

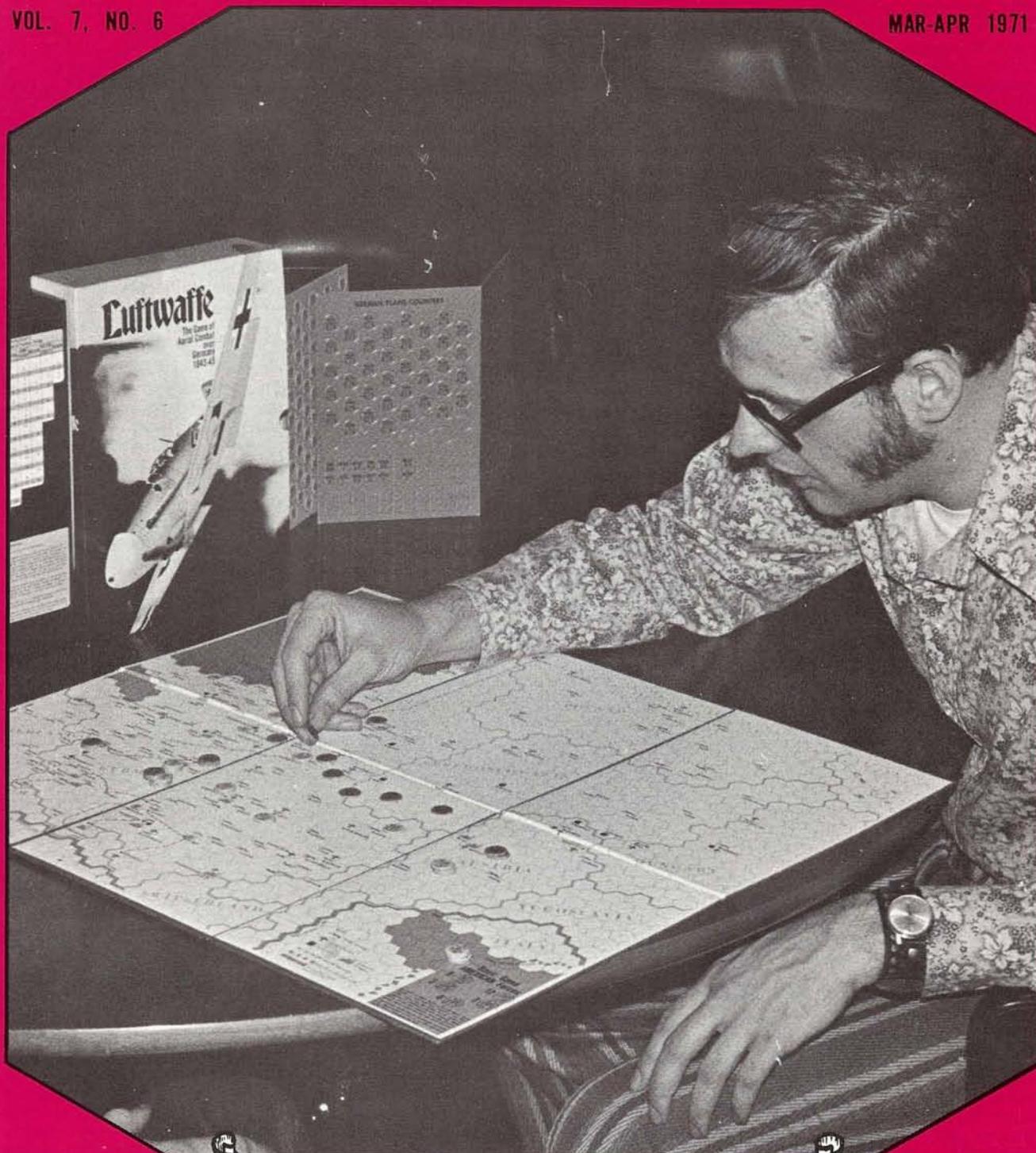
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The AVALON HILL

# GENERAL

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 The AVALON HILL **GENERAL**

... a losing venture published bi-monthly pretty close to the first day of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

The General is edited and published by The Avalon Hill Company almost solely for the cultural edification of the serious game aficionado. It also helps sell our merchandise, too.

Articles from subscribers are considered for publication at the whim and fancy of members of our erudite editorial staff and company baseball team. To merit consideration, articles must be typewritten double-spaced and not exceed 1,000 words. Accompanying examples and diagrams must be drawn in black or red ink. Payment for accepted articles is made according to the dictates of the voting subscribers.

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## Avalon Hill Philosophy - Part 26

### Making Connections

Len Lakofka is a "positive" person. He's a doer. He makes connections. He is President of the IFW in addition to guiding two gaming societies and publishing two Diplomacy fan zines. On the side he contributes articles to a variety of gaming magazines — all, that is, except *The General*. Panzerblitz Magazine selected Len as "1970 Wargamer of the Year" (despite this latter indiscretion.)

Most of his personal "free" time has gone into expounding the virtues of wargaming. Instead of spending his vacation at a local spa, he chose to help Avalon Hill personnel man their booth at the Hobby Trade Show in Chicago. It was during this time when Len discussed with Avalon Hill how to help wargamers make connections with other wargamers — an idea suggested to him by Alister M Macintyre of the Central Ohio Wargamers.

"Write it down," we suggested. He did just that:

"In the United States the hobby of wargaming has always been a fluid entity. Prior to the emergence of Avalon Hill Games, the hobby of wargaming was limited, almost exclusively, to small groups of miniature figures collectors who, on occasion, would create rules so that they could recreate battles for their collections. When the Avalon Hill Company pioneered the adult wargame, in board game style, many more persons were introduced to the competitive aspect of wargaming. Still, a person would buy an AH game, play it with a friend or two, but then, most often, find a void in which no new competition could be found.

"*The General* was the first step in creating a broadly based permanent market of "hard core" wargamers and a means via which persons, interested in the hobby, could contact one another. Of course, I refer to the "opponents wanted" column in this magazine.

"It was this unique innovation that began the process of tying together the various segments and factions of wargaming aficionados. This merging of purposes and interests were fostered by the large number of wargaming clubs that sprang up around the country. Their interest, while primarily in Avalon Hill games, also lapsed into the areas of miniatures, game design and military history. Such national clubs as the INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WARGAMING, and SPARTAN INTERNATIONAL INC. have completely bridged the gap, in their diversified activities, between the Avalon Hill Board game and the miniature's player.

"Yet it can be noted that the hobby of wargaming is still in its infancy. This is due to the fact that the huge number of persons who buy Avalon Hill games, or buy miniatures, are still not in contact with one another. Percentage wise, few buyers of Avalon Hill games, subscribe to *The General*. To them the hobby, i.e. the

organized side of wargaming, clubs, special interest magazines, general hobby publications, conventions and face-to-face meetings, are unknown.

"It is the informing of this huge faction of potential wargamers that we must address ourselves. To this end, the IFW is starting a project which, it hopes, will accomplish this very task. They wish to make available, first in major metropolitan areas, then on a statewide basis, lists of local clubs, gamers who like to play ftf games on a regular basis, conventions, and regular wargaming meetings. These lists would be compiled and updated every 3-6 months and made available to local hobby dealers and any wargamer who would wish them. Thus, when you went to your local hobby store, he could give you a list of persons in your area with whom you could play the game you just bought, or places you could go for AH gaming and miniatures play in your area. The list would give information on how to obtain lists from other locals, so that if you traveled you would know where other wargamers could be found. Such a project benefits everyone! The dealer, when he tries to sell a game or miniatures, is often stymied by the objection, "...but I have no one to play the game with." If he has a place to play he will buy the game. If he starts to play the game he will, very likely, be introduced into other aspects of wargaming by the people he meets. Thus hobby clubs, of all types, will find a new member for their products and magazines — to say nothing of the dealer who can now sell this same person miniatures, other games, and books on all aspects on wargaming and associated fields.

"To accomplish this task we need; a basic list of wargamers, clubs, and regular meetings in a locale and persons who can go to their local hobby shop and have the dealer pass out these lists to customers. The IFW is going to make a concerted effort in the metropolitan areas in which it has large member concentrations. But to make the project ultimately successful we need aid from everyone, including local clubs especially, via submission of their names for the preparation of lists and via contact of local hobby shops to carry the lists once prepared. If you would like to appear on the first lists, to be prepared and distributed by May 1, 1971 send the following data to IFW c/o Lenard Lakofka, 1806 N. Richmond St., Chicago, Ill. 60647; Name, address, city, zip code, phone, games you wish to play, days and/or times when you will be available to play. From clubs and local meeting groups, please send the name of at least one representative along with location of meeting, time and date(s). Every listing of an individual on these lists will carry with the statement that you wish to be called or written to first — so you will not have people standing at your door. If you wish to aid in the distribution of these lists, via your club magazine, or in hobby shops please contact the same address as above. This project has shown excellent success in Columbus, Ohio where a group has already attempted it. Now it will be your aid that can make it a national success."

## COVER STORY

IFW President Len Lakofka ponders the fate of his last remaining Focke-Wulf Geschwader during a test of Avalon Hill's brand new LUFTWAFFE game.

"Probably the most playable game in their line," equivocated Len during the play-test period, "I've lost just as many games being the American as when I was the German." Len quipped during a moment of humility. Len spent quite a few moments during Avalon Hill's Hobby Show at the Luftwaffe Game Table. With his help and that of several IFW cohorts who managed to spend a few hours at the table, Luftwaffe comes to the public a most accurate portrayal of the real life event.

Luftwaffe covers the time period 1943-45 during which the Americans were dropping everything but the kitchen sink over Germany. You won't get the sink with the game; but everything else you need to recreate the same excitement Len experienced during the test phase.

Look for it around April 1 in local outlets — \$8.98 retail; \$9.98 mail order.

# Bulge - as it Really Was . . .

By Richard Thomas

During the past few years, there have been many articles on The Battle of the Bulge, most dealing with the strategy and tactics of how the competent German player can turn a rough game into a lesson on lightning war and envelopment for the fretting American opponent. Out of these articles has come the strategy of the southern offence and the all important attack against the 99 inf. division, both of which I think are good moves. Wargamers have also been reminded about the north-south road net running through Houffalize, a target of grave importance to the German. What I don't think has been given enough "publicity" in the General is the faulty placement of some of the American units, and the incorrect boundary between the 6 Panzer and the 5 Panzer Armies. As I continue this article, I shall try to describe the thought process I used, and the important information I used to formulate the new Start set-up I'm trying to "sell to you."

My sole source for the new set-up is the monumental work by the Office of the Chief of Military History; European Theater of Operations, The Ardennes, Battle of the Bulge, by Hugh M. Cole. The book is about 900 pages long.

Looking from north to south on the battle map I saw some familiar units. On the north flank is the 3 battalion, 395 inf., bracketed on the north by a unit of the 102nd Cav. group, and on the south by the 99th Rcn. Troop. Next in line was the 2nd division. Then came the rest of the 395th infantry. This contrary to AH's set-up which shows a unit called the 361st regt. as being first in line to the north. If OCMH's book is to be trusted, we now find out there was no 361st regt. with the 99th division, at the time of the battle. The regiments of the 99th inf. are the 395th, the 393rd, and the 394th, from north to south. The separation of the 2 battalions of the 395th in the south with the 3rd bat. in the north would not appreciably affect the play so I didn't bother with this point. Therefore, the first part of my set-up is to leave the 2nd inf. division where AH put it.

South of Monschau about 8 miles was where the boundary of the 99th and 2nd inf. divisions met. This would be roughly 3 squares on the battle board. Here the 2 battalions of the 395th took over from the 2nd inf. division. Since the major strength of the 395th inf. was with these 2 battalions, and since the 395th can't be broken down into battalions to place the 3rd battalion at Monschau, the second part of my placement puts the 395th on RR-8, which is historically correct. Then follows the 393rd, and the 394th. However, these two regiments each had a frontage of 2 to 3 miles each, and they were 8 miles east of Elsenborn, which is roughly 3 squares east of the Monschau-Elsenborn road! This would place them on UU-7 (for the 393rd), and UU-8 (for the 394th). Besides being a little out on the limb, this placement would put the two regiments right in the middle of the German 6th Panzer Army assembly area for the AH game, so I decided on a compromise between historical accuracy and panzer fodder. Therefore, in the new set-up, place the 393rd on TT-8, and the 394th on TT-9. During set-up, you might find it hard to get a

394th regt. so what I suggest is to change the 361st regt. into the 394th.

Before continuing on, I would like to say a few words about the 102nd Cav. Group.

The 102nd Cav. Group held the line north of the 2nd inf. and that 1 battalion of the 99th. It was deployed in a fashion similar to the 14th Cav., holding a line between two large formations, in the case of the 14th Cav. it was V and VIII Corps, while in the case of the 102nd the two formations were either the 99th and a division to the north, or the 99th and the VII Corps. In any case, the 102nd could have been available, and was in the area of the Bulge board, (although with only 1 sqdn, the 38), however, I have decided to include it into my set-up. Just make another 4-6 Cav. Group, (most Cav. Groups had the same number of Sqdn's at this time, 2 or 3, I'm not certain), and name it the 102nd. Place it at RR-4, just north of Monschau, where the real 38th Sqdn. was.

South from the 99th inf. division is the 14th Cav. Group, correctly placed in the Losheim Gap.

Next in line is the 422nd regt., then the 423rd, and finally the 424th, which is on the east side of the Our River! The positions of the first two units is correct, except the 422nd should be at UU-12 and the 423rd at TT-14. The 424th as stated above, was on the east side of the Our River, with a front line of approximately 4½ miles, (roughly 1-2 squares). The main concentration of strength was south of the Our River bridge 3 miles, so in the new set-up, place the 424th at SS-15, and not in St. Vith.

No game can realistically represent the gallant action of the 28th inf. division, and it's delaying action which held the Germans in check until other commands could take over. I, and I think Avalon Hill were faced with the problem of how to take into account the strung out companies and platoons that stopped the enemy in the first critical hours. The first regt. in line from north to south was the 112th inf. This unit held a line of 4½ miles that extended from Oberhausen to Kalborn, which is do east of Houffalize. Thus it would seem to be correct to position the 112th at NN-22. To the south of the 112th is the 110th with a frontage of ten miles, extending from the 112th boundary in the north to the town of Hoscheid, which is east from Wiltz. From Wiltz south to Diekirch is the responsibility of the 109th inf. (Excuse me; from due east of Wiltz on the Our River to Diekirch is the responsibility of the 109th). Thus we can put the 112th, as mentioned above, at NN-22, the 110 at NN-26, and the 109th at Vianden and be historically correct. With one problem. The bridge at PP-26 is left uncovered, and the German can advance across it quite easily! Again I had to resort to compromise, and I suggest this set-up, which moves the 112th south to NN-25, taking over that sector from the 110th, which can now cover the bridge mentioned above by placing itself, the 110th, at 00-27. Place the 109th at Vianden. So, by sacrificing some historical accuracy, we have a placement that fulfills the criteria of covering Clervaux, the PP-26 bridge, and Vianden.

During the Battle of the Bulge, the 9th Armoured never fought together. South of the 109th inf. was Combat Command A of the 9th Armoured. The command consisted of the 19th

tank bat., the 60th armoured inf., and the 89th and 90th Rcn. battalions. This force was due east from Diekirch about 5 miles, (roughly 2 squares). However, if we put CCA on SS-30, the bridge at RR-29 would be left uncovered, so resorting to compromise again, I decided to place it at RR-30, which would be near correct, while covering the bridge.

CCR, 9th Armoured Division, the armoured reserve of the VIII Corps, was stationed at Trois Vierges on the 13th of December, in position to support the corps left and center. Trois Vierges is on the Bastogne-St. Vith road at the terminals of the Clerf River. Therefore, place 9th/CCR at MM-23.

Combat Command B of the 9th Armoured had been transferred to the V Corps shortly before the Ardennes offensive to support 2nd inf. in its attack toward the Roar River dams that was to take place on the 16th and 17th of December. This command was stationed at the town of Faymonville, 12 miles north of St. Vith, on the night of the 15th. When the offense struck, the unit was released to the VIII Corps on the night of the 16th, when it moved south and took part in the defense of St. Vith. Faymonville, as stated above, is 12 miles north of St. Vith, and about 3 miles southwest of Elsenborn. Therefore, place 9th/CCB at QQ-11.

The 4th inf. division was stationed on the Our River line south of 9th/CCA, and Avalon Hill has correctly positioned this division. This ends my new American set-up, now for the German, and the results of the new positions.

The 6th Panzer Army, as everyone knows, was charged with the main burden of the offense. It's boundary with the 5th Panzer Army started south of Losheim about 2 miles, (approx. 1 square). In my new set-up, therefore, place the southern limit of the Army at grid 11, retaining the eastern boundary at grid UU, inclusive.

The results of this new set-up are to allow the German a fairly easy time in the south, while slowing him down in the north. He will no longer find it an easy matter to block the Monschau-St. Vith road. An attack against the 395th might push said inf. regiment back into the rough, but it is a simple matter for the American to move the 394th from TT-9 to SS-9, thereby blocking the road to St. Vith. The German could try against the 393rd, with an attack against the 395th, and put one on the 14th Cav.; if both the attacks had an A advance 1, you would have the 394th trapped, but what good would it do you when you pushed the 14th Cav. and the 393rd back onto the road?

A German headache in the north is, however, compensated by smooth going in the south, where he has the choice of which regiments to route. It is fairly easy to achieve a breakthrough in at least 1 area, and probably 2.

The American now finds that the southern arena is not as secure as it used to be, but 9th/CCR is nearer to the danger area than it used to be. In the north, he can count on having a good front to delay the German, using 9th/CCB for the St. Vith area to check any possible river crossings in that part of the "woods."

I would be interested in hearing from anyone interested who has any comments on this subject, and would like to have a PBM game with someone. My address:

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Granby, Conn. 06035

# 1914 Strategy & Tactics

by A. Augenbraun

This article should prove useful to you for its purpose is to help improve your game by comparing the strengths of both sides and by discussing the strategic alternatives as well as some tactical hints.

To get an overall view of the relative strengths of the opposing forces, I have compiled the following charts, all of which apply to the advanced game *without* the use of game variations:

## I. NUMBER OF UNITS AT START

	"A" Corps	"R" Corps	Siege Cavalry	Other Art Units
German	26	16	11	7
French	21	8	10	0
Dutch & Belgians	2	0	2	0

The Germans have a slight numerical edge over the Allies, but this alone is not too significant. Both sides should be able to defend at an approximate one-to-one basis, but neither the Germans nor the French can maintain a strong defensive line if they shift their weight to either the left or right flank.

## II. OFFENSIVE FACTORS AT START

	"A" Corps	"R" Corps	Support Cavalry	Other Art Units
German	182	80	44	32
French	126	48	20	24
Dutch & Belgians	12	0	3	0

## III. DEFENSIVE FACTORS AT START

	"A" Corps	"R" Corps	Cavalry	Other Units
German	312	128	33	46
French	210	72	10	16
Dutch & Belgians	16	0	2	26

Charts II and III clarify the picture. The German offensive strength, while more powerful than the French, will find itself evenly matched against Allied defenses. On the other hand, German defensive factors appear able to have an easy time of it against any Allied offensive. The ratio here is about 2½:1 in favor of the Germans. German cavalry is twice as strong as that of the Allies while other units are evenly matched.

## IV. TOTAL REINFORCEMENTS

	Number of Units	Offensive Factors	Defensive Factors
German	9 Inf.	33	50
French	11 Inf., 1 Cav.	35, (1)	43, 0
British	11 Inf., 3 Cav.	41, (10)	69, 4

But the German player must take the Allied reinforcements into consideration. Chart IV shows that total reinforcements for the Allies are double those of the Germans in all areas: number of units and offensive/defensive strength. The German also must bear in mind that the optional East Front Rule will, at least to some extent, weaken his forces.

The graphic evidence presented above indicates that while the Germans can easily execute defensive operations against the French, they will have

their hands full if they assume an offensive posture.

This brings us to strategical considerations. At the start of the game, the French possess all of the point-yielding areas except for Metz and Strassburg. Since the Allies possess no siege artillery, the Allied commander may as well forget about taking those two German strongpoints. It then remains for the Allies to hold onto what they already have, and that means waging a defensive campaign.

The Germans, in order to win, must wrest the point-yielders from the French. Thus, offensive plans are needed for the Germans. However, I have already established that it will not be easy for the Germans to destroy the Allies. It must be the German intention to push the enemy back from the point-yielding areas and keep him at a distance

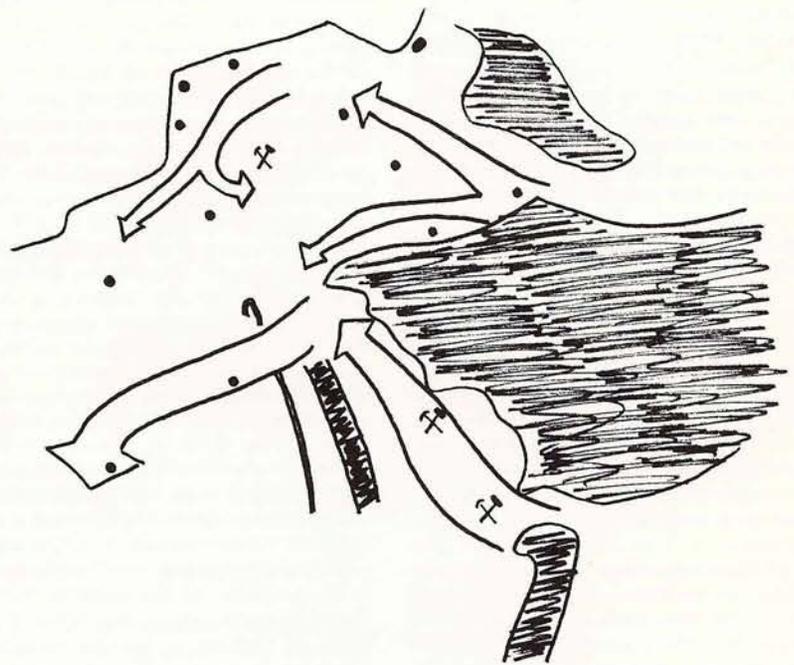
by converting to the defensive. Of course, every possible opportunity to eliminate enemy units should be taken by both sides.

Since the Germans are to be on the offensive initially, they must examine their alternatives. The middle of the board contains the movement-restricting Ardennes. Speed and maneuverability will suffer if an offensive is launched through here. Besides, since the geographical targets are, for the most part, to the north and south, this alternative will not yield very much direct profit.

In the south, mobility is hampered by the rough terrain-forest which stretches from southeast of Strassburg to the Swiss border, but the squares east of Strassburg and west and southeast of Metz can be utilized as staging areas. The going in this area is otherwise relatively easy.

The best site for an offensive is the Belgian plain. Once the Germans clear the bottleneck northeast of Liege, they will have smooth sailing all the way to the coast at Boulogne.

An ideal pattern of attack is shown below although an attack through Belgium alone should also produce good results. The dark areas are the impassable forests and rough terrain where movement is restricted. The dots represent point-yielding cities in Belgium and France.



The Allied defenders don't have much of a problem. They should place most of their force in the north where the Germans are most likely to strike initially and where the Germans are sure to strike eventually. Remember that most of the point-yielding squares and cities are in the northern half of the board. Some forces should be placed in the Verdun-Nancy-Toul area both to protect the economic squares therein and to protect the Allied flank from the south.

There are a few tactical hints of which I would like to remind you before I conclude. 1) Always try to cut off your enemy's retreat route when attacking. This will usually result in his loss of an additional step. 2) Avoid attacking frontally. Remember that your primary aim is to push the

enemy back, not destroy him. You should attempt to turn the enemy line by striking at his flank. This will also help make it possible to get behind the enemy line and cut off his escape. 3) Arrange your attacking forces so that you are able to hit the enemy in waves. Keep the pressure on him. 4) Try to move weakened units to rear areas as soon as possible so that they can start receiving replacements.

I hope that my analysis of 1914 and my suggestions will help improve your winning capacity in this game regardless of which side you take. Good luck!

Alan Augenbraun  
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Brooklyn, New York 11223



## Plan of the Month

# Festung Italia

by Geoff K. Burkman

Perhaps the single most important facet of a successful German defense in *Anzio* is the fortress line. Forming an impenetrable wall across the path of the advancing Allies, a well-built line will hold until hell freezes over (which it regularly does during air strikes and often during invasions). At any rate, it is a basic truth that the fortress lines are the key to German victory in the Italian campaign.

The vast majority of *Anzio* games are divided into three time/campaign segments: Phase I – invasion to 1st air strike, Phase II – 1st air strike to Sept., 1944, Phase III – Sept., 1944 to game's end.

### Cassino or Rome?

Phase I of your defense is the most variable situation in the game; it depends entirely on exactly where the Allies make their initial invasion. Should they land at Salerno, you will have an easy time of it constructing a Cassino Line (K51-M49-O47-Q46-S44-V21). This defense is perhaps the best available on the entire board; no wonder the Germans used it. It requires a mere six forts, leaving seven to begin your next line well in advance, and has only two really critical points. Both of these are easily shored up with the plentitude of reserves the Germans will possess using this line. One hinges at Formia, where the Allies can pull a sneak retreat behind your lines. This is prevented by garrisoning I51, which, by the way, supported by a unit on H51, presents a hardy defense of the Terracina beaches. The other trouble spot is the fort on O47. Since this square is completely boxed in by High Appenines, it is difficult to put additional units into the fort without waiting a move. This could be disastrous should the Allies attack in force and win, leaving you to counterattack with weakened troops. It is therefore imperative that you keep a reserve of at least a division directly behind the fort (on O46, to be exact). As the saying goes, "it's better to be safe than sorry," so follow this advice even if ISS is in that fort. Of course, the defense of the immediate flanks of the fort line against commando raids and/or invasions is a foregone conclusion. When it comes to crushing fort lines, invasions rank second only to air strikes.

Most mildly daring Allied commanders will, however, invade further up the Italian coast, almost always at Naples or Termoli, but often at Pescara or Mondragone. Such assaults will invariably threaten any plans for a Cassino Line, if not render them useless entirely. The German must, therefore, prepare to make his first big stand further north. This is accomplished through the construction of a Rome Line (E44,H42-K40-N38-Q36-T34-V34). Like its south-

ern cousin, it utilizes a minimum of forts, allowing ample preparation of the next line. It has only one point of weakness and requires the garrison of only one beach (although it is a bit of a long one). Its only big disadvantage is, in fact, that it surrenders a great deal of Italy to the Allies, including many useful ports. But for many games, it will have to do, and it usually does it well. A quick glance reveals the solitary weakness of the line; the fort near Rieti. The situation here is similar to the one in the Cassino Line, with the exception that it occurs only when the Allies attack from and successfully hold Rieti itself. It is thus the best of ideas to position some reserves on N37 and to place mountain troops in the fort (the latter is also suggested, perhaps more so, for the fort on Q36). The beaches from Civitavecchia on south must be well-held to prevent the flanking of your line, but happily the east coast need not be guarded at all; there is no invasion spot, and commando raids can't quite make it from the Pescara beach. Count it and see.

One more situation deserves comment. Once in a blue moon or two, you'll face an opponent who will make his first invasion at Rome, Civitavecchia, or even Livorno. Where will your fort line go? Probably nowhere! I'm betting on the Germans successfully crushing any invasion north of Terracina or Pescara within a few months, which means that you won't even need a fort line. Even if you fail, you can usually get up a line along the Fiume Arno that will hold. At any rate, don't let it worry you. Few Allied players will risk their game on a long-shot invasion, and the ones that do often aren't the best of players. They're too greedy.

### General suggestions for Phase I –

- Build your fort line from the coast inwards, since the flanks are the easiest areas for the Allies to penetrate.
- Whatever your line, conserve forts. Make it short and sweet.
- Always be on the lookout for flanking invasions.
- Do everything in your power to crush the second invasion before the air strike comes. Doing this will win the game then and there for you many a time.

### Interim (Phase II)

Whatever your first fortress line is, the odds are that it will be broken by the Allied air strike, if not already crushed by the second invasion. Your forces will be crippled, harassed constantly, and retreating continuously. Only an extremely tenacious German will be able to halt the advance of the Allies in the spring and early summer of 1944.

During this hectic period of the campaign, the

German has only two real objectives. The first is to withdraw his forces quickly and safely to the second MLR; every unit lost along the way is bad news for the Germans. Only the destruction of a large segment of the Allied forces would result in an equal trade. The second concern of the German is to insure that there will be a fort line ready for occupation when he arrives! Should the line be incomplete, a very hard defensive war must be waged to hold until it is finished. At the same time, strong measures should be taken to prevent punitive commando raids or full-fledged invasions up near the new line.

At any rate, by September of 1944 your defenses should be well established. You will be prepared for the winter withdrawals ahead of you, and ready for the final Allied air strike. Victory is most likely yours if you haven't lost by now.

### Not One Millimeter

The last phase of your defense, Phase III, can be the easiest to endure, yet it is the most crucial of the entire game. Nearly all *Anzio* games are tight, down-to-the-wire contests resolved at last by the second air strike (almost always in favor of the Germans).

Roughly speaking, you have two options for your second fort line. Both will enable you to defend all of Northern Italy. Each line requires a relatively small number of forts, so that completion of either line during Phase II should be rapidly accomplished. The Firenze Line (E22-G22-I22-K22-M22-P21-R21-U20) is the weaker of the two, since it must be protected on two sides from sea attack. On the other hand, it puts another 35-mile wide strip of Italy in German hands, possibly the margin of your victory or defeat. The Gothic Line (F21-I19-K18-M18-O18-R17-T17-V17) offers slightly stronger positions and a left flank which needs coverage only against commandos. In my judgement it is the better of the two, since it can more easily be evacuated during the Allied aerial blitzkrieg.

The existence of one of these two lines is essential to assuring victory in your campaign. Holding the entrances to North Italy will permit the unhindered construction of a Vicenza Line (V5-V7-V8-W8-Y8). Such a line will prevent the Allied from capturing your last bastion of Nazidom, Vicenza. They will be unable to fulfill their victory conditions and you will win.

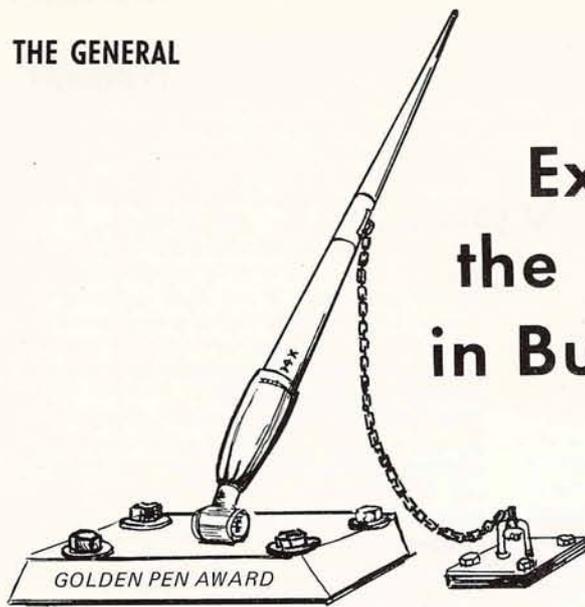
On various occasions, you will be unable to complete a Gothic-type line in time. No sweat. As soon as you see that you'll never get your intended line up, abandon work on it and commence the construction of an emergency line (S6-S8-T8-U10-U12-U13-W14). Its main drawback is that with a little luck, the Allies will be able to surround units on the front near Ostiglia or Ferrara and second combat their way to your Vicenza Line. But it will take luck.

### General suggestions for Phase III –

- It is essential that you keep North Italy clear of Allies. Guard all beaches, notably Genoa, extremely well.
- Conserve troops. You'll need 'em all.
- Don't worry about partisans. They are simply a necessary evil you can't do too much about.

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# Exploiting the Initiative in Bulge



With this issue we begin a series of articles reprinted from out of the past. Articles selected for this series are those voted "most outstanding" by readers of the periodicals in which they appeared. Our first Golden Pen award goes to Don Lowry for "Exploiting the Initiative in Bulge," reprinted here by permission from 1970 *The International Wargamer*, Vol. 3, Nos. 2 & 3.

Among the nine principles of war recognized by the U.S. Army, is one called the *Offensive*. This is defined as follows: "Seize, retain, and exploit the initiative." In BULGE the very nature of the game delivers the initiative to the 'German' player on a silver platter. Retaining it is absolutely essential. Exploiting it? Well now, that's what it's all about.

The exploit to the maximum the advantage which the initiative gives us, we must call on two other principles of war: *Mass* and *Maneuver*. The latter is self-explanatory, and the former merely means "to achieve military superiority at the decisive place and time." But exactly how does this apply to BULGE?

Well, let's review the obvious. Our objective is to reach the Meuse River in considerable force while maintaining at least one supply route leading back to the eastern edge of the board. Secondary objectives are St. Vith, Bastogne, and Spa, whose possession would lessen the amount of force that must cross the Meuse. Our opponent is aware of our objectives, of course, and will try to block every road west. And there is our answer: our opponent must defend *all* roads leading west, while we can take our pick of which ones to advance on at any given time.

For example: Many 'German' players evidently make the mistake of concentrating so much force on their attempt to take Bastogne, that they virtually neglect all other routes. I say "mistake" because this allows the defender to ignore the other routes and concentrate almost all of *his* forces around Bastogne also. But by attacking along other routes first, we would draw defending units away from Bastogne. Then a sudden switch of forces into the Bastogne front would meet fewer defenders — for one turn at least. Thus it is by *maneuver* that we are able to "achieve military superiority at the decisive place and time" — mass.

As long as we have the initiative, our opponent is reduced to merely reacting to our moves. If we

concentrate in the south he must do likewise; if we concentrate in the north he must match that. But, he is always one move behind us. We concentrate first — or, as Forrest put it, "Get there first with the most men." To continue a head-on attack against the main concentration of the enemy's power is foolish if there are other routes less heavily defended which lead toward our objective therefore, you must be prepared to switch your forces back and forth almost continuously in order to achieve a local superiority of force in decisive proportions. In other words, "Hit 'em where they ain't."

Your ability to do this will depend primarily upon your lateral lines of communication. That is, the roads connecting the various routes west. You must keep these connecting, or lateral, routes as short as possible and free of enemy zones of control. When the game begins, we do not control the road connecting our forces north of St. Vith with those south of it, and it must be our number-one objective to clear that road and thereby gain freedom to maneuver on a board-wide scale. We must also constantly be on the lookout for a way to lengthen our opponent's lateral communications and thus reduce his ability to switch forces back and forth to match our own maneuvering. This ability to employ forces against the enemy faster than he can counter our moves creates a situation called "interior lines" (so-called because it usually, but not necessarily, results from a central position with respect to the enemy). This situation, in conjunction with the initiative and superior forces, should prove decisive.

Getting off to a good start is essential. Since each move will influence all those that follow it, the first move is obviously the most important one of the game. Aggressive use of the Sixth Panzer Army (northern group) and part of the Fifth (central group) in the area from St. Vith north, will mean that few American units can be spared to go south to the Bastogne front. An army-sized push south and west from the Vianden-Diekirch area toward Martelange will have the same results on that end of the board while increasing the number of approaches to Bastogne he has to defend. (Forces operating on this axis also represent the ability to advance on Wiltz from the southeast.) A corps-size push along the Clervaux-Bastogne axis will still gain ground, and it will force the coverage of all the middle routes.

Eventually, of course, the capture of Bastogne is absolutely essential, but an indirect approach will find it more lightly defended than if we attempt the obvious. By the time you've taken St. Vith and have a clear road between the northern and central sectors, you should have attracted considerable American forces to the defense of the Malmédy-Werbomont and St. Vith-La Roche roads. You can then switch large forces toward a thinly-defended central sector — perhaps in the area of Houffalize. Also, by this time, your southern drive should be nearing Martelange, and the 'American' player finds himself defending a long semicircle around Bastogne with very few units. If he also switches several units southward from the northern area, you might find it profitable to bring one or both of the second two SS divisions in on the northern front to draw some of them northward again. This accomplished, the SS divisions can also switch to the central front.

So our strategy is to move aggressively in the north and the extreme south (so as the draw defenders to these areas) while clearing the St. Vith-Clervaux road. Then, we suddenly shift our power to the center and drive on Bastogne.

## An Initial Tactical Setup

Presented here is the northern half of an initial tactical set-up and the rationale behind it, that will get us started on fulfilling our strategy. I will assume all rules are used except one-way traffic. The southern half will be covered in Part III.

Most people usually think of tactical surprise in terms of the open-mouthed astonishment of the enemy soldiers. But it is only necessary to surprise the COMMANDER, not the troops. In fact, an attack the enemy has seen coming for hours, or even days, can be a surprise. The necessary ingredient of a tactical or strategic surprise is to "Accomplish your purpose before the enemy can effectively react." Thus, no matter how much warning the enemy is given, if we can seize our objective before our enemy can react with effective countermeasures, we have achieved surprise. I will attempt to apply this principle to our first objective.

I said, in Part I, that our ability to switch our forces back and forth would depend on our lateral lines of communication and that, therefore, it must be our number-one objective to clear the road through St. Vith for our own use. The enemy also knows the importance of St. Vith and will move to protect it. So we must seize it before it can be reinforced. We do this by eliminating, or blocking out, all units that might move to reinforce the St. Vith area. The accompanying diagram shows the forces in the northern area disposed so as to have a good chance to accomplish this and also various secondary objectives.

At the northern extreme of the board is the largest American concentration of power, the 2nd and 99th infantry divisions. These two divisions are, in fact, so far north as to be unable to interfere with our westward movement from where they are. Wouldn't it be nice then, to keep them where they are? This would not only keep them out of the defenses of St. Vith, but out of our way altogether. There is no move that will guarantee such results, but the set-up shown WILL offer fair odds. The first attack, by the 9th SS Div., does guarantee, however, that at least the 2nd Div. will be cut off. This is so important

# Waterloo - Part II

by Raymond Hosler

*Part II is Hosler's sequel to his Jan-Feb 71 article, "A Shocking French Victory," which appeared as the Plan of the Month.*

On infrequent, but somewhat catastrophic occasions the PAA will lose to the French. The fault almost invariably lies in the PAA strategy. Of course, the French may have a lucky game to top this off. To avoid such a humiliating experience the PAA must follow the following plan I have laid out.

## A. SET UP

Situate the Prussian Army within reach of the Quatres Bras ridges (i.e. BB-20, Z-24, etc.). Put a small outpost of twelve factors around CC-17. If the French places all the cavalry at Fleurus, be sure to have a 4-4 on DD-13. A 1-6 must be

placed on EE-23. Put a 4-4 on U-26 as a reserve. Commit it to T-23 if the French make advances down Tilly road. Make sure a couple of Prussian cavalry units are within reach of Tilly road as they will be needed if the French push there.

## B. FIRST STAGE 7am/16-3pm/16

The average French player will attempt to split your army by sending a detachment to Nivelles and the rest to the east of Quatre Bras. Oddly enough this is what you want. Plan your reactionary moves accordingly. Place four 6-4's and a 8-4 behind the Quatre Bras ridges. The 8-4 goes on AA-27. This strong line makes a French attack very risky. Don't make a stand on the Tilly-Quatre road, but use delaying tactics with your 1-6's. As the French approach Tilly you will be forced to split your army. It's advisable for 10-15 factors, composed of at least one 1-6, to fall back

that I violate here one of my standard operating procedures (I try to avoid attacking at odds that might result in an exchange unless there are enough infantry factors involved to absorb any losses). At 6-1 odds we're guaranteed an advance of 1 square. So we drive the defender northward along the road, and even if it turns south at Monschau it cannot get past our advanced units' zone of control.

The second attack is on the 14th Cav. Gp. using the 1st SS Div. and six Volksgrenadier regiments, at 4-1 odds. Since the 14th Cav. is surrounded in such a way that it can not move out and counter-attack because the odds would be greater than six to one — and since at 4-1 there is no chance of "A back" — this guarantees that the 14th Cav. cannot move to the St. Vith area to get in our way there. It also offers very good odds (80% PEM, 83-1/3% FTF) of eliminating the enemy's most mobile unit right here. Do NOT advance the 1st SS Div. (for reasons given later).

The third attack is a soak-off against the 99/361 at 1-2 odds. Here we want anything but "D back 1" (a 20% chance PBM, 16.67% FTF) which would put it in a position to move down the road through Malmédy into our path. And, the fourth attack (see rule No. 8 under "Rough Terrain") is a 1-1 against the rest of the 99th Div. in the hope of getting a "Contact" or "Engaged" (50% chance either way) "D back" would put these two regiments where they can move south through Malmédy, and "A back" would leave the road through Elsenborn open.

The overall odds, then, of blocking out these two divisions are as follows: Chance of blocking all six regiments: 40% PBM 41.65% FTF; chance of blocking all but one regiment; 50% PBM or FTF; chance of blocking all but two regiments; 80% PBM, 83.3% FTF; chance of blocking all but three: 100% PBM or FTF. The important thing to consider here is the 50% chance of blocking all but one regmt. This is because it will take at least three American units to adequately defend the St. Vith area. Why? Because the two regiments of

the 116th Panzer Div. at QQ-17 will be in a position to outflank any two-unit defense.

The fifth attack is a 5-1 against the 106/422 with all retreat routes blocked. So any results except "Contact" will eliminate the defender, and even that will result in elimination unless the retreat routes are opened by the sixth attack ending with "A back". So we have these odds of knocking off the 106/422, PBM 90%; FTF, 91.5%.

The sixth attack is at 1-2 against the 106/423 and is undertaken solely for the purpose of blocking the retreat routes of the 106/422. The 423rd can't get to St. Vith because of the 1st SS Div. on TT-11 and the rough terrain. No advance should be made after eliminating the 422nd. A German unit on TT-14 would give the 423rd a chance to attack, with any "A Back" results putting it on the road to St. Vith.

So, we have definitely blocked out the 106/422, 106/423, 14th Cav. Gp., and the entire 2nd Div. with a good chance of blocking all or most of the 99th. The two panzer Regiments at QQ-17 threaten to cutflank the St. Vith defense, and the 116/406 is in position to block any reinforcements coming from the south. Thus, with a little luck, we'll have our surprise — accomplishing our purpose "before the enemy effectively can react." Then on the second turn the forces that attacked the 106/422 should advance and repeat the performance on the 106/423. If at all possible, move 2 or 3 regmts. to PP-11 to block the road to Malmédy, while keeping the Elsenborn-St. Vith road blocked. And above all, clear the road through St. Vith.

If our luck is bad, there's still the south. I've got another "surprise" brewing down there, and the odds are very good of getting either one or the other. It's all in Part II.

*Part II will appear in the next issue. Meanwhile, why not visit Don either in person or via mail — he is proprietor of a new hobby shop devoted almost exclusively to the sale of military models and related materials: Lowry's, P.O. Box 1123, Evansville, Indiana 47713.*

on the Tilly road. Over at Nivelles maintain the minimum of troops. A reserve at W-31 is usually sufficient until reinforcements arrive from Braine Le Comte at 11am/16th.

## C. MIDDLE STAGE 3pm/16-11am/17

By the 3pm move the French player will be at his desired position and most likely attacking. At this point the French strategy will be revealed. The only case in which the following moves could not occur is if the French took their whole army down the Tilly road which rarely happens. Most French players head for Quatre Bras. The PAA can counter this attack by making the best use of the Quatre Bras-Nivelles road. Place a strategic reserve on W-31, W-32, and V-33. From here they may strike out at Quatre Bras or Nivelles. You can be sure the French will drive through Y-23, Z-23, and AA-23. But here is where the PAA will be waiting. Violent counterattacks must be made by the PAA. The French can only bring units up on three hexes. The Quatre Bras ridge units are to be used for counterattacks.

If the French try to penetrate the forests their hopes are nil. The PAA should allow the enemy to advance to the fringe, then attack. This way a Back-2 will be D-elim. since they are forced to retreat through a forest square.

On the Nivelles front reinforcements and lack of good terrain will delay the French. A superb defense can be held on squares X-36, X-39, and Y-35. The French are limited to two squares for attack whereas the PAA can counterattack in three or more squares.

After about four turns of this the PAA will be forced to withdraw to the Genappe. The casualties at this point should be heavy for both sides. Plan the retreat ahead of time and be sure each unit has a place to defend.

## D. LATE STAGES 1pm/17-5pm/17

The Genappe river and ridges to the east provide a temporary defense line for the PAA. The defense should expose as few units as possible. Make sure they have a clear retreat route as well as time to carry one out. The Genappe line is not meant to be held for a long period of time. It's just a convenient place to retreat to after the Quatre Bras — Nivelles battle. On the 5pm turn the last retreat should take place-to Waterloo.

## E. FINAL STAGES 5pm/17-end

As the French advance toward Mt. Saint Jean they will lose a turn to movement. This gives the PAA a chance to set up a defense. The L row 36-40 ought to be the first line of defense. Try to have all the big units in the line. If you have an excess of 1-6's place them on each flank with a strong center line, otherwise keep the flanks strong. At this point the only answer to victory is ATTACK!! Fight for every foot of terrain and watch those flanks! Use the terrain to your advantage, especially rivers. After 5 or 6 turns the Prussian IV corps, from Wavre, will relieve the east flank. Victory will now only be a few more Vive La France screams away.

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# Simulating the Art of War

## Part II -

by J. E. Pournelle, Ph.D.

In Part I, Jan-Feb 71, Professor Pournelle pointed out that one way to simulate the art of war is through abstracting certain principles, then setting up the rules so that failure to heed the principles is punished. He then examined surprise and uncertainty, and outlined rules which incorporated them into play. In Part II, Pournelle examines other principles of war and their application to the design of an advanced version of Afrika Korps.

### The Principle of Pursuit

Pursuit is not one of the nine "official" principles of war recognized by the US Army; but Napoleon and many other Great Captains have called it the key to victory. In real warfare, the enemy does not usually suffer his greatest casualties in battle, but in pursuit. It is when men break and run that they are killed or captured. In fact, in most decisive battles throughout history the loser has at the moment of decision held as much or more strength than the victor. It was later, during the pursuit, that his army was destroyed. On the other hand, many battles that might have been decisive were not, because the victor either would not or could not pursue. For example: at Arbela, Darius held far more strength than Alexander, yet the Macedonian losses were almost trivial in comparison with Persian casualties — nearly all of them sustained after their formations broke and then ran. Alexander pressed the pursuit relentlessly, driving his men with curses and threats, because he knew that if the enemy ever regrouped he might not be able to win again. On the other hand, King Pyrrhus (circa 280 BC) twice defeated the Romans, at Heraclea and at Asculum, but each time took such losses that there could be no pursuit. As a result Rome held and eventually dominated the world. Asculum, by the way, is the place where Pyrrhus, congratulated on his victory, said "if the gods are pleased to grant me such another, I am undone." It was the original Pyrrhus victory.

Now Avalon-Hill games have pursuit built into the CRT, in a sense. That is, it takes overwhelming superiority to achieve victory; and that victory is usually far more decisive than ever is the case in the real world. Thus, "D elim." must assume pursuit of some kind, otherwise the enemy wouldn't be eliminated at all. On the other hand, there is no provision for actual on-the-board pursuit, and the resulting fruits of victory. Look, for example, at Afrika Korps. Rommel was a past master at the art of pursuit. He drove DAK forward after every victory, relentlessly pressing the defeated 8th Army units, trying to bag them, and, incidentally, capturing guns and tanks by the hundreds.

A second source of unreality in Afrika Korps is the confusion of strategy and tactics that is inherent in the move-by-move nature of the game. That is: you cannot exploit an enemy strategic weakness unless he has also made a grave tactical mistake; and in fact tactical mistakes are the crucial errors of the game. This is not itself unrealistic, as it was German tactical superiority that allowed Rommel the successes he had.

However, in the real world these tactical victories could be exploited in ways not really allowed in the game. (And, of course, the real world allowed strategic errors, such as Rommel's dash to the wire.)

The war in Africa consisted of rapid movements across long rages, usually not followed by battles because DAK ran out of gas; and much shorter range but more intense battles lasting sometimes for days. The game tends to reverse reality. That is, in the real world, German units were outside Tobrukh with 3rd recce, plus elements of Italian Ariete and Brescia, by April 11, only nine days out of Agedabia. In the game, no units can get to Tobrukh, even unopposed, in less than a full month. On the other hand, in the real world the Gazala battles including the Cauldron crisis, lasted from 26 May to 15 June, a total of two full weeks and a little bit; during this time, units moved rapidly, vast operations were carried out, entire armies were engaged, multiple battles took place, and the British lost control of the whole area around Tobrukh. In the game two weeks is only one move by each side, surely too little playing time to accomplish such decisive results.

Following Gazala and the Cauldron, there were five more days of battles in the ridges, then the capture of Tobrukh. By the first of July, Afrika Korps was engaged at Alamein, having fought battles at Mersa Matruh. Incidentally, most German analysts — and I agree — think that Rommel's pursuit of Eighth Army was *too* vigorous this time. His forces simply weren't up to it. Had he waited to regroup, repair some of his armor and incorporate captured armor into his force, the final outcome would probably have been different. But the point for our article is that under the rules of the game, none of this is even possible. There can be no complicated series of battles lasting over several "days" with action-reaction; such battles take months of game time and bring the British reinforcements inevitable nearer. Secondly, there can be no dash for the wire, no all-out pursuit across the desert, no charge to el Alamein and repulse at Ruwasait, no loss of precisely 18 tanks (out of only 55) to 18th Indian Brigade with the result that the campaign was lost.

Attempts to change this situation usually result in play-balance upsets, and for that matter in loss of realism. In the desert world, dashes like that cost heavily, although normal movement down the road was not particularly punishing. I think I have come upon a solution to the strategic movement problem for Afrika Korps; the rule may be applicable to other games as well.

### Movement Rule for Advance Afrika Korps

1. Units may trade combat factors for movement factors at the rate of four movement squares for each combat factor. This represents equipment losses, fatigue of the men, etc. The reduced combat effectiveness lasts until it is next the turn of the player who chooses this option. That is, the unit must attack at reduced effectiveness, and suffer enemy attacks on it at the reduced effectiveness for our turn; it is restored at beginning of player's next turn.

2. The road bonus for units which begin their turn on the road and do not subsequently leave the road is 30 squares. The road movement bonus for units not beginning their turn on the road is 10 squares. The bonus for units which do not possess the road is 10 squares.

### Discussion

The two rules bring the game much closer to reality. Rule 1 requires that we use a roster system for Afrika Korps, and particularly for German units; but this is no bad thing. One of the problems of AK is those big German 7-7-10 units which cannot be risked because if one is lost so is the game. A roster system allows us to reduce them without eliminating them, makes attacks more feasible, and livens up the game quite a bit. We should in fact exploit the possibilities inherent in this device. After all, there aren't that many units to keep track of.

The road bonus is *still* small. It could be argued that a 40 or even 50 square bonus would be more realistic; after all, 600 miles in a week is not blinding speed. At least under this rule 15th Div. can take part in May assaults on Tobrukh; unfortunately, the effect of the two rules is to make it nearly certain that Tobrukh will fall. Therefore, we add an *ad hoc* rule to keep the game playable:

3. Infantry units in Tobrukh have their defensive combat factors TRIPLED. Armored units receive only 3/2 as much strength. Armored infantry is doubled.

When we examine this *ad hoc* rule, we see that it makes a lot of sense. Infantry are much better employed defending a fortress than armor, which, immobilized, doesn't gain so much effectiveness from fortifications and mine fields. Also this forces the British player to use his armor out in the open, which is an additional realism.

We need another explanation though: possession of a road. You possess a road if one of your combat units has already moved along it and no enemy combat unit has subsequently moved

# GUESS



... FORGOT ABOUT AUTOM

along it. Thus the opening move road bonus for the German player is only 10 squares. This is quite realistic; you don't go charging down a road when you expect combat quite the way you do when the road is yours and you're only ferrying the stuff along.

We've eliminated some of the unrealities of the movements in AK, but we haven't even touched the problem of pursuit which we started with, nor have we solved the problem of how to have long battles that don't take up a lot of playing time. At least we now can have some long range strategic movements, although the historical situation still cannot happen in the game.

#### Combat Rules for Advance Afrika Korps

I must confess I am not satisfied with the following. Unfortunately I haven't anything better. Let us begin by designating the player whose move it is as "A" for attacker (although at times in the sequence that follows he will defend.) His opponent is D.

4. Before a player moves, he may declare that he intends to make extended attacks on this move. He then proceeds to move in the usual manner, and combats, if any, are resolved. Every victorious unit — those of either A or D — may advance one square, provided that the square is empty of enemy units. Survivors of any exchange are victorious for the purposes of this rule. Retreating units are turned upside down, and may not be moved during extended combat. This applies to both A and D units.

4.1 All units taking part in combat during the engagement are reduced by one combat factor, except that no unit may be reduced to less than one combat factor.

4.2 D may now move his units as follows: Armor, armored infantry, and motorized units: 2 squares. Recce units, 3 squares. All others, 1 square. This movement factor is doubled for units on roads, but it requires one full factor to enter and/or leave roads. D may make attacks if he so chooses. He may not enter an enemy zone of

control without attacking. D units in A unit zones of control at the beginning of this movement-phase need not attack, but if they do choose to attack the usual requirements for attacks apply.

4.3 The new attacks are now resolved. All units participating in combat in this phase are reduced by one combat factor, except that no unit may be reduced below one combat factor. Retreating units turned over as before.

4.4 A now moves his forces the number of squares described in 4.2. Combats are resolved. All victorious units may move one square. If this results in further combat opportunities. A may choose to attack or not at his option.

4.5 Every A unit engaging in extended combat remains reduced in combat effectiveness by one factor, during D's turn. Every D unit forced to retreat during combat moves at 1/2 movement factor, and fights at combat effectiveness reduced by one factor except that no unit has a combat factor of less than one.

4.6 DURING THE EXTENDED COMBAT every unit forced to retreat has its combat effectiveness reduced by one factor in addition to the one factor subtracted for engaging in combat. This applies so long as the unit is upside down. Units may be reduced to zero effectiveness, in which case they are eliminated if attacked. Such units may be reinforced, but not moved. Upside down units are turned over at the end of a player's turn.

#### Hidden Movement Rule for Advance Afrika Korps

5. The German player is provided with three numbered counter called "markers" and three envelopes. Up to three units may be concealed in the envelope corresponding to each counter. The markers remain on the board, and the hidden units are considered to be on the square with the marker corresponding to the envelope containing the units.

5.1 The British player is provided with two such markers, and may conceal up to two units for each marker.

5.3 Players must reveal which units are concealed with a marker if any enemy units places the concealed unit marker in its zone of control. Markers are automatically eliminated when placed in enemy ZOC, but are re-created at player's home base. When marker represent nothing, it moves as a supply unit would move; when it represent units, it moves as the slowest unit in its stack.

#### Isolation Rule

6. If an enemy unit is isolated at the beginning of a player's turn, that enemy unit is eliminated at the end of the player's turn. (I.E., if I surround an enemy unit, he has only the next turn to escape; otherwise the unit is eliminated at the end of my next turn.)

#### Discussion

The extended battle rule makes some sense without the hidden unit rule, but not a great deal. With the hidden unit rule, however, a player may bring his forces up for an attack, keeping some units concealed. The defender reacts, the player attacks, bringing out his strength — and incidentally being able to employ, at reduced strength, forces used in a previous automatic victory. He is able to pursue his enemy, and turn a victory into something very large.

Given skillful players, this set of rules does not destroy the play-balance of Afrika Korps. It does change the game quite a bit. For one thing, the British player now finds himself forced to use much the same tactics that were actually used in North Africa. On the other hand, changing the isolation rule makes things more realistic in that a week unsupplied is enough, and now no one will go charging off to the other player's home base without protecting his lines.

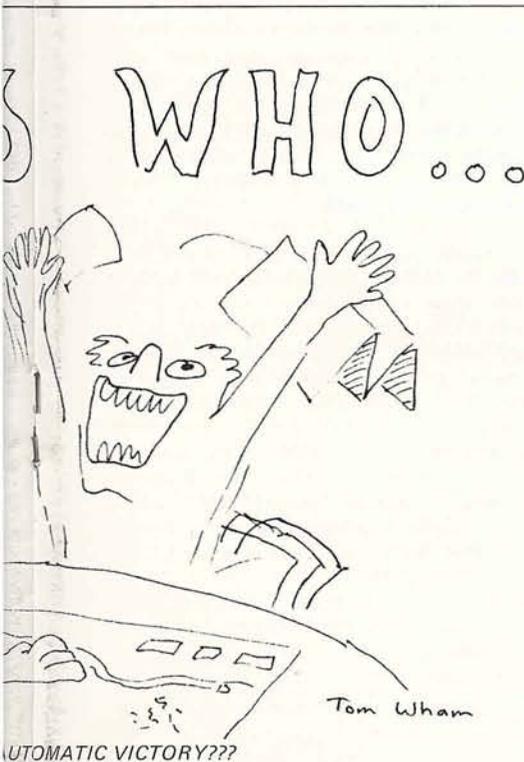
There are a lot of other methods for providing realism in Afrika Korps, and in a future article I will try to discuss a Tournament version of that game. The above is an attempt — a clumsy one, I'm afraid — to introduce the principles of mobility and pursuit into the game of AK. If anyone wonders why I give the Germans more powers of concealment than British, I refer them to the campaign, by the way. German air reconnaissance and radio security were both better than 8th Army's, with the consequence that DAK usually knew where the British were, while 8th Army was lucky to know the location of DAK within a hundred miles.

The AK campaign is in many ways a beautiful illustration of the principle that you can't simulate a real campaign in a playable game. There were just too many factors at work over there, and each rule change usually requires a set of *ad hoc* rules to keep the whole mess playable. To top it all off, some of the most important factors are so intangible as to be impossible to assess. For example: one reason the Luftwaffe was so much more effective than the RAF in the desert was the aircraft designs. Another, and possibly even more important reason was that the Chief of the German Aviation Medicine program for DAK put umbrellas and cooling air bottles out on the flight line so that German pilots on ready alert status were cool when they took off. They fought British pilots who had been flying for over an hour in the desert heat. When the Germans attack British bases, the British pilots on alert were already overheated... Now how do you assess the effects of something like that? I happen to know Dr. KJK Buettner, who was in charge of Aviation Medicine for the Luftwaffe, and he things the effect of those umbrellas and air bottles was more decisive than the differences in aircraft...

#### Conclusion

This started as a discussion of pursuit, and did in fact touch on some of the principles of pursuit. The important discovery is that when we want to incorporate pursuit into the rules we find it gets pretty complex. Further, we see that something like pursuit is already built into the AH CRT or we couldn't get the results the CRT gives us. We may conclude that Avalon Hill has to some extent chosen (probably not deliberately) to eliminate pursuit as a factor in their games, by incorporating it automatically into the combat results table. If we want to have games in which ignoring the principle of pursuit costs you the game, we will have to adjust the CRT accordingly. When you do that, you find yourself inevitably thrust toward the roster system, resulting in a lot of bookkeeping, longer games, and probably less fun. I would welcome suggestions on how to escape that dilemma.

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# Vyazma

## Russian

### Emphasis on

### Close Assault

### Tactics

by Bill Freeman

*PanzerBlitz* Situation No. 3, "The Battle of Vyazma" is an excellent introductory game to this "series" of games and demonstrates many, if not all, the facets of tactical warfare. Believing its title, *PanzerBlitz*, this situation can effectively show the inevitable superiority of properly prepared infantry over panzers in tight combat. Additionally, this game demonstrates and foreshadows many of the problems and Russian

( ): denotes units under transport.

Mines: 2-DD-10	R/182: 2-DD-5	R/84: 2-X-5
2-GG-2	R/183: 2-DD-5	(R/12 + R/416): 2-EE-1
2-GG-3	R/141: 2-CC-10	R/61: 2-X-5
Xs: 2-GG-5	R/142: 2-DD-9	R/62: 2-X-7
2-GG-6	R/143: 2-DD-9	(R/31 + R/422): 2-V-6
2-EE-8	R/144: 2-CC-7	(R/32 + R/423): 2-V-6
2-GG-1	R/145: 2-EE-6	R/412: 2-U-5
(R/161 + R/411): 2-Z-9	R/146: 2-EE-6	R/413: 2-BB-7
(R/162 + R/421): 2-V-6	R/147: 2-EE-2	R/414: 2-CC-6
R/181: 2-DD-6	R/148: 2-EE-2	R/415: 2-CC-2
	R/84: 2-X-7	R/33: 2-CC-7

Although not perfect; this deployment will meet all of the above needs superbly.

**Intentions:** The German mobility is reduced to a snail crawl. Antitank units are generally protected from long range fire, all other units are poised to counterattack wherever the German attempts to run the obstacles (excluding wagons, of course.) The three German infantry platoons are of little consequence except as woods piercing and spotting units. The Guards and antitank units can be quickly moved to counter-attack any major assault, in conjunction with main-line units. The German will most likely attempt to either weaken or force a withdrawal of Russian infantry units from the woods and obstacles with antitank, H. and M. fire, before the major assault. Panzer units will likewise attempt to fire at "range" on spotted units, to aid in this withdrawal. The minefields will most likely be avoided.

solutions that the Germans would later face before Leningrad, the Moscow outskirts, Stalingrad (disastrously), and Kursk (fatally).

For the Russian, the game can be broken into three parts before the German even enters combat: 1) intelligence; 2) terrain; and 3) intentions. Without the optional "Hidden Deployment" and because of the situation's "Orders of Battle," both sides possess a first-rate intelligence of the other's strength. This is of primary importance to the Russian player: he deploys first. As in 1914, and to a lesser extent, in *Stalingrad*, the game begins and can end here.

**Intelligence:** a. The German units are completely known; ranges and strengths. b. Reduced range and firepower of PzKpfw III over PzKpfw IV. c. Lack of significant Russian mobility and transport. d. Need to prevent overruns due to German mobility. e. Need to engage German with CAT due to Russian immobility and a lack of strong artillery support. f. Russian superiority in infantry. g. Need to hold at all costs, a "crust" situation, due to Russian immobility during a retreat (rout). h. Need for sited antitank, howitzer (H.) and mortar (M.) areas. i. Need to reduce German hilltop fire of German antitank, H. and M. units.

**Terrain:** Necessity for "close" terrain to minimize German mobility, overruns, and enable Russian CATs. Area 1-Y to 1-CC would be ideal under these circumstances, but this is unavailable for blockages ("X"s) and mines. However, area 2-CC through 2-GG is quite similar. Consider a Russian deployment as follows:

It is essential for the Russian to use the woods and CAT to attack the German units stopped or dispersed on top of mines or Xs. Exception to overruns in 2-CC-9, should the Germans cross or withdrawal to hills and next wood line. Antitank units must be used at the last critical moment to aid in the defeat of German units on the obstacles. Even so, many will be lost. Under no circumstances should Russian units retreat across clear terrain, overruns will quickly decimate them. H. and M. units can be withdrawn to Bednost should Panzers breakthrough to the rear. Some protection by infantry would be ideal. In any event, as long as a line is held intact with units and/or fields of fire: the German loses. Finally, unless I'm down on my Russian, the "y" in "Doroya" should be a "g" for "Doroga" = meaning "road."

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# Confessions

## of a

# Game-aholic

by Dave Slick  
with the permission and  
help of my wife

Those of you who enjoy a pleasant husband-wife wargame relationship as described in previous issues of the GENERAL should count your blessings, for the good will which the typical wargamer's wife displays toward the typical wargame is seemingly not a universal quality on the part of the former. My spouse, for example, is not intrigued at all by the prospects of wargaming; and thus I feel that it is time I set the record straight by presenting the "other side" of the family-wargame story.

First, a little background information is needed about the combatants so that you can better appreciate the subtle aspects of the ensuing marital war. Cindy and I were married in October 1969. Cindy is now 17 years of age; I am 19. Cindy and I have a small baby girl and a similarly sized income, earned solely by my part time job and subsidized by my scholarships at A.S.U., where I am a full time student. I started wargaming in 1965; between '65 and '69, I joined many small wargaming clubs and I had several periods of inactivity; however, in 1969 my wargaming commitments and general level of wargaming activity rose to unprecedented heights. The final point of background which needs to be made is that prior to our marriage, Cindy promised me that she would "learn" at least three wargames "soon after" our entrance into the blissful marital state. Thus the stage is set for the blow by blow description of the events which led me to write this article.

The trouble began in June of 1970 and lasted through the summer, the period of time in which the only thing which matched the fury of the intolerable Arizona sun was the fury of the equally intolerable atmosphere which existed in our home. If you've ever spent a summer in southern Arizona you know what I mean. It is easy to sum up my wife's feelings at the time by using her own words: "I hate wargames, wargamers, wargaming, war movies, gaming conventions, gaming magazines, gaming clubs", and so on. Cindy made no attempt whatsoever to learn how to play any of my "stupid games" as she called them; and she made no attempt at being pleasant with the few people who came to play me in person. Cindy and I were at each other's throats constantly with our petty bickering worsening matters by the day. Our marital relationship was suddenly perched on such a shaky foundation that in a desperate attempt at compromise I deliberately pulled a wargaming no-no

by "throwing" some of my PBM contests (which will probably cost me a tournament Stalingrad title). However, this was not enough, and matters worsened still. Finally, September came and the changes effected by my change in daily routine brought an end to the "war".

Now before the women's league of wargamer's wives and fiancées comes crashing down on my mailbox, allow me to examine the causes of those events which included my schedule, the baby, my occupation, and our ages.

Probably the main contributor to the crisis was my daily schedule, which ran typically as follows: one, 7:30 A.M. — go to work; two, 5 P.M. return from work, shower; three, 5:30 P.M. play wargames, either FTF or PBM, and eat; four, 11 P.M. — go to bed. On weekends I merely substituted more of number three for numbers one and two. There is now little wonder in my mind as to why Cindy exhibited such hostile behavior; all of my spare time was devoted to my hobby, which had become a second full time occupation.

Another major contributor to our troubles was the baby. I wasn't much help to Cindy in those first few months with the baby; my wife was on twenty-four hour duty as I had a habit of sleeping right through those middle-of-the-night-sessions. Those of you who have had children know what I'm talking about; those of you who haven't have an unforgettable experience awaiting you.

I'm sure that my job did not help matters any. I worked (and still do) as a transformer-repair-plant-yard-laborer. The eight plus hours of one hundred plus degrees in the sun each day burned away what was left of my patience and common sense.

I feel that the final contributor to the illness which struck my home last summer was the fact that Cindy and I are young. I'm sure that you are all familiar with the fact that the divorce rate for young married couples in this country is quite high, 90% last I knew. So while our disagreements did not reach that conclusion, I assert that it was more natural (for lack of a better word) for us to fall into disagreement than, say, an older couple.

Nowadays, I still play my games and Cindy doesn't like it, but things aren't nearly as bad as they were before. Perhaps it was just a matter of growing up on our part. However, two facts stand out: one, I have not purchased a wargame since I was married; which reflects point two, Cindy Slick is not exactly in love with wargaming, which proves that there is at least one wife who does not share her husband's enthusiasm for this hobby.

That brings me to the real purpose of this whole article. Cindy and I are relatively sure that there must be others who have suffered or are suffering through similar plights. We are interested in contacting these people for the purpose of exchanging helpful correspondence on the subject. We hope that we have shown others in similar circumstances that they are not alone; and we hope that we have been helpful to at least one other couple. And for those of you who are still bachelor wargamers — beware of the conflicts between women and wargames. Your most serious strategic and tactical challenges may arise off the board.

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# Ostrieg

by Mark Teehan

Avalon Hill's game of *Stalingrad* is certainly one of the big all-time favorites of most wargamers, whether they be veterans or beginners. Probably because of this, many articles have appeared in *The General* dealing with *Stalingrad* and have covered the broad spectrum experienced by individual wargamers. This still, however, does not change the fact that no comprehensive, strategically and tactically detailed article has ever been written on the German side in *S-grad*. In this article, I hope to change this situation.

## GERMAN TACTICAL DOCTRINE

Although it's strategy in *S-grad* that will ultimately make or break the German commander, let's start with a discussion of some of the more salient tactical concepts which should govern the German conduct of operations. Sound tactics are important to the German in *S-grad* and are acquired through experience.

### I. Type Tactics

There are two different types of tactics which you can employ as German commander—annihilative tactics and exhaustive tactics. An example of annihilative tactics would be executing 4) 3-1's instead of, say 2) 6-1's; exhaustive tactics would be the opposite — the 2) 6-1's instead of the 4) 3-1's. Annihilative tactics are clearly superior to exhaustive tactics even though they will result in heavier German casualties. Your tactical object as German commander is to destroy (annihilate) the Soviet forces adequately enough to permit your strategic aim being realized—capture of the three big cities. You must realize, however, that the choice of which type of tactics you employ is not yours, but the Russian player's. If, as an example, after the Nemunas River is broken, the Russian player stands and fights, i.e., lines all his units up between Riga and Minsk (a la Thomas Fowler's "Tactics of Defense"), you can employ annihilative tactics. Any time the Russian stands and fights in open, undoubted terrain allowing all his units to be hit, instead of delaying with a minimum and holding the rest in reserve, hit him with all you've got. The key to success with annihilative tactics lies in the soakoffs — always soakoff at a minimum of 1-3. If you run 3-4 soakoffs at poor odds (1-5, 1-6), chances are that you'll lose most of those units and then, only then, will it become a battle of attrition which the German can never hope to win. Another possibility with annihilative tactics is the 1-1 "blitz." Once you have broken the Nemunas R. and the Russian has lined all his units up from Riga to Minsk, hit him with about 6) 1-1's. You've got about 50% chance of eliminating three Soviet units, and by employing Rumanian 2-2-4's with 4-4-4's and 5-5-4's, you'll minimize your critical German losses. The important thing to remember about 1-2's and 1-1's is: "Mass, not driblets." As Guderian used to say, "Klotzen, nicht klechern" ("boot 'em, don't spatter 'em"). One or two 1-2's or 1-1's are mere pinpricks which require either much luck or telekinetic control of the die in order to produce satisfactory results. Four or more 1-2's against a river line, on the other hand, will generally be enough

to guarantee success. An exception to the "Mass, not driblets" rule is the 2-1. Here the potential losses of a tactical defeat are so high, in spite of the basically low probability of defeat, that only one 2-1 should ever be attempted in one month. There will be critical times when you, as German commander, will be forced to resort to a 2-1; this should never occur much more than 2-3 times per game.

There will come a time in every game when the German must switch to exhaustive tactics (quality 5-1/+ attacks) which emphasize advancing with the least possible casualties (unfortunately for the enemy as well as yourself). The basic reason for this is the insufficient number of German units to cover long defensive fronts and simultaneously conduct a full scale offensive. This situation is in turn aggravated by German losses and their inability to be replaced adequately.

## II. Initial Operational Tactics

Now let's discuss initial tactical operations along each sector of the Eastern Front, starting with the Central Front (from the Baltic, R-28, to Brest-Litovsk), where Army Groups North and Center will usually be operating. The single most important tactical operation on this Front is breaching the Nemunas R. line (and not, incidentally, capturing Brest-Litovsk) by July 1941 (that's July '41). In this context the indirect approach should be employed on the tactical level — Brest will fall indirectly as you advance on its flanks, the central Nemunas and Lwow gap. Contrary to what others have said on this subject, the most important square in the Nemunas R. Line System is V-19—this is where you want to break the Nemunas.

Now let's move down to the South Front, from BB-15 SE to the Black Sea, where Army Group South will be operating. In South Poland, the prime tactical operations of Army Group South are breaching the Bug River Line System and opening up the Lwow gap. The Soviet defensive position which is key in this area is CC-14; without Soviet units at CC-14, EE-12 on the San River becomes untenable as a strong defensive position. The mountain position GG-12 is also important once you shatter the Soviet border defenses. Turning now to the southern portion of Army Group South in Rumania, the key tactical operation here is breaching the Prut River at NN-14. If the Russian is experienced you'll find either a 6-9-6 or a 7-10-4 at NN-14; otherwise, against a 5-7-4 or 4-6-4, you'll have no trouble in getting a 3-1. Against a 7-10-4 or 6-9-6, attack NN-14 at 1-1 surrounded and add 3) 1-2's along the rest of the Prut.

## III. Miscellaneous Tactical Principles

1. When attacking with armor at 3-1 in open undoubted terrain always provide infantry support to cover any exchanges. Your Panzer units are your trump cards and they must be kept intact. This is especially true early in the game.

2. Try to build up your replacement balance early in the game to cover possible armor exchanges which might occur when attacking a double river position at 3-1.

3. After May 1942, utilize 2-2-4's and 3-3-4's as infantry replacements as much as possible in order to compensate for numerical shortages and increased defensive frontage.

4. The key to crossing rivers is to create an operative front of sufficient length so as to stretch the defenders resources and thus allow

you to cross at enemy's weak points. The smaller the river line frontage that the Russian has to cover, the easier it is for him to concentrate his forces on the small area threatened and frustrate your attempts.

## GERMAN STRATEGIC DOCTRINE

### I. German O/B

Before moving up to Finland, let's suggest the use of an O/B for the German in *S-grad*; the German commander needs an O/B to facilitate both operational planning execution. A model O/B would have 4 Panzer Armies, 1 Panzer-grenadier Army, 8 Infantry Armies, and 1 Mountain Army (5-5-4 and Rum. 2-2-4 to operate in Finland) for the German forces. The Finns and Rumanians should be organized into 4 Infantry Armies, 2 each. A good way to group your Panzer corps is as follows: 1st Pz. Army (24 factors), 2nd Pz. Army (18 factors, 2) 7-7-6 & 1) 4-4-6), 3rd Panzer Army (18 factors, 3) 6-6-6's), and 4th Pz. Army (18 factors, 8-8-6, 6-6-6, & 4-4-6).

### II. Finland

Finland is literally and geographically in a class all by itself in *S-grad*. One cardinal rule regarding Finland which will always serve you well is: Never underestimate the importance of operations on the North (Finnish) Front. Although a side-show for both sides, it is the German in Finland who can more or less relax while the pressure is on the Russian. The Soviet commander must rapidly liquidate the Axis forces in Finland so as to free all available units for action on the decisive Central and South Fronts. By conducting a withdrawal in Finland along sound tactical lines the German player can achieve a decisive success in tying down valuable Soviet units which are desperately needed elsewhere by Stavka. The basis for any German operations in Finland should be Carl F. Knabe's "In Defense of Finland" (Vol. 2, No. 6 - March, 1966), except with a 5-5-4 instead of a precious 6-6-6. Your Finnish trump card as German commander is the weather - when the Russian packs up to leave in Nov. 1941 at the earliest, there's a 50% chance of snow! Remember - delay, defend, and never, never attack in Finland (assuming Stavka stations 6-10 units on the North Front).

### III. Strategic Defense Evaluation System (SDES)

The primary purpose of the SDES is to pinpoint the weakest sector of the Eastern Front for you graphically and thus help you select the operational plan best suited to the situation. You want your main blow to hit the weakest Front of the Soviet defense. Basically, the SDES consists of figuring out how many defense factors you opponent has on each Front, converting it to a % breakdown, and counting the number of 5-7-4's and 7-10-4's (6-9-6) he has *per Front*. These results are then matched up with corresponding figures (per Front) for a sound Soviet defense - where discrepancies occur for your opponent's defense, you simply penalize him. At the end, you just tally up the minus charges, and you have a composite evaluation of his defense. I don't have room here to include the Evaluation Procedure and Interpretation of Results (you may write me for further details) but the criterion for judgement are as follows: North Front (Finland) - 31% (68 defense fctrs.); Central Front (R-28 to Brest incl.) - 32% (71 def. fctrs. = critical strength level), 6) 5-7-4's 2) 7-10-4's (6-9-6 for

one allowed); & South Front (BB-15 to Black Sea) - 37% (15% from BB-15 to GG-12, 22% south of GG-12), (81 def. fctrs. = critical strength level), 6) 5-7-4's, 1) 6-9- 1) 7-19-4. Avalon Hill's "Suggested Defense" has a rating of -5 (-4 on the Central Front, -1 on South Front, therefore, your main attack vs. Central Front; interpretation = Average, Fair, OK. The "Shagrin Defense" which appeared in the *General* has an SDES rating of -3, all charged against the Central Front. The SDES interpretation is "Good, Playable" - Mr. Shagrin's defense is the best that has appeared in *The General*.

### IV. Operational Strategy

Now we come to the crucial core of German strategy in *S-grad* German operational plans can be classified into two types: 1) the basic "which city first" type (unorthodox political-socio-economic) and 2) the more detailed and subtle type which emphasizes above all destruction of the Soviet armed forces first and then capture of the three big cities (orthodox military). A characteristic of the unorthodox-political type is the "independent" capture of one city (Stalingrad) by secondary forces while the other two are taken successively by a strong main force. On the other hand the more orthodox military strategy usually concentrates all available forces on each city successively, depending heavily upon a successful "type" strategy - that of annihilation. Against a competent and experienced Russian the only operational strategy which has even the slightest chance of success is the orthodox military (5% at that...).

The first basic guideline in formulating operational strategy is always keep your main strength concentrated - don't dissipate your armor along the length of the Eastern Front. Always keep a minimum of 3 Panzer Armies operating together (usually the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, with the 4th separate). Ideally, all four should operate together. The second operational guideline is that of surprise/deception - always try to keep the Russian guessing as to your intentions (like where your massed Panzers will strike next.) Shift your massed armor north and south of Brest-Litovsk early in the game so as to keep the Russian off balance-if you 1-1 "blitz" in the Center, employ your armor in the Lwow gap for that month. Another important guideline to follow when formulating operational strategy is never employ the bulk of your armor in Rumania - the 3-river system is too restricted and your ability to switch massed armor around Brest is destroyed (surprise gone). The key to Rumania is either assign the minimum number of units needed to hold the Prut River Line, or assign 3-4 German Infantry Armies and 1 Rumanian Army to crack the River lines - never something in between.

Whichever type of operational strategy you decide to use, be it the unorthodox socio-economic type or the orthodox military, you'll have to further decide which of the three cities to take first (of course in the case of orthodox military strategy this is a secondary consideration). Stalingrad can be definitely ruled out as a first objective/city. The laws of advance in *S-grad* would prevent you from taking the city which before Nov. 1942, and even then you would have to commit the bulk of your armor. Moscow is a tempting "1st city" target to most German commanders - certainly if it can be captured during the summer of 1942 the German situation is ideal. The problem with Moscow is how to

take it as the first of the three big cities - it's an extremely tough nut to crack (realistic first city capture date vs. competent Russian - Sept. 1942, if at all). The "Moscow first" people usually never even reach Moscow; much less win the game; they attempt to take Moscow directly from the west when the bulk of the Red Army is still intact and able to concentrate in the confined Rzhev-Smolensky-(Dnepr R.)-Orel triangle for defense of the capital. The bulk of the Red Army must be destroyed or seriously weakened *FIRST* before Moscow can be taken as your first city. Therefore, if you ever decide on Moscow as your first city, use an orthodox military operational plan (with a strong "type" strategy of annihilation) as your strategic guideline. The best way to take Moscow (at all) is second- after Leningrad is taken. Although its capture first by the German is not nearly as decisive as the capture of Moscow, it does not pose all the thorny operational problems which the capture of "Moscow first" presents. Leningrad is the only one of the three cities that can be taken at a comparatively early date (May 1942 vs. a competent Russian), thus cutting the Soviet replacement capacity by 1/3 before the crucial '42 Summer Campaign. Against a competent or super-expert Russian, Leningrad will generally be your best "first city." If you operate the way J.K. Norris does with a strategy of exhaustion the whole game, you better aim for Leningrad first- it's really your only choice (chance?).

In summary, remember to carefully evaluate the initial Russian defense using the SDES - this will show you his weakest Front and indicate the best location for your main attack. Then decide on a basic operational plan which includes an O/B, strategic phases, and a time-table/objectives chart. The important point is to decide what you're going to do strategy-wise before your first move, and then act on it. Your best method is to formulate, self-wargame, and then revise (if necessary) several operational plans before playing a real game. In effect, you'll be conducting a "strategic/tactical staff study" to test and resolve any problems associated with your operational plan. Some of the questions such a "staff study" could resolve would be "how many Panzer Armies should be allotted to Army Group Center," "how many infantry armies should Army Group South have in Rumania," and "what is the earliest possible time that the Divine and S. Bug could be breached." (all as examples). The answers to questions such as these would depend on the framework of the specific operational plan being considered. (e.g. "main drive from Center objective Leningrad with subsidiary drive in South," "converging attacks from E. Prussia/Rumania intermediate objective Kursk followed by all-out assault on Moscow from S/W, S, & S/E with defensive lines Divina R.-Smolensk and Dnepropetrovsk-Kharkov-Voronezh," or "main attack launched from southern flank - S. Poland and Rumania objective Moscow with Nemunas held defensively"). Finally, your decision on just which operational plan to implement will depend on the initial Soviet defense. Here we have the true "wargame" - testing a preconceived operational plan before it is executed in the form of a real war.

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# Letters — Yes, We Get Letters

After reading Raymond Hosier's article, "A Shocking French Victory," I fail to see how it became the "Plan of the Month" (in the Jan-Feb. 1971 issue). Irregardless of the most brilliant maneuvering done beforehand, any plan which rests its final results upon a series of 2-1 attacks is certainly not a sound plan, by any standards.

First, after initially obvious maneuvers, Mr. Hosier suggests making a 2-1 attack on the Quatre Bras ridges "if possible." The entire concept of making attacks at 2-1 odds is faulty. Common sense should tell you that the probabilities of success are not high. There are two possibilities of success; two of a too expensive success, an exchange; and two of defeat. The minimum attack a commander should make is a 3-1 to ensure success, at least in gaining position.

At any rate, he envisions the eventual French seizure of Quatre Bras by 9 AM on the 17th. This is a bit too late in the game, unless they have also eliminated a very large part of the P-A-A army (which will probably not be accomplished by making 2-1 attacks). Also, 7 factors of cavalry is certainly not sufficient to tie down enough allied troops at Nivelles to yield decisive results more quickly at Quatre Bras.

"This leads to the final and crucial step," a series of 2-1 attacks everywhere. "That's exactly what the P-A-A doesn't expect." It is probably true that no competent player would expect the French to gamble so foolishly. An attack on morale is only effective if it not only is unexpected, but is also based on sober calculation, and leaves the enemy in such a disadvantaged position that he has no alternative other than a desperate countermeasure, which will probably fail.

A loss at the wrong point may throw away the chance that the French had for victory. Success in these 2-1 attacks will, of course, bring about the rout and defeat of the allied army. For that matter, a group of successful 1-1 attacks would produce the same effect in this, and indeed, most wargames.

However, a wargame is essentially a contest of skill and an exercise of the mind. As such, defeating opponents by making 2-1 attacks with impunity is meaningless. There are times when a 2-1 attack is the only alternative to flat failure (as in the AH version of Stalingrad with the Germans against a good Russian defense), but even if they must be made, the idea is to calculate the risk involved with the possible results of a successful combat and determine the best place to launch such an attack. Apparently, Mr. Hosier is used to exceptional luck when rolling these odds.

Looking over his campaign ideas, it is obvious to me that he compensates for the lack of method and subtlety with which the first part of his campaign is conducted by his own good luck in rolling uncalculated 2-1's along the entire allied line. I only wish he had not tried to persuade others (who may not be as lucky as he) to use his own poor tactics in the hope of success.

Mr. Jeffrey M. Bale  
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Gentlemen:

I want to thank you for the excellent coverage you gave our upcoming convention in the Jan-Feb issue of the *General*. Things are moving along smoothly towards finalizing our plans. I enclose a copy of the Convention Newsletter No. 1 for your information.

To correct a few items in the Jan-Feb report: you will notice admission to the convention does not include the tournaments, as one might think your report implied. A schedule is not available from me — this newsletter is, at 10 cents a copy, refundable with any registration (registration also includes the 3 issues we will be putting out). No. 2 will have accommodations, more events information, and No. 3 will have the schedule. No. 2 will be out by 3/1/71, also 10 cents. The banquet menu will be fruit cup, assorted relishes, green salad, baked Virginia ham, mashed potatoes, two vegetables, rolls and butter, ice cream and cookies, and coffee. This is our 1st East Coast convention, not our second. Brochures are in limited supply and are sent only as they last. Prize lists are not fixed as yet, but will be fairly extensive for the AH tournament, having cash, trophies, and JM subscriptions to 8 places. The naval tourneys will have specially designed trophies with the Massachusetts in 1:1200 scale mounted atop them.

The Capital Chapter will hold a "minicon" March 13. Tom Karwaki should supply you with info on it. The SICL will be throwing two small tournaments — one in one of the 5 "basic" AH tournament games, and one in Tony's *Sink the Bismarck* game using search and naval miniatures in one game.

Thanks again for the coverage.

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To the Editor:

I note that each month a fair number of ads in the *General* request information regarding various non-AH wargames. I have made a list of over 40 such games for my own use, since in some cases this information is hard to come by. I am in the process of duplicating this list, and will be happy to send a copy off to each of the first 200 or so readers who request it and send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope to return it in. My list includes the name of each wargame, the price and at least one place from which it may be ordered.

J. Richard Wagner  
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Dear Sirs:

...I had last played an AH game while attending the Armor Officers' Advanced Course at Ft. Knox in 1969. It was observed by my opponent (an Infantryman) that *Battle of the Bulge* should require as a prerequisite completion of the career course. This was, to be sure, due in part to the relative incapability of Infantrymen to grasp mobile warfare. In *Panzerblitz*, however, I think you may have made his awed statement prophetic.

The new game is strikingly more versatile than its ancestors, due largely to the mapboard. In addition, it permits considerable exercise in the science of task organization (stressed *ad nauseum* in Career Course). Application of the task force concept is basic to *Panzerblitz*, and the player learns many painful lessons in this fundamental consideration without the loss of life attendant to such lessons in combat.

Having commanded tank and mechanized infantry units in combat, and armored cavalry in training, I was skeptical after the first reading of the rules. The reservations largely disappeared after "live-fire" practice. I feel, however, that certain features beg for comment:

Branch antipathy aside, I simply cannot swallow the striking way in which the WESPE and HUMMEL batteries dominate the battlefield. In most cases (e.g., Situation No. 12) the batteries are used in an interdicting role — indirect fire. I suspect that at least one person on your staff has tried to hit a moving tank with a large-caliber indirect fire tube directed by FO. Assorted orientals have tried it on me, and it is just not effective enough to warrant the inflated AF. The (justifiable) lack of counterbattery capability in the Russian elements adds to this virtually unchallenged dominance. This AF, I feel, should be reconsidered, particularly when applied to tank units.

In task-organizing, I find myself using your organizational tables in the Campaign Analysis booklet. Sometimes, however, the TO&E and list of counters do not balance out. I am sure this is due to legitimate losses that occurred prior to the actual situation's occurrence or simply modifications due to equipment shortages. In such situations you might have spared the player some anguish by detailing the actual task organization.

Despite the above niggling gripes, I feel that *Panzerblitz* is a real breakthrough in concept, and hope to see games using the same concepts and different scenarios. I hope to find some AH fans in the Knox area.

Timothy R. O'Neill, Cpt., Armor  
U. S. Army Armor and  
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Fort Knox, Kentucky 40121

Dear Sir:

Your newest game, *Panzerblitz*, is a masterpiece. When I first ordered it, I did so only to maintain my collections of all your wargames. Judging from your previous release, I thought that it would be a unplayable monster with 352 units. But your use of several playable situations and the German and Russian unit organization information make it the best one you've put out.

Greg Degi  
22A Sheridan Ave.  
Fort Riley, Kansas 66442

Dear Sir:

Recently, I acquired your latest release, *Panzerblitz*. I found it to be a most flexible and entertaining game. I have an objection to one rule, however. That is the rule that forbids all vehicles from crossing the wooded green hex sides.

In view of the other rules in other A.H. games that prohibit armored units from entering wooded areas, it was not surprising to find such a rule in *Panzerblitz*. However, I feel that it is unwarranted.

As a former armored officer in the Army, I found that the only true natural barriers to armored vehicles are water and slopes. Vegetation in any form cannot prevent a full tracked armored vehicle from moving. It can and does slow down any vehicle, but it is not impenetrable. I make this statement with the experience of an armored cavalry platoon leader in Vietnam in particular.

This assertion requires some clarification. Tanks can knock rather large trees over without difficulty. With an experienced driver the danger

of throwing a track is minimal. Any tree that is too large to be knocked over is also too large to grow side by side with another large tree. This holds true for large groups of trees as well. To summarize, any tree that cannot be simply run over, can be by-passed. Smaller tracked vehicles have the same quality in that they can move through smaller openings between those trees that they cannot run over.

Movement through wooded hex sides in *Panzerblitz* for full-tracked vehicles could accurately be treated in the same fashion as movement across a barrier.

All of the preceding is not to imply that there are not problems for armored vehicles maneuvering among densely grouped trees. Firepower is limited both by the vegetation and by the difficulty in moving turrets since the gun tubes on tanks can be obstructed by nearby trees. This could be handled by reducing the attack factor of armored units by 1/2 on the turn after they cross the hex side.

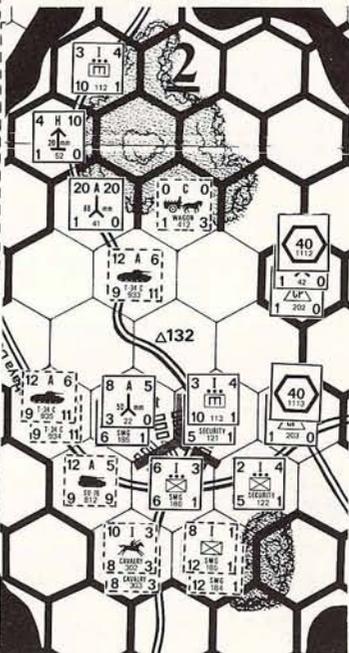
Of all the terrain features on the *Panzerblitz* game boards, the ones most likely to be barriers to armored vehicles are the gullies and stream beds. Often such terrain features have severe slopes on one or both sides resulting from the water washing away the soil along the bottom of each bank. Further there is often MUD at the bottom of the most innocent looking stream. Thus these terrain features combine the two elements that prohibit armored movement, water and slopes. Perhaps it would be accurate to treat gullies and streambeds other than fords as barriers also.

Michael A. Plesko  
6628 N. Sheridan Rd. 121  
Chicago, Ill. 60626

## Contest No. 42

PANZERBLITZ: "Gamble At Bednost"

This month's contest is Situation No. 1 of a *Panzerblitz* game. All optional rules are employed. You are the German player. It is the German 9th turn move. You have lost a CP(203), a 20mm(51), a 20(4)mm(53), a 50mm(21), and a security platoon(123). The Russians have lost all



units not shown on the diagram. All units still in play are shown on the diagram. The Russians have launched a last-ditch offensive on his half of Turn No. 9. You, as German commander, must initiate a counter-attack plan that holds the best possible chance to preserve a German Marginal Victory.

Simply fill in the areas of the chart below. Under the attack section fill in the number of the battle that each individual unit is participating in. Number your battles consecutively, with CAT attacks following direct fire attacks. Be sure to compute the correct odds for your attacks (considering range, types of units attacking, etc.). Also list final positions of units where indicated. Clarity, organization, and economy of movement will be factors in determining winners.

unit code	position	attack order	target/defender	odds	final pos.
22	U-5	d.fire CAT			U-5
41	R-5				R-5
42	S-7				S-7
52	Q-4				Q-4
112	P-5				
113	U-6				
121	U-6				
122	V-7				
185	U-5				
186	V-6				

Headlines of 3 Best Articles:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# The Question Box

When submitting questions to us for answers, please note the following:

1.) Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The letters that include one are answered first. Those that do not are answered last; as a result, these letters get back to you at least a week later.

2.) If your question refers to a specific situation, please include a diagram of the situation. It takes a good deal of time to answer the letter otherwise, which will delay your reply.

3.) We wish we could answer technical questions and do research for you, but the large amount of mail we receive prohibits this. We will be glad to answer questions on the play of the game, but we cannot, unfortunately, answer those on technical or historical points nor can we research data for those of you designing your own games.

4.) Keep orders and other mail separate from questions. Separating the items of your letters into different departments takes time and delays your reply.

## BULGE questions and answers to date:

Q. In the Basic Game, can new units enter or pass through the ZOC of "engaged" units?  
A. No.

Q. Are units in fortresses required to withdraw or counterattack when an "Engaged" or "Contact" is rolled?  
A. No. Zones of control do not "pass through fortress walls." Units inside are never required to attack or withdraw even though adjacent to the enemy. Of course, the reverse also is true.

Q. Suppose the ISS attacks and defeats a unit of RR7; it then moves onto the vacated square. But the units on RR6 and RR8 are engaged; thus

the US cannot do anything in that sector. Can the ISS back out of that square in its next turn?  
A. No. Pulling back would mean moving through enemy ZOC. The ISS has unwittingly committed itself to battle by advancing after combat on the previous turn.

Q. After an Engaged has been rolled, can the attacker bring up reinforcements if the defender does not exercise his option to do so?  
A. Yes.

Q. If German units are immobilized by a SAC attack and are forced to retreat in a ground attack on the next turn, are they eliminated instead?  
A. Yes.

Q. If a unit moves directly from square UU19 to TT19, has it used its entire movement allowance for that turn?  
A. Yes. However, it is possible to move from UU18 to BB33, from NN25 to KK23, from UU18 to MM25, or from MM25 to RR30 in one turn. It is NOT possible to move from TT18 to KK26, or from LL12 to JJ14 in one turn. (We assume a movement factor of 4 here.)

Q. In reference to the optional rule mentioned only on the last page of the appendix (limiting German attacks to two per road), if German units are completely surrounded, may they participate in an attack by units from outside the encirclement?  
A. Yes. If any of the units in an attack are supplied, all others participating in that particular attack are considered to be supplied. (Note: this is not true for Afrika Korps.) Isolated US units can always attack. If the special optional rule limiting the Germans to two attacks per road is not used, isolated German units can always attack.

Q. May the US make his SAC attack on an empty square in order to restrict the retreat of German units under ground attack?  
A. Yes. German units may not retreat through a square under SAC attack, and the US may bomb an unoccupied square.

Q. If a Volksgrenadier unit is isolated when US air supremacy comes into effect, is that unit immobilized?  
A. No. The movement factor of German units is never reduced below 2.

Q. May retreating units move toward the enemy if routes away from the enemy exist?  
A. No, not unless the retreat route is the only one available. Units must always be retreated in the general direction away from the enemy if possible. Specifically, attacks at soak-off odds with the intent of having the unit retreat into a greatly advantageous position toward the enemy lines (or behind them) is outlawed. This will, on occasion, conflict with the "retreat to the nearest road" rule, but a retreat should be a retreat, not an advance.

Q. May fractions of moves be carried over from one road to another?  
A. Yes. For example, a unit may move four squares on one road, three squares across country to another road, and then move one more square on that road (same road or different road).

Q. If defending armor become Engaged, may they on their turn move away and have other, new, units take their place in the engagement?  
A. Yes, but at least one of the originally engaged units must remain on each square that new units are brought onto.

Q. If a river and a road are on the same square, can units cross the river without delay?  
A. Only if the road CROSSES the river on that square. Bastogne cannot be taken on the first move.

Q. Can German units reach SS9 of the 16 AM turn?  
A. Yes. They start on UU8, move to TT9, and take the road to SS9.

Q. Do new units entering from edge squares like HH, I, and 7 enter at the road bonus rate?  
A. Yes.

Q. Can one friendly unit move into an enemy ZOC (and attack no unit) while a second friendly unit attacks the enemy unit?  
A. No. All units in enemy ZOC MUST attack some enemy unit.

Q. If a unit in a fortress is surrounded, can it move one square outside the fort to a vacant square and attack only the unit(s) that it is then adjacent to?  
A. Yes.

Q. May the victorious unit ALWAYS advance into the vacated square?  
A. Yes.

Q. Using the optional weather table, if the weather clears up on the roll before the German 24 AM turn, when is the movement rate of the German units reduced?  
A. 24 hours later: during the 25 AM turn.

Q. On the optional rules concerning Panzerblitz assault, MUST the infantry attack the overrun unit or may it attack any adjacent unit?  
A. It must attack the unit being overrun.

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Q. If only a transport or CP unit is placed under a fortification counter, does the fort counter still have its full defense factor?  
A. Yes, any unit with people in it will do it (granted, it's not realistic, but it saves a whole lot of hassle).

Q. For victory conditions do you count truck and wagon units?  
A. Yes, but you don't count counters which contain no men (such as mines, blocks and fortifications).

Q. Are units on hilltop hexes such as the plateau like hill top on board 2, that are not forest or town hexes, subject to the overrun rule by armored units?  
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A. You may attack any of the units in this case.

Q. What would happen in a situation such as No. 6 if the Russian player refuses to attack the German position?  
A. Nothing, no battle, no "victory".

Q. In situation 1 may all the CP's be placed in one fort or may two be placed in one fort or may only one be in each fort?  
A. All three may be in one fort, but the fort, as stated, must be on a HILLTOP hex (one with six orange sides).

Q. The TEC states that it costs a truck unit 2 MF to enter a clear terrain hex, does this mean EACH clear terrain hex?  
A. Yes. This applies for all movement penalties of this sort.

Q. When a unit becomes dispersed, does he still have zone-of-control on the hex he occupies?  
A. Yes, enemy units may still not move through a dispersed unit. The dispersed unit also retains its normal defense factor.

Q. If a unit moves TO a fortification, does it cost him a movement factor to enter UNDER the fortification, rather than just sit on top of it?  
A. There are no movement penalties for moving onto or into a fortification counter.

Q. On the optional rules concerning Panzerblitz assault, MUST the infantry attack the overrun unit or may it attack any adjacent unit?  
A. It must attack the unit being overrun.

Q. Can either side voluntarily destroy their own armored vehicles?  
A. Yes, but it doesn't make much sense.

Q. Does a colored hex side obstruct the line of fire?  
A. In some cases, yes. It depends on the respective elevation of the attacker and defender. Consult the Target Elevation Table and the Examples of play card as there are many different situations.

Q. For victory conditions do you count truck and wagon units?  
A. Yes, but you don't count counters which contain no men (such as mines, blocks and fortifications).

Q. Are units on hilltop hexes such as the plateau like hill top on board 2, that are not forest or town hexes, subject to the overrun rule by armored units?  
A. Yes, only hexes with orange sides are hilltop hexes. A clear hex is a clear hex, no matter what its elevation is. Clear hilltop hexes are clear hexes.

Q. If a unit is fired upon from a woods hex

## Infiltrators Report

THE ARMORED SCHOOL at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, Major D. Neck, Command Staff Department, is currently investigating the use of AH games... "to see if we can incorporate ideas of your games into our tactical military map terrain problems." We don't know about that, but we guarantee that our games will keep the officers sufficiently preoccupied where they can forget about the Viet Nam thing.

A UNIQUE 2-DIE COMBAT TABLE has been developed by Rev. Ken C. Haydon, and introduced with great success to the M.T.U.F.M.C. Club, 444 E. Wadsworth Hall, Michigan Tech U, Houghton, Michigan 49931 by their President, Donald E. Clark, Jr. Too detailed to reproduce here, it lists probabilities that make for even more realistic battle results. Our own research department is giving it the old once over.

MILITARY MODELING — the latest Donald Featherstone publication is a comprehensive collection of facts and information on making military models. Precise and detailed instructions are given for making model soldiers, military vehicles and buildings, and converting and adapting existing models. From its pages can be learned the art of moulding and casting soldiers, soldiering and glueing, painting, construction of diagrams and their display cabinets, guns, vehicles and buildings, etc. The book also deals lengthily with the assembly and conversion of plastic models. The publisher is A. S. Barnes & Co., P. O. Box 421, Cranbury, N. J. 08512.

WARGAMING IS CATCHING ON more and more on college campuses as seen by the establishment of clubs at such places as the West Point Military Academy, St. Johns University, and Villanova University, yet there have been no intercollegiate play-by-mail tournaments and only a few face-to-face encounters. The major reason for this lack of activity is poor communications.

For this reason a Collegiate Association of Military Strategy Clubs open only to college recognized clubs should be established. The purpose of the organization would be to publish addresses of clubs and announcements of intercollegiate tournaments and their results. It would definitely not be to disseminate articles on strategy, etc.

If your college club is interested in an intercollegiate organization of this type, please send your address (hopefully a permanent on campus address) to the address below and you will receive, in turn, a list of other college clubs and where they may be reached. Tom LeFevre, President; Rensselaer Military Strategy Club; R.P.I. Student Union; Troy, New York 12181.

IN CONTEST NO. 41, the trickiest part of all was figuring out what we meant by "advance into

Russia." By way of definition, "advance into Russia" means:

- a) win a battle so that you occupy a square in a Russian ZOC.
- b) advance across rivers so that the Russian will either have to counterattack or give up the squares into which your ZOC extend.

In judging the results of an attack now under the German ZOC. For example, a 3-1 attack against the Russian 29 inf. could net the Germans 7 squares (the square the German occupies plus the six squares in his ZOC). The best results, as mathematically determined, can be shown in chart form. For those wargamers who have not

analyzed games in this manner, the chart below should give you a fair idea of how it is done. In the chart, P(WIN) means the probability of winning the specific attack, P(ADV) means the probability of advancing into the Russian's square, GAIN means the number of squares gained on the attack if successful, E(SQ) means the expected number of squares one would gain on the average. The TOTAL is the number of squares gained on the average with all of these attacks:

unit	odds	P(WIN)	P(ADV)	GAIN	E(SQ)
29inf.	3-1	6/6	6/6	7SQ	7SQ
4arm.	1-2	2/6	1/6	3SQ	3/6SQ
7arm.	2-1	4/6	4/6	2SQ	1 2/6SQ
12inf.	1-1	3/6	2/6	6SQ	2SQ
3inf.	1-2	2/6	1/6	6SQ	1SQ
28inf.	1-3	0	0	0	0
4cav.	3-1	6/6	0	8SQ	8SQ
TOTAL:					19 5/6SQ

Thus, the most correct contest form would look like this:



Any other results are, in our opinion, less than optimum.

THE TEN CONTESTANTS THAT CAME closest were picked by a random drawing from approximately sixty contestants that captured twenty or more squares of Russian soil. They were: Gary Emory, Livermore, California; Bill Tanks, Colorado Springs, Col.; Brian Alden, Rockville, Md.; John Van De Graaf, Jr., St. Claire Shores, Mich.; Robert Taylor, Farmington, Mich.; Arthur Torry, Bath, N.Y.; Mark O'Steen, Raleigh, Tenn.; Chris Hawkins, Seattle, Wash.; Harry Booth, Elkins, W. Va.; Richard Gorski, Milwaukee, Wisc.

THE FIVE BEST ARTICLES IN LAST issue were: J. E. Purnelle's "Simulating the Art of War"; Alan Augenbraun's "Winning with the Wehrmacht"; "Ships that Missed the Battle-Part I" by Stephen Lewis; "Getting it Together" by Scott M. Sherwood; and Dick Triek's "Then There Was..." Congratulations and a tip of the helmet to these gentlemen.

LARGEST WARGAMING TOURNAMENT ever thrown is scheduled by Spartan International for late '71. Prize list includes \$500 in cash and \$110 in trophies. Entry info is available from their home office @ 5820 John Avenue, Long Beach, California. Their 1970 International Championship was captured by Bob Wilson who is to compete against Bob Shupe in a play-off for the first SICL Championship which is the highest competitive honor in Sparta. Amassing a total of

12,710 points is Phil Pritchard, International Commissioner of Affairs, joining only four others before him whose point total entitled them to "retirement status."

IFW TOURNAMENTS will also be of record setting proportions, three (instead of one) being planned in the coming season: the annual Lake Geneva Convention will occur in the latter part of August (dates not determined as yet), with other sites listed at Mt. Prospect, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri. Meanwhile...

THE CAPITAL WARGAMES MINI-CON I had scheduled a miniatures convention at Fort Hunt High School, Fairfax County, Virginia — two miles north of Mt. Vernon on Fort Hunt Road — Saturday, March 13, 1971. While this notice is too late for those wishing to make reservations, we certainly direct your attention to the fact that it is an outgrowth of an idea implemented by Interest Group Baltimore, the organization featured in the Jan-Feb issue. Inquiries on future plans should go to: Thomas Karwaki, 8218 Chancery Ct, Alexandria, Va. 22308.

AN UNUSUAL APPROACH to tournament conduct is the ability-pairing method that will be in vogue at the National Invitation Tournaments sponsored by *New Aggressor*. Entrants will be matched up with opponents of like ability unless stiffer competition is requested. Complete info including rating specifics available from Tim Fox, 58 Cutler, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507.



# GUESS WHO...



... FORGOT ABOUT AUTOMATIC VICTORY???