took five hours and consequently they only managed to complete one half-turn before retiring for the evening. Sixteen hours of play on Friday carried them through July 2nd, but the lines weren't changing significantly. The game had settled into its grinding attrition phase, and by July 5th—ten hours later—with the arrival of the SS Panzer divisions being more than the Allies could bear, our heroes decided to pack it in and avail themselves of what was left of the convention. In retrospect, it was decided that it would have been better to start a new game since the Germans were in a commanding position already, and the mid-game of TLD is by its very nature too attritional to be of much interest to any but the most serious student of the campaign. The participants decided the Allies could still have achieved a breakthrough, but it was debated whether it could have been achieved by the August 31st deadline. Those wishing more information about TLD at next year's AVALONCON should write Paul Sommers at 27 Simeon St, Kitchener, ONT CANADA N2H 1R9 or by Email (GENic: P. Sommers or Internet: paul@monet.uwaterloo.ca).

ANZIO was notable for two upsets. The first was that GM Tom Oleson wasn't twisting my arm to try to achieve minimum participation because it already had 13 players and was thus assured tournament status again in '93. The other was that Oleson lost in the opening round to Mike Sincavage—who had lost in the finals last year. Such a pairing in the opening round is surprising until one realizes that the GM is under no obligation to pair opponents in any particular way. Although AREA ratings are provided and recommended for use in seeding tournaments, GMs may ignore them if they wish. It would appear that Tom purposely dealt himself the toughest opponent so that if he did lose, he could concentrate on the later TPS tournament. In the absence of further details, I suspect Sincavage had little trouble beating the rest of the field.

B-17 was a new event this year and the "let-fate-sort-it-out" approach was a welcome respite from the more intense fare judging by the 32 pilots who took part. Two missions were flown with only 13 planes completing both. Fifteen bombers were lost with 139 crewmen KIA, 33 wounded, and 29 captured. The Germans lost 37 Me110's, 98 Me109's, and 49 FW 190's. Our own Don Hawthorne posted two-strikeouts for being one of only three flyers to be shot down twice and finished dead last (literally). Serves him right for flying again—once you're shot down, you should stay down, pil­grim. Or so it seems to me, anyway. I always thought the appeal of B-17 tournaments was in cheering every time one of your competitors went down in flames. Frank Alexander of Royal Palm Beach, FL took top honors with 115 points to Howard Newby's and Daryl Luby's 106. Advisory Panel member Dave Terry was one of the hardest-working GMs we had. His overhead projector was the high-tech high point of the event. All of his entrants will receive a detailed post-con report in the mail, probably in late October or early November. If you have any input to share for next year's B-17 raid or similar want a closer look at what happened this year, drop him a SASE at 7501 Norris Ave, Sykesville, MD 21784.

1830 used three preliminary heats to generate 14 first-round, four-player games. It took three rounds for Dave Harshbarger of Chapel Hill, NC to prove himself the best railroad mogul.

FORTRESS EUROPA had the largest percentage growth of any event by nearly tripling in size from last year's minimum requirement of eight players. Michael Newman of Colrain, MA improved on his second-place finish in 1991 to win as the Axis when the Allies rolled a "1" in a 3-1 on Toulouse and failed. GM Randy Heller once again failed to advance far in his beloved event.

GM Charles Hickok rides herd on a flight of space traders in the first MERCHAND OF VENUS Juniour tournament.

The MERCHANT OF VENUS Junior tournament drew two-thirds as many entrants as the adult version and may soon overtake the adult version of this beloved event.

Super Deluxe ASL was won by GM Ron Berger of Thousands Oaks, CA. It marked both the first and last competitive miniatures event to be held at AVALONCON. The battle between the 100th Jaeger and the 14th Guards in the outskirts of Stalingrad used GHQ micro-armor and styrofoam terrain to play ASL in miniature using an open-ended system that allowed players to jump in and out of action throughout the weekend until their personal leader was killed. However, the consensus of opinion on our survey was that AVALONCON was the best boardgaming convention extant because it focused on boardgames and to maintain that focus we need to concentrate on what we do best. Henceforth, the Keystone room will be reserved for the ever-growing ASL competition.

By 7 PM the next slate of tournaments got underway with 17 politicians throwing their hat into the ring in CANDIDATE. Three first-round games advanced Steve Kyle, Ken Gutermuth, Jerry Smolens, Randy Cox, Robert Rademaker, and Steve Pedlow to the finals where Cox proved to be the most underhanded, er, competitive candidate. He went into the convention with a commanding lead, but it came down to the final vote to claim the third place finisher's delegates before he won 277-261.

The gridiron wars heated up with the largest field for FOOTBALL STRATEGY that I can remember since ORIGINS II topped out at 64. I had money on this one. Four members of a rival Philadelphia league were on hand just for this tournament and I had $10 riding on one of our league members winning it. Of course, we had nine of our 28 members playing in the tournament. My momma didn't raise no fools.

Then again, maybe she did. This was also the first event for "Team Doily" in the Team Competition and our team came up with the brilliant strategy of entering games that fellow team members were also playing for points. I, alone of my team, was playing in an event not also contested by three of my teammates. So, I fully expected Team Doily to repeat its shutdown performance of last year when we were beaten by our own teammates. We put our strategy to the test with three of us playing in the football tournament. One of my teammates, Cliff Willis, lost in Overtime of the first round to George Holland—my betting protagonist—while I was destroyed 28-10 in the second round by Winston Forrest, a member of our league who I had beaten five times previously. So much for Team Doily committing suicide. Bill Cleary—our eligible team member—won his third game 24-17 over George Holland to win my bet and then advanced to the final with a 21-17 win over Lee Kershaw. Meanwhile, Winston was feeling his oats, beating Gordon Rodger 14-3 and Tom Shaw 27-10 to advance to the finals while giving up only 23 points in his last three games. Mike Fitzgerald, last year's winner, was beaten 16-13 by Lee Kershaw in Overtime after missing three 10-yard field goals himself. Both finalists had entered the Team Tournament using FOOTBALL STRATEGY as their eligible game, so a lot rode on the outcome when Cleary won and put Team Doily on the board. Eight big ones. The AHFSL claimed the top three spots as Tom Shaw took third. It almost eased the sting of the drubbing Winston gave me... almost.

With 30 entrants, NAVAL WAR was well suited to draw a large crowd on Thursday night as a quick-play event before the start of the glamour events the next morning. The six finalists probably did not expect it would be six hours before the issue was decided at 1 AM. Kenneth Shunk of Ancestor, ONT won over David Davis, Mike McCann, Greg Wilson, Steve Proksch, and Bill Taylor who finished in that order.

GETTYSBURG fared far better as an adult tournament than it had previously as a Junior event. Nineteen Lees/Meades required five rounds before Michael Uhrich of Lebanon, PA emerged triumphant as the rebels. The Confederates dominated the early rounds while the later rounds were split evenly.
The first of two heats for ADEL VERFLICHTET ended the events for Thursday and was notable from my viewpoint because Team Doily was swinging into action again in the person of GM Ray Pfeifer. At this point, perhaps a little history is in order: Ray used to be about as hard-core as they come. There was no wargame too complicated or too long for him. Suffice it to say that THE LONGEST DAY was one of his favorites. Then I made the mistake of introducing him to Bill Cleary, Cliff Willis, and Mick Uhl, and Team Doily was born. Now if it takes more than an hour to play or to read, it’s off this list. During this sorry evolution, Ray fell in love with ADEL VERFLICHTET and now proclaims it one of the greatest games of skill ever devised, to which I say “hogwash”.

To make matters worse, he won the tournament last year (knocking out our own last eligible team member in the process) and now fancies himself the World’s Best Player of the World’s Best Game. Again, I respond: “hogwash”. My teammates have probably played ADEL VERWHATCHAMACALLIT a hundred times. I’ve played it with them perhaps three times and won all three games. Yet, every time I’ve shown it to novices, I lose miserably. This is a great game of skill?

To prove my point, I enlisted my 14-year-old daughter to play in the tournament and promised her a $20 reward if she beat both of my teammates in the tournament. Since she had played the game only once before I figured she was novice enough to prove my point. Naturally, she came in third, and Bill and Ray were nowhere to be seen in the finals. It was the best $20 I’ve ever spent. Terry Tegler of Fort Worth, TX took home the plaque, but I took home the bragging rights for my next debate with the members of Team Doily. Despite Ray’s humiliation and thanks to a generous final round that admitted more entrants than the NHL playoffs, he actually managed to score a point for Team Doily. We now had nine—which was nine more than we scored last year, and put us among the current leaders.

FRIDAY

The glamour events started Friday morning and none was more glamorous than the ASL field at 112 strong. Over 300 games and some 48 hours later, the second ASL National Championship came down to two players: Perry Cooke of MD, and Ray Woloszyn of NC. Each had beaten heavy favorites; Ray faced down Gary Fortenberry of TX in a grueling nine-hour match only to follow it with a blistering match against Virginia’s Guy Chaney. Perry did the seemingly impossible by topping 1991 champion Mike McGrath and last year’s GM Bill “Fish” Conner in back-to-back games.

The championship game came down to the Barrikady—specifically, Bread Factory #2. This scenario had been played 22 times already in the tournament with the Russians prevailing 13 times, and after two turns Woloszyn’s Russians looked good for win #14. The Germans had lost a leader and a squad-and-a-half, as compared to no losses for the Russians. But two KIA’s and an Ambush later, the Russians were in full retreat. Fish placed third, Chaney fourth, and newcomer Eric Givler took 5th and “best of class” honors for the highest finish by a player rated at or below 1500. Ironically, he edged-out Rob Wolkey for that honor, although Wolkey had given him his only defeat.

Considering the size of the field, ASL may well split into divisions next year with additional plaques for best performance by a player in his class (based on AREA ratings) and perhaps a bounty hunter plaque to the player who scores the biggest upset as determined by the difference in their AREA ratings. Fate can be fickle. During the last five ASL Oktoberfest, Guryev’s HQ was won by the Germans at 17:5 clip, while the Russians prevailed at AVALONCON ’92 at a ratio of 5:10. Such are the quirks of tournament play.

BULGE ’91 was one of the few tournaments to decrease in size—losing nearly half of its field and barely staying eligible for tournament status with eight players. Moreover its champion was decided by forfeit when the other finalist, Mark Guttag, had to depart, leaving Randy Heller as the unchallenged champion. The small field allowed the first round to be played as two games by switching sides in each game to adjust for the perceived imbalance. Mark was the only player to win twice as the Allies and Randy had the two highest scores as the German.

Between its recent publication, voluminous rules, and the competition of two other THIRD REICH tournaments, I figured ADVANCED THIRD REICH would have a tough time qualifying as a tournament. However, playtester and GM Joe Brophy managed to pull enough curious grand strategists together for an official
event and walked off with the plague. I suspect the event was as much a teaching experience as a competition and that Joe will find both a larger and more experienced field to contend with next year.

George Seary of Endwell, NY became the first AVALONCON champ to successfully defend his crown when he repeated in CIVIL WAR by beating Tom Druejing in the semifinals and Don Johnson in the final.

James Falling of Raleigh, NC also held serve by repeating as the champion of RUSSIAN FRONT, albeit against a reduced field of only ten. The objective bids for sides ranged from a high of 39 to a low of 27. Runner-up Bruce Kernan gained a high of 45 objectives as the German in one round while Sean Finnerty aggressively pursued the Axis satellites as the Russians in another game and captured both Constanza and Helsinki.

WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN was decided in the fifth round when John Boisvert blew away the rigging of GM Jim McAden to end the tournament as the only undefeated player.

Perennial tournament favorite KINGMAKER drew only 11 entrants this year, less than half last year's total, and may be showing its age in the face of a rising crop of new multi-player games. Yet the four-hour championship round of the "War of the Roses" produced more than its share of tension and excitement for the six finalists as the lead changed hands no less than four times in the final 30 minutes of the game! GM and last year's winner, Heikki Thoen, finished third this time out behind the victorious George Sauer III of Circleville, OH. George is a worthy champion, having written an imaginative article on KINGMAKER variants in Volume 24, Issue Number 5 of The GENERAL.

No lack of participants troubled TITAN, which retained its status as the fifth-largest event with 48 players. Hard-working GM Bill Scott, who makes rules clarification mailings to his players before the convention and detailed summaries of the results afterwards, is among our most dedicated GMs and his overall GM rating of 9.21 in our convention survey bears that out. Six finalists from a field which included past winners of AVALONCON, Origins, Atlantiscon, and the Charlottecon TITAN Open began play in the final round. Bruno Wolff gained much respect as he cut down Mike Pustilnik, the highest scoring qualifier, Brian Bouton, and last year's winner Steve Rareside. Steve Kolesar chose that time to put Bruno out, but not without being crippled in the process. Kevin Quirk, having quietly stayed clear of the mayhem, then charged Steve and the last battle pitting Serpents and a Titan against each other took place in a swamp. When a Behemoth eliminated Steve's Titan, Kevin emerged as the new TITAN champion.

Speaking of dedicated GMs, Glenn Petroski also rated very high with a 9.2 rating in our GM survey. Small wonder. Glenn also precedes the tournament with an extensive mailing of clarifications for his VITP tournament and then hovers over his seven-round, Swiss-style tournament throughout the weekend. This year's event was exceedingly hard-fought with no one going undefeated. 76 games of VITP were played, with 38 Japanese wins, 36 Allied victories and only two draw games. Glenn tells us: "Characteristic of the '91 VITP tournament was the separation of the men from the boys. Characteristic of AVALONCON '92 was the fact that the boys had grown up." As Marvin Birnbaum commented after besting me: "That is for throwing sand in my face last year!" ... All of '91's Top Ten finishers had taken a loss by the third round and had to fight their way back through the new contenders to hold any standing at all." Wes Erni and Alan Applebaum took first and second, respectively, with only one point separating them. Wes Erni overcame his early loss to pull out the win for himself and his team in the Team Tournament.

GM Pat Flory comes up short in THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN; finishing second again.

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN had a slightly reduced field this year for a new format which used a "Round-Robin" preliminary to determine the eight finalists who would battle it out in single elimination format. This resulted in a ten-round tournament which saw Alan Frappier of Norwich, CT go undefeated, leaving GM Pat Flory, the AREA postal champion, as the bridesmaid for the second year in a row. Pete Menard, a third finalist from CT, also entered the Semi-Finals undefeated but fell to Flory as Tom Gregario of Norristown, PA lost to Frappier.

James Fleckenstein of Sterling, VA won the FIFTH FLEET tournament with an overwhelming victory over the Indian navy by sinking both the Vikrant and Viraat in the appropriately-named Battle of the Flatops. It was easy to see how James got his practice. His ten-year-old son scored decisive victories in the first two rounds.

COMPUTER THIRD REICH failed to draw enough entrants to qualify as an official tournament (which is probably just as well, since 70% of our Survey respondents felt that computer games had no place at AVALONCON). Consequently, the first and last AVALONCON computer event was won by Baron August of Alquiappa, PA.

The WIZARD'S QUEST Junior tournament grew to 13 players and had to be a success judging by the enthusiasm of my 9-year old. I felt guilty dumping this bundle of energy on GM Bill Navolis without having taught her the game but Bill did an admirable job of explaining the game to those who had never played before. So good, that my daughter is now constantly bugging me to play WIZARD'S QUEST. Anabel Raymond of Dorval, QUE won with an easy victory in Red Dune while Carolyn DeMarco took second by routing the Orcs in "Lair of the Lizard".

Michael Anchors of Rockville, MD won the ACQUIRE tournament by qualifying for the finals on a tie-breaker and then winning the final game. In the three preliminary rounds, a player received one point for each player he beat in the four-player games. Dave Plotnick and Doug Gollulo scored eight of a possible nine points to advance while Anchors and Mark Derek were among seven players with seven points. The final order of finish was Anchors, ... and who says kids don't like boardgames?

DUNE was the most frequently requested tournament last year so it returned from the grave as a discontinued game to draw 12 players to the two-round event. Paul Saunders of Sterling, VA was the only double-winner, winning as Emperor allied with the Guild and as Atreides in an Atreides-Emperor-Harkonnen triumvirate. All games ended in an alliance win.

The new version of D-DAY fared no better than its predecessor in attracting a qualifying field. Only four generals battled for control of the beaches, topped by David Grosskuth of Powder Springs, GA who came from nowhere in the final round to win the only full victory of the tournament.

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Derek, Plotnick and Gallulo. **ACQUIRE** was also notable for my teammate’s failure to score in the Team Tournament. In two years, Team Doily has failed to score a point in **ACQUIRE**. When will we learn?

![Team Doily](image)

*Obviously, this isn’t the finale of ACQUIRE—not with Team Doily’s Bill Cleary (left) in attendance.*

**EMPIRES IN ARMS** joined the tournament ranks this year using a “domination of the board principle” to resolve winners in one round. Four full tables went the entire weekend with Aaron Smith of Trenton, NJ declaring the winner based on going dominant with Russia in 1806. In the 1792 game, France went dominant in 1796 before Napoleon arrived. Tema de la Pena, Tim Stone, and Kurt Schlegel finished second through fourth, respectively.

![Team Doily](image)

*You mean all you guys want to play EMPIRES IN ARMS all weekend?*

With the beginning of **TURNING POINT: STALINGRAD** at noon, the “manly” portion of Team Doily went into action. I drew Paul Fletcher in the opening round and was surprised to get the Germans despite a bid of 0. My German win was just one of 13 against a total of only four Russian wins despite a preponderance of VP bids of one and two for the Germans. Seven hours and an adjudication later I was into the second round against the GM Henry Jones. Jones is the local opposition for Ron Fedin—the fellow who so unceremoniously dumped me in the opening round last year. With seven German wins in the first round, I decided to up my bid for the second game to a point. That matched Henry and he took the Germans on a Unit Elimination tie-breaker bid of +10. The game that followed once again proved my contention that **TPS** is better with chips than dice, as Henry was consistently out-rolled. His German offense deserved better than it got but still almost broke through at the very end when I got careless and allowed his armor to threaten the Red Barricades. Meanwhile, Fedin had dispatched last year’s winner, Byron Stingley, in an extremely close game resolved by the tie-breaker on the final die roll.

I was third in line for the bye caused by our uneven field of 17 and gladly took Saturday morning off to wrestle with my daughter in the Tag Team tournament. When I returned, my old foe, Ron Fedin, had dispatched Jason Robert with another +2 bid and was waiting for me with mouth watering—or so it seemed. Ron again bid two for the Germans and I gladly took the Russians. Ron even graciously offered to use chips, no doubt not wanting to hear me whine about the dice for the next six hours. But it did no good. Ron’s dice tower, the same one I dubbed the “Tower from Hell” the year before—did me in again even while using chips to resolve combat. The Russian got only two of 12 ruble rolls and couldn’t re-arrange artillery at all. When Ron drew his “2” to end my night on the first turn I knew I was in trouble. Falling further and further behind, I made increasingly more desperate gambles and as despair replaced hope, added bad play to bad luck for an unbeatable combination. Ron won easily for the second year in a row, and my two points left Team Doily out of contention with but 11 points and no events remaining. It was no consolation that Ron lost in the finals to James Doughan by an even wider margin—his bid of 2 VPs for the Germans had little to do with his downfall, so complete was the Russian victory. In fact, Doughan won three of his four games as the Russians, although German bids of as much as two VPs certainly helped.

**BLACKBEARD** posted one of the largest gains in participants—nearly doubling in size and requiring a shifting of sites as well as the addition of a third round to crown Gordon Rodgers of Philadelphia the top seadog among the field of 36.

**DRAGONHUNT** drew only four junior competitors but that didn’t prevent Beth Barnard of Fairview, PA from slaying the dragon, after having faced down and wounded the vile worm twice previously.

**LEGENDS OF ROBIN HOOD** was another of the successful Juniors events with 18 youngsters “riding through the glen”. However, it got me in hot water with my nine-year-old when the GM cut the published game length in half—thus making my pre-tournament coaching obsolete. Poor Jessica ended the half-game tournament with lots of Merry Men but no gold. Ah well... losing is a more important lesson than winning. Melissa Pafenberg of Arlington, VA proved to be the best young archer.

![Young archers praciticing](image)

*Young archers practicing before the LEGENDS OF ROBIN HOOD tournament.*

With 19 competitors, **SQUAD LEADER** proved itself to still be a quality event, although obscured by the shadow of its progeny. Indicative of its plight is the fact that its GM and original winner, Scott Romanowski, is abandoning it next year to enter the **ASL** ranks. Eventual winner Jeff Miller of Massena, NY dispatched Scott in the opening round of the **Single Elimination Finals** and then beat Brook Shultz and Eric Stranger for the win. Jeff won as the Germans in the last four rounds with Scenario 7 (**Buchholz Station**) being his battlefield of choice.

**RAIL BARON** remained a popular event with 29 entrants and yielded the first double winner of the weekend when Kevin Quirk of Mechanicshurg, PA ended the two-round marathon ten hours later at 2 AM. Marcus Foster of Ft Worth, TX, the son of last year’s winner, came within one dot of winning, but as a result of the shortfall fell beneath $200,000—allowing Kevin to win on his next run.

**PELOPONNESIAN WAR**, which barely made tournament status last year with eight players, was not so fortunate this year as only six showed to contest Greece despite the enthusiastic GM’ing of designer Mark Herman. Roberto Sanchez nevertheless won in three rounds when his Athenians rebounded from certain defeat to capture Sparta.
SUPERSTAR BASEBALL also slipped drastically from its inaugural showing of 23 entrants to only 9, proving that scheduling is everything, and prompting GM Randy Cox to abandon it and move on to something else next year. Perhaps the competition from the newly added Statis Pro Baseball tournament proved too much, but with sports coverage at AVALONCON on the rise, the competition is only going to get tougher. Using the special charts provided by GM Cox, John Brandeberry's 1991 Atlanta Braves beat David Baumgardner's 1991 Toronto Blue Jays four games to one for the second AVALONCON World Series title.

Speaking of sports, my least favorite "sport" and my favorite "sports game" also got underway at this time with 16 "wrestlers" pairing off with teams of three wrestlers apiece in a WRASSLIN' Elimination tournament. I predict this fast-paced game will grow in popularity at AVALONCON as more gamers see how much fun it is. I'd planned on entering it myself if I had made my typical first round exit from TPS, but as it was I had an appointment to keep on the Volga. Consequently, Mike Fitzgerald won his second AVALONCON plaque in as many years by defeating J. Rush, Ray Stukensas, Steve Rugh, and Mike Stein in that order.

Moving now to the ridiculous, in the sub-line we come to DIPLOMACY—ranking third in the AVALONCON hierarchy with 65 players, but first in prizes. In keeping with the traditional prizes of DIPLOMACY events, Best Country Armies were given out for best performances by each player and a "Hammered" plaque for the poor soul who lost the most centers in a single turn due to a stab. The unfortunate recipient of that booby prize was Marc Rosenthal of Brooklyn, NY who was done in by Tom Kobrin of Mebane, NC to take both the Golden Knife Award for best stab as well as winning the overall competition with the best overall performance over the three rounds. He also posted the only solo win. Kobrin was followed by Steve Chilcote (MD), our own Rex Martin, Greg Gilmer of VA, Lee Kestler (PA), James Stevens (GA), and David Hood (NC). Best Country Awards went to our own Rex Martin as Turkey (come to think of it, I've often referred to him as "Turkey", myself), Tom Kobrin as Russia, Jerry Pitey as England, Tom Mainardi as Germany, Steve Chilcote as France, Tom Pasko as Austria, and Fred Hyatt as Italy.

GANGSTERS made an impressive showing in its first tournament at AVALONCON with 28 players—many of them taking advantage of its "B" rating to learn as they played. One such newcomer, Debbie Otto, won it all—gaining all the experience she needed as she advanced through the three-round tournament. I bet that was a long ride back to St Louis for her husband.

PANZERGRUPPE GUDERIAN slipped from 16 entrants to ten, but that didn't stop GM Phil Rennert from repeating as champion of his own event. Phil noticed that most games saw the Russian player make a serious forward defense on the Vitebsk-Orsha line. Phil believes that the 30-50 point bids for the German side (which he considers low) were due to the perceived advantage of this tactic. Phil's response: "In my experience, the Russian can't get enough [units] forward to hold, and can lose his army trying." Phil recommends trying to hold the main line along Smolensk-Hex-2418-Roslavl. Doubtless there are quite a few die-hard POG fans out there who will be eager to test Phil's premise next year.

Far from lacking participants, REPUBLIC OF ROME added more players this year, but that didn't stop it from being a one-round tournament as the "game" defeated three of the four boards to prevent anyone from advancing. One fell to an outbreak of no less than seven active wars. Robert Rudolph of Pittsburgh, PA won on the fourth board to take the tournament outright in one game.

PAX BRITANNICA attracted a disappointing total of seven entrants, thereby failing to make tournament status. That didn't prevent Marx Franceschini of Owings Mills, MD from enjoying a great game as Britain when Germany declared war on him without allies and lost Africa in the process.

TYRANNO EX had a good start for a new game with a perfect field of 16 for a two-round tournament. Most had never played it before as the ink was still wet on the copies rushed to the show. I must commend my teammates on Team Dolly for their restraint in not entering the tournament but instead helping GM Mick Uhl explain the game to beginners, for this is one of their favorite games. Next year, no more Mr. Nice Guy. William Patrick of Rossville, MI took first followed by Dave Pugh, John Irvine, and John Ellsworth.

MARCH MADNESS used one of my favorite tournament formats. It is unique in that the more players it attracts, the faster it concludes. Using each Regional as a qualifying heat allows up to 16 players to try for the Final Four final round at any of four different times. And, if space permits, players can enter more than one heat fairly because repeat entrants are penalized by lower draft numbers. It is the perfect tournament format for AVALONCON. Steve Rugh won the East Regional with his Duke '89 team while Bruce Reiff took the West with UCLA '69. In the SE Regional, GM John Ellmann advanced 8th seed Louisville '75 while yours truly advanced the fifth seeded Michigan '89 team from the Midwest by blowing away Heikki Thoen's vastly superior top-seeded UCLA squad with torrid dice rolling. The Final Four competition saw Reiff's UCLA squad overcome a ten-point deficit to edge Rugh's team by a point, 92-91. My dice remained hot as Michigan crushed Louisville 99-74. One game away from a World Series title. Consequently, Mike Fitzgerald won the SE Regional, GM John Ellmann advanced the fifth seeded Michigan '89 team, Tom Droescher in the semi-finals, only the hus­band and wife duo of Don and Maria Hawthorne remained. The championship game was now for all the marbles—not just best UP FRONT player in the land, but more importantly, best in the household. In a technically flawless match, onlookers enjoyed a nip and tuck affair that literally went to the wire and was decided on points at the time limit when Maria's last German attack on Don's Russian firebase ran out the third deck and pinned two men at Range Chit 2 for a 21-20 victory.

PANZERBLITZ and PANZER LEADER both started in tandem which was probably a mistake in terms of drawing participants, as the sister games competed with each other for players. The older PANZERBLITZ managed tournament status while the relatively newer had to settle for Demonstration status with but six combatants. Both used a Double Elimination format to entertain their players throughout the day. Johnny Hasay of Benton, PA went unbeaten in five games and defeated Ron Long (4-2) twice using scenario 18 to take the PANZERBLITZ SATURDAY MERCHANT OF VENUS began the new action on Saturday with a two-round contest decided by percentage of money made at the respective boards. Kathy's first game was close, but in the second game a fast start gave her the lead, which she expanded to beat her opponents (including her husband) by a wide margin. Although both Kathy Stroh and Brian Bouton finished with 2-0 records, Kathy won the tie-breaker game and took the plaque back to Lilburn, GA.

This is never enough time to do everything you'd like at AVALONCON and one of the events I regrettably bypassed was UP FRONT. Our new editor, Don Hawthorne, has quite a reputation as an UP FRONT player, and it ticked me no end to secure office bragging rights at AVALONCON '92 by winning two out of two and then beating a hasty retreat with my virtue still intact. It was enough to tempt me to enter the tournament, but I had a date with Ron Fedin on the Volga.
When last year's winner, Bart Rigg of May's Lick, KY again went undefeated, this time in PANZER LEADER.

I was looking forward to the WRASSLIN' Tag Team tournament. After being drubbed by my daughter dozens of times, I was glad to be on her side for a change. Seriously, you can cheer at their sports events, enjoy their triumphs, and comfort them in defeat, but there's no substitute for actually playing with your child on the same team in a shared endeavor. I heartily recommend it to any gaming parent. My only problem was which daughter to team with as 9-year-old Jessica is now ready to enter the Welterweight ranks. I suspect next year the Greenwood clan will have to hold a qualifying meet to see who gets stuck with mom as their partner. Tara and I won our first match, but in the finals that great card-drawing luck that won her two plaques last year deserted her. With five points of damage she tagged dad into the ring and was never seen again—failing to draw either a Recovery or a Power Surge, or even so much as a Referee to help her old man, who was beaten to a pulp by the Stakenes father-son duo from Livonia, MI. Second again. "Wait till next year" is starting to sound old.

BULGE '81 yielded the weekend's first double winner when Rob Beyma added to his WATERLOO laurels by fortifying key towns as the Americans and hanging on against massive armor, nebelerwerfer, and stuka attacks against Jeff Martin in the finals and Phil Evans in the semi-finals after defeating Barry Conley with the Germans. The game's designer, Bruno Siniaglio, fell to GM Bryan Eshleman who then lost to Jeff Martin in the semi-finals.

ADVANCED CIVILIZATION has apparently replaced CIVILIZATION as the event of choice for the marathon gamer. This year's event started out with six boards of eight players each.

GM Charles Hickok relates: "The level of play was excellent and the games tightly contested, with people who stayed out of war generally doing best. Most early front-runners (including the GM) attracted early end-game unpleasantness and were thumped out of their leads. Six qualifying-round winners combined with the three best second-place finishers to fill out the board for the final game. Dan Vice of Fanwood, NJ led the Iberians to a victory characterized by intelligent play and excellent diplomacy."

GM Hickok, who placed second, offers this advice: "Don't get in front until the game is over and don't expect to catch up if you draw five disasters during the end game."

Charlie's planned improvements for next year include tighter time limits and possible "Best Country" awards for outstanding play in the first round.

STATIS PRO BASEBALL was an ambitious first time event at AVALONCON in which twelve entrants drafted individual player cards to form their own teams and then engaged in league play and playoffs. As predicted, the GM woefully underestimated the time required for his format and when last seen the World Series was still underway Sunday evening as we departed. I am told that Steven Pedlow of Chicago, IL finally edged Pat Jones of Pittsburgh, PA for the first Statis Pro Baseball crown. This is a unique event which deserves a place at AVALONCON but should realistically start at the beginning of the convention and plan to run through the end.

For the second year in a row, GM Ray Stakenes proved to be the best Pied Piper by drawing 20 youngsters to the lost plateau to hunt dinosaurs in DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD. Lauren Fitzgerald, who finished second in the event last year, joined her father in the winner's circle by edging out last year's champion Ryan Boufford in the finals.

Bruce Reiff of Powell, OH became a double winner for the year and claimed his third plaque overall by amassing a winning margin of $115,000 in WIN, PLACE & SHOW. His winning margin came primarily from betting Cockroach in the fifth. Linda Pedlow placed second by buying and backing Letye Gulf in the sixth. Jim Burnett, a veteran GM of many conventions, achieved the only perfect score on our GM ratings for this event when six of his ten players answered the poll and each gave him a perfect "10."

The GM ratings serve a dual purpose. They help us to choose a recipient for a well-deserved honor as we single out one of our outstanding GMs and honor him/her with a plaque. The ratings also let us know who, if any, may not be suited for the task. All GMs are sent their evaluations and comments so that they can learn from the experience and hopefully improve their event in future years. To my knowledge, AVALONCON is the only convention which works with its GMs in this way to provide feedback and attempt to improve their performance.

Although we had many excellent GMs, the nominations were limited to the top six in overall ratings on the GM Ratings survey with a minimum of six responses. That resulted in nominations for Jim Burnett (10) for WIN, PLACE & SHOW, Randy Cox (9.66) for SUPERSTAR BASEBALL, Russ Gifford (9.44) for ASL, Bill Scott (9.21) for TITAN, Glenn Petroski (9.2) for VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC, and Dave Terry (9.05) for B-17. The Advisory Panel committee for these awards selected Russ Gifford as the winner—not just because he ran the largest event and ran it well—but also because he came all the way from Nebraska and sacrificed his own weekend (not playing in much of anything himself) in order to administer ASL as a late replacement GM. Well done, Russ. Richly deserved.

If I may digress for a moment, I recently read a review of AVALONCON by someone who obviously isn't one of its fans, and whom I recall as someone who ran events for a fee. He basically had two complaints. First, the events were limited to Avalon Hill games. Second, Avalon Hill was too cheap to pay its GMs. As for his first criticism, I have no excuse, nor do I feel I need one. Parker Brothers doesn't run events for Milton Bradley games when they're holding the National Monopoly championships. Nor does Nintendo promote SEGA when they crown their world's champion of video games. I don't feel the slightest bit guilty about not hosting tournaments in our competitor's games—especially when those competitors don't contribute one dime to the considerable expense of organizing this convention. One of the reasons that AVALONCON is such an intense, enjoyable experience is its concentration on Avalon Hill boardgames, but on one specific brand of boardgame. It is that focus which makes it unique, and so enjoyable that over 40% of its attendees come from a distance in excess of 800 miles. Those who find this objectionable can continue to go elsewhere; frankly, we're having a great time without you.

As to his second complaint, I would point out that the decision not to pay GMs is not Avalon Hill's, but mine. The company wanted to reimburse GMs but I vetoed it based on my prior experience with such matters while running both ATLANTICON and Origins. Both of these conventions have had to offer incentives to attract GMs in the past. I know because I was the one who was paying them. I've seen this policy expand from free admission to actual bounties for each event ticket a GM can collect. I've also seen the GM performances under this system deteriorate progressively from year to year as it attracted more and more mercenary types more interested in making a buck than in running a good event. In contrast, AVALONCON GMs not only don't make anything, they pay up front for the privilege—long before their event is publicized—so that the pre-registration form can be prepared. I am immensely proud of the fact that this policy—although proposed by me—was solidly endorsed by the Advisory Panel of 16 GMs which make the policy decisions for AVALONCON. They openly rejected any compensation in favor of retaining the volunteer spirit that has so far attracted only those with the best intentions. I ask you which event would you rather enter: the one being run by a GM collecting tickets for his cut who is then off to administer his other 11 events, or the one by the guy who does nothing else all weekend but administer that game and who has sent you a pre-convention guideline sheet at his own expense? For me, it is no contest. This is just another reason why I feel our volunteer GMs are the best in the world. Apparently many agree with me for we have no shortage of volunteers to host events under these terms. Indeed, I've noticed more diversity in our
boardgame event offerings than in several prominent national conventions. So my answer to our critic is that far from returning to the archaic systems he espouses, I would suggest to him that the other conventions consider adopting our policies.

WAR AT SEA is another event I wouldn't mind trying my hand at if I could find the time. Thomas Scarborough of St. Louis, MO was the undefeated winner of the five-round Swiss-style event with a perfect score of 50 victory points out of a possible 50. Bruce Monnin of Minster, OH (the defending champion) tied for second with Ken Shank; both had 4-1 records and 40 VP's each. Chuck Stapp of Freehold, NJ was fourth with 38 VP's and a 4-1 record.

KREMLIN employed a point system to advance the top six players to a winner-take-all championship round. The final turn saw a "purge spree" combined with the "Kremlin Flia", leaving too few politicians to fill the Politburo. Sean Cousins of Bangor, ME saw his Party Chief ousted after an assassination scandal, but not before promoting Leech Schukrutoff to KGB head, thus winning the tournament via the "Highest Active Politician" route. Considering that this is a game of diabolical back-stabbing, I found the following statement from Sean especially meaningful:

"I would like to relay one event that summed up the whole weekend for me. On Saturday night I was competing in the KREMLIN finals when we took a break to attend the After Action meeting. All six players left the table, with Intrigue cards, I.P. sheets, etc. sitting unattended. No one seemed to care about their opponents taking advantage of this. In fact, we were using my copy of the game, and I had no reservations about leaving it spread out for almost two hours with no one watching it. I have never played in any tournaments outside of AVALONCON where such trust was commonplace. I didn't speak to anyone who didn't thoroughly enjoy himself and almost every conversation ended with "see you next year". I know the 650+ mile trip won't deter me from attending."

ROADKILL became a demonstration instead of a tournament when the game failed to be produced in time. Nevertheless, GM and playtester Mike Fitzgerald put an interested group through their paces in a demonstration race with my prototype. He must have excused them for I was besieged with requests to borrow the set for the rest of the convention. I predict it will be among our most popular events within a few years as the Campaign game version lends itself very well to a unique tournament format. Craig Taylor reported similar enthusiasm from his ad hoc playtesting of MUSTANGS—the newest game in our Smithsonian American History Series.

FLASHPOINT: GOLAN failed to draw enough entrants to retain tournament status, but that didn't prevent Byron Stingley of Cary, NC from taking home another plaque. In his third and final round Battle of Armageddon scenario against Rodger Taylor's Arabs, his Sabra Brigade artillerymen disorganized an entire Syrian Armored Division, setting up a devastating attack by the Israeli Natani Division for the win.

At 4 PM the Greenwood clan finally got on the scoreboard. Diminutive Jessica, all of nine years old, redeemed the family honor by taking the Junior division WRASSLIN' title over five other half-pint competitors. Lacking the necessary eight entrants to qualify for tournament status is a technicality I wasn't about to explain to her. A plaque is a plaque—and this one has her name on it.

An hour later, ENEMY IN SIGHT for little admirals got underway with Scott Cornett of Monroe, CT edging out last year's winner Megan McBride in a two-round affair.

The rules for PATTON'S BEST were amended to allow for a multi-player format, and GM Jason Robert of Northridge, CA led ten players in a drive on Bastogne.

NEW WORLD picked up additional players with a Saturday night start which is looking like a prime time slot to start two-round Multi-Player games for a Sunday morning conclusion. Trevor Bender of Arlington, VA proved to be the best colonizer with Ryan Bouffard, George Sauer, and Jim Smith finishing in that order behind him.

SPEED CIRCUIT was the last event to get under way on Saturday, as 18 racers pitted their skills against the Monza course. The winner at the checkered flag Mike Fitzgerald who claimed double-winner status for the weekend and his third plaque overall with a high speed slipstream on the last turn after making the last lap with no Wears remaining. Rick Kissan finished second, followed by Thomas Greene and Michael Duffy.

The AVALONCON After Action Meeting brought Saturday to a close and compared to the inaugural meeting of a year ago was a pretty tame affair. Contentment seemed widespread. The most controversial discussion centered around the "No Smoking" policy with smokers and non-smokers backing predictable sides. The point was made that a designated area could be set aside for smokers and that issue was brought to a vote and soundly defeated in the Advisory Panel meeting that immediately followed in the wee hours of the morning. The prevailing attitude was that such an exception would only cause problems for GMs who would have to keep track of games in two locations. This decision was soundly backed by the attendees who answered the AVALONCON survey with 90% favoring the present "No Smoking" policy, 9% advocating a less severe restriction to allow smoking in the lobby, and only 1% advocating allowing smoking anywhere. For most the part, the smokers among us were remarkably cooperative in restraining their habit and the weekend passed largely without incident. Certainly the number of favorable comments on the "No Smoking" policy far outweighed the negative so the decision to stay the course was an easy one.

The only other significant discussion that I can recall involved the unhappiness of one fellow who to play his favorite game had to commit the entire weekend to a Swiss style format of playing only that game. Like the smoking issue, this is a matter which cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. I specifically recall that the game in question settled on the Swiss format, because a number of people requested it—not wanting to be eliminated from a Single Elimination tournament on the first round because that was the only game they wanted to play. Obviously, these two sets of desires are in conflict with one another. My answer was that tournament formats were a matter of individual choice by the GM and those who were unhappy with the current format should make that known to the GM so that he can poll his players as to the format they would prefer in the future.

The winners of the Team Tournament with 16 points were the representatives from Wisconsin (from left to right) Peter Wilke (BRITANNIA), Wes Ertle (YTP), Bruce Wolff III (TITAN), and Tom Mueller (ASL).

SUNDAY

"Get away day" at AVALONCON began with an interfaith religious service on Sunday for those hardy souls able to rise early from three straight nights of wee-hour gaming. For most, Sunday is reserved for the final round of events started previously and an early departure for those beginning the long trek home. But for others, there remained three last chances to grab an AVALONCON plaque.

ENEMY IN SIGHT led off the action at 9 AM with 32 admirals breaking up into four groups of eight to advance four of their number to designer Neal Schlaffer's final round. Robert Kilroy and John Filbride jumped off to early leads by each capturing a pair of prizes (prize ships, that is). In the second deck Gordon Rodgers pulled into the lead, but Bill Sanders' luck remained bad throughout as he assumed a trailing position at the back of the pack. The third hand proved to be the last as many prizes were taken and Gordon Rodgers went to 107 points with a third of the deck remaining. John Filbride sank two ships and took another prize worth 32 points, removed a Break The Line played against him and the Philadelphian returned to port with 147 points and the win.
ATTACK SUB again drew well in the get away slot with 26 submariners vying in a “two out of three” format in the preliminaries. The final came down to a scenario of Flattop between Steve Rugh of Norwalk, CT and defending champion James Fuqua of Detroit who was trying to become our first back-to-back double winner by claiming his fourth plaque. Steve was down to his last sub and NATO had just hammered it with three separate attacks—all misses—when the lone Soviet sub sunk the Kennedy to win the tournament.

Nineteen wrestlers showed up for the WRASSLIN’ Battle Royale at 11 AM and the last chance at a plaque. Being the defending champion in this event is like walking around with a kick-me sign taped to your back so I unchained my wife from the registration desk and sent her off to defend the family honor. Much to my surprise, she survived the first round and made the final six. Fortunately for my own peace of mind, she was soon ousted from the finals when she got a bit frisky with a BR card. The struggle was now a three-cornered battle between the Judge (Troy Middler), Manly Mike (Judy Kibler), and the Garbage Man (Gene Gibson). The latter two combined to hurt the Judge but not enough to prevent the Garbage Man from making a quick exit when his BR was reversed with a Power Surge. That left Judy Kibler, last year’s runner-up, in position to finish off the crippled Judge with a Bear Hug.

As much as it pleases me to honor all of the aforementioned for their gaming prowess, there are others who stand even higher in my esteem. With all of the emphasis we place on competition and winning at AVALONCON, the best thing about the convention is the high degree of sportsmanship which is displayed throughout. Thus I tip my hat to the following folks, who so impressed their respective GMs to earn a nomination for the Sportsmanship Award:

- Trevor Bender (SOA)
- Ryan Boudraff (BKB)
- Fred Calderone (VITP)
- Bob Boyd (RFT)
- Sean Cousins (NG)
- Mike Ellsworth (MV)
- Laureen Fitzgerald (LR)
- Bill Friedman (PW)
- Terry Hunsinger (WIS)
- Lee Kershaw (CMS)
- Sylvia Larose (B-17)
- Alan Libuszaki (KRW)
- Dennis Mason (CVW)
- Mark McBridge (EC)
- Tom McCorry (ASE)
- Troy Medler (WBR)
- Bill Napolis (FTB)
- Forrest Pakefan (BB)
- Cindy Pedlow (WPS)
- Randy Schill (FSE)
- Bruno Singalong (AFR)
- Bill Taylor (NVW)
- Marcello Tummo (SSB)
- Andre Uhr (GRC)
- Mark Walker (SQL)
- Bob Wartenburg (SRJ)

The job of the Advisory Panel Sportsmanship Award committee was made easy when Chuck Stapp of Freehold, NJ was nominated in two events to become the clear winner. Rodney Robinson, the WATERLOO GM, had this to say of Chuck: “An opponent that is a pleasure with which to do battle. Always remembers that fun comes before the win.” Chuck also drew GM Andrew Maly’s endorsement in the UP FRONT tournament.

And so ended another AVALONCON which would have to be considered by any measure a great success. What it lacked in numbers was more than made up for with enthusiasm. Management is now convinced that this “Back to Basics” championships theme is a concept whose time has come, and is committed to making it an annual event. More importantly, the format is one which the majority of our attendees simply adore.

A quick accounting of the survey results reads like an across-the-board endorsement of the convention structure. Consider the numbers which follow:

- 90% rated their AVALONCON experience as “Great”, compared to 10% who gave it an “Average” grade. Not one person among 300 responses rated it “Poor”.
- 65% said they would probably return next year with others in tow, while another 32% indicated they’d be back alone. Only 3% indicated they would probably not attend next year.
- 48% found the AREA rating program “interesting” while only 7% found it “annoying”.
- 48% also found the Team Tournament concept “worthwhile” while only 2% found it “not worth the effort”. A 50% increase in the number of teams in this year’s tournaments seems to indicate that this is another concept growing in popularity.
- 85% felt that the plaques “were the main attraction” while only 15% favored replacing them with more merchandise credits. This proves my point that while “you can’t play a plaque”, neither can you remember how you got a free game ten years later.

The AVALONCON plaques were much sought-after honors. This year, as the plaques were won, they were replaced on the display by photographs of the winners. See this issue’s center spread for photos of the various tournament winners.

- 60% favored maintaining the present Thursday-through-Sunday format while 40% opted for a longer format. Given the high number of people who attend by travelling great distances, I’m inclined to give them more bang for their travel buck. The compromise solution of maintaining the Thursday-to-Sunday format, but moving the starting time up by eight hours, seems like the most logical solution.
- 51% favored an early August date, compared to 27% for July, 13% for any holiday weekend, and only 9% for June.
- 92% were in favor of staying at the Penn Harris. Only 8% were interested in moving to a larger facility in a major city.

Interest in spousal-support programs was minimal, so we won’t be going into the tour business. It was largely felt that people interested in seeing local points of interest would rather do so in the family car than in a bus. Besides, the point of AVALONCON is to promote boardgaming as an enjoyable social activity. It doesn’t really say much for gaming if we have to offer tours to other activities as an adjunct. The “wargame widow” argument loses a bit of its validity when you examine the breadth of the tournament offerings at AVALONCON—or the Winners Circles of such games as GANGSTERS, MERCHANT OF VENUS and UP FRONT. In addition to which, there are enough beginner’s games and socially-interactive, easy-to-learn games to keep anyone entertained who will give them a chance. My wife is even threatening to run a FACTS IN FIVE tournament next year.

On the question of adding the fringe activities common at other conventions, the responses were uniformly in favor of keeping AVALONCON as an exclusively boardgaming convention with the emphasis on playing games. A clear majority disapproved the addition of game auctions (57%), seminars (59%), flea markets (56%), role playing games (94%), and computer games (70%). Only on the issue of adding more free Junior-only events was a majority (72%) in favor of adding to the current format. We will try to respond to that request to the best of our ability to attract quality GMs. It takes a special kind of person to GM a Juniors Event well. There is also the matter of which should come first—the Juniors or the events to attract them. Although attendance by youngsters appears to be on the rise, we have not been sure that the number of events doesn’t dwarf the participants. The prime ingredient in any event is players, and a paucity of them lessens the enjoyment for everyone.

A surprising 32% favored the “stick” approach of charging an additional $5 to those who don’t pre-register on time as opposed to 68% who favored the “carrot” approach of offering free souvenirs. I favor “carrot” to “stick” incentives because once the deadline has passed for pre-registration, the extra charge serves as a negative incentive for someone to attend. Consequently, we’ll be trying a combination of the two incentives next year, while charging the same fee to both. Early pre-registrants will receive a free t-shirt or hat and a $5 credit to be used for any game purchase made at the show. This largesse will be funded by a $5 increase in the registration fee which, among other things, will enable us to mail the program by first class mail—avoiding the problems other things, will enable us to mail the program by first class mail—avoiding the problems we’ve had in the past using bulk rate mailings for timely delivery.

A cynical would be quick to point out that the registration fee for AVALONCON has increased every year. But before you complain, stop to compare our $30 price which includes a free souvenir and a $5 game credit to the $35/$40 charged by other national conven-
tions, who then sell you a souvenir for another
$8-$10, and charge you again for admission to
every event in which you participate. ADVANCED
CIVILIZATION is a bargain—especially if you avail
yourself of the credit to make a purchase, and
value the free souvenir.

Michael Tsuk of Arlington, MA writes: “I
just wanted to let you know how much I
enjoyed ADVANCED CIVILIZATION. Basically, I had the
time of my life! ... The format was great. It
was wonderful to just play games for four days
straight. I’m definitely coming back next year,
and I’ll try to bring some of my gaming friends
from the Boston area, too. On that note, I think
you could easily charge more for the registra-
tion fee, especially since there’s no fee for indi-
vidual tournaments. I, for one, would be will­ing
to pay $50 to register. After airfare and
hotel room, the registration fee is pretty
significant.”

We’re not interested in raising the registra-
tion fee, but we do want to attract more people
to experience ADVANCED CIVILIZATION first hand. The
most vital ingredient to hosting a great conven-
tion is gamers—the more the better.

I realize that there are those who will dismiss
all of this as a PR hype. I exchanged letters with
one cynic last year who insisted my description
of ADVANCED CIVILIZATION had to be fiction. He hadn’t
attended but he wouldn’t believe me or the eye
witness accounts of another correspondent who
had. Such people will never be convinced. But
if you have your doubts, I urge you not to take
my word for it but to seek out someone who has
attended and ask them their opinion. That’s
why we give away t-shirts and hats rather than
charging for them as other conventions do. We
want you to ask those people what they thought
of ADVANCED CIVILIZATION. If you do, odds are you’ll be
joining us next year at the Hunt Valley Marriott
in Baltimore, MD when we do it all again on
August 5th-8th. See you there.

PLAYTESTERS WANTED

We’re looking for more playtest volunteers.
This time the subject is nothing less than the
HISTORY OF THE WORLD; a multi-player
game of global conquest tracing the rise and fall
of civilizations across all of recorded history.
The game system is very simple and reminiscent
of a Risk variant. Prior experience is not to be given to those
already in possession of the Ragnar Brothers
version of the game, although a few “virgin”
groups will be chosen as well. The playtest will
require groups of at least four players and
preferably six. Volunteers must be willing to spend
a minimum of 20 hours per month in playtest, and submit three written, monthly reports regarding their findings. Applicants are cautioned that playtest materials are pre-production quality and may involve considerable labor
to assemble. Remuneration is limited to a free
copy of the game for each group coordinator.
Applicants should send a short letter of intro-
duction to Don Greenwood c/o The Avalon Hill
Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Balti-
more, Maryland 21214. We regret that, due to
the volume of mail such playtest invitations usu-
ally generate, we will be able to reply only to
those actually selected.

POST-ATOMIC (?!)
ADVANCED CIVILIZATION
Variant Rules for the (Re)Birth of Mankind
By Richard Berthold

The new ADVANCED version of CIVIL-
IZATION has so re-kindled our enthusiasm
for this venerable game that Gary Mayhew
and I have actually tried the two-player ver-
sion, surely an act of gaming desperation.
There are two immediately obvious problems
with only two players: trading opportunities
are severely limited and there is too much turf
available, even though the rules call for use of
the Italian and Balkan peninsula panels with­
out any of the island city sites. What we sug-
gest here are a few rules modifications that we
feel produce a two-player game of much
greater interest and variety.

First, any two adjacent panels may be used,
and an appropriate number of provinces and
city states is created by randomizing some of
them out of existence. For each province in the
playing area (if the population limit number
is on the panel, the province is in the play-
ing area) a die is rolled to determine if the
province is in play. Provinces determined
to be not in play are marked with counters,
and they are completely inaccessible to tokens.
If they are coastal provinces, ships may still pass
through them, but may not remain there
between turns if carrying tokens. Consider
these areas to be radioactive hot spots left
over from the nuclear holocaust that destroyed
the previous civilizations.

The percentage chance of a province being
eliminated from play depends on the panels
selected and the interests of the players. If,
for example, the Italian and Balkan peninsula
boards are used, a twenty percent chance of
elimination will generally produce a good map,
whereas a fifty percent chance is better if the
Babylonian and Egyptian panels are used. These
percentages could be increased if the
players want a very constrained and challenging
environment. In any case, once the randomizing
is done, the resulting map must be checked for
topographical suitability. Are there start areas
for at least two different nations available? Is
there any significant number of provinces com-
pletely cut off from the rest? You may have to
consider this, a bit for a playable map.

Since, with two players, trading will be
severely limited or nonexistent (we don’t
trade at all), a player may now hold eleven
commodity cards in his hand. A player is also
no longer limited to two calamities, but when
he draws a calamity, he immediately draws
another card from that commodity deck.

Now, the game resulting from these changes
is perhaps something other than ADVANCED CIVILIZATION,
but so is any two-player version, since the core dynamics of
trading and dealing will be missing in any two-
player game. What you do get is a variant that
emphasizes all the non-trading aspects of the
game, which can be quite interesting. The
province elimination mechanism ensures that
each game presents fresh geographical chal-
enges, and efficient growth and token man-
agement becomes the real heart of the game.
Preparation for and reaction to calamities
assume a tremendous importance, since a
player will now be suffering many calamities,
both because there is no two-calamity limit and
because he is the only possible secondary
victim for the other player’s calamities. Civil
War is particularly interesting in a two-player
game; as often as not it can be a benefit to the
victim, setting him up to attack cities trans-
filled to his opponent and thus to steal valu-
able commodity cards.

The civilization card picture is also
changed. Agriculture and Coinage tend to be
generally more important than in the regular
game, and Mining becomes an absolute neces-
sity, since it is so difficult to build large sets of
commodity cards. Metalworking and Astron-
omy are also extremely valuable, because in a
two-player game, war is all of a sudden feasible
and even profitable. The enhanced possi-
bility of war, incidentally, contributes to the
need for careful token management, since
moving second can be a tremendous advan-
tage in certain situations. Military of course
allows this, but the card is so expensive and
otherwise so useless that it is unlikely ever to
be purchased.

All things considered, regular ADVANCED
CIVILIZATION is still a far better game, but if
there are only two of you and you’re still itch-
ing to play, this is the way to go. Post-Atomic
ADVANCED CIVILIZATION is not only intrigued and challenging in its own right,
but with its emphasis on token management
and geography it continually provides valu-
able insights into the play of its parent, regular
ADVANCED CIVILIZATION.
A GAME of Political Intrigue with Military Overtones

REPUBLIC OF ROME is a multi-player, diplomacy game set in ancient Rome which spans more than 200 years of the republic from the Punic Wars to the assassination of Julius Caesar and the onset of the Empire.

Players vie to control the Senate while also cooperating for the good of the state against Rome’s enemies. It is this constant balancing act between personal advancement and the welfare of the state that sets REPUBLIC OF ROME apart from ordinary games. If the players allow their personal goals to interfere too heavily with the republic’s best interests, the people may revolt or the state may fall to foreign conquest and all players will be put to the sword. Not since KINGMAKER and CIVILIZATION have so many innovative concepts appeared in a multi-player boardgame.

Not a wargame in the traditional sense, it is a game of political intrigue with military overtones that literally oozes the rich detail of the period’s history. A deck of 192 illustrated cards sets the scene for the panoramic spectacle that was the Roman republic. As that history unfolds before them, each player’s faction of influential Senators vie for political power, military commands, and economic advantages against the backdrop of a turbulent world. Deals and counter-offers abound. Short the necessary votes for Consul? Trade the Armaments Concession for a faction’s support. Spartacus has destroyed your villa? Send Pompey off with ten legions to crush him. But is that too much power to entrust to one man? What if Pompey rebels and marches on Rome? Such checks and balances abound in a game replete with moves and countermoves as historical figures with special capabilities appear and die with the passing years. All of the great names of Rome and those who opposed them appear once again to contest control of the Mediterranean. Wars, revolts, droughts, epidemics, and a host of other random events flash before the paper time machine as fortunes rise and fall.

The game contains three scenarios which divide the color-coded cards into decks simulating the Early, Middle, and Late Republic. Those wishing a larger game can combine them into a Campaign Game of truly epic proportions.

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FIFTY WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR SENSES
The Pursuit of Defeat in REPUBLIC OF ROME
By Stuart K. Tucker

If you've ever wondered how the Congress of the United States really works (perhaps a better term is "functions", since the system may not always "work"), then you should not miss the chance to experience it vicariously through play of REPUBLIC OF ROME (hereafter, ROR). Although our nation may not face the life and death issues that plagued Rome (such as dealing with Carthaginian invaders), the game system simulates parliamentary politics in full form. The political glory-seeking, pork-barrel politicking, silent back-stabbing, investigations of ethics, and appeals to non-partisan unity all seem eerily familiar—whether we are considering the Senate of modern America or that of ancient Rome. I have never experienced a game system which so well pits players against each other and against the game itself that no artificial constraints on naturally antagonistic attitudes are necessary. Antagonism can be played out fully, and will reap its own just desserts.

In the nomenclature of political science, governing systems are often classified by the method of alternation of opponents within the key offices, and by the relative loyalty of the opposition to the goal of maintaining the basic rules of the system. Distal opposition in ROR can threaten to try to bring down the whole system as a way of forcing the governing coalition(s) to include them in the spoils of office-holding. However, the Republic is more likely to collapse through actions (whether well-intentioned or not) of the ever-shifting coalition partners. Unfortunately for the people of Rome, the temptations to depart from unity are many, and the resulting chaos can end the existence of Rome suddenly. Even clawing your way to the top is no guarantee. This factioned Roman Senate, running the Republic becomes a demanding test of your ability to manage demands for personal glory (influence and popularity points) with both external and internal threats to your very existence.

Unlike other political games, where the threats of systemic failure (wherein all players lose the game) are somewhat artificial, ROR realistically shows historic threats to the Senate that each faction must consider (as opposed to threats to their own faction's position in the power structure). In ROR, there are no improbable nuclear blowouts, insane military psychos, or unanticipated random decapitations. This is not to say that there are no random events in the game system (known as "external shocks" to us economists). However, the consequences of these events are fully known and can be at least partially guarded against to minimize their effects. The problem is that most players are too busy maximizing the benefits of other activities to push for the "common good" policies that would save all from defeat.

So, what is there about ROR that makes it so appealing? Well, to fully comprehend the nuances and many facets of political life, you must play the game. And to play it well, you must understand the many, many ways you can lose the game. Once you fully digest the threat of losing, you will then know what it means to win. All too often, new players undertake any unfamiliar design by grabbing for a quick solo victory (and sadly, most game designers have catered to this by crafting unimaginative systems that reward such anti-systemic behavior).

In the real world, nobody has the power to be on the top of the heap all by themselves. Coalition-building, sycophancy, negotiations, payoffs, meritocratic action, self-sacrifice, skilled finesse—these are the elements of real-life promotion, and of victory in ROR. Yet even the most skilled player at the game of politics will find the challenges to the Senate in this game multifarious, difficult and entertaining.

The tedious histories we have suffered through in reading about the Roman Empire often neglect to remind us that the formation and survival of the Republic was a troubled birth, to say the least. It is truly a credit to those long-dead Romans that there were so many centuries of democracy (however limited) in such a hostile Mediterranean world. The old Senate was amazingly resilient. But in this game, disaster accrues. It seeps in each turn. Like poisonous residues in the food chain, you know it is happening but prefer to discount the immediate threat until it is perhaps too late to do anything. Interestingly enough, this game reinforces two general, but contradictory, principles: 1) power begets power; and 2) all energy (read, "power") tends to maximum entropy ("dispersion").

Formally speaking, ROR is won by one player through one of the following methods:

I) Acquiring gobs of influence for one of the senators of your faction (requiring many terms in office); or
II) Getting one of your senators to have significant influence, while having sufficient votes in your faction to elect him "Consul for Life";
III) Getting one of your senators (preferably, your most able military commander) into the field with many loyal legions, and/or with adequate moneys, to defeat an ill-organized Senate (rebel victory in battle);
IV) Declaring one rebellious provincial governor at the moment an opposing, unpopular consul faces deep-seated unrest (a popular revolt); or
V) Having the most combined influence among all your senators after the Republic has faced down all threats and finished the deck (or "decks"; there can be as many as three in a long game).

On the other hand, the Senate collapses—and thus, all players lose—if:

I) There are four active wars facing Rome at the end of a turn;
II) There is a Popular Revolt because of too high an Unrest Level;
III) Rome has overspent her funds, has too many outstanding obligations in the form of military and social expenditures, and faces a natural disaster beyond the treasury's capacity; or
IV) The Senate's army loses to a rebellious commander.

The enjoyable challenge of this game is that as each player strives for personal victory, all players risk defeat en masse. If you are too civic-minded, you may not have the opportunity to grab the solo victory you (so richly) deserve. If you are too independently greedy, you may undermine the vitality of the state and bring about the collapse of Rome about your (and the others') ears.

Since this article is intended for Novices in this game, I suggest that when you first begin to play ROR you clarify your main objective. Clearly, the rules are complex and the ways of winning varied, and difficult to accomplish. Therefore, as a beginner, you should set your sights on a reasonable objective for your first few games. That objective being of course not to win, but to lose.

Let us then, with tongue firmly in cheek, consider the ways in which you might engineer your own defeat. If you embark on this straightforward objective, you have a fair chance of success and will finish the game with the gratifying feeling that you have at least accomplished something. Furthermore, you will now know a lot more than your fellow beginners about how to avoid defeat next time—because it is precisely at the point when all players together are about to lose that one player is most likely to emerge victorious in ROR! Julius Caesar recognized this truth when he was at the Rubicon. Marius is a lesser-known figure because he did not.

Which would you rather be?

Defeat through Mortality:

1. Old Age. The game provides for the random death of from none to two senators each turn. Over the course of 8-10 turns (at about a one in thirty-six chance each), the odds of death for your best senator are quite significant—thereby making him fairly useless to any governing coalition.

Defeat through Assassination:

2. Get Assassinated. More deadly than a random mortality draw, should another player decided to bump off one of your best senators, the typical odds are 33% (and higher if the attacker devotes the proper cards). You can best expedite this method by concentrating all your
wealth and power in one senator and then ticking off another player who has an obscure senator he would sacrifice for the chance at your big-wig. Best done when you have no bodyguard cards to get in the way.

3. Fall an Assassination. Pick a player—any player (especially one having many Intrigue cards that might be bodyguards)—and try an assassination that fails. Your assassin dies and your faction is then open to prosecution. Better still, you’ve gained an enemy for life! What better way to ensure that you will never get elected to any significant post?

4. Succeed in an Assassination. In this case, you will have many friends smiling, but you will have done nothing whatsoever towards gaining influence or votes (or promises from others that might lead to these). Mostly, you will have ticked off at least one other player, and with luck have killed the one senator that was needed to defeat the barbarian hordes or keep down popular unrest next turn—thereby bringing everybody down. Of course, you might ignite fear of assassination attempts that will pretty well bring about the demise of both targets and shooters alike, leaving some formerly out-distanced faction in command of the Senate.

5. Fail to Try an Assassination. Let us assume assassinations will always insure your defeat, remember that some players will be trying to force the killing of rising big-wigs. You can conveniently forget to knock off the most influential senator around, or maybe forget that by killing a senator you can defeat a vote to send a Dictator off to glorious military victory (soon to be followed by a glorious military rebellion). Or perhaps you might forget to assassinate that unpopular Consul that is likely to foster a game-ending popular revolt. Finally, you might want to just lay low and get ignored for the entire game, gaining no influence whatsoever. So, don’t make the mistake of assassinating anybody—other players in future games might just offer deals to keep you from doing it again.

Defeat through Bad Money-Management Techniques

6. Spread Your Money Thin. By allocating your Faction income evenly among your senators and leaving little in the Faction treasury, you can make every one of your senators vulnerable to persuasion, render each of them incapable of direct action themselves, and rob your Faction of vital reserves all at the same time.

7. Persuasion Defense of Neutrals. Giving money to other neutral senators in defense of persuasion attempts may seem like a winning “counter-balance”, but in reality you make yourself poor and give the richest player in the game the only chance for big bonanzas when he takes control of them—a surefire way to imbalance the game quickly by throwing money to him!

8. Sponsoring Games. This expensive method to buy popularity is best done when you have little cash, thereby robbing your coffers of moneys that should be preserved for crucial votes and rebellions.

9. Contributing to the State. To lose with real class, propose equal contributions when you are the poorest. But even if you are the richest, you can still lose through such contributions by making it possible for the Senate to send more loyal legions after your rebellious Consul at some point in the future.

10. Attract Knights With Cash; Lots of It. By spending five talents per Knight, you can squander the most per talent gained. Better yet, their extra votes make you seem powerful without really accomplishing much. And your Knight-heavy Senator (remember to concentrate them all on one) is a sure bet for persuasion, prosecution, assassination or distant governorship.

11. Play those Concessions Early. This way the opposition can prosecute you before they get distracted by more important investigations. It is amazing how jealous the smallest concession can make people if you but make much of it.

12. Play those Concessions Late. After all, you don’t want to reap too much money from armaments or ship-building in the early stages of the game when the bulk of these are being raised.

13. Save Money (Especially all in one place). The accumulation of piles of unspent coin will certainly ensure that none of the others will ever consider you for a field command with any significant number of legions. Further, if you put it openly on your best senator, his life expectancy will quickly and gratifyingly drop!

Defeat through Ignoring the Polls

14. Pay no Attention to the Unrest Level. Let those improbably low population rolls put the squeeze on the Senate. Take care never to be a lowly governor in revolt at such times—the people might actually look to you for salvation!

15. Elect a Popular Senator to Reduce Unrest. Since this rival senator is likely to be very influential anyway, the troubles times and your heartfelt support of him should catapult him to victory!

Defeat through Acts of God(s)

16. Be Pontifex Maximus. Then you can empty your treasury really well by being the Pontiff at the moment of “bad omens”. Certainly, your doubled votes on military matters will make some players very leery of giving you other important spoils as well.

17. Let Someone Else be Pontifex Maximus. These priesthoods and Pontiff votes can lead to some very manipulative field assignments for commanders. You should be able to attract at least one opportunity to fight a losing campaign with your best senator.

Defeat through the TKO (Technical Knock-Out)

18. Be a Rules Lawyer. In any crowd of players who have only cursory knowledge of the rules, you can gain everybody’s ire simply by correcting their errors publicly and loudly. You may have to do this often, no doubt encompassing all possible coalition partners. Remember, most players will not discern a “clarification” from true politicking.

19. Do Not Learn the Rules. If you ignore such “minor” details as the intricacies of naval/land battles, multiple commanders (to protect against Disasters and Standoffs), revolting provinces, treasury allocation, and Senate Phase procedures, you will certainly find your faction hung out to dry soon enough.

20. Talk to Your Coalition Partners—Late. A good Rome Consul will be able to deprive you of your votes on the issue at hand if you wait and talk only after the vote is called. This play should, however, be reserved for crucial votes, where your coalition is being screwed to the wall and in need of your suggestions to present a united front.

21. Be Quiet. While it is possible for you to—horror!—win this way, it is hard for others to be so inept as to give you any consulships just for being silent. Try to avoid expressing any desires; other players might just believe you are powerful enough to be a threat, since it is impossible to know what damage your hidden cards can cause. Just to play it safe, don’t hold any red cards in reserve.

Defeat through Voting

22. Avoid Those Knights. The more you have, the more the other players will feel obliged to give you some office(s).

23. Accumulate Votes. If you can get enough extra Senators and Knights, you can get everybody else thinking of creative coalitions that exclude your faction. Good move! It also can cost lots of money to achieve this, thereby doubly insuring your defeat.

24. Use That Veto Power—Often. The Tribune cards and automatic tribunes of certain senators give you plenty of opportunities to stop a vote. This should be done when the mathematical combinations of other, different (but essentially the same) proposals reach into the range of four-factorial, as usually happens. Never, ever, save these tribunes for proscriptions—as this will keep you powerful for too long.

25. Propose Anything Objectionable. Should you have the misfortune of being Rome Consul (or Dictator), you can quickly lose control of the meeting by proposing anything and having it rejected by all concerned. Alternatively, you can carry on and so drive your own influence down precipitously. This is best done by cutting off debate right away to make the other players feel negative towards anything you propose.
26. Propose Everything. Perhaps you also have the misfortune of having some misguided voting ally. Now you will have to be more devious in your attempt to lose the game. In this case, propose every possible combination that others think will help you, which they will surely vote down, thereby leaving the Senate no choice but to elevate the prospects of some other faction.

27. Propose Nothing. If you bore the Senate with lots of votes on minor motions, you should be able to get them all to jump happily at the first real proposal you offer—especially if you commence the voting illogically with the likely "yea"-sayers. Be certain, however, that the proposal does not inadvertently help your cause!

Defeat by Popular Acclamation
28. Sponsor Land Bills. This will certainly bring about an early demise of the Republic’s finances if you do it often.

29. Oppose Land Bills. The loss of popularity from this action should make you a vulnerable target for assassinations and a very poor choice for Rome Consul.

30. Pay for Land Bills. The rules require that you pay for them once passed. So, you need to conscientiously help the Treasury get low enough so that it can’t pay, thereby ending the game (this requires lots of fleets and legions lying about, and many undeveloped provinces).

But even if Rome manages to pay for one you have proposed, you might lack out and get a disaster or bad omens to put on the final touch.

31. Repeat Land Bills. Ooh, this will make a lot of senators very unpopular at the very time when they (and Rome) need their popularity the most. Wait to do this until the Unrest Level is especially high.

32. Mention Land Bills. The shudders you send through competent players will surely end your participation in winning coalitions.

33. Let Your Rivals Sponsor Land Bills. Their gain in popularity ought to give them immunity from prosecution and a psychological defense against assassinations.

Defeat by Legal Reform
34. Play a Law Card. Do this strictly for temporary personal gain, knowing that the changes to the rules and political dynamics are likely to make Rome ungovernable, and your victory impossible.

35. Hold a Law Card. You wouldn’t want to upset your rival’s final march to victory by changing the rules on him at the last minute!

Defeat by War
36. Fight the Strongest War First. Since this war is also likely to have the highest probability of Disasters and Standoffs, you can manage to lose the most legions/fleets (and state money) by sending everything after it. The ideal situation is to keep the fighting going, but have as few wars won as possible, so that the four wars necessary for systemic collapse build up fast.

37. Fight the Weakest War First. This is pretty good too, because the stronger wars then have the chance to double in strength or acquire able leaders before the Senate can get around to fighting them.

38. Dispatch Lots of Force. The more troops you send, the more likely that one of the following wonderful things will happen: 1) a victorious Roman commander rebels with Rome’s legions under his command; 2) a commander (preferably one of your Senators) runs head-long into a Disaster or a Standoff and loses lots of troops; or 3) a commander from another faction wins quickly and piles up game-winning amounts of influence and popularity through the victory.

39. Send Minimum Forces to Several Wars Simultaneously. While some players may hope for victory in at least one of those four wars confronting Rome, you will know that the odds are much more in favor of stalemate and collapse.

40. Send the Wrong Commander. Every military failure will decimate your rivals, of course, but at least Rome will lose more wars than she will win.

41. Send the Best Commander. A militarily competent field general will be a tough rebel to beat. Good prospects for Senate loss in the civil war to follow!

Defeat by Statesmanship
42. Play Statesmen Cards Early. You will want these game-winning bozos to face as many mortality draws, assassination attempts and prosecutions as possible. To that end, be sure to assign them plenty of concessions and Knights to insure their death.

43. Keep Statesmen Cards Hidden ‘til the End. If you wait long enough, these will be unplayable—or at least their special abilities may be irrelevant. Trade them away if they are valuable to other factions.

Defeat in the Provinces
44. Take a Provincial Governorship. This way your votes will be in temporary exile, giving your opponents free rein for skulduggery in the Senate Phase. Don’t try for any personal income, either.

45. Give Opponents Provinces. Propose and vote them the richest plums. They can probably use the money they reap to defeat you.

46. Collect Personal Income from Provinces. This way you can minimize your influence gains from “development” of the province and subject your Senator to prosecution upon his return to Rome.

Defeat by Long-term Policy
Remember that there are four ways for Rome to lose to the system or to a rebel. By pushing for full prosecution of any one of the following policies, you should be able to see the collapse of the Senate by the loss of its ability to deal with the others:

47. Prosecute all wars to the fullest.
48. Keep the Unrest down.
49. Never spend too much State money.
50. Never send out too many legions with any one commander.

And just remember the Fifty Ways:
If you, Lou, haven’t figured it out by now; the plan, Stan, is to do this:
Either concentrate, Nate, on everything or push one scheme, Akeem, to the extreme. Oh yea, Ray, rebel as often as you may. And the response, Alphonse, should be overwhelming!

SO THAT’S WHAT YOU’VE BEEN PLAYING
(Volume 28, Number 2)

Titles Listed: 114 Total Responses: 365

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>2. Up Front</td>
<td>AH</td>
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<td>3. Blackbeard</td>
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<td>4. D&amp;D</td>
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<td>5. Third Reich</td>
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<td>8. B-17</td>
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<td>AH</td>
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<td>13. Russian Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Storm Over Arnhem</td>
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Quite a shake-up, as over half the titles fall off the list, to be replaced by a mix of new titles and revered greybeards. STORM OVER ARNHEM, CIRCUS MAXIMUS, BULGE ’81 and AIR FORCE all enjoy a resurgence (and all deservedly so), while PELOPONNESIAN WAR and ADVANCED THIRD REICH evidently benefit from, respectively, this magazine’s coverage and convention appearances over the summer.

The three solitary titles (four counting the easily solo’ed BLACKBEARD) reinforce the popularity of this format, while the appearance of both original and advanced (or updated) versions of conventional titles implies that at least a few players are comparing games like THIRD REICH, CIVILIZATION and BULGE ’81 to their heirs.

Titles Listed:
- Advanced SL
- Up Front
- Blackbeard
- D&D
- Third Reich
- Diplomacy
- Air Force
- B-17
- Bulge ’91
- Adv. Civilization
- Circus Maximus
- Peloponnesian War
- Russian Campaign
- Tae Air
- Adv. Third Reich
- Ambras
- Britannia
- Civilization
- Panzer Leader
- Storm Over Arnhem

Rank Times Last On Freq.
1. Advanced SL AH 2 34 5.6
2. Up Front AH 1 21 4.6
3. Blackbeard AH - 1 4.3
4. D&D TSR -- 1 3.3
5. Third Reich AH 3 14 3.3
6. Diplomacy AH 8 35 3.0
7. Air Force AH - 1 2.6
8. B-17 AH 17 2 2.3
9. Bulge ’91 AH 5 2 2.3
10. Adv. Civilization AH - 1 2.0
11. Circus Maximus AH - 1 1.6
12. Peloponnesian War VG 1 1 1.6
13. Russian Campaign AH 9 8 1.6
14. Tae Air AH - 1 1.6
15. Adv. Third Reich AH - 1 1.3
16. Ambras AH 17 1 1.3
17. Britannia AH 11 2 1.3
18. Civilization AH 4 7 1.3
19. Panzer Leader AH - 1 1.3
20. Storm Over Arnhem AH - 1 1.0
FLASHPOINT: GOLAN
A Strategic Primer
by Kevin M. Boylan

The single most important point that one must always keep in mind when playing FLASHPOINT: GOLAN is this: The game mechanics are designed to simulate how the combination of long-range reconnaissance capabilities and high-tech airpower, SRBMs and artillery assets allow commanders in modern warfare to fight a Deep Battle behind an enemy’s front lines. The idea is that properly-employed long-range detection and strike capabilities can fatally disrupt—or even destroy—enemy forces before they ever come into contact with friendly forces. The course of the recent war in the Persian Gulf was a perfect illustration of the importance of the Deep Battle concept. The four week strategic bombing effort shattered the Iraqi Army’s command and control network, seriously disrupted its logistical system, and heavily attrited its front line and reserve combat formations; all before the ground campaign was even launched. While the Air Forces available to the belligerents portrayed in FLASHPOINT: GOLAN aren’t strong enough to duplicate fully the Allies’ accomplishments in the Gulf, the most vital strategic lesson that the game’s players can learn is how to wage and win the Deep Battle.

JORDAN: Jordanian Defensive Strategy

The Jordanians possess a high-quality professional army that is indisputably the best in the Arab World (and, indeed, stacks up well against virtually anybody). It is, however, much too small to successfully defend Jordan’s extended borders against the Israeli juggernaut for any extended period of time. Jordanian defensive strategy must, therefore, recognize the reality that the Israelis will almost certainly achieve a major offensive victory if the war lasts as long as a week. The numerical superiority of the Israeli Army is so pronounced that even a fairly clumsy Israeli player could probably crush the Jordanians within that time frame. When the Israeli Air Force is factored into the equation, the Jordanian position can become virtually hopeless in as little as three days. The Jordanians can hope to win a Defensive Victory only if either the UN intervenes before they’ve lost too much ground, or if they inflict enough losses to reduce the Israeli level of victory. Since the Jordanians cannot hope to hold off the Israelis indefinitely, their strategy and tactics should be structured so as to impose the maximum possible delay.

Artillery

Unfortunately for the Jordanians, their Air Force is too weak to seriously influence the Deep Battle, and they possess no SRBMs. Consequently, Jordanian artillery units are the only long-range firepower assets available, and the success or failure of the Jordanian defense will be determined largely by how well they are employed. As a general rule, Jordanian artillery should be used en masse to pin and inflict casualties upon moving Israeli stacks by firing Reaction Strikes. Not only will this upset the rhythm of the Israeli offensive, but keep in mind that only 20 step losses need to be inflicted upon the Israelis before their level of victory is reduced. If there’s sufficient artillery left over to support Jordanian combat units defending in battles, that’s all very well and good, but the best way to resist Israeli attacks is to break them up before they get started. Generally, Jordanian Special Munitions Points should be used to fire Improved Conventional Munitions (ICMs) against large Israeli stacks, but Artillery Delivered Minefields (ADMs) are also a viable alternative, particularly if they are used to block otherwise undefended routes leading into the Jordanian rear. Wherever possible, Jordanian artillery units should be positioned in fortifications in order to optimize their chances of surviving Counter-battery Strikes. Finally, the one-hex range advantage that most Jordanian artillery has over Israeli artillery must be exploited to the hilt by deploying the artillery units where they are immune to Counter-battery (unless the Israeli player wants to throw in one of his MRL units, or use a Special Munitions Point to fire RAP).

Airpower

The Jordanian Air Force is so hopelessly outmatched by the Israelis that it rarely gets to show up at all except on the first day of hostilities; and even then it will probably have only one strike available. For what little it’s worth, that strike should probably be used to hit a moving Israeli stack. Knocking out one of the bridges across the Jordan could prove more beneficial, but the odds of success aren’t very high (“Are you feeling lucky today, punk?”).

Reserves

As soon as the Israelis secure Level 2 Air Superiority (usually on the second day of hostilities), the Jordanians will find themselves confronted with the same dilemma that bedeviled Rommel during the Normandy Campaign; how can one react effectively to enemy attacks, much less organize strong counterattacks, when the enemy’s overwhelming air superiority makes it virtually impossible for one’s reserves to maneuver? As Rommel discovered, there really is no answer to this dilemma, except to disperse the strategic reserve and form instead a series of tactical reserves directly behind the front. Therefore, Jordanian reserves should be deployed as far forward as the scenario allows. Naturally, this means that the Jordanians probably won’t be able to influence the overall shape of the campaign after their initial deployment, but at least some of the reserves will be in the right place at the right time instead of being chewed-up by Israeli airpower while marching up to the front. As a general rule, Jordanian units should move using tactical mode in covered terrain (i.e., hills) so as to avoid Israeli Reaction altogether.

Parachute Battalions

On the defense, the Jordanian parachute battalions are tailor-made to play the role of airborne reserves. All three can be lifted by a single use of the Jordanian High Command HQ’s Transport Helicopter capability, and their high Permanent Troop Quality (6) means that even Israeli mechanized units cannot just roll over them. The Jordanian airborne units can be dropped in front of rampaging Israeli columns when no other reserves are in reach, but they are more profitably employed in the Deep Battle, dropping in behind advancing Israeli units to cut their communications and block reinforcement. One particularly effective technique is to chopper a parachute battalion into a hex adjacent to one in which a road or highway crosses the north-south escarpment; Israeli mechanized units down in the valley will be blocked by the paratroopers’ ZOC, but will be unable to attack them due to the escarpment. If the parachute battalion can re-occupy a permanent fortification which the Israelis have advanced past, all the better.

Combat Engineers

One of the most effective means of delay available to the Jordanians—in lieu of an effective Air Force—is mines. Minefields should be laid as thickly as possible along the roads and highways leading back from the north-south escarpment. Sometimes it may even be beneficial to lay minefields behind Jordanian units—effectively cutting them off—since if the Israelis are attacking heavily in that sector the units won’t live long anyway. Don’t bother laying many Barrier Minefields, since both the necessary time and HQ Capability Points are lacking. Putting down a profusion of Hasty Minefields is a much better bet, especially since two Hasty Minefields can be laid using the same expenditure of HQ Capability Points as it needed to lay one Barrier Minefield, but require the expenditure of twice as many enemy HQ Capability Points to breach them. The Jordanians could really use a whole series of Fortifications constructed along the roads running eastward from the escarpment, but their engineers will rarely have the opportunity to build more than a handful because of the speed of the Israeli advance and the need to lay minefields behind those sectors where defending units have been largely or totally destroyed.

Special Operations Forces (SOF)

Jordanian SOF Missions should generally be of the Raid variety, and be targeted against either Israeli HQ’s or bridges across the Jordan
River; although every now and again it may be worthwhile to run an Ambush or Target Acquisition Mission against a crucial Israeli stack.

**Deployment**

The Arab player is probably best advised not to deploy any Jordanian units on the floor of the Jordan Valley except perhaps the far south. While it may look tempting to put a few delaying units in the fortifications adjacent to the river, the Jordanians simply cannot afford to sacrifice their units in so prodigious a fashion. Furthermore, if Jordanian units are deployed adjacent to the river, the Israelis can conduct Set-Piece Battles against them immediately, and then Pursue up to the escarpment/hill line without fear of Reaction Strikes. Deploying on top of the escarpment limits Jordanian losses on the opening day of hostilities, extends Jordanian Detection ranges (see 11.1), and forces the Israelis to cross open ground and expose themselves to Reaction before they can attack. As an additional precaution, some Jordanian units should be deployed to the immediate rear of the fortifications in order to prevent Israeli airborne troops lifted in by helicopter from getting a Rear Attack modifier.

The southernmost sector of the Jordanian line (i.e., that portion just to the north of the Dead Sea) generally does not require all that many manpower units for its defense because an attacking Israeli force has a lot of open ground to cover before it can come to grips with the main defensive line. A relatively small number of Jordanian artillery units deployed in the second line of fortifications along the Jerusalem-Amman highway can sweep the entire sector with their fire, turning it into a virtual "valley of death" for the Israelis.

Don’t use the 5th Infantry Division to defend any important sector of the front, since the Israelis will simply focus their offensive against it and blow right through it in short order. Instead, the 5th Division should be deployed in the reserve role, and preferably not in any truly critical sector. Its units can be used as one-turn delaying forces along the major roads when nothing else is available, or the Jordanians don’t want to sacrifice a better quality unit. The 5th Division is really best suited for the static defense of a position in strong defensive terrain; the city of Irbid—blocking the normal thrust line—is one possible sector. In any case, units of the 5th Division should occupy fortifications whenever possible due to the formation’s low Troop Quality.

**Jordanian Offensive Strategy**

There is much less to say about the Jordanians' offensive options, simply because they have only a very limited capability to mount an offensive at all. The Jordanian Army is a high-quality military instrument, but fundamentally a fragile one because of its small size. By comparison, the Syrian Army is more than twice the size, and has to cover a frontage which is less than half as long! Consequently, when Jordan is an aggressor, it should conduct its offensive operations cautiously and with a definite eye toward limiting losses. Because of the limited forces at Jordan’s disposal, offensive operations should generally be mounted only in one sector of the front at a time, and Jordanian units in other sectors should be deployed in keeping with the defensive guidelines given in the previous section. Overall, Jordan’s role in a combined Arab offensive is to divert Israeli forces away from the Syrian front.

Because of their offensive weaknesses, the Jordanians should probably set their sights somewhat low, seeking only to secure a Limited Victory. Furthermore, the objectives of a Jordanian offensive should be determined beforehand in very specific terms, and strong forces should not be squandered in further offensive action once those objectives have been secured. This is not to say that opportunities developing out of good luck or Israeli mistakes should be ignored, but rather that such opportunities must be exploited judiciously, without risking the objectives already secured, or endangering the integrity of the front. Given the extent of Israeli numerical and air superiority, this means that no more than a handful of Jordanian units should be employed in risky ventures unless some combination of Israeli incompetence and dramatic Syrian offensive success has blown the game wide open. Generally, the Jordanians should aim to take their objectives and begin consolidating them before Israeli air superiority becomes overwhelming.

There are two sectors in which the Jordanians can hope to achieve an offensive victory without undue risk:

1. A thrust toward the southern extremity of Lake Tiberias to secure a Limited Victory by grabbing Ashdot and Afula; and provides the Jordanians with a defensible front along the Jordan River. This option is particularly attractive because the distances are so short, and because of the close proximity of Jordanian fortifications that can shield reserves and artillery, or offer strong fallback positions in case of failure. Furthermore, this strategy strongly complements a simultaneous Syrian offensive by denying Israeli reinforcements the southernmost route onto the Golan Heights.

2. An offensive in the southern region of the Jordan Valley opens up the possibility of gaining a Major Victory if Jericho can be taken and held. If that proves impossible, there remains the alternative of winning a Limited Victory either by grabbing the two towns adjacent to Jericho, or by securing a bridgehead encompassing ten hexes on the West Bank.

In any case, a Jordanian offensive should be supported by the insertion of airborne battalions along routes which are likely to be used by Israeli forces staging for counterattacks (though naturally this will be possible only before the Israelis secure total Air Superiority). Additionally, whichever Israeli HQ is in the path of the Jordanian offensive should be the target of a concentrated assault featuring SOF Raids, Jamming and even helicopter-transported airborne troops.

As a final point, the Jordanian player should always keep in mind that all he needs to do to win a Decisive Victory is to have a unit occupying any hex of Jerusalem at the end of a scenario—it doesn’t even have to be in supply! Therefore, the Jordanians should never miss an opportunity to sneak a unit into an unoccupied Jerusalem hex; again, a helicopter-inserted parachute battalion seems the natural choice, although a mechanized unit dashing up from the Jordan Valley shouldn’t be ruled out. If this gambit succeeds, the Israelis face the difficult task of extracting a high Troop Quality from City terrain (which permits it to largely ignore retreats (see 10.5). Even if the Jordanian unit(s) don’t hold out until the end of the scenario, its ability to distract Israeli forces away from the main battle could prove most helpful.

**SYRIA:**

**Syrian Offensive Strategy**

The Syrians, unlike the Jordanians, have sufficient forces to mount a major offensive in pursuit of decisive victory. However, they too must confront the reality that, barring a totally incompetent performance by their opponent, the balance of power will eventually swing decisively in favor of the Israelis. Therefore, the Syrians will have only one quick shot at grabbing the Golan Heights before Israeli mobilization and air superiority slam shut the window of opportunity. Optimaly, the Syrians should try to secure their initial objectives before the Israelis achieve total air superiority on or about turn #3, and all of them before the Israelis receive the bulk of their reinforcements around turn #6. Once they have achieved their objectives, the Syrians should hunker down, dig in and wait for the inevitable Israeli counteroffensive; hoping all the while that the UN will soon pass a cease-fire resolution.

The main weight of the Syrian offensive on the Golan Heights should be directed against the southern portion of the Israeli line, which is defended by the weaker forces of the Golani Division, and where there is little of the highly-defensible terrain (Tels and Rough) that predominates in the Moshe Division’s sector. Once a breakthrough has been achieved, the leading Syrian units must thrust forward aggressively to widen the breach and grab the road defiles leading down into the Huleh Valley. At this point in most scenarios, the Syrians can afford to “burn up” a division or two in order to maintain the pace of their advance, since three strong armored divisions (the 1st, 4th and Assad Guard) are readily available as offensive reserves.
While a strong Syrian force presses on westward and southward to deal with the remnants of the Golani Division and secure the southern Golan, the bulk of Syrian forces should turn northwards to outflank and envelop the Moshe Division. The destruction of the Moshe is not, however, the real objective of this northern thrust. Rather, it should aim to win control of the roads leading down the escarpment to the valley below. This is far more difficult for the Syrians to achieve than the initial breakthrough onto the Golan, and will become almost impossible if the Israelis succeed in bringing a reinforcing division onto the heights in the Moshe's sector. To help prevent that from happening, the Syrians shouldn't be afraid to push on down into the Huleh Valley if the opportunity presents itself. Even a fairly small commitment can have a considerable effect because the narrowness of the valley means that virtually any advance threatens to cut the highway that runs along its floor. Furthermore, by threatening to win a Major Victory on the cheap by grabbing the Kosh Pina Airport, the Syrians may force the Israelis to divert some of their attention from the battle on the Heights.

**Mount Hermon**

Any Syrian offensive should include an effort to capture the Israeli summit of Mount Hermon. Not only is Mount Hermon the equivalent of five hexes on the Golan for Victory Determination purposes, but its capture opens up the possibility of Syrian forces coming down behind the Moshe Division's northern flank. Because of the strength of the position, and the difficulty of moving up additional forces, the best way to take it is to chopper a Special Forces Regiment in behind the Israeli garrison and attack in conjunction with the 45th Special Forces Regiment advancing down from the Syrian summit. Naturally, the best time to conduct this operation is during the first or second turn of hostilities, before Israeli air superiority virtually puts a stop to Arab Helicopter Transport.

**Special Forces Regiments**

The Syrians like to use their artillery en masse, Russian-style—which is why their artillery is organized into brigades instead of battalions like everyone else's—and the Arab player should employ it as it's intended to be used. Because Israeli units have such high Troop Qualities, it's almost impossible for the Syrians to dislodge them from behind the anti-tank ditch without the benefit of artillery superiority. Since Israeli divisions have 14 strength points of artillery compared to a Syrian division's 11, achieving artillery superiority requires the support of Syrian army artillery units. Thus, the fire of the army artillery must be massed in support of a handful of attacks per phase. (A useful tactic that can help the Syrians gain artillery superiority is to run small units up adjacent to Israeli artillery units as soon as a "Breakthrough" result is accomplished. The weak Syrian Reconnaissance Battalions are custom-made for this role).

The key to ultimate Syrian success, however, lies in their ability to wage and win the Deep Battle. Unfortunately for the Syrians, their Air Force, like that of Jordan, will literally play no role in the Deep Battle after the first turn or so of hostilities. Consequently, once the Syrians have achieved a large-scale breakthrough on the Golan Heights, the primary role of their army artillery switches from providing direct support in battles to that of interdicting the arrival of Israeli reinforcements. This is best accomplished by pushing artillery units well forward into positions from which their fires can cover the highways in the Zefat-Mishmar Hayarden area—a strategic bottleneck through which the vast bulk of Israeli reinforcements have to pass.

**Momentum**

The Arab player must be constantly on guard against the possibility of generating large swings in Momentum in the Israeli player's favor by launching overly risky or gratuitous attacks. Because all Syrian ground combat units are brigades and regiments, and because the Syrians mount so many Set-Piece Battles, it is shockingly easy for an unlucky Battle Resolution Die Roll to result in a nine point shift in Momentum. All it takes is a handful of these shifts to give the Israeli's 50 Momentum points and a Bonus Activation Chit; and a top-rate, quality Israeli division moving and attacking twice per turn will fatally compromise the Arab player's prospects of winning in virtually any scenario.

**Special Operations Forces (SOF)**

The Syrian SOF Initial Strike has a range of valid strategic targets from which to choose; Israeli HQ's, the bridges leading onto the Golan, and Israeli air bases. However, the best results will be achieved by following the principle of concentration and directing the initial Syrian SOF Missions against one particular category of targets. It's up to the individual Arab player to determine for himself which targeting concept best suits his overall strategic style.

**Artillery**

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**Syrian Defensive Strategy**

Syrian defensive strategy shares much in common with the Jordanian strategy already described. For example, the Syrians will also find it almost impossible to maneuver their reserves in the face of Israeli air superiority. And, even though the Syrian Army is significantly larger than the Jordanian, and has a much shorter front to defend, it too will be unable to stand up for long against a full-fledged Israeli offensive. Consequently, Syrian strategy is shaped by the same fundamental imperative of delaying the Israeli advance until the UN intervenes and brings the conflict to a halt (hopefully before the Israelis secure a major victory). If there will be no UN resolution, however, the Syrians—and all of their co-belligerents—had best make their peace with Allah and prepare to start rolling dice really well.

The Syrians shouldn't expect to be able to conduct fighting withdrawals back to the second or third fortified lines, because the withdrawing units will either have been bloodied in earlier battles, or disorganized by Israeli Air Strikes as they pulled back. Thus, the Syrians should try to have fresh, intact reserve forces deployed in the rearward fortified position before the front line formations have to fall back. If the maneuver is timed properly, the retreating formations can rally and reorganize themselves in relative security behind the new front line occupied by the former reserves. They can then begin preparing the next rearward position, assuming that the pace of the Israeli offensive permits it. (In military jargon this is known as Defense on Alternate Positions.)

Syrian artillery plays an even more crucial role in defense than it does on the attack. Again, the crucial consideration is winning—or at least breaking even—in—the Deep Battle. The Israeli Army will invariably prevail in Set-Piece Battles...
because of its high unit strengths and excellent Troop Qualities. Therefore, the best way for the Syrians to resist the Israelis is to break up or disorganize their attacks before they can be mounted. Given the uselessness of the Syrian Air Force, artillery becomes by default their main weapon for engaging the Israelis. The Israelis, realizing this point, will typically concentrate their Deep Battle effort upon suppressing Syrian artillery with a combination of Counter-battery Strikes and Set-Piece Air Strikes. Consequently, Syrian artillery units ought to be kept well back from the front, fortified whenever possible, and should never be stacked with one another (increasing their vulnerability to all varieties of strikes).

Other Syrian Deep Battle assets should be integrated into the defensive strategy of delay in much the same way as was previously described for the Jordanians. Special Forces Regiments should be dropped in behind Israeli lines to occupy strategic battlefields and block reinforcement and supply. Special Operations Forces and Jamming are used to disrupt and Disrupt vital Israeli headquarters; and Air Strikes are used on those rare occasions when there are any available) either to hit large stacks maneuvering beyond artillery range, or to knock out crucial bridges. None of these elements will have great odds of succeeding, but if they do, they can have a considerable (and possibly, decisive) strategic effect.

The Lebanese Front (Defensive)
The character of Syrian defensive strategy in Lebanon varies depending upon whether Lebanon or the Golan Heights is initially the primary theater of war. In either case, the Syrians should integrate PLO forces into their defensive tactics to the greatest extent possible. Syrian and PLO units can benefit dramatically from the symbiotic benefits of being stacked together. The Syrians benefit from PLO units’ extended Ambush (see 22.9) zones, while the weak PLO units are protected from quick destruction by Israeli attacks. This cooperation is most easily realized in the Bekka Valley, where the Syrians and PLO can be initially-deployed in close proximity. In the coastal region, where there are initially no Syrian units, the PLO will be on its own.

The run of the terrain west of the Bekka Valley creates two narrow, easily-defensible axes of advance; one along the coastal highway, and the other between the headwaters of the various rivers and the flank of the Shouf Mountains. In between, the rivers—often running through gorges impassable to armor—offer a series of strong defensive lines running perpendicular to an Israeli thrust to the north. Some PLO forces should be deployed fortified in the various cities and towns running along the coastal highway, while others interdict the highway with their Ambush zones from positions in the hills two hexes to the east. The inland north-south roads are defended on the successive river lines. Note that sometimes roads can be interdicted by Arab ZOC’s from positions on the top of Escarpments where they cannot be attacked by Israeli armored and mechanized units.

Syrian/PLO forces should attempt to hold the southern portion of the Bekka Valley (where it’s at its narrowest, and the terrain is most favorable to the defense) for as long as possible. As one proceeds northward, the valley opens outward like a funnel, requiring a defensive line which is both longer and much easier to outflank. The Syrians must also assure that a disaster in the Bekka Valley doesn’t create an opportunity for the Israelis to invade Syria and threaten Damascus by the “back door” along the Beirut-Damascus Highway. If there’s any possibility of the Israelis being able to attempt such an operation, a Syrian force consisting of, at the absolute minimum, two Special Forces Regiments should be kept in occupation of the fortified line running across the highway.

**ISRAEL:**

It is difficult to discuss the Israeli military without the continual use of superlatives. The Israeli Army is excellently-led, well-motivated, equipped with the latest technology, and has a well-proven doctrine. The game accurately depicts the strength of this superb military machine which dominates the Middle East by the absolute technical and professional superiority which it enjoys over all of its enemies (except perhaps Jordan). Indeed, it enjoys such significant advantages over its enemies that there is no prospect of any single Arab nation being able to stand up to Israel on its own; only a strong coalition can hope to succeed even on the defense.

The Israeli Army is, however, only one element in the equation. The Israeli Air Force enjoys qualitative and technological superiorities over the Arab Air Forces which are, if anything, even more pronounced than the superiority which the Israeli Army has over enemy ground troops. The Israeli Air Force has played a vital—if not decisive—role in every one of the Arab-Israeli conflicts to date, and would undoubtedly do so again in the event of another major war. It virtually guarantees Israeli victory in the Deep Battle, with all of the many tactical and strategic advantages that implies. When Israeli airpower is properly integrated with the operations of their excellent army, the combination is almost unbeatable.

The Israeli Air Force has historically been employed primarily as a tactical instrument, flying Close Air Support and Battlefield Air Interdiction missions in support of Israeli ground forces. Both roles can have a decisive effect when playing a scenario in FLASH-POINT: GOLAN. By conducting strikes in support of Set-Piece Battles, Israeli airpower often tips the scales against the Arab armies, which cannot count upon air support in anything like the same quantity or quality. However, Israeli Air Force exerts its greatest influence in the game by the way in which it hampers Arab maneuver. Both on the offense and in defense, the Arab forces will find it extremely difficult to react to the quickly-changing situation because any large-scale movement at the highway rate or in open terrain immediately draws a hail of Israeli Air Strikes.

**Israeli Offensive Strategy**

There’s no real need to provide detailed tactical advice for the Israelis. Their army is so powerful and versatile that it can conduct a very flexible offensive, constantly shifting the point of the attack to take advantage of fleeting opportunities in a fashion which its opponents simply cannot match. Additionally, since Israel will virtually always have air superiority, its forces—and should the Helicopter Transport option to a much greater extent than the Arabs—will be much less vulnerable. Israeli offensives should also be characterized by the aggressive, deep exploitation of any penetration, and the maintenance of unrelenting pressure upon the enemy. This last point is of particular importance when fighting the Syrians, because it’s generally much less expensive to overrun their defensive lines by an aggressive (albeit risky) pursuit than it is to try to break them by assault, even if pausing would allow additional troops to be brought up. In any case, the Israeli player’s worst enemy is always time; since the longer he takes, the greater the odds are that a UN Resolution will rob him of his shot at victory. Israeli offensives cannot afford to be slow and deliberate!

The greatest threat to Israeli offensive success is Arab artillery, and the efforts of Israeli airpower, Special Operations forces and airborne operations should concentrate upon silencing it. This can be accomplished either directly, by attacking the artillery units themselves, or indirectly, by Disrupting the Arab headquarters that control them. It’s a toss-up which approach will work best, since there may be more artillery units present than can be effectively attacked, while the headquarters are generally better-defended and much more difficult to detect.

**Versus Jordan**

Israeli Offensive Victory Conditions dictate that an offensive versus Jordan be a broad-front affair, because all three levels of victory require the capture of widely-scattered objectives, some of which can be up to 20 hexes apart. One place to avoid, however, is the most direct route to Amman, along the highway from Jerusalem. The open plain south and east of Shuna can be turned into a killing ground for Israeli attackers by Jordanian artillery occupying the fortifications which look down upon it from the heights above. Forces of at least an armored division in strength should be sent up each of the other three highways running out of the Jordan Valley. The aim is to pierce the Jordanian front at several points preparatory to rolling-up and encircling the rest.

Helicopter Transported parachute battalions inserted behind the Jordanian fortifications lining the top of the escarpment can gain that all-important Rear Attack bonus for the Israelis, and it will probably be necessary in order to dislodge units with Troop Qualities as high as those possessed by most Jordanian formations. Indeed, the Jordanians are so strong that the Israelis will typically have to dismount a number of mechanized and motorized infantry brigades in order to dislodge them from fortifications.

To satisfy their Decisive Victory conditions, the Israelis have to capture three Jordanian cities. For a number of reasons, Iribid should be one of the cities against which the offensive is directed. First of all, the range of hills east of the escarpment is at its thinnest along the Iribid axis, meaning that a breakdown into open country can be effected fairly quickly. Another considers...
Armored Division should be versus Syria point in the Syrian line, and mass their troops southwards behind the Jordanian front. A pec for subtlety in an Israeli offensive because of its narrowness and relatively large numbers of troops that the Syrians can commit to the defense. The Israelis just have to pick some point in the Syrian line, and mass their troops and airpower against it. If they can break through, however, it becomes an entirely different ball game; since the Israelis will be able to maneuver while the Syrians cannot (due to the Israeli Air Force). The Arab player, realizing his inability to win a battle of maneuver, will naturally do everything that he can to keep the battle static. The Israeli player, therefore, must act boldly to prevent the Syrians from solidifying their defenses behind one of the rearward fortified lines. The best way to do this is to overrun portions of the fortified line before the enemy can occupy it. Either deeply-penetrating maneuver units or airborne forces inserted by helicopter can carry out this task.

To achieve a decisive victory, the Israelis have to grab three Syrian cities and/or major airports. Studying the map, it quickly becomes clear that the Israelis must decide whether their offensive will be weighted toward the south (where Nawa, Sara, and the As Suwayda airfields can be secured), or toward the north (where Daraya, Damascus, and the cluster of major airports southeast of Damascus are the objectives). The southern route is somewhat shorter, and the enemy forces there are likely to be weak, because Syrian formations will typically mass on the road to Damascus (where most of them are initially deployed anyway). However, to ensure that the Israelis can achieve their Major Victory Conditions in case a Decisive Victory cannot be secured, a major threat should also be made in the northern and central part of the front in order to ensure the capture of the requisite 30 towns. While the Israelis certainly have the capability to mount two separate thrusts, they may not be sufficiently strong to press both of them home before a UN Resolution brings the offensive to a screeching halt.

As a final point, any Israeli offensive against Syria should include an operation to capture the summit of Mount Hermon. As was recommended in the case of a Syrian attack against the Israeli summit, airborne troops should be inserted behind the fortification by helicopter in order to gain the Rear Attack bonus. In Lebanon

An Israeli major offensive probably cannot be launched in Lebanon if a major battle is taking place simultaneously in the Golan Heights, and certainly not if Jordan is also involved in the war. If an offensive is undertaken in Lebanon, it will most likely consist of two thrusts up three axes of advance; the coastal highway, the road running just to the west of the Shouf Mountains, and the Bekka Valley. The main weight of the offensive should be put into the two flanking drives, while the mobile up the central axis is a more-or-less secondary affair. Amphibious assaults can materially assist the drive up the coast by outflanking Syrian and PLO positions based upon the easily defended river lines.

The weaker Syrian air defense capabilities in Lebanon make Helicopter Transport missions especially appealing in an Israeli offensive to the north. Furthermore, the Shouf Mountains divide the Lebanese theater in two, while Mount Hermon and the Jabal al Hasiyah combine to largely isolate the Syrian forces in Lebanon from reinforcement from the homeland. The only route available for movement between the Lebanese coast and the Bekka Valley, and between the Bekka Valley and Syria, is the Beirut-Damascus highway. Therefore, if the bottleenecks along the highway (where it passes through or around the two mountain chains) can be occupied by Israeli airborne troops, the Syrians will encounter considerable difficulty in shifting their forces laterally to mass against the Israeli thrusts, and in pumping in reinforcements from Syria.

An offensive into the Bekka Valley may open up the possibility of a drive into Syria by way of the Beirut-Damascus highway. At first, the Syrians may seem invitingly weak in this region, but their reserves will be fairly close at hand around Damascus, and the highway runs through a two-hex choke-point that could be defended indefinitely by a well-fortified Syrian force. If the Israeli player wants to try this he must do it quickly, by surprise, and should probably think about sacrificing some airborne to hold the pass open until the armor can break through. Even if the effort fails, it may dictate sizeable enemy forces away from the main front, and will certainly scare the hell out of the Arab player.

Israel's objective is to take the Golan Heights, defeat the Syrian Army, and liberate the Syrian people from the rule of Baath. However, the Syrians can deploy adjacent to the Golan, and will be able to conduct Set-Piece Battles against it without having to move. That means that the primary role of the Golani's artillery will be providing Artillery Combat Support; Reaction Strikes will generally be fired at close range against Syrian units that have broken through the divisional front.

The Mordecai Armored Division should be taken as Israel's M+3 reinforcement, since once it gets firmly established on the Heights, the Syrians will make no further major advances. The Mordecai should try to climb onto the Heights in the Golani's sector, but if the road defiles are controlled by Syrian units or clogged by retreating Golani units, the division should detour north into the Moshe's sector rather than to try to fight its way up. Other reinforcements (commonly, the Vardi Armored Division) should try to get onto the Heights using the El Al road. In combination with an attack in the Moshe Division's sector, a thrust from the El Al direction becomes the second arm of a double-pincer offensive that threatens both flanks of a Syrian penetration in the Golan sector.

Defending Against Jordan

The weakness of the Jordanian Army is such that it will experience great difficulty in mounting anything but a limited-objective offensive. Therefore, any competent Israeli player shouldn't have to worry about the prospect of Jordanian mechanized columns roaring westward toward Tel Aviv and the Mediterranean Coast. Typically, the Jordanians will be able to secure at least a Limited Victory in the first two or three game turns by blasting through the highly-dispersed units of the Rachal Armored Division, or by penetrating through the gaps between them. However, it will be a bold Jordanian player indeed who tries to continue a strong offensive to the west. A far more common (and practical) strategy is for the Jordanians to consolidate their gains by fortifying a strong defensive position around their objectives. The Israeli player's strategy versus the Jordanians will usually, therefore, be self-evident: Mass forces against the enemy advance and launch a counterattack as soon as possible. Keep in mind the option of cutting off the Jordanian spearhead by mounting an attack across the Jordan River above or below the enemy bridgehead, and then thrusting laterally behind it.

The Golani Division's artillery can be deployed fairly close to the front because the Israeli line here is reasonably strong (largely a function of the terrain), and is unlikely to collapse under Syrian attack. Furthermore, the UN Treaty Observers Zone creates a buffer zone in front of the Moshe Division's sector which the Syrians must cross—exposing themselves to Reaction Strikes—in order to attack.

The Golani Division, on the other hand, must face the primary Syrian attack on terrain which is much less favorable to the defense. Consequently, there's a good chance that it will be broken through and suffer heavy casualties. Deploying the Golani's artillery as far back as possible therefore reduces the chances that it will be overrun or at least that it will be overrun quickly. An additional consideration is that the Syrians can deploy adjacent to the Golani, and will be able to conduct Set-Piece Battles against it without having to move. That means that the primary role of the Golani's artillery will be providing Artillery Combat Support; Reaction Strikes will generally be fired at close range against Syrian units that have broken through the divisional front.

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CONCLUSION:

So far, this article has had little to say about the tactics of fighting conventional ground battles in FLASHPOINT: GOLAN, but the topic is easily addressed. Simply put, the mechanics of movement and combat in the game reward the use of blitzkrieg tactics. When on the offensive, attacks should be made en masse along very narrow fronts, with the objective of producing a breakthrough. Once through the enemy’s lines, attacking units push on into the defender’s rear areas to suppress his artillery, disrupt his units’ supply, and attack his headquarters. Following waves of attacking units widen the initial penetrations by rolling up the enemy’s front through a series of flank and rear attacks.

On the defensive, the front line’s strength is usually kept to an absolute minimum, unless an abundance of defending units are available. Those units not committed to the front line are used to create a series of tactical reserves that are deployed in positions from which they can reinforce any hexes of the front line as possible. Whenever possible, strong operational reserves should also be maintained for the purpose of counterattacks and sealing off enemy breakthroughs.

Having said all this, I must emphasize once again that firepower is the decisive element on the modern battlefield, and that FLASHPOINT: GOLAN is fundamentally a game about such firepower. For example, when an attacker assaults an enemy’s line, he must fight and win two engagements; one against the defender’s ground units, and another against his artillery and other long-range firepower assets. Of these two, the contest for indirect fire superiority is the more important, since if the attacker does not win it, then his advancing forces will be shot up, pinned, and disrupted before they ever come to grips with the defender’s front-line combat units.

The “Deep Battle” referred to throughout this article is primarily the business of applying long-range firepower to the tasks of restricting the enemy’s strategic mobility, disrupting his command structure, and neutralizing his long-range strike assets so they cannot be used against you. This is the proper role of airpower, SRBMs and the long-range MRL artillery units in FLASHPOINT: GOLAN; using these assets to attrite the enemy’s front-line combat units is a waste of their potential. Helicopter-transported airborne troops and Special Operations Forces activities should also be integrated into the Deep Battle effort, and not used to gain purely tactical advantages in the immediate vicinity of the FLOT (“Forward Line Of Thrust”).

In closing, I cannot stress too strongly the importance of winning the Deep Battle; although the effects of such a victory may sometimes be subtle, they will almost always make a decisive contribution to the achievement of final victory in FLASHPOINT: GOLAN.

25.1 BATTLE SCENARIO

25.16 NORTHERN INCURSION IN MINIATURE

Situation: On the morning of February 20, 1992, an Israeli mechanized task force supported by helicopter gunships broke through roadblocks maintained by UN peacekeepers (UNIFIL - United Nations Independent Forces in Lebanon) and pressed on to attack two Lebanese villages located in the UN zone from which Shiite guerrillas were firing artillery and Katyusha rocket barrages into northern Israel. This was the third occasion on which Israeli forces had mounted a ground incursion into Lebanon beyond the limits of the Security Zone that Israel occupies to a depth of several miles along the entire length of its northern border. The incursions of 1978 and 1982 were, however, much larger affairs, constituting full-scale invasions undertaken by Israeli forces ranging upwards of five divisions. This latest incursion, on the other hand, was a quick in-and-out raid that lasted only a day or so.

This latest round in the cycle of violence in the Middle East had begun on February 15th, 1992, when three soldiers at a camp in northern Galillee had been hacked to death by PLO infiltrators. In retaliation, Israel launched a series of airstrikes against Palestinian guerrilla forces inside Lebanon. However, in a move apparently unrelated to the PLO attack, Israel also sent attack helicopters to strafe and rocket a motorcade carrying Sheik Abbas Musawi, leader of the Iranian-backed Islamic fundamentalist group Hezbollah, which has been involved in acts of terrorism against Israelis and Westerners for almost a decade. Musawi and several members of his family were killed in the attack, prompting Hezbollah and allied Shiite guerrillas in southern Lebanon to begin a major artillery attack upon Israel for the first time since 1982.

Scenario Parameters

Scenarios Length: 1 Activation Segment.

Air Superiority Level: Neither side has any airstrikes available.

Initiative: N/A.

Special Munitions Points: None.

Initial Deployment

Israel:

- 1st Task Force, 46th Mech Infantry Brigade of the Lev Armored Division, and one self-propelled artillery battalion of the Lev Armored Division (Strength = 3, Range = 5) - Hex N1924.

- 2nd Attack Helicopter Battalion - Rosh Pina airport (N2327).

Shite Guerrillas:

- 3rd (Guerrilla) Battalion of the Kararneh Brigade and the Kararneh Brigade’s Artillery Battalion - Yatar (N1622). The 3rd Battalion is deployed on its Disorganized side.

Design Note: Use PLO units to represent the Shites. Their military capabilities are, in any case, quite similar; that is to say, very limited.

Reinforcements

None

Troop Quality

Israel: Both units have a Troop Quality of 5.

Shite Guerrillas: Both units have a Troop Quality of 3.

Special Rules

Game Length: The entire scenario consists of the Lev Armored Division’s Activation Segment. The Shites do not get an Activation Segment and consequently never get to move.

Shite Artillery: Shiite artillery cannot fire Reaction Strikes in this scenario, although it is counted when determining the artillery advantage in battles.

Design Note: This rule reflects the fact that the Shites’ guns and rocket tubes are highly dispersed and constantly on the move in order to avoid Israeli counterfire; that the gunners are trained to fire barrages against static, area targets such as Israeli cities, not mobile, point targets like an armored column, and that the Shites have no real command and fire control system such as would be necessary to coordinate the tactical massing of artillery fire.

Victory Conditions

Israel wins if it captures Yatar (N1622); if it doesn’t, the Shites win.

Commentary:

Clearly this isn’t much of a scenario. In fact, the entire thing basically consists of a single Meeting Engagement Battle in which the outcome is highly predictable. The odds are 4 to 1, the terrain is Town, and Israel has a 2 to 1 advantage in artillery/attack helicopter strength (6 points versus 3) which effectively reduces the Shites’ Troop Quality to 1. Consequently, the Israelis have a 90% chance of victory, since the Shites can only win on a die roll of 9. Therefore, I offer this scenario not to increase the play potential of FLASHPOINT: GOLAN, but because games such as this can be highly informative, and act as a tool for understanding current events as they unfold.

— Kevin Boylan
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- **Craonne—March 7, 1814**: Russian general Sacken fights a delaying action against a French army that seems to consist only of units of the Imperial Guard.

*This is not a complete game. Use of Avalon Hill's NAPOLEON'S BATTLES game is required to employ the information in this module.

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"THE TARGET FOR TODAY IS..."
Reminiscences and a B-17 Tournament Scenario
by Don Hawthorne

Several months after purchasing my first copy of B-17, QUEEN OF THE SKIES, I was pleased to learn that a local convention would be holding a tournament for the game. At the time, I wondered how a tournament could be run for a solitary game, and if I even had the time. The event referee, Dana Moreland, himself a pilot and a fan of all flight games, is a man devoted to the principle that games exist primarily to be played. Dana had worked hard and produced a tournament that ranks in my memory as one of the three best convention events that I have ever participated in.

(Well, yes, I won; but that's beside the point.)

The tournament was held on Monday morning, the last day of the four-day convention. The field consisted of myself and thirty-one other participants, who had gathered in the Escon/Bombay Rooms (no kidding!) of the Los Angeles Hyatt Hotel Convention Center. Three long tables were reserved for the players, and Dana had even prepared a large chalkboard sketch map of the bombing route to the target. That target was to be the Rail Yards at Hamm, deep in enemy territory.

Dana assigned us to squadrons by random die roll, and within each squadron, we drew a seat at each table relative to our respective positions in our squadrons. Every player was required to name his aircraft and to enter his own name as the Pilot. My bomber was the **Lady Sam**, named after an English girlfriend named Samantha. (What better name for a B-17 flying out of Britain in 1943?) Dana gave us the go-ahead, and the formation of thirty-two players — each in command of his own Boeing B-17F and nine imaginary fellow crewmen — took to the air to do battle with Hitler's Luftwaffe in the skies over Europe. Good-natured wisecracks among the players soon took on the tone of the non-regulation chatter that had filled the airwaves almost half a century ago.

*I mean, this was great stuff! After three days of heavily intensive, even cutthroat competition, often between many of the same gamers who now had this very room, here we were faced with a situation that must inevitably become a cooperative effort. Each of us wanted the best bombing run, the most enemy planes shot down — that was how we'd score points and how we'd win the tournament.*

But the real competition was not against each other, but against The Cold Equations² that would largely determine each player's fate. Everybody wanted to beat those equations, and how we'd win the tournament.

But the real competition was against each other, but against The Cold Equations² that would largely determine each player's fate. Everybody wanted to beat those equations, and how we'd win the tournament.

To that wargaming purist that is the Number Cruncher, B-17 is nothing more than an exercise in odds-making. And granted, sooner or later, with all the dice rolls and the dozens of deleterious effects they generate, we all have that FLAK BIP in the Wing or the loaded Bomb Bay. But if there are such mechanistic dooms awaiting us in the play of B-17, there are also eerily consistent runs of fortune which lend the game a personality of its own. For example:

During that tournament, on the outward bound leg of our journey, I ran into an Me 110 over Abbeville, piloted by an Ace German Pilot. In three passes at my aircraft's front, he shot out the nose and both cheek guns, evading my own fire every time. On the return run, passing once more over Abbeville, the charts and die rolls once again conjured up an Me 110, piloted by an Ace Pilot — which proceeded to make three passes, all from the 10:30 and 1:30 Level positions. Unable to fire on what I believe to this day to be the "same" German, attacking me from the blind spots he had "expertly" created for himself earlier, I could only watch miserably as my Navigator was Severely Wounded, my Bombardier was KIA, and even my Pilot (my paper alter ego) won a Purple Heart with a Light Wound, before our Tail Gunner flared our nemesis after his last pass.

Now, I fully realize and appreciate the fact that, to the Number Cruncher, this is all only an interesting set of coincidences. And that's a shame, for with that sort of attitude, people like them will never truly enjoy this game!

After that first tournament, I bought a WWII flyer's cap in a war surplus store, wore it to the next B-17 tournament, and turned it over to that day's winner (Stance Nixon, as I recall). My intention was that The Hat, as it came to be known, should always be handed over to the next winner of the tournament where it appeared. The only condition being that in accepting it, you had to guarantee your attendance at the next local convention and participation in its B-17 tournament, along with your willingness to surrender The Hat to the next champion.

To my knowledge, The Hat was passed on three more times, until it wound up going to someone presumably more interested in the cash prize certificates than in any sense of tradition or sportsmanship, and disappeared. Alas. Maybe it was a Number Cruncher.

In any case, there were fewer and fewer B-17 tournaments so enjoyable for me as that one. Another referee began running the B-17 events exclusively, and although his heart may have been in the right place, I disagreed strongly with his methods. All too soon the skies over which he ruled became filled with B-17/Gs, Me 262 Schwalben and Me 163 Kometen; the tournaments evidently remained popular, because they apparently had no shortage of participants. Even so, they had ceased to be the game I had grown to love.

But there was one convention...

This particular event was not attended by the aforementioned referee, and while the convention planners wanted a B-17 event on their schedule, they also wanted it to have some interesting new wrinkle. At the planning session, I suggested we try a wrinkle that a lot of wargamers seem to enjoy: History.

So was born the B-17 Tournament Scenario reproduced here. The first one went over so well at that convention that the gaming club I attended at that time asked for several new ones. As you will see from the scenario as reproduced here, they aren't terribly difficult to create, but they do require a little research. Fortunately, that research makes for some of the most exciting reading available on World War II.

I wanted to host an event that would create that same sense of shared danger and the resul-
B-17, QUEEN OF THE SKIES

Tournament Scenario I
Schweinfurt; August 17, 1943

The first Schweinfurt Raid was the deepest penetration of German airspace up to that time. The raid was in two stages, the first half to be against Regensburg, with a follow-up raid on the ball-bearing works at Schweinfurt. USAAF planners reasoned that most of the German fighters which attacked the Regensburg force would be on the ground, re-arming and re-fuelling, when the Schweinfurt force passed through their sectors.

The Schweinfurt groups, however, were delayed by bad weather in England, and by the time they had assembled and begun their own run to their target, the German interceptors that had already attacked the Regensburg force had indeed re-armed and re-fuelled. And were waiting for them.

The Schweinfurt Raid force thus had to fight through every mile to its target, and then back to its bases in England, against a Luftwaffe determined to make the most of this opportunity to cripple the daylight bombers. Some German gruppen flow as many as three sorties that day.

Despite the battering suffered by the Eighth Air Force, and the relatively light damage inflicted on the target, the operation did have an important strategic effect. The Luftwaffe's response to the Allied air threat was to now heavily re-deploy its airpower, leaving less than a quarter of its available airforce on the previous "all important Russian Front."2

The Luftwaffe forces now in Western Europe, though hard-pressed from this August 17 raid, would be rested and ready for the next USAAF operations of consequence. These would be the follow-up raids, once again on Schweinfurt, which would climax on October 14, 1943: "Black Thursday".

But that is another mission.

**SCHWEINFURT SCENARIO RULES AND VICTORY CONDITIONS**

Although the Referee will make all die rolls regarding the following conditions, and apply them to all players' bombers in the force, the information is presented here for the players' reference, and as an aid to any future solitary play.

**Fighter Cover**
- Zone 2: +1 to die roll
- Zone 3: No modifier to die roll
- Zone 4: -1 to die roll
- Zone 5: Poor Cover available on a die roll of "6"

**Weather Over Target**
- As per Table O-1

**Weather Over Base**
- 2/12: Bad; 3/4, 10, 11: Poor; 5-9: Good

**FLAK Over Target**
- FLAK Over Target is automatically Medium; ignore +1 on Table G-3a 3.

**Flight Log Gazetteer**
- The Flight Log Gazetteer is modified to represent the historical situation as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 2</th>
<th>Zone 3</th>
<th>Zone 4</th>
<th>Zone 5</th>
<th>Zone 6</th>
<th>Zone 7</th>
<th>Zone 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-1/W</td>
<td>0/W</td>
<td>0/W-N</td>
<td>0/N</td>
<td>0/G</td>
<td>0/G</td>
<td>-1/G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. This tournament will be a return to the traditional play of B-17, QUEEN OF THE SKIES. Certain modifications have been made to the mission profile to better represent the character of the historical event, but the players will be required to perform within the framework of the original game system as Mr. Frank envisioned it. Points will be awarded for downing enemy aircraft, preserving bomber crew members, and for delivery of payload to the target. A special award will also be presented to the player who returns to England with (or perhaps we should say "in spite of") the most heavily damaged bomber, without losing the entire crew on landing (a die roll result of 2 or less on Table G-9).

2. The bomber used will be the B-17/F as presented in the original game, with no modifications.

3. The Pilot, Co-Pilot and Bombardier of each aircraft are all considered to be flying their 11th missions, and receive the appropriate benefits for such status to all die rolls on Tables O-6, G-9 and G-10.

4. Ace Gunners may be acquired during the course of play; no player may have an Ace Gunner at the start of the mission.

5. Table B-7, "Random Events", will be used, with the following exception: Result numbers 3, 7, 10, 11 and 12 are treated as "No Effect".

6. The Referee will make all die rolls for Weather and the level of Fighter Cover in all cases, and the results of these die rolls will apply to all bombers in the force. There will be the possibility of minimal fighter cover in Zone 5 during the mission.

7. Rule 20.0, "German Fighter Pilot Status", will be used.

8. Players will use one side of their Mission Charts for the outbound portion of the game, and the reverse side of the same chart for the return. The Flight Log differs slightly for each half of the mission in this scenario, so pre-printed Mission Charts should be provided for the players.

9. Players of the same squadron will sit at the same table, in the order of their bomber's position within the squadron (i.e., the Lead Bomber player will sit at one end of the table, the next bomber player will sit next to him, and so on down to the Tail Bomber player who will sit at the opposite end). Players will be assigned to squadrons by the Referee; positions within each Squadron should be determined by the players through die roll or, better still, by drawing straws (one historical method). If (when) bombers are lost, the next player in the Squadron will move into their position. Seating order is important because the Lead and Tail bombers in a squadron draw more enemy fighters, and thus have a greater opportunity to gain points for kills, as well as a greater risk of being shot down themselves.

10. If a squadron loses its Tail and/or Lead bombers, the adjacent player in line takes over the particular position vacated. If a squadron is reduced to one bomber, that bomber is treated as being both the Lead and Tail bomber for purposes of apportioning enemy fighters during future attacks.

11. If either the Low Squadron or High Squadron are totally eliminated, the Middle Squadron takes their place. Adjust the Flight Log for each aircraft accordingly. There is no change in the status of the Low or High Squadrons if the Middle Squadron is totally eliminated. If only one squadron remains of the original formation, it automatically becomes a Low Squadron upon entering the next Zone.

12. Players receive one point for each Me 109, one point for each Me 110, and two points for each FW 190 which their crews shoot down. No points are received for enemy fighters forced to Break Off Attacks or driven off or eliminated by Fighter Cover or Random Events. No bonus points are awarded for shooting down enemy "Ace" or "Green" Pilots. Players will also receive points equal to one-tenth of the percentage of their bombs dropped on the target, fractions rounded up. Finally, players receive one point for each crewman returned to England who does not later die of his wounds.

13. This optional condition (appropriately numbered "13") is for the player who somehow manages to limp back to England in a manner better suited to The Twilight Zone than to any reasonable expectations based on the condition of his aircraft. The player who returns with the most heavily damaged B-17, and lands it with at least one living crew member who does not later die of his wounds, regardless of the final condition of his aircraft, should be given some sort of Honorable Mention or an Award of Recognition. Typically, this is a pair of new "Consolation Dice", hopefully a little luckier than those he played through the tournament with.
Credit Where It's Due
Since writing this article, I have played in another B-17 tournament very similar to the one described herein. This was the AVALONCON '92 event, refereed by Dave Terry. This time out, it was my bomber—the Avè Maria, named for my wife—which, believe it or not, fell prey to a Fuel Tank Fire, dictating a Bail Out. Two of my crew escaped occupied France and actually returned to England, only to be lost on the next mission when an FW 190's burst hit the Bomb Bay of my second aircraft, the Mina Mine-Ah ("Mina" is my wife's nickname), detonating her cargo. Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.

I found Mr. Terry's efforts to be in every way the equal of those of Mr. Moreland which I so fondly recall in the above article. All the old fun and good sportsmanship that had been lacking since that first tournament were in full force once more. Any B-17 fan who was at AVALONCON '92 will remember the enthusiasm of the participants and sheer entertainment of Mr. Terry's tournament; any B-17 fan who wasn't there would do well to plan on attending next year. I know I will; I have a new pair of Conso­ nation Dice I have to break in.

1. The phrase "The Cold Equations" used in this article is the title of a classic science fiction short story by Mr. Tom Godwin. It shows up from time to time in anthologies, and is highly recommended reading.

2. The source authority for this section was Mr. S. Craig Taylor's own Bomber, a design he published for Yaqueinto Publishing, Copyright 1985. With all due respect to our own LUFTWAFFE, this now-out­of-print title remains for me the definitive simulation of the air war over Europe. Mr. Taylor's own Scenario Notes for his August 17, 1943 scenario provided the bulk of the information and verbiage for my own synopsis of the B-17 Tournament Scenario version.

3. "Table G-3a" is from Mr. Doug Bleyaert's excellent article, "The Queen in Germany; More targets for B-17" (THE GENERAL, Vol. 23, No. 5), which lists twenty-two new targets for the game, some as deep as ten zones into Germany. Mr. Bleyaert's article also provides a more conventional Flight Log Gazetteer for raids on Schweinfurt as part of its "Table G-11a". Also highly recommended, and de rigueur for all fans of B-17, QUEEN OF THE SKIES.

DINOSAURS AND CADILLACS

TYRANNO EX
Some Background on Our Latest Release

Many of my gaming acquaintances of "Team Doily" fame are presently enraptured by the European school of game design. While their tastes tend toward simpler and less militant fare than would interest the average reader of this magazine, there is little doubt that considerable fresh game design talent resides on the far side of the Atlantic. Everyone has a different idea of what constitutes a great game and I am far from joining the other members of Team Doily in proclaiming ADEL VERFLICHTET as the greatest game of all time. Nonetheless, I recognize talent when it kicks me in the butt. Thus, I've had my eye on the European boardgame community for quite some time with the idea of acquiring the right products for Avalon Hill fans.

Prior to the appearance of ADEL VERFLICHTET, Team Doily was nearly unanimous in its declaration of Die Macher as one of their all-time favorite games. However, a German election game was not my idea of a hot marketing property, so I held my curiosity in check until the same designer turned to a subject I deemed more saleable. Fortunately, I haven't long to wait before Karl-Heinz Schmiel released Tyranno Ex under his private Mosquito Games label. This time the theme was evolution and Team Doily was duly impressed. So was I, and an agreement to do an English-language version was soon reached.

Avalon Hill's TYRANNO EX is a game for two to four players (four being optimum) in which each player selects from a pool of 28 different species and follows their evolution through rapidly passing millennia as they struggle against the changing environment and threats posed by other species. Each animal has a unique combination of three elements which are vital to its survival. The more these elements are found in the environment, the more robust the species. If these elements are removed from the environment altogether, the species becomes extinct, and therein lies the crux of the matter. The environment is constantly changing as players alternate placing elements in a simulated passage of millions of years. Each player has a supply of elements which he may play to influence the environment or return for another selection. By weighing the elements at his disposal and the needs of his and other players' species, a skillful player can accurately manipulate the environment to best suit his own ani­

nels. The ability to plan ahead and bluff during the secret allocation of elements makes the Evolution Phase far from a random factor.

As the Evolution Phase comes to a close, species will have gained or lost strength based on their own unique element needs and how successful players have been in manipulating the environment. Each player then selects one of his animals with which to attack an opposing species during the Combat Phase to establish dominance at the top of the food chain. The resulting dice battles are reminiscent of TITAN, but victory in combat alone does not guarantee survival. Even combat victors are eventually pushed out of play by the survival of new and more successful species as evolution marches inevitably forward.

Whereas Karl-Heinz Schmiel's version used an abstract board, fictitious animals and a more comic treatment, our rendition employs full color illustrations of actual animals. They range from the mighty Tyrannosaurus Rex of the title dating back some 66,000,000 years to the harmless Raphus Cucullatus (better known as the Dodo bird), which met extermination at the hands of man a mere 300 years ago. Beautifully illustrated playing cards and mounted map-board bring the Primeval World to life in a game that is every bit as challenging as it is fun to play. Pertinent data regarding each animal's size, habits, time period and probable cause of extinction adorn the back of each playing card, making it an educational tool as well.

TYRANNO EX is a relatively simple game suitable for family play and playable in two-to-three hours. Yet, heavy thinkers of the ACQUIRE variety may be its biggest fans. Due to the bluffing aspects of the hidden Element placements, it is not recommended for solitaire play. TYRANNO EX was released at AVALON­ CON '92, and the response from gamers indicates it has been very well received, indeed.

ROADKILL
Greenwood Hits the Road
(And Everyone On It With Him)

It's a long stretch from prehistoric dinosaurs to futuristic road races, but that's where my next development shore took me. This time the designer was Dan Verrsen of Modern Naval Battles fame. Like his earlier claim to fame, ROADKILL is a card game. I share Dan's preference for card games as the best medium in which to design sophisticated games with a minimum of rules dependance. A well-designed deck of cards can replace endless pages of rules by providing all the necessary rule prompts at the player's fingers whenever...
he needs them. They also provide much more opportunity for graphic support than the average wargame’s half-inch counters.

Unlike most of Team Doily, my favorite game is UP FRONT. I’ve been a fan of Courtney Allen’s designs for a long time and never miss an opportunity to borrow and improve upon his design innovations. Such was the case here as ROADKILL has undergone major in-house redesign to become a futuristic UP FRONT-type demolition derby. While ROADKILL doesn’t have the depth of scenarios or strategy of an UP FRONT, it doesn’t have a 36-page rulebook either. Many who found the latter’s rules daunting will embrace the four pages of ROADKILL rules as perhaps more appropriate fare for this type of card game.

ROADKILL is a cross between Hollywood’s Mad Max and Death Race 2000 themes, wherein full-contact, combat cross-country auto racing has become the rage of the future. Life is cheap. Cars are well-armed and armored. The event is televised to a blood-crazed, wagering audience more addicted than any NFL junkie. Consider it CIRCUS MAXIMUS, sans mapboard, with machine guns and turbo-charged engines.

Each player has a control panel on which he tracks the fuel, damage, and location of his car. A player’s hand capacity is reduced as his car’s damage increases. So as the race continues and combat takes its toll, cars have to drop back on side roads or rest stops to repair, or stagger forward with reduced capabilities. The decision of when to stop and sacrifice time on the road and position in the pack for necessary fuel or repairs is not unlike those gut-wrenching decisions of when to move forward in UP FRONT. The variables to be considered are nearly infinite.

The premise for ROADKILL is simple: The course is laid by playing Road cards from your hand. The first car to play and enter the eighth Road section wins. However, only the leader can play Road sections, and remaining in the lead is a perilous undertaking. By the time one has fought his way through the pack to take the lead, he may have little remaining with which to forge a new Road section or defend his record-accorded lead.

The Road sections come in straight, curved, and mountainous sections which each take proportionally more fuel and time to transit. Balancing a car’s position in the race with its fuel/repair needs and card hand is a constantly changing test of skill, nerves and calculated gambles. Timing is everything. Knowing when to bide your time and build a stronger hand and when to go for broke is essential. Players may play any number of cards in their turn, but their maximum draw capability is reduced by one for each card played. A player who plays all his cards is thus left visibly defenseless with nothing to protect him from attacks by passing cars. The cards are color-coded to allow play either in your own turn or in response to another player’s actions during his turn. A player with few cards in his hand invites others to pass him with disdain and kick a little sand in his face for good measure.

Each car must pass a Road-entry random number check to advance to the next Road section. This simulates in a playable manner “time on road” in marking progress along that Road section. It also serves to handicap a run-away leader as the tail-enders earn beneficial Road-entry modifiers to offset the difficulties of fighting one’s way through the pack. The end result is a balancing feature that usually provides a photo finish. Even cars that are all but smoldering at the outset have an excellent opportunity to repair and overtake the leaders.

Random events add color as weather conditions, mechanical breakdowns, narrow roads that inhibit passing, and the occasional raised drawbridge screw up even the best laid plans at the worst possible moment. The Advanced Game allows players to augment their vehicles with unique features and custom design their own cars.

ROADKILL is a riotous two-hour game of armored leapfrog for two-to-ten players or teams, ages 12 and up. It is currently scheduled for a spring release. I recommend it highly to those who share my enthusiasm for sophisticated card wargames such as UP FRONT, ATTACK SUB, or WRASSLIN’. Don Greenwood

PROLOGUE:
Fear and Loathing in Baltimore...

I’m no Einstein, but I am not without a certain low animal cunning that, in past years, has often allowed me to slip from the clammy clutches of the editor of The GENERAL when ragged to write a few (translation: “Pad that sucker so there’s no need for a lengthy philosophy section!”) words on what’s upcoming from my prestigious and plush office de design. “So what’s the problem?”, you ask, perplexed; “Write it and get on with your life.” Well, boys and girls, it’s like this: This will be my sixth and last (at least for a while) game for the Smithsonian’s American History Series. The game should be published early in 1993. It covers only fighter-to-fighter combat (if you want bombers, you’ll just have to play AIR FORCE) at the end of the Second World War. In common with the other games in this series, MUSTANGS is quick and easy to learn, and the low number of counters in use at any one time makes this one especially suitable for novices. The game system combines a simultaneous movement system that requires no written orders, with a capability to exploit initiative and so react to enemy maneuvers in a timely manner.

Aircraft found in MUSTANGS will include the P-38L “Lightning”, the P-47B and D “Thunderbolt”, the P-51B and D “Mustang” (of course), the F-4U-1A “Corsair”, the F6F-3 “Hellcat”, the Me-109G-6, the FW-190A-8 and D-9, the Me-262-1a, the A6M5a “Zeke”, the Ki.84-Ia “Frank”, and the N1K1-Jb “George”, plus many variations on these types. Over thirty additional fighter aircraft types and their variants will be available in an expansion kit that will be released later.

NAPOLEON’S BATTLES: MODULE 2

This will be the second of our final module for the miniatures rules set, NAPOLEON’S BATTLES, and should be out by the summer of 1993. The booklet will include new scenarios (including Austerlitz and Wagram), a campaign game, an expansion-correction-update of the two games’ data cards can be used together for compiling “design-your-own” modern scenarios. Despite the common game system, IDF, thanks to the older equipment in use and the more open terrain, has a totally different feel from MBT when being played.

Vehicles found in IDF include the M60A1, various Centurions (Super, Ben Gurion, Mk.3 and Mk. 5), the M47A1, the M48A2 and Super Patton, the ancient but still effective Shermans (M1, M50 Mk.2, and M51 Mk.1), the AMX-15, the T-67, the T-10M, the Stalin 2, the T-34/85, the T-54B and T-55A, the T-62A, the PT-76B, and many others, plus infantry, artillery, aircraft and helicopters.

MUSTANGS

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OTHER FUTURE PROJECTS

I have four projects on the back burner right now, but hesitate to make any further mention of any of them as they are currently on no official company schedule and are at least a year away (from when this article was written—probably not more than a few weeks away by the time it gets printed). So, NO COMMENT!!! Craig Taylor

Thanks, Craig; you can have your family back, now. DJH
How to Build a Computer Game

Several prospective developers have approached me on the question of just how development proceeds on a new computer game. Here is a vastly simplified description of the process. Keep in mind that this is under ideal conditions. Under the pressures of the real world, things can be a little less well defined. For illustrative purposes I am assuming that you have assembled a team of a designer, one or more programmers, and an artist. In the real world you might well have people doubling up jobs, but it's not the best way. Many more people are needed to bring the final product to market such as editors, layout artists and producers, but we were talking about the R&D end.

The first step is the design of the game. It is better to have your completed design at hand, rather than to let it grow as things proceed. In this way the programmer will have a solid feel for the fundamental structure of the game and can make the game engine as solid as possible. The design for the computer player(s) should not be a part of the fundamental design, but be a separate engine.

The next step is to decide how the game will look, play, and feel. Many programmers use toolbox programs to produce dummy programs. This allows the designer, artist, and the programmer(s) to see an approximation of the finished product. Design parameters can then be discussed and worked out before the programmer writes any good code and avoids conflicts within the team. The third step is for the programmer(s) to begin the game engine. This starts with the basic functions of the game and proceeds to the higher level functions. Hooks to connect with the human interface and hooks for the computer player are included in the code of the engine. At this point the computer player should still be in the design stage and not actually being coded.

Next step is to program the user interface. Interface code is very time critical, that is the interface cannot have annoying time/contro lags, but should react to input without any perceptible delay. Advanced graphics routines (such as scrolling, pop-up menus, and animation) have to be quick, and that generally means ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE (shudder). While I'll admit that good "C" code is better than poorly written assembler, good assembly language is still by far the fastest.

Once the game engine and user interface are complete, they are merged and the complete ALPHA version of the game tested thoroughly. While this is going on, the programmer begins work on the computer player engine. Philosophically we feel that the computer player should be constricted by the game rules in the same manner as the human player. This does not allow for cheating, and eventually gives the human player the edge (as a more flexible CPU is at work... we hope).

Suggestions and bugs from the ALPHA test are implemented, and then the computer player connected to the game engine. This is the BETA version of the program which is tested even more thoroughly than the ALPHA.

Any problems which crop up in the BETA test are addressed and the final version given on last PROOF test. The game is then prepared for market and released (where all the undiscovered bugs... er... features come to the surface).

Sounds simple, but in fact it's a complex process, requiring much time and creative energy to do well. Changes in industry standards that have occurred during development, improvements to the design, changes in prompts and requesters and so on which will invariably add to the complexity of the project.

GEnie International

GEnie is available to international users via PDN in the following countries:

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1. Connect to the local PDN (public data network by joining the local PDN service).
2. Enter the following information all on one line:
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   - 9 (Indicates PAD Service)
   - 00 (Indicates Asynchronous Service)

Thus, you would enter: 3136900 OR 3136900000000000 (if the PDN requires the full X.121 address.) Contact the PTT representative if there are any questions as to the correct addressing structure. (GE Information Services will distinguish the access speed (300 bps or 1200 bps) automatically.)

3. When you receive the MARK*NET Service sign-on prompt UF#, follow the traditional user number, password which is:
   - XJM11997,PDN

4. After the signup, a startup package will be mailed. This includes a contract, which must be returned before the account can be validated. If you choose, you may FAX the signed contract. The PAX information appears on the contract.

The hourly rates for PDN usage are:

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There is no sign-up fee. A manual is not included, but may be ordered for $28.95 (which includes shipping and handling).

Prime time is in effect from 8 AM to 6 PM **EST** or **EASTERN** time (U.S.A.) weekdays (i.e., Monday through Friday). Non-prime time is all other hours and includes GEnie holidays.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

The GENERAL will list any gaming convention in this column free of charge on a space-available basis, provided that we are notified at least six months in advance of the event date. Each listing must include the name, date, site and contact address for the convention.

Additional information of interest to our readership, such as tournaments utilizing Avalon Hill games, is solicited and will be printed if made available. The Avalon Hill Game Company does not necessarily attend nor endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that events using our titles will be held. Readers are urged to contact the list source for further information before making plans to attend.

JANUARY 15-17, 1993

THE ASL OPEN TOURNAMENT, Arling ton Airport Hilton, Arlington, TX. Seven Round Swiss-style system. For more information, contact Gary Fortenberry at 231 Linda Drive, Burleson, TX 76028, or call (817) 447-2850.

FEBRUARY 12 - 14, 1993

GENGHIS CON XIV, Marriott Hotel Southeast at I-25, Denver, CO. Sponsored by the Denver Gamers Association. For more information, contact The Denver Gamers Association, P.O. Box 440058, Aurora, CO 80044, or call (303) 665-7062.

FEBRUARY 12-15, 1993

ORCCON 16, Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. The full gamut of the hobby available in tournament and/or open gaming formats. Contact STRATEGIC: P.O. Box 3849, Torrance, CA 90510-3849, or call (310) 326-9440 for more and immediate details.

FEBRUARY 26 - 28, 1993

TOTAL CONFUSION VII, Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough, MA. Contact: Total Confusion Convention, P.O. Box 1463, Worcester, MA 01607-1463; or call (508) 481-8241 or (508) 9487-1530.

MARCH 25-28

SIMCON XV, sponsored by the USGSA, Rochester, NY. Contact SIMCON, CPU #277146, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627-7146, or call (716) 275-6186.
Sirs:

I am a war gaming enthusiast and have enjoyed gaming with many of your fine designs. However, I am visually impaired, and my sight has become worse. In order for it to be possible for me to game with any of your systems, they have had to be adjusted. I have come up with a conversion kit that will work with any of your systems. Not only is it workable for the partially visually impaired, but people who are totally blind can use the kit also.

I think that the system that I have designed could be marketed. People whose vision currently prevents them from using many of your fine games may now have the opportunity to do so. In addition, some conventional gamers may find this system advantageous, as such easily modifiable, counters that won’t fall off the map, and friendlier phase adjustment procedures.

I am hoping that you would be interested in trying this kit, or if you think you might be interested, I will design a kit for your company. This kit will allow me to use its games with my system, and market the system myself. I don’t know what kind of consumer market there might be for this idea, or if any blind people would even have much interest in the use. All I can do is go on my own feelings, and I believe that if people who are now unable to use your systems could have an opportunity to do so, they would.

Let me discuss which games I chose to work on for the kit. I would like to see Tom Cat/Blackjack converted to a play-by-mail would be the easiest to convert, especially if someone was going to get started in war gaming. I developed systems for THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN and AFRIKA KORPS. Among other things. Most of the expensive parts, such as map boards and counters, are modular or re-used with other games. Once a person acquires all the basic parts needed, the only additional parts they would need to purchase would be rules, unique components, and no more for the individual games. I think almost any game could be converted, but the ones listed above were the best to start with to get a feel for the kit.

Let me close by saying that Avalon Hill has given me many hours of enjoyment, and is the standard that I use to judge other games, and I hope you are doing well for your time.

Carl Meikle
Pittsford, NY

Personally, I think it’s a great idea. I’d very much like to know the views of the readership on this, so I’ve printed Mr. Meikle’s letter in this column. How about it? Any comments of your own? A game which players move more STORM OVER ARNHEM than THUNDER AT CASSINO just because it’s easier to read SONA’s components? Think about it before you answer!

DH

Dear Mr. Martin:

There are a couple of reasons I find myself writing a letter to THE GENERAL and yourself.

First, I wish to congratulate you on the always fine manner in which THE GENERAL has endeared under your guiding hand. It is always a pleasure to see the next issue appear in my mail box. I may disagree on occasion, but I enjoy the exposure to the variety of games published by Avalon Hill. I especially enjoy the Series Replays, as they often give me the “flavor” of a game, more so than the original purchase ever did. The past was based on 3’s that I have read. I also wish to commend all those game-players who write in with their evaluations of the various games. Some have been most enlightening. cardinal games which are available to us who compete. I am glad there’s room in the hobby for all of us.

Mike Dom
Alpena, Michigan

Dear Editors:

Thank you all for the most outstanding GENERAL issue ever (Vol. 27, No. 6). Just as I was about to let my subscription lapse, along with my other boardgaming-oriented games with only the proper proportional-to-sales number of wargame articles. Praise be unto ye.

And an article on STOCKS & BONDS was a refreshing change. Keep up the good work and excellent direction.

As for the yahoo minority who continue their unreasoned slaming of THE GENERAL (and Avalon Hill in general) for moving toward the less complex, more playable games, please point out to them that the published wargame market is constituted only by the boardgaming enthusiasts. This is obvious in the Top 25 ad on page 33 (Vol. 27-6).

Only seven of the titles were wargames (GURPS, BATTLE OF THE BULGE ’91, GETTYSBURG ’88, FLASHPOINT, GOLAN, ASL, CIVIL WAR AND THIRD REICH) and only four had been introduced in the last year. I am not saying wargames should be ignored, I am just saying that times change and gamers should, too. I enjoy many wargames but I won’t limit myself to them by closed-mindedly reining back any discussion of the non-military offerings. If wargamers want to continue receiving periodic new wargame titles from Avalon Hill, then they should enthusiastically support Avalon Hill’s new-found bread and butter—plain old boardgames. (I won’t even go into the fact that 100% of Avalon Hill’s role-playing line is represented in the Top 25.)

Again, keep up the good work and a subscription renewal is on the way.

Randy Cox
Chlama, SC

Dear Mr. Greenwood:

I am writing for the Eastern Pennsylvania Gaming Society (EPGS), to let you know about the little library we have set up that we have taken to reviving the so-called “decline of the hobby.”

We are a group of gamers which meets the third Saturday of each month in the Eastern Pennsylvania area, currently at the George Washington Lodge on Plymouth Meeting Boulevard in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania. Our listings can be found in the Pennsylvania Tunes lip. Our list of full current members has just topped fifty people, with something like seventy-five members on our waiting list. Our next meeting averages twenty-five to forty people each month. We play games of all publishers, but Avalon Hill games are certainly quite popular here. Our members pay a four dollar fee for each meeting they attend, and this goes toward paying the rent for the hall and entitles them to receive our newsletter.

We sent a total of three full teams to AVALCON this year. Most of our membership is very excited about the AVALCON concept, and we are even more thrilled that it will be held for the foreseeable future in PA, since Camp Hill is only a two hour drive down the turnpike for most of us. The only way it could be better is if the convention were held in suburban Philadelphia rather than suburban Harrisburg.

Our membership, including myself and the other officers, is especially enthusiastic about UP FRONT and ASL—we have quite a number of enthusiasts who would no doubt be ready to give up their entire weekend to the game. Regarding UP FRONT, there are many of us who consider it the greatest game you have ever published—we are making converts all the time, even from those people who make a big noise about not liking Avalon Hill games. Thus we would be most disturbed if the rumors we hear about the game being discontinued were true. Let’s hope a great deal of enthusiasm can be generated by the UP FRONT tournament at AVALCON; both myself and the club Minister of Internal Affairs, Anthony Toglia, will be participating.

In closing, I want you to be aware that we are thinking quite seriously about expanding our organization to the entire eastern Pennsylvania, and we look forward to helping it do even better. Hoping that I might be aross cards with you at the next UP FRONT tournament.

David Bozinni
Exton, PA

Dear Mr. Hawthorne:

As a long time reader of THE GENERAL, I wish you well in your new position. I hope that you will continue to expand and improve your magazine as your predecessors have done. You certainly have a tough act to follow.

I felt that I must respond to Michael Anchors’ article “Forgotten History” in Vol. 28, No. 1. Perhaps the article should have been titled “Forgotten Victory” as it will admit that the Assyrian player following this strategy will do better than the Assyrian, but consider the following points:

By committing the Assyrian population to war in Asia Minor early in the game, you remove much of the Assyrian forces from Babylon and Egypt. The Assyrians need no longer have to make the agonizing decision of either building their two cities on turn four or shaving their population to four, or both. All will fall into line behind one, the other. Instead of fighting for the city sites in Palestine and Syria, they can peacefully coexist, at least in the early game, placing them in the heart of the Assyrian army.

More important is the time it will take to eradicate the Asians from Asia Minor. Mr. Anchors implies in his article that the side with the most take-aways has an advantage in battle. This is a fallacy. In CIVILIZATION, having a smaller population and the ability to move faster is far more desirable. I have found that even with an uninspired defense, the Asians can hold off a large number of Assyrians through at least turn seven. If Assyria holds on to its cities, until it is a “questionable situation” has been resolved, as they must if they intend to sole possession of Asia Minor, they will have fallen back three places on the AST to Egypt. If they can afford the luxury of embroiling a strategy that places them far behind, if it doesn’t also show how I am to bring every one else to a similar level. When Assyria finally takes over Syria, it makes itself feel behind in the trade war that truly determine victory or defeat.

It is easy to lose sight of the fact that CIVILIZATION is just as much as it is a military game. You need good diplomacy, culture, etc. and this is a wise strategy, particularly in the early turns of the game.

Brian S. Dubius
Ann Arbor, MI

Dear Mr. Greenwood:

Since purchasing BLACKBEARD in February ’92, it has become the favorite of me and my wife, who are also DINOZORS and THE LONG LOST WORLD and LEGENDS OF ROBIN HOOD. The enclosed ratings form, a collective effort on our part, reflects our approval of the efforts of Rich Berg, Jim Ellison and yourself.

The bibliography in the rules manual, and especially, the reference to THE GENERAL, Vol. 27, No. 6 featuring BLACKBEARD, are great ideas. Incidentally, my copy of that issue has just arrived and it is an excellent companion to the game.

The only “negative” comment on the game concerns the recording of “Net Worth.” Somehow, recording numbers on the Ship Log cards does not seem to mesh with the game of the Captain. Something more visual is needed. A set of “doubles,” like the gold coin used in ROBIN HOOD, would have created the right “feel” of a ship of pirates.

Despite that minor inconvenience, thanks for another great game.

Rich Jennings and crew:
Michael, Kevin, Brian and Molly
Saint Ann, Missouri

My wife and I generally “raid” the ROBIN HOOD game for gold-piece counters and use them to cover the chits on the "WATER/LAND" board. The ACHIEVERS ("ASHORE" and "SHIP/LAND") cards (some of which may be blasted!) provide the effect you seek and adds the extra dimension of preventing calculating players from reading one’s bank statement.

DH
The game system features historical leaders who conduct strategic operations against the enemy coalition. Each three year game turn represents a phase of the 28 year conflict complete with random events, collection of tribute, and rebellions. During each game turn opposing leaders expend money (talents) to move triremes, hoplites, and cavalry forces toward distant objectives in an effort to control strategic lines of communication while destroying the enemy's forces and ravaging his territory.

The unique leader system has historic personages, such as Pericles, Alcibiades, Archidamus, Brasidas, Glyppas, Cleon among others, who not only represent themselves but also the political factions they lead. This political affiliation determines the type of historically-accurate strategies that they will pursue when they are in charge of the polis. Success for the solitaire systems allows it to maintain its strategy while failure leads to a new strategic direction of the war. The combat system features naval battles, land battles, and sieges. Success in battle depends on the ability of the leader, the quality/size of the forces (Spartan Hoplites and Athenian Triremes), and superiority in cavalry.

The Peloponnesian War comes with four scenarios (Peloponnesian War, Archidamian War, Decelean War, Fall of Athens). The three smaller scenarios allow the player to have a short but satisfying gaming experience by examining a critical segment of the war. Of course there is always the option to play the Peloponnesian War scenario and experience the full panorama of the conflict while not consuming prodigious amounts of time. Included in this package are commissioned articles which trace the strategic course of the war, examine its tactics, and translate the history of Thucydides into the form it would take during an actual game. Whether alone or with as many as seven friends, The Peloponnesian War allows one to experience the glory that was Greece.
**Stonewall Jackson's Way**

**August 1862:**

President Abraham Lincoln has ordered General John Pope to Washington and given him command over all Union forces in central Virginia. His orders: March "on to Richmond" in conjunction with General McClellan’s Army of the Potomac and crush the Rebels once and for all. But General Robert E. Lee’s renowned Army of Northern Virginia has secretly moved north from Richmond to confront Pope before the Union plan can be put into effect. With his brilliant subordinates, including Longstreet, Stuart and Jackson, Lee is about to launch his most masterful campaign of the Civil War. When it has ended, the Confederates will be at the gates of Washington, and John Pope will be out of a job. Throughout the four years of the Civil War, the South’s prospects for victory will never look brighter, nor those of the North so dim.

This simulation of the Second Manassas campaign is the first volume in Avalon Hill’s new series of strategic Civil War games. Future games will link up with the STONEWALL JACKSON’S WAY map to portray more of the Civil War’s eastern theatre. This is one of the first Civil War games to concentrate on an entire campaign rather than a single battle. Despite its rich detail, the game is fairly easy to learn and play. Indeed, several scenarios can be played to completion in an hour.

Two beautiful 22" x 32" maps portray central Virginia as it was in the summer of 1862, featuring roads, turnpikes, railroads, rivers, mountains—even bridges and fords. These highly accurate maps are based on original Civil War maps in state and county archives. The players control Union and Confederate military units in turns representing one day of real time. The game features five Basic scenarios, two Advanced scenarios, and a detailed day-by-day historical analysis of the actual campaign. STONEWALL JACKSON’S WAY will appeal to Civil War buffs of all types as well as to those who are just being introduced to this dramatic period of American history. Its interactive game system assures that each game will be unpredictable, exciting and competitive.

Game features include Corps leaders, distinct Infantry and Cavalry capabilities, Forced Marches, flanking attacks, fatigue rules, bridgelaying and bridge and railroad demolition, weather, supply, varied terrain features and their effects and even foraging. Players may choose from seven scenarios re-creating such engagements as Cedar Mountain, Stuart’s Cavalry Raid, and the first encounter between Lee and Pope.

Stonewall Jackson’s Way is now available for $35.00 from your favorite game store or from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). If ordering direct, please add $5.00 to cover shipping and handling ($10.00 for Canadian and Mexican orders; $15.00 overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

*We Make History*
A Variant for STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL

By Frank Calcagno

Although first published years ago (and of course updated yearly for player statistics), STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL (SPF), by the Avalon Hill Game Company, has retained its authenticity very well. This is largely due to fact that few significant rules changes or playing techniques have been instituted in the NFL itself in recent years.

Recently however, one new technique has gained increased acceptance in the NFL which has greatly affected play. This is the "No Huddle" offense. The Cincinnati Bengals were one of the first teams to experiment with this technique, which was then dubbed the "Sugar Huddle." Cincinnati would indeed huddle, but they would do it near enough to the line of scrimmage that, if the defense attempted to change personnel, the Bengals would be in perfect position to snap the ball and force a procedure penalty against their confused opponent. Controversy raged throughout the NFL to the point of suggesting that the Bengals themselves be penalized for utilizing such a "cheating" tactic.

This technique was developed to its fullest during the 1989-1990 season by the Buffalo Bills. Instead of the "abbreviated" Sugar Huddle of Cincinnati, the Bills developed a true full-game No Huddle offense, which in effect amounted to a 60-minute "two-minute" offense. This accomplished several things for the Bills; first, it kept the opponent constantly off balance during defense. Second, the opponents were hard-pressed to substitute any personnel for changing field situations, such as for obvious pass downs. Third, their opponent's defensive players never had a good opportunity to rest between plays—although similarly, the Bills' own defensive players had it almost as bad, since they were required to be on-field so much more themselves... their own offense only requiring a couple of minutes per drive! In addition, this novel technique had many opponents demoralized from the start, thus giving the Bills an edge before they even entered the stadium. Not limited to the 1989-90 season, the tactic was also used quite effectively by the Bills during the 1990-91 season. Although a couple of teams threatened its use sporadically during the 1990-91 season (such as the Washington Redskins, who also went to the Superbowl with the Bills that year), no team was better suited for such an offense than the Bills, with their powerful striking offense, balanced by a fine stable of receivers, a running threat headed by Thurman Thomas, and Jim Kelly, arguably the best quarterback in the league.

SPF falls short of simulating this new aspect of professional ball, although the main ingredients needed are in the rules with only slight modifications required. So, here are my suggested rule additions to SPF, which should bring it up to date a la Buffalo Bills Football.

The "No Huddle" Offense

A modified "Two Minute Offense" may be used by the Buffalo Bills at any time throughout the game during the 1989-90 and 1990-91 seasons. (It will be up to the players to decide whether any other teams, or even the Bills, may use the "No Huddle Offense" in later seasons.) The No Huddle Offense runs just like the traditional Two Minute Offense, but does not have the yardage and Completion Run Number drawn, except for a true Two Minute Offense.

Defensive Substitutions

Whenever the "No Huddle" or the traditional "Two Minute" Offenses are being employed, the defensive player may only substitute personnel under the following three conditions:

1. Free defensive substitutions may be made at the same time as any offensive personnel substitutions.
2. Free defensive substitutions may be made whenever there is a time out, player injury, or penalty.
3. At any other time, defensive substitutions may be successfully made on a subsequently drawn defensive substitution Run Number of 1 through 4. On a defensive substitution draw of 5 through 9, the next offensive play Run Number FAC result has a MINUS TWO modification applied to it (due to defensive confusion). On a defensive substitution Run Number Draw of 10 through 12, the defense must either be penalized 5 yards for 12 men on the field, or take an immediate Time Out.

Defensive players currently on the field may be freely switched to different defensive boxes as usual. Realistically, the only problems occur when defensive personnel attempt to enter the field from the sidelines.

That's the essence of the "No Huddle Offense" rule additions. For those who demand the most in your table-top games, here are a few additional optional rules you may wish to try:

Out Of Bounds Kickoff Penalty

The most significant rule change in the NFL (other than "instant replay") has been the new penalty for a kickoff going out-of-bounds (Penalty Table #15). Instead of instituting a new kickoff with 5 "extra yards" (as shown in the rules), the receiving team now automatically receives the ball on their own 35-yard line.

Solitaire Multiple Pass Coverage

Double coverage on a receiver may only occur in a solitaire game if the defensive setup allows it (i.e., if enough defenders are placed in secondary boxes). Solitaire triple coverage (or double-double coverage) is no allowed under any circumstances. Solitaire coaches may "inadvertently" help their own offense along simply by keeping their defensive "opponents" men on the line, thus never allowing multiple coverage to occur against their own teams. Realistic? Hardly! There is an easy way to avoid this "accidental omission", as shown below.

Whenever the FAC Solitaire section shows a result of "P(x2)" or "PR(x2)", immediately check to be sure that four defensive players occupy both Row-2 and Row-3. A result of "P(x2)" or "PR(x2)" with a Defensive Number of 4 (third or fourth down, with 7 or more yards to go for a first down), immediately becomes a triple coverage possibility, with a mandatory three players in Row-2 and five players in Row-3. Arrange the secondary players in any logical way which allows for the proper coverage.

Instead of an automatic double coverage occurring as is shown in the rules, it must be determined if the correct receiver has been covered. If there is only one receiver possible, then the coverage is multiple (double or triple if the situation allows, but never more than double-double coverage). However, if there is more than one eligible receiver, then a subsequent multiple coverage FAC Run Number is drawn to determine who has been covered. On a multiple coverage FAC Run Number of 1 through 8, the eventual receiver was covered. On a multiple coverage FAC Run Number of 9 through 12, another receiver was covered instead (i.e., no multiple coverage). Of course, although not
stated unambiguously in the rules, the offensive play (and receiver or runner) must be determined before the Solitaire section of the FAC is consulted. After the play has been completed, the defensive set-up is returned to its state prior to the multiple coverage.

Audibles and Stadium Noise

As an optional rule, players may wish to introduce audibles and stadium noise into their paper games. To do so, follow these steps:

The offensive play (and player) must be determined before the defensive strategy is revealed. For audibles, the offensive player calls out "Ready" when the play and player are first determined. At this point, the defensive player immediately has the option of changing his defensive formation to anything allowable with the current defensive players on the field. After the defense sets its new formation (if any), the defense calls out "Go". At this point, the offense is committed to the originally determined play, but may immediately "audibilize". To do so, the offensive coach states an audible FAC Run Number. The following audible FAC Run Number modifiers are applied cumulatively to the play:

+2 if the game score is within 7 points or less;
+3 if the current offensive team is "On the Road".

If the modified audible FAC Run Number is 1 through 11, the audible is successfully called out and immediately implemented.

If the audible is successful, the offense form a new play (verifying it by cards, if necessary) and implements it. At this point, the defense reveals its defense and strategy, and the play is resolved.

If the audible attempt was unsuccessful, then the offense has two options:

1. They may call a Time Out;
2. They may run the original play. If the original play was a pass, then the Quarterback's Pass Completion Range is determined before the Solitaire section of the FAC is consulted. After the play has been completed, the defensive set-up is returned to its state prior to the multiple coverage.

So, this is the NFL. Play with some or all of these new variations, and you may even hear Dandy Don in the background, singing something about turning out the lights.

**AH Philosophy; Continued from Page 4**

This is what we do for fun. You may think SPEED CIRCUIT is the sine qua non of competitive gaming; you may play home-brewed tactical-level miniatures rules that make ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER look like Chutes and Ladders; you may roll out of bed every morning and paint two dozen miniatures for NAPOLEON'S BATTLES, or you might spend every moment of your gaming time playing RUNEQUEST. Where ever your hobby interests lie, as leisure pursuits they are, by definition, valid. And as gamers we have an obligation to our hobby overall, and not at the expense of different aspects of it. The ability to enjoy a (well run) role playing game does not preclude enjoying a fiercely competitive session of THIRD REICH, I speak from experience.

As to the future format of this magazine, I hold to the premise that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". This does not mean that The GENERAL will go on placidly as before. Like any point structure, The GENERAL has a Publisher; that publisher constitutes its Management, and that management has requested a "new look" for the magazine, part of which new look began in the previous issue. Initially, most changes to The GENERAL will be similarly cosmetic. But certain "structural" changes will come about as new formats are developed and tested. These changes will include a semi-regular "Scenario Briefing" column (the first installment of which can be found on Page 19 of this issue), providing an in-depth look at a particular scenario for ASL. Another will be a "Gone But Not Forgotten" section (currently being prepared by Bruno Sinigaglio), an occasional column dealing with such of our out-of-print titles which still command a devoted following. Between these two extremes will be the same extensive coverage of our newest titles, with all the Series Replays, Designer's Notes, variants and other formats that have proven so popular with our readership over the years.

So The GENERAL will see alterations in content, style and tone, to be sure; but nothing too drastic unless you, the readers, desire it. And in fact, I am happy to consider any reasonable suggestions as to the sort of things you would like to see in these pages. The best way to make such suggestions is, of course, to write something and submit it to be published. No amount of suggestions or pleas for articles on a given subject will magically conjure up such coverage. The only way to see such articles in print is for them to be submitted to us by one of you. As to the nature of those articles, back issues of The GENERAL will show what sort of coverage has traditionally been welcome, and the next few issues will give you an idea of the new lines we'll be pursuing, but do not hesitate to submit something entirely new. The GENERAL exists to support our enjoyment of our hobby, and we all have a stake in its success.

**AREA TOP 50 LIST**

```
   Rank Name  Times On List Rating Previous Rank
     1. K. Cohn  81  2583YOW  1
     2. C. Burdick 80  2358IR  2
     3. J. Kraus  8  2179GJ  3
     4. B. Sinigaglio 66  2189GJ  4
     5. S. Bedor  8  2185BHN  5
     6. P. Pålby  57  2109EH  6
     7. J. Board  70  2103UD  7
     8. T. Gratz  50  2081GIP  8
     9. P. Landry  55  2054HIO  9
    10. D. Mattson  23  2050MKY  11
    11. J. Barlow  28  2039KLW  12
    12. T. Gratz  20  2024EFG  13
    13. G. Forstberryl  3  2035CD  12
    15. J. Bjoenn  15  1995EFK  19
    16. J. Pogus  15  1996FIA  23
    17. M. Sinevage 8  1984FEEK  21
    18. D. Koop  26  1978IHO  15
    19. K. Siragusa 47  1975GIO  22
    20. M. Mitchell 18  1955CHL  26
    21. R. Shurtld 26  1954HWM  24
    22. G. Cheeney 3  1952DA  46
    23. John 5  1946HGN  36
    24. P. Reese 61  1911D  28
    25. W. King  7  1907BDG  29
    26. T. Olson  90  1906ZSS  30
    27. P. Renert 3  1905BEA  13
    28. H. Newby  46  1896VLC  27
    29. M. Crowe 9  1890CCH  33
    30. J. Bliason 29  1881OKD  34
    31. J. Monsul 1  1874GIA  38
    32. W. Scott 78  1870NLX  31
    33. M. Fries 35  1865DF  35
    34. R. Schull 5  1862HK  39
    35. S. Packwood 1  1859BDF  --
    36. L. Nisler 1  1854AEA  --
    37. B. Sutton 6  1841GIE  38
    38. W. Plm 1  1836DFA  --
    39. G. Smith 5  1836BDF  --
    40. P. McNevin 3  1822MJZ  34
    41. R. Kinsel 14  1819JH  40
    42. J. Campbell 16  1818FDP  41
    43. J. Greene 3  1806GIA  43
    44. H. Grattz 1  1804CAF  48
    45. S. Ponder Lawrenceville, GA  1804CAF
    46. J. Beyma Pocomoke, MD  1804CAF
```

**WATERLOO RANKINGS**

The AREA Specific listing this issue is for aficionados of that Grande Dame of Avalon Hill's classic titles, WATERLOO. Shown is the member's name, hometown, and Specific rating (V = verified; P = provisional; for this title, all listings are "Provisional"). Note that this does not match the general AREA rating, as Specific AREA reflects only the results of rated play of the title indicated.

```
Rank Name  Hometown  Rating
  1. R. Beyma  Pocomoke, MD  P1775
  2. B. Suelki  Paterson, NJ  P1635
  3. E. Kitcher  Florence, KY  P1580
  4. E. Sennick II  Wilkes-Barre, PA  P1500
  5. R. Robinson  New Cumberland, PA  P1480
  6. C. Ponder  Lawrenceville, GA  P1490
  7. J. Beyma  Pocomoke, MD  P1770
```
On August 27th, 1992 we lost a great friend and talent with the passing of George Parrish to lung cancer at the age of 62. GENERAL readers will remember George for his many vivid portrayals of combat scenes which graced the covers of this magazine and 39 of our games. From his first rendering for us (BEYOND VALOR) to the last (GANGSTERS), George's work was the epitome of quality. Beyond being merely good art, it seemed to convey his love for adventure and history as if painting it enabled him and his fans to vicariously experience the thrill of past feats of bravery.

Simply saying that he will be missed would be a gross understatement. In my 20+ years as the R&D Director at Avalon Hill I have been privileged to work with many brilliant creative people. Few were as talented as George and none were as pleasant to work with. George was a noted historical artist and illustrator. Among his illustrations are a Civil War mural at Stone Mountain Park and commissions for such corporate giants as AT&T, Coca-Cola, Disney, HBO and McDonald's. Yet, he always found time to work for Avalon Hill doing the historical scenes he preferred to the more lucrative commercial art of corporate America. Although not a gamer, I think he would have been a passionate one had it come to him earlier in life. He had a love for history and adventure that made our association a natural.

Perhaps the best way to describe George is to quote from his reminiscences written shortly before his death:

"I haven't in retrospect, always made the best decisions. One being at 22 when I opted for two years as an army infantryman, as opposed to using that time pursuing a Master's Degree in the sheltered halls of academia. Through pure luck and Eisenhower's truce, I was spared the fate of a Chinese bullet in the snows of Korea, but also later found those doors of academia closed to me. However, part of my reasoning then was that if I were going to paint soldiers as a career, I had to be a soldier for a time...

"My career as a free-lancer has never offered me great security, but I always chose excitement over security. I've never known "job security" to last for more than six months, and never sought anything different because I seemed to do better making my own career decisions and client choices. All of us, in what I now think of as the last "golden era" of illustration - the late '60s to the mid '80s - lived for the excitement of making it big... But big business has always been political and some of my best work never saw print...

"I think I have always been driven by a desire for adventure, without ever having been an adventurer in truth. The army was enough for me of long marches, backpacking and sleeping in the snow. A fear of storms, sharks, and icy depths also denied me the life of the seafarer. My adventures have been of the milder variety, though exciting enough for me...

"Much of my life has been difficult, full of ups and downs, but so are most lives, and if one is to live life to the fullest one must accept the hard times as part of the whole package and experience them to the fullest extent too. Only then, I think, can one totally experience the happy times, and I have had more than my share."

George was surrounded by his relatives during his final weeks. They never heard a word of complaint from him as his cruel disease took its toll. As his ex-wife Cindy told me, not all heroes are found in war. His passing ends an era in our publications, and more than a little of Avalon Hill died with him last August. He will be sorely missed.

Don Greenwood
The following games are ranked by their reader-generated Overall Value. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where each title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly. Readers are reminded that ratings take the form of a numerical value ranging from 1 to 9 (with "1" equating "excellent" and "9" equating "terrible"). However, the Game Length category is measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus, a rating of "18" equates to three hours). A "*" following the Year of release indicates that the game is continued or complemented by additional modules in successive years (for instance, the ratings for SL reflect the entire system—original game plus add-on modules). Game Type is broken down into three broad categories: SO = Solitaire; MP = Multi-Player; 2P = Two Player. Finally, it should be noted that a minimum requirement of 50 responses (see the Sample Base) was judged necessary for a valid representation; additional titles that garner such will be added to the RBG in the future.
Our BLACKBEARD feature issue closed out Volume 27 with a rather lackluster score of only 4.03. Many letters and comments indicated that the people who enjoyed the subject matter (the Age of Sail in general and that of piracy in particular) enjoyed it immensely, while those less enthused about such things cared little for the overall theme. Those seeking trends should note that the featured game itself did only slightly better in the Readers Buyer’s Guide survey (see page 58). The breakdown for the readership’s rating of 27-6 follows (based on a random sampling of 200 responses, with three points for each first place listing, two for each second and one for each third):

BLACKBEARD SERIES REPLAY 235
WOODEN SHIPS FOR ONE 177
A SCOUNDREL’S LOG 142
THE BATTLE OF RENNELL ISLAND 100
ODYSSEY ON THE HIGH SEAS 93
NAPOLEON VS. LLOYD’S OF LONDON 83
LEARNING THE ROPES 75
A ROGUE’S TALE 61
MOVING UP THROUGH THE MOP 53
PLUNGING THE DEPTHS 31
AH PHILOSOPHY 26
VENUS SMUGGLER 25
NEW ADVENTURING 24
FINANCIAL STRATEGY 21
SPORTS SPECIAL 21
AREA NEWS 20
COMPUTER CORNER 13

Contest #159 seemed to pose little challenge to our readership; over a hundred correct entries have been submitted (a requirement for a random draw if ever there was one), and not one entry was in error. Most of those entries pointed out to us that the non-encrypted number “34” was a dead giveaway which no amount of let­
ter/symbol substitution could obscure. In any cas­e, the ten lucky winners, drawn at random from the Box O’ Fate, are: David Berroth, Col­orado Springs, CO; Mark Larabee, Washing­ton, DC; Henry Lin, Gainesville, FL; Kyle Madden, Belton Spa, NY; Dan Manherz, Williamsport, PA; Elizabeth Lester, Toms River, NJ; Cory Miller, Athens, GA; James Penick, Victorville, CA; David Ravetti, Pittsburgh, PA; and Brook White, Marion, OH. Each will receive merchan­dise certificates from Avalon Hill.

And Contest #160 seemed to prove no more difficult than its predecessor, especially if one had access to a computer (and it seems like just about everybody does). Still, the vast majority of entries gives clear evidence of most contestants having relied on their own wits rather than resort­ing to mechanical aids. A combination of cipher,

word search and scramble, it was an attempt to combine most of the more popular puzzles into a single challenging one. The only clue—that a boxed string of letters was the name of a WW 2 aircraft—was apparently more than sufficient for the would-be Black Chamber members out there. Neither a double-substitution (“W” and “M” both equating to “W”) nor a flip (“U” equating to “J” and vice-versa) did anything to throw them off the scent. But if Contest #160 wasn’t all that diffic­ult, we hope it was at least entertaining. The answers are:

The letter values of each letter/symbol thus translate as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
3 &= A \\
1 &= B \\
0 &= C \\
6 &= D \\
9 &= E \\
7 &= F \\
4 &= G \\
2 &= H \\
5 &= I \\
8 &= J \\
10 &= K \\
11 &= L \\
1 &= M \\
0 &= N \\
5 &= O \\
6 &= P \\
9 &= Q \\
4 &= R \\
3 &= S \\
1 &= T \\
2 &= U \\
0 &= V \\
3 &= W \\
5 &= X \\
7 &= Y \\
9 &= Z \\
&= A
\end{align*}
\]

X, Y and Z are not used, and so have no sub­
stitute characters assigned.

Finally, the highlighted letters yield the scram­bled name of the puzzle: “ALLIED AIRCRAFT OF WW II”.

The winners will be listed in Volume 28, Num­ber 3 of The GENERAL.

It was with great sadness that we at The GE­
ERAL learned of the death last August of George Parrish, whose fine work graces this issue’s cover as it did so many of our games. In addition to Don Greenwood’s tribute on page 57 of this issue, the following is a list of all the covers Mr. Parrish produced for us over the years.

Merchant of Venus	Enemy in Sight
Beyond Valor	Gettysburg
Code of Bushido	Kremlin
Hedgerow Hell	New World
Hollow Legions	Patton’s Best
Last Hurrah	Raid on St. Nazaire
Paratrooper	Republic of Rome
Partisan	Siege of Jerusalem
Red Barricades	Tat Air
Streets of Fire	Thunder at Cassino
Yanks	 Turning Point:
West of Alamein	Stalingrad
Attack Sub	Gangsters
Battle of the	Legends of
Bulge	Robin Hood
Blackbeard	Showbiz
Britannia	TV Wars
D-Day	Gung Ho
Devil’s Den	Russian Front
Guderian	Under Fire
Empires In Arms	Splitfire ’40

Besides the sheer volume of works on a wide variety of subjects, the above list also comprises some of the finest original artwork ever to grace the cover of any publication, and certainly of any line of games.

George Parrish helped to define the look of Avalon Hill products for many years. His impact on our hobby and on historical art was and is welcome and enduring.
Play the ULTIMATE WARGAME that Re-creates WWII on an Unprecedented Scale!

What if...

- France had extended the Maginot Line to the Ardennes?
- Hitler had given in to Stalin in the Balkans and invaded Britain?
- Mussolini had appointed decent commanders?
- Japan had attacked Britain or Russia in 1941?
- German air supply capacity had lived up to Goebbels's boasts?
- Russia hadn't received aid from the West?
- The atomic bomb had been used during the war in Europe?
- YOU had been in command?

ADVANCED THIRD REICH, the ultimate strategic game, lets you answer these questions and hundreds more. Building on the framework of Avalon Hill's award-winning game "The Rise and Decline of the Third Reich", first published in 1974, ADVANCED THIRD REICH simulates the military, economic, political, diplomatic and technical aspects of the Second World War on an unprecedented scale.

What you get...

The game is played on a large, full-color map depicting Europe from the fjords of Norway to the sands of Egypt, and from the Atlantic approaches to Britain to the Urals. Four sheets of die-cut counters represent the armor, infantry, airborne, partisan, air, naval, V-weapon and commando units from various major and minor countries. An indexed 64-page Rulebook and 40-page Appendix provides you with everything needed to refight World War II in Europe on the strategic scale.

New Features Include...

- Diplomacy, allowing players to affect the policies of Russia, Italy, the United States, Turkey, Spain and a host of other countries.
- 25 variants for each side.
- More detailed and realistic air/naval combat rules.
- Overruns.
- 3 additional scenarios (1940, 1941, and Barbarossa) augment the originals.
- Revised British and Russian surrender rules.
- More realistic Strategic Warfare rules with increased bomber effectiveness and resolution every turn.
- Oil rules reflecting Germany's dependence on Rumanian oil.
- Distinctive counters for every Minor Country and variant unit possibility.
- Larger unmounted map with hexes for greater ease of play.

ADVANCED THIRD REICH is not a variant of THIRD REICH. It is a complete, self-contained game. Ownership of THIRD REICH is not required to play ADVANCED THIRD REICH, nor is familiarity with the original game necessary to learn and play this version. But one must be thoroughly familiar with wargaming, as the ultimate wargame is also the ultimate in complexity.

CONTENTS:
- 1 31" x 44" unmounted, full-color map
- 4 sheets of die-cut playing pieces
- 64-page rulebook
- 40-page appendix
- 16-page ULTRA newsletter
- 6 8"x11" Scenario Cards
- 2 six-sided dice

Suggested retail is $49.95 at better hobby, game, book, and comic shops everywhere. If not available locally, feel free to order direct, adding $6 postage & handling ($55.95 total).

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Air/Naval Battle, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS:
Rate each category by placing a number ranging
from 1 through 8 in the appropriate
space to the right ("1" equating to excellent;
"8", average; "6", terrible). EXCEPTION: Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes neces-
sary to play the game, in ten-minute incre-
ments. (Example: if you've found it	
takes two and one-half hours to play the basic scenario
of HITOR'S WAR, enter "15" for category 7a.)
For an explanation of the categories, refer to
the AIM Philosophy of Vol. 24, No. 6. Enter rata-
ing only for those categories relevant to the
game in question. Note that AIM's ratings for
Complexity, Year of Publication and Type
(2p=two player; MP=multi-player; SO=solita-
ire) have been provided for your information.

1. Overall Value __________
2. Components __________
2a. Mapboard __________
2b. Counters __________
2c. Rulebook __________
3. Complexity __________
3a. Avalon Hill Complexity __________
4. Completeness __________
5. Playability __________
5a. Excitement Level __________
6. Game Length __________
7a. Shortest __________
7b. Longest __________
8. Year of Publication 1992 __________
9. Type ___ 2P

Opponent Wanted 50¢
1. Want-ads will be accepted only when printed on this form or on a facsimile and must be accompanied
by a 50¢ token fee. No refunds. Payment may be made in uncancelled U.S. postage stamps.
2. For Sale, Trade, or Wanted To Buy ads will not be accepted. No refunds.
3. Insert copy on lines provided (25 words maximum) and price, name, address, and (if desired) phone number on the appropriate lines.
4. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND ENSURING. If your ad is illegible, it will not be printed.
5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed in our limited space, we request that you
limit your entire collection; list only those games which you are most interested in locating opponents for.
6. Feel free to list any game of any sort regardless of the manufacturer. There
is no limit as to the number of games you can list.
7. For an explanation of the categories, refer to
the AIM Philosophy of Vol. 24, No. 6. Enter rating only for those categories relevant to the
Game in question. Note that AIM's ratings for
Complexity, Year of Publication and Type
(2p=two player; MP=multi-player; SO=solitaire) have been provided for your information.

CONTEST #161

Ciphers seem extremely popular with our readers, especially as each one
seems to generate another from a reader who is sure they can design a tougher
type. In support of that theory, here is a cipher of a famous quote. Decrypt the
cipher and send us your solution on this form or a facsimile. To be valid, your
solution must include your numerical rating for this issue as a whole (1 equalling excellent and 10 terrible) and your rating of the three
articles which you enjoyed most, in order of preference. The solution to Contest
#161 will appear in the next issue, and the list of the ten winners (who will
receive merchandise credit vouchers from Avalon Hill) in the following issue.

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 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 Game's Top Ten. From the responses to this
form, your editor produces the regular column "So That's What You've Been
Playing" found elsewhere in this issue.

We aren't asking you to sub-jectively 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 (concerts organizers spring instantly to mind). The
degree of correlation between this listing, the Best Sellers List, and the RG
show prove extremely interesting.

Please list one game of any sort regardless of the manufacturer. There
will be, of course, a built-in bias to the survey since the readers all play
Avalon Hill games 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.

Name ____________________________
Tel. ____________________________
Address ____________________________
City __________________ State __________ ZIP __________

Issue as a whole ________ (Rate from 1 to 10, with "1" equalling excellent and "10" terrible). To be
valid for consideration, your contest entry must also include your choice for the three best articles, as
listed below:
1. __________
2. __________
3. __________

NAME __________________________
ADDRESS __________________________
City __________________ State __________ ZIP __________
Commemorating America's 500th Anniversary!

NEW WORLD is a unique, multi-player game which re-creates the Age of Discovery in the 16th-18th centuries as the powers of Europe explore, conquer, and ultimately colonize all of the Americas. The game compresses 300 years of westward expansion into a few hours of playing time ... spanning the decades from the maiden voyage of Christopher Columbus and the Pilgrims landing on Plymouth Rock through the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro and the ultimate wars of imperialism which followed as Spain, England, and France clash time and again over the riches of the New World.

THE GAME is played on a map of the Americas divided into 26 hexagonal areas. Each area has a combination of natural resources, native population, climate, gold, and proximity to home which makes it unique. The relative merits and dangers of each must be weighed carefully as the game progresses against the backdrop of circumstances — a task made even more challenging by hex tiles which mask the identity and contents of each area until it has been explored.

MORE than just another game of conquest, players must possess diplomatic, economic, and military skills in equal proportions to triumph.

EACH PLAYER builds and maintains a fleet with which to transport his soldiers and colonists to the New World and his gold and crops home again. Storms and pirates may take their toll — especially on the Spanish treasure fleets — so nothing can be taken for granted. Once ashore, colonists may raise crops, mine gold, or push on to new lands. Soldiers may search for gold, conquer native civilizations, protect colonists from foreign incursions and native uprisings, or embark on military excursions of their own. The ensuing balancing act always yields a tense battle — further stirred by the whims of fate in the form of climatic attrition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Players</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Suggested Retail</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>884</td>
<td>NEW WORLD</td>
<td>2 to 6</td>
<td>10 &amp; Up</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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THE ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE PEIPER

ASL SCENARIO T11

South of TROIS PONTS, BELGIUM, 21 December 1944: The key to the German Ardennes offensive lay with a quick breakthrough and deep penetration. In the north, the success of any breakthrough rested upon Colonel Peiper's kampfgruppe from the 1st SS-Panzer Division. But the quick victories which had taken Peiper so close to the Meuse River bridges also left his force in a position of danger. The kampfgruppe had outraced most of its follow-up units, and had completely run out of fuel. The "back door" to Peiper had not been kept open. On the morning of the 21st, SS-Oberführer Wilhelm Mahnke, commander of the 1st SS-Panzer Division, collected the remaining assault elements and launched an attack in an effort to reach Peiper's stalled kampfgruppe. The main German thrust came at a point south of Trois Ponts on the Salms River. There, a company of the 82nd Airborne Division had established a small bridgehead on the cliffs across the river.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win immediately upon exiting ≥ 20 VP off the west edge on/between 2P10 and 2Z10.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

- Shorten Game Length to 8.5 Turns.
- Add a 9-1 Armor leader to the German OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

- AMERICAN Sets Up First
- GERMAN Moves First

Elements of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Regiment [ELR: 5] set up on board 2 and on board 5 in any hex numbered ≤ 3: (SAN: 5)

Elements of SS-Panzergrenadier Regiment 2, 1st SS-Panzer-Division [ELR: 4] enter on Turn 1 on the east edge on/between 5B10 and 5L10: (SAN: 2)

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Ground Snow, with no wind at start.
2. All hexes of Hill 538 are considered ground-level woods; outline of these woods conform to the outline of the printed hill mass. All buildings are wooden.
3. One American squad (or equivalent, along with any/all accompanying SMCSW) may use HIP.
4. The Americans receive one module of 100+mm OBA (HE and Smoke). As per Footnote C5, the American radio may be kept offboard.
5. Bore Sighting is NA.
6. Both German AFVs are equipped with Schürzen (D11.2).

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

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

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Americans win if at game end they Control the US “Assembly Point” (as determined by SSR3).

TURNS RECORD CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMERICAN Moves First</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4*</th>
<th>5*</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>END</th>
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**BOARD CONFIGURATION:**

**BALANCE:**

+ Add one HMG to the initial German on-board force.

- Remove one 4-6-7 MMC from the initial German on-board force.

**SPECIAL RULES:**

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start.
2. Hills 621 and 538 are ground-level terrain; the woods thereon exist normally. Treat all grain hexes as brush.
3. Prior to set-up, the American player randomly determines his “Assembly Point” by Secret dr: 1 = 4Y9; 2 = 4P6; 3 = 4110; 4 = 2W9; 5 = 2M9; 6 = 4S2. He then secretly organizes each Wing and records its Drop Point (E9.12). During the first turn, one Wing (American player’s choice) must use its pre-designated Drop Point, and the other Wing must use random selection to determine its Drop Point. The recorded Assembly Point and Drop Points must be revealed at the conclusion of the game.
4. Bore Sighting is NA.
5. German entry hex for each Reinforcement Group is determined randomly at the start of the RPh of the turn indicated. A dr is made by the German player and the following applied: 1·2 = 5GG5/6; 3 = 2Q1; 4·5 = 4GG5/6; 6 = Group does not arrive, roll again for arrival during the RPh of the next German Player Turn.
6. The German Sniper counter is placed onboard just before the American parachutes land (E9.4). The American Sniper counter is placed onboard immediately after the first American Player Turn is completed.

**AFTERMATH:** After a short but sharp firefight, the paratroopers of the 513th Regiment were able to get the upper hand and finally assemble in their battalions. With the regiment in order, the objectives for the first day were all seized and link-up was made by nightfall with the British ground troops assaulting across the River Rhine.